

Talking Trees

The newsletter for Norwich Steiner School, Kindergartens & Parent & Child Groups

May 2010

Dates for your diary

Friday 25th June – St Johns Festival

Saturday 3rd July – Olympics for Elder class parents

Sunday 11th July – Summer Fayre

DFR Support Team

By Emma Pawsey & Lindsey Mack

In response to the need for funds to continue the development of the school, the Development Fundraising Support Team (DFR) has been formed. In contrast to the excellent work that the Publicity & Events Team have been doing in organising high-profile fund-raising events at the school, the DFR will be seeking large scale corporate and private funding, sponsorship and patronage for the school, in an attempt to ensure its long term stability and development.

We are asking for your help and support in suggesting anyone you think could be approached to: -

- a) become a patron and ambassador for the school (for example, high profile public figures, especially those who have had a Steiner Education)
- b) provide small scale funding (for example teaching equipment for the classrooms or building materials for maintenance of the school)
- c) large scale funding to help with the long term development of the school (for example, large donations to provide a science block)

Also, if anyone is interested in joining the DFR team, please let us know.

We can be contacted at:

dfr@norwichsteinerschool.co.uk

Many thanks.

From Priscilla Gibbons

Afternoon Care Supervisor

I would like to thank all the staff and parents for the kindness and help shown to me following my recent accident, and it is with a great deal of sadness and regret that I have to inform you of my decision to give up my post as Afternoon care Supervisor, for financial and health reasons.

All being well I hope to return to school on Thursday 10th June and work up to the end of the summer term. I shall however be continuing with my Forest School practitioner training and may be returning to the school in this capacity in the future.

In the meantime I will greatly miss my afternoons spent with the children, and the inspiring and dedicated staff and parents it has been my privilege to work with.

I wish the school well for the future and I hope it continues to go from strength to strength.

Kind regards,
Priscilla

Upper School Development

Since issuing our finance letter to parents in November 2009, some initial work has been carried out into the feasibility of continuing with the schools original development aim; to grow the school year on year in a continuous way, to provide a Steiner education for children from 9 months up to age 16/17 (ie to include GCSE O Level exams or equivalent).

This study is currently underway and the findings still have to be written up. We hope to have a report available by the end of the term, so that we can share our findings and any proposals with you at that time.

Birch Class

By Sarah Higgins, Class teacher

At the beginning of term, Birch class continued learning about building. They had previously looked at primitive structures and the necessity of shelter. This time, however, we studied the truly impressive and complex structures that human hands are capable of building. Connecting to our Local History lessons the children saw that the grandest buildings in Norwich are either royal or religious and so we looked at design structures of sacred spaces around the world and the difficult task of the Mason.

Understanding the hard work involved in making such elaborate structures shows the children the motivation and capability of the crafts person, as well as the possibility of what humans are able to achieve. Over the last few weeks Birch class have been learning about the human being and the animal world, which began with a detailed study of the human head and hands – the taking in and giving back to the world. This has been great for the children to look at the specialisation of different animals and again, at just how many varied things the human hands can do.

Finally, thank you to all the Birch parents for your support and input over the year.

Elder Class

By Michael Higgins, Class teacher

In a few weeks time, Elder class will be going to Michael Hall School in Sussex to take part in the Olympics, along with all the other Class 5 children of Waldorf schools throughout the UK. This will be quite an adventure for the children as they pitch camp, meet new faces and share and experience of javelin, discus, 50m dash, high jump, wrestling and marathon (1 mile). As the children get to grips with the different gestures required for these disciplines, they are encouraged to work towards grace as well as distance, appreciation of each others' efforts as well as their own and improving their own performance rather than comparing themselves to their peers.

Elder are also preparing a play focusing on the myths of Pandora and Orpheus, having worked with various stories from Greek Mythology throughout the last term.

Below is a villanelle composed by one of the Elder pupils:

*She was made by all of them
The vengeful gods' disastrous pest
As a punishment to men*

*From Hermes Machiavellian
By Athena she was dressed
She was made by all of them*

*The clay Zeus breathed his breath upon
By Aphrodite made fairest
As a punishment to men*

*Look, next to the porcelain hen
There she saw the deadly chest
She was made by all of them*

*She paced back, forth and back again
She opened it to the world's distress
As a punishment to men*

*Slammed it never to reopen
Then she heard hope and was impressed
She was made by all of them
As a punishment to men*

Jumble Sale – coming soon

On Saturday 2nd October, we are planning to have our first ever school Jumble sale.

