

Parents'

Handbook

London Steiner School

9 WEIR ROAD
LONDON
SW12 0LT

Tel: 020 8772 3504

Email: info@waldorf-sw-london.org

Website: www.waldorflondon.co.uk

Registered Charity No: 289801

Company Limited by Guarantee No: 1797323

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Please note that this Parents Handbook is a working document. If changes are made the School will email to you the entire updated document.

Welcome to our School

Introduction

The acorn of an oak was planted in September 1983 when the School started with just one teacher and one pupil. Three years later the School moved into the pavilion at Woodfields and a wooden building for classes 1-4 was erected in 1988. The addition of two portacabins in 1992 made further expansion possible and paved the way for a complete lower school of kindergarten and classes 1-8, plus the Cresset kindergarten in nearby Balham. Unfortunately, the premises at Balham became unavailable in 2003 and the Cresset moved to Woodfields.

In June of 2004 the School's classrooms were burnt to the ground and by a tremendous co-operative effort and with a lot of help from supportive friends worldwide, the classrooms were replaced in the summer of 2005. After many negotiations and extensions of lease and planning permissions, in 2010 it was no longer possible to occupy the Woodfields site and as we continued negotiations with another local authority for another site, we moved into the Streatham Methodist Church, who kindly leased their premises making it possible for our school to continue while we continued to seek and negotiate for potential new sites. In the summer of 2012 with much support from dedicated and energetic parents and staff, we worked towards moving into and beginning the new academic year in Weir Road, Balham

We are proud to be a truly pioneering venture which, through the dedicated efforts of staff and parents, has grown and developed in a truly organic way. Our relatively small classes and dynamic "village" community are additional and valued features of this inner-city school.

The Waldorf School of South West London is a Registered Charity, founded in 1983, with the intention of making Steiner Waldorf education available to all children regardless of their parents' means, race, creed or social class. The School receives no statutory or trust funding and is totally dependent on the commitment of teachers, parents and friends.

We have a very supportive 'sister school', The Hamburg–Harburg Waldorfschule in Germany. They helped us to build our first wooden building and over the years have continued to be supportive through many donations of money and materials and exchange visits of pupils and teachers.

Our School Creed

This is our school.

Let peace dwell here.

Let the room be full of contentment.

Let love abide here,

Love of one another,

Love of humanity,

Love of life itself,

And love of God.

Let us remember,

That as many hands build a house,

So many hearts make a school.

What is Waldorf Education?

Rudolf Steiner was a scientist, philosopher and educator who, by the turn of the 20th century had established himself as an original, albeit unorthodox, thinker within the artistic and intellectual circles of the German-speaking world, bringing ideas that have inspired the development of new methods in the arts, economics, medicine, agriculture and science, as well as in education. His spiritual training and insight had made him aware of man's diminishing ability to healthily assimilate and evaluate new ideas which would serve rather than enslave mankind's development.

Sharing his concerns, Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, invited Steiner to found a new school for the children of the factory's employees. Steiner took this opportunity to demonstrate how using his view of the human being as a being of body, soul and spirit, (Anthropomorphous), a new school curriculum and teaching methods might be created so as to develop clarity of thought, sensitivity of feeling and strength of will. There are now over 1,000 Steiner/ Waldorf schools in 60 countries, making it the largest independent educational movement to offer the full range of education for children from 4 to 18 years.

A central aim of Waldorf education is to develop, harmonise and unite the faculties of thought, feeling and action so that the foundations may be laid for mental adaptability, initiative and moral strength in adult life. A child has physical, emotional and spiritual needs as well as intellectual ones and the teaching and curriculum together seek to nourish all these aspects.

The curriculum of a Waldorf School is geared to the developmental stages of the child. The teacher shapes the subject to suit the experience, abilities and individual qualities of his or her particular class, out of his or her own initiative. Whatever the subject of a particular lesson, the teacher's art is to make it come alive.

In looking at the development of children from infancy to adulthood, Waldorf education recognises the significance of three seven-year periods, which can be characterized by the qualities of Goodness, Beauty and Truth. The content and method of the education is related to this sequence of three ideals and is transformed as the child grows older.

The mood of a young child is, by nature, one of perfect trust in its environment; it is in the deepest sense of the word "religious". This natural reverence, which is a basic note to our teaching generally, is fostered further through specific weekly lessons. Lessons change in character as the child progresses through the School. In accordance with the general curriculum, they aim to guide the children to an appreciation of the divine in the world and in the human being.