It's a chance to shift on all those things you've finished with and that are cluttering up your house – clothing, toys, books, games, video's – you name it, we'll sell it, and remember that "one man's trash, is another man's treasure".

We hope to run just 2 jumble sales a year to raise funds in this way and that such events will attract in the local community too. It will run in the hall, with overspill into the courtyard, and anything left at the end of the day will either go to the charity shop, or if it's in really good condition, we'll pass it onto the two parents who run a nearly new stall on occasions.

There is no storage space for jumble at the school, so please leave it in your attic or store cupboard for now, but in the week before the jumble sale, we'll be inviting you to bring in any jumble you would like to donate and will store it in the gym hall for that week.

Help needed with setting up, pricing, selling goods and clearing away at the end of the day. Caroline May (mum of Jasmin in Oak class) has kindly agreed to coordinate this, so if you are willing to

help, please give her a ring on 01953 603128 or 07874 217571.

Maple & Chestnut Kindergartens

From the Kindergarten team

Summer in the Kindergartens truly started with Festivals. We came back to blossom and ribbons as we practised for our May Day Festival. This was followed by a reflective yet beautiful celebration of the Whitsun Festival for which we made white doves and told the story of the Whitsun Daisy. We are now preparing for a brightly joyous St. Johns Day near to Midsummer's Day when the Sun will be at it's highest. Each festival has had it's own mood and colour, which have been reflected in the colours on the nature table, the crafts we have engaged in, the ring times we have sung and the stories we have told.

This year we have started a transition group for the Sun children from both Kindergartens who will be entering the new Class One in the autumn. This is proving to be a great success as the summer term has progressed. They come together in their own room on a Wednesday morning away from the younger ones for a few hours and work on their final year projects, practise skipping and beanbag games and sing and dance to their own ring time. As a result they are beginning to bond together as a class and make firm friendships as well as prepare for the very different structure and rhythm of a lower school class.

At the end of term, on the last Thursday, the Sun Children will present a puppet show and selection of favourite ring time songs to all the children in the Kindergartens at a small graduation ceremony to which their new class teacher will be invited and afterwards we hope all the kindergarten children and their parents will join us for a very special picnic to celebrate the journey the Sun Children are making.

Oak Class

By Jeremy Nowell, Class teacher

Surely a term with wings, it has flown by so fast! Oak Class has been working very hard this term, somewhat helped by an absence of inviting weather outside. We have written and illustrated our own stories, some of which have developed into real epics. We began the term with some of the silliest stories imaginable, in one of which appeared a man who would suspend his trousers

between two chairs each morning, take a run up and attempt to jump into them! Then there was the old lady who pushed her cow up onto the grassy roof of her house to graze, tied a rope around its neck, poked the other end down the chimney and tied it to her wrist. When the cow fell off the roof...

But it hasn't all been silly. We have continued to follow the misfortunes of the *Lady of Shalott*. The hero made his appearance with due pomp and circumstance:

*The sun came dazzling through the leaves
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.*

More recently we have, unseasonally perhaps, been reading Hans Christian Anderson's '*The Snow Queen*.' This is a story of such depth, beauty and wisdom that it should be told again and again, to children of all ages. Steiner talks of fairy tales as being 'soul food' for the younger classes; this story is a veritable feast, drawing us deeper and deeper into the real and indefinable workings of the human soul.

The class has continued to form its own character and impulses. It has an exuberance which can, occasionally, spill over, but which, on the whole, expresses itself in hard work and joyful play.

Finally, a special thankyou to our class contact, Katie Baxter, for the wonderful pockets that now adorn the wall outside the classroom. Please check them regularly, and use them for communicating with other Oak Class parents.

Job Vacancy

Playgroup Teacher required from September 2010 to be responsible for running Steiner Parent and Child Groups for up to 12 young children and accompanying adults.

Hours of work will be Friday 9.15-12.45 during term time. Pay will be £7.73 per hour plus statutory holiday pay (currently 12.1%).

*Closing date for applications is July 9th 2010
Interviews will be held during the week beginning
12th July 2010*

For further details, job description, person specification and application form please email info@norwichsteinerschool.co.uk