This School, like other Waldorf schools, is in essence Christian, in a non-denominational manner. In keeping with this background, the celebration of the main Christian festivals has an important place in the School year. The School respects and welcomes other faiths and cultures; festivals from other religions may be brought into the School by the families of the children where appropriate.

It is vital that parents gain a knowledge of what lies behind, and guides, Waldorf Education. From this position they will be able to give informed and whole-hearted support to the School. The School provides the new parents with a book about Steiner / Waldorf education, arranges open days, education workshops, study groups and guest speakers and also has a section in the School library for parents (see appendix)

Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (S.W.S.F.)

The S.W.S.F. is a registered charity whose work includes organising Education Conferences, helping to maintain standards in schools and teacher training, focusing information and publicity nationwide. This work has grown considerably during the last five years as Steiner/Waldorf has gained a higher profile, particularly through its push for government funding. Our school is a full member of the S.W.S.F

School Life

Pre-Kindergarten

Parent and Child group sessions are held during term-time only. Days, times and costs are announced in the weekly newsletter and on the website.

At school, in a quiet, relaxed environment with soft colours and natural materials, children follow a relaxed rhythm similar to the kindergarten. They can play freely with the kindergarten toys, there is a seasonal craft or activity, then tidying-up time is followed by a wholesome organic snack and the session ends with ring time, singing seasonal songs and playing finger games

At the outdoors Parent and Child Group children are free to explore their natural surroundings, make crafts from things found on the common and have a snack and ring time whatever the weather

Parents and children from newborn to kindergarten age are welcome.

Kindergarten

Children usually enter the Kindergarten when they are three to three and a half years old.

During the first seven years children love to imitate and the Kindergarten teachers strive to provide an environment in which the children can learn through healthy imitation. As children grow into their bodies, they live particularly in their will-activity and learn enthusiastically through doing.

A clear daily and weekly rhythm, as well as a rhythm of seasons and festivals, brings a sense of belonging and security to each child. Toys in the Kindergarten are largely unformed and made of natural materials; this allows the child's creativity and imagination to unfold during free play. There are also more structured times during the morning, with activities such as eurythmy, circle games, singing, painting, modelling, drawing and sewing.

Children usually leave the Kindergarten in their seventh year, following an assessment of their readiness.

The Lower School

This phase, the Class Teacher period, includes classes 1-8 (ages 7-14 years).

Class Teachers have a special role in a Waldorf School. They move up with their class from year to year from Class 1 to Class 8. This provides the children with the continuity and security they need. The Class Teacher is also the central figure for understanding the children's needs and enabling them to make the most of the curriculum. In the Class Teacher period all subjects are introduced orally in ways that aim to activate the child's imagination.

The formal learning of reading, writing and arithmetic begins in Class 1 and regular practice of these basic skills continues throughout their school life alongside artistic activities such as painting, modelling and drawing.

An important aspect of the education is the Main Lesson. From Class 1, a subject is studied in depth for three to five weeks, every day from 8.30 am to 10.30 am. A wide range of subjects is studied over a school year within the framework of a clearly defined curriculum.

As well as orchestrating a thorough grounding and development of the "3 Rs", the Class Teacher will lead the children through fairy story, myth and legend, to history; from home surroundings and local geography to world geography and astronomy; from nature and animal stories to the phenomenological study of the Sciences: Biology, Zoology, Physics and Chemistry.

The precise content and arrangement of the Main Lesson will depend on the Class Teacher's artistic presentation, but will usually include a range of rhythmic and pro-active activities, together with the main theme. The children create their own Main Lesson book for each subject, based on the material presented by the Class Teacher. These books are carefully crafted and colourfully illustrated and are a record of the child's progress through the year.

As the children grow older, some main lesson blocks may be taught by teachers with more specialised knowledge

During the rest of the school day, the children follow a timetable of regular lessons in other subjects that are taught by specialist teachers. These subjects include German, music, eurythmy, games, handwork, form drawing and religion. In the older classes, there are regular practice lessons in English and maths and other subjects are added including art, drama, games, woodwork and gardening.

At times during their school lives, the children will be using the great outdoors to further various aspects of their lessons, there will also be outings to support the curriculum such as historical sites and buildings, farms, performances and exhibitions. From Class 4 onwards, these will include overnight stays for the class.

The Teachers

The teachers are required to have a commitment to the school, the children and their own self-development and the school encourages and funds further training and development where possible.

Ideally, class teachers should stay with their class for the whole 8 years of the lower school. This ideal cannot always be met and creative ways to resolve the situation are found with the co-operation and support of staff (teaching and administrative) and parents of the school community.

A summary of the qualifications and experience of the teachers is available on request from the office.

A Pupil's Progress

This is assessed by continuous consideration of his or her whole development, which includes social and artistic capacities as well as academic performance.

Regular and candid communication between parents and teachers is vital in Waldorf education.

End of Year Reports

End-of-year reports are given to all parents/guardians with parental responsibility. If you want a report to be sent to someone who does not live with the child, please inform the child's class teacher or the school office, and provide the address. The reports are handed out on the last day of term and parents asked to sign for them. In circumstances where reports are delayed, an extended deadline for producing reports to the parents may be given by the College and the reports sent by post.

These narrative reports, addressed to the parents, include a brief summary of work covered during the year and comments from the teachers about the pupils learning and achievements, also identifying areas of concern and potential improvement and showing ways in which parents can provide support. The reports also include data to show the pupil's punctuality, attendance (percentage or number of sessions out of total), and sometimes a record of homework completed.

The reports aim to be comprehensive, but they cannot take the place of regular meetings between parents and teacher for an objective discussion of the child's performance.

Parents' Evenings

These are held on average once a year, when parents and children of classes 5, 6, 7 and 8 are invited to make appointments to speak to all of their children's teachers. All teachers try to be present to talk about each child.

A letter is sent out to all parents, with a tear-off slip to fill in details of who to see and preferred times and this is to be returned to school as soon as possible in order to schedule all requests and offer different times if those times are already taken.

To ensure that you have the best chance of seeing the teachers of your choice, please respond immediately.

Class Parents' Meetings

These are held at least once a term, to enable the parents and teachers to discuss the class as a whole.

The Class Teacher and a subject teacher will be present and will speak about work being done with the children and describe the curriculum for the year. A broad sketch of the children's learning process at their current stage of development and a picture of the class dynamic is given. Parents can bring their insights and ask questions about changes their children may be undergoing, although this is not the place for in-depth discussion about individual children.

These meetings are important and at least one parent for each child is expected to attend. To miss them is to miss a vital link in understanding your child's education and stage of development and a chance to get to know the parents of the other children in the class. For the child, his or her parents' participation is a confirmation of their involvement and support.

These meetings are also used to discuss and make important arrangements for class outings and contributions towards festivals and fairs and find new class representatives. Look out for emails and in the newsletter for dates and times.

Home Visits

Welcoming the child's Class Teacher into your home for a social visit greatly supports the relationship between teacher and family; parents are requested to invite their child's Class Teacher home at least once a year.

Spending time with the teacher in the family setting helps the children to feel secure in their teacher's care; also parents have the opportunity to get to know the teacher in an unhurried and relaxed way.

Anthroposophical Doctor

The School arranges, once a term, visits from an Anthroposophical Doctor (who has had orthodox and Anthroposophical training) who holds a surgery for the day to meet with children and parents.

The Doctor looks at developmental concerns, including the child's progress, educational, social and behavioural concerns.

The class teachers request from the parents that their child sees the doctor at least once during the child's time at the School. The Doctor will be able to give the teachers and parents advice, such as changes to ways of working with the child, or eurythmy therapy. Anthroposophical remedies may be prescribed, which can be obtained by post from the Doctor's practice and which must be paid for by the parents.

The Doctor's visit is to be paid for directly to the school, costs may change. Please call the school with any queries.

Extra Curricular Support

Eurythmy Therapy

The School arranges weekly visits from a qualified eurythmy therapist who works with exercises recommended by the Anthroposophical Doctor. Working with movement and speech towards equilibrium and good health, the eurythmy therapist supports the work of the education.

Special Educational Needs

The School currently does not have a learning support teacher, but is working towards provision as follows.

The learning support teacher will make assessments of all children at the end of class 3 or the

beginning of class 4; also, if recommended by the teachers or in response to concerns from the parents. Support will then be provided for the children in extra lessons on a one to one basis. Unless a child has a Local Education Authority Statement of Special Educational Needs, the costs of this must be met by the parents.

The learning support teacher will also be the School's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and liaises with the Local Education Authority in respect of children with a statement of special educational needs

Arrangements for Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language

Support for these children is worked out on an individual basis, through discussions between the child's parents and the teachers.

Events

Festivals and Celebrations

Fairs, Festivals and Celebrations have an important role in the School year. They encourage a feeling for, and an awareness of, the seasonal rhythm and the importance of community and co-operation.

The School depends on the active involvement of parents in the building and maintenance of the School's healthy social fabric, which is made possible through celebration and working together.

The teachers and children celebrate with special assemblies, often inviting parents to participate, (see the school newsletter). Parents are welcome to bring ideas and suggestions for school or class celebrations from their own cultures – please talk to your child's class teacher. The Kindergarten hold their own festivals but parents are also invited to participate in the main school festivals as appropriate for their small children.

The first festival of the School year is the festival of **Michaelmas** on the 29th September. It is a festival of 'strong courageous will' for the whole of the school. Kindergarten children each receive a gift from Mother Earth and Class 1 upwards take part in the Michaelmas play of St. Michael and the Dragon.

At this time of the year we also find ourselves gathering in the **Harvest**. All children are encouraged to bring offerings of garden produce and home baking which are placed together in a display and later donated to a local charity.

The festival of **Martinmas** is celebrated on 11th November by the younger children (Kindergartens and Classes 1 and 2). The festival culminates with lantern walks to bring light into the darkness of winter.

The **Advent Spiral** (sometimes called the Advent Garden) is held close to the first Sunday in Advent, where Kindergarten children take turns in walking the spiral and lighting their candle to place and light the way for us all.

St Nicholas visits the School on 6th December. He encourages the children to behave properly and kindly towards others and can give the children special tasks or activities to perform to aid their development. Traditionally, St. Nicholas' guidance is given to help us prepare ourselves to receive the birth of Christ.

The **Advent Fair** is held in November/December. It is one of the major fund-raising events of the year. All parents and friends are encouraged to work together in a variety of ways to make the day a success. Planning usually begins in September.

At the end of the **Michaelmas** term the teachers and friends sometimes perform the **Oberufer Shepherds' Play** as a gift to the children and the children present to the parents a **Festival of Work**.

At **Easter** the Easter Hare brings a surprise **egg hunt** for the children to emphasise spring and nature. At the end of the Spring term the children present a **Festival of Work**.

In **May** we celebrate the beginning of summer with folk dancing or maypole dancing and flower crowns.

Whitsun is celebrated as a festival of community and the gift of inspiration from the Holy Spirit. Everyone is asked to wear white on the day of the festival and an assembly is held, with parents of all nationalities invited to read a passage of the bible in their native tongue.

St. John's (24th June) is celebrated with the lighting of a bonfire, the symbolic burning of unwanted thoughts and habits, and the focusing on our good intentions for the future.

The **Summer Fair** is held in June or July and is a major fund-raising event where everyone is expected to be involved in making the day a great success and enjoyable for all. Planning for this usually begins in the Spring Term.

Festival of Work At the end of each term the children present poetry, plays, songs and eurythmy that they have worked on during the term, to the whole school community. Parents are invited and expected to come along to watch these performances. Please note that these festivals can be up to two hours long and sometimes younger children can become bored and disruptive.

An **Exhibition of Children's Work** is on display in the classrooms after Sports Day. We ask that you give time for everyone to see this exhibition before you take your children and their work home.

On the last day of the academic year, the children enjoy a **Sports Day** to which all families are invited; this is followed by a picnic where everyone should bring something for us all to share.

Workdays

These are held at the beginning of every new term, before the children return, to give the School a freshen-up and prepare for the activities of the new term. All teachers and parents are expected to come along and help - children are welcome too.

Workdays are a long standing tradition of the School, sociable working days for the whole community, to clean, mend and improve our children's environment together.

Workdays are very important for keeping the fees down, as we do not, as in other schools, employ contract cleaners and maintenance workers every holiday; doing it ourselves, and together, gives everyone a sense of ownership and, very importantly, gives the whole community an opportunity to work and socialise together. Workdays start at 10am and finish at 4pm, with lunch provided around 1pm.

New Parents' Evenings

At the beginning of each School year we hold a new parents' induction to introduce new parents to our school and the way that it works. It is a good opportunity to meet and support new people and we ask that established parents join us to welcome newcomers and help to answer questions that come from new parents.

Education Workshops

These are held once a term and are provided for parents to continue to find out how their children are educated; also to provide insight for those considering a Steiner education for their children. Teachers volunteer to help with this and we ask that parents also help with making lunches and running the crèche.

Open Days

These are held regularly to introduce the wider community to our work. Tours are given through the classes and talks given by the teachers afterwards. We like to serve refreshments and have established parents to chat about their experience of the School. Please help if you can by looking out for them in the newsletter and donating home-made goodies and a couple of hours of your time.

Practical Issues

Attendance

The rhythm of daily, weekly and seasonal cycles is important to the well-being of the child. In our School subjects are taught in blocks and are often built one upon the other, so that experiences missed are not easily made up at another time.

Parents are expected to ensure that their children attend regularly, arrive at school on time, and are collected punctually.

If there is an exceptional need for absence for other than medical reasons, early consultation is essential and permission must be sought for, in writing, at least one month prior to the required absence so that the School can consider whether the absence can be authorised by the College of Teachers.

As a school, under current legislation, we cannot give permission to parents to take their children away on holiday during term-time. The School is obliged to note the absence as unauthorized and cannot take responsibility for the resulting gaps in the quality and experience of the child's education. Please be aware that parents taking a child out of school without adequate justification could be in contravention of current government legislation.

The School is required by law to inform the local education authority of unexplained absences longer than two weeks, regular long absences and frequent lateness.

If a child is not able to attend school, parents are requested to inform the School office before 8.30am and subsequently to keep the School informed, for instance of the child's progress if they are ill. If your child travels to school alone we need to hear from you every morning whether they will be absent.

A note of explanation should always be brought on the child's return, for school records, and for the authorised/unauthorised attendance figures which we are obliged to submit to the Department for Education in the annual school's census - for example: a letter from Parents, or copies of hospital appointments

To help us all with the difficulty of daily life and remembering everything we as parents have to, the appendix to this handbook has a couple of forms, easily printed and sent in with your child for their class teacher. If you have more than one child, each individual child in the family should have a form completed for them.

One form is to let us know why your child was absent; the other is to let us know your intention for the child to be absent. Simply print off, write in name and dates and send with your child to school, or copy, fill in the form on your computer and e-mail to the school office.

The site is open by 8am, the bell is rung and the classrooms are open at 8.25am and the pupils are expected to be in their places, ready to learn at 8.30am. Avoidable lateness after registration constitutes as unauthorised absence.

Children who have permission to leave during the school day must report to the school office before leaving.

Please be aware that the regular school hours are subject to change, for instance in the case of festivals - in such circumstances you will be notified in advance by the School newsletter and/or e-mail.

Parents must make their own arrangements for after school care.

The school's 'Missing Child Policy' sets out the procedures for ensuring that missing children are seen to be absent and found as soon as possible. This is a brief explanation, the full policy can be seen at the school office.

If a child of class 5 age or over has not turned up for school by 9.00am, and the school has not received any notification, we will follow up the absence. Staff will attempt to contact the parents using mobile numbers, land-line numbers and finally try the Emergency Contact numbers. If the parent is not aware of the reason for absence, or cannot be contacted, the office staff will begin the search procedure. If the child cannot be found in school or the vicinity, then, if necessary, another attempt to contact the parents and their emergency contacts will be made, followed by a call to the police to report the child missing. After this the school considers that it no longer has a duty to search for the child, but will continue to communicate with you and the police as appropriate.

Before and after School

Children of class 4 and under should be under their parents/carers' supervision when on site before school and after their school day has ended. Children dropped off or waiting to be picked up should not go out of the school gate. Please make sure you keep the gate closed and do not tell the children the code for their own safety.

The bell rings at 8.25am and the children must then go directly to their classrooms and prepare themselves for the first lesson of the day. Lessons begin at 8.30am. Please endeavour to make sure that your children arrive at school in time.

The School recommends that children under class 5 do not travel to and from school unaccompanied by an adult and requires that parents of children of classes 5, 6,7 and 8 sign a 'Home Alone' form giving permission for the children to leave the School unaccompanied by an adult. If any child of class 4 and under is to travel home unaccompanied by an adult, the School must be in possession of a letter from the parents saying that they wish this and absolving the School of any responsibility for the child's care once he/she has finished his/her last lesson on the day(s) in question.

In the event of a child being reported missing after their school day has ended the office staff will attempt to contact the following people to see if they know where the child is or might be and to enlist help in finding the child: the teacher of the child's last lesson; the child's friends, the class teacher, the parent or guardian, the emergency contact. If after attempting to contact these people no further information is found, the office staff will instigate the search procedure, as availability of staff allows, and continue to communicate with you until the child is found or the police are notified.

When parking your car, please take care not to obstruct the entrances of the neighbouring buildings and be alert to parking restrictions.

Since many of our families travel some distance to school, there is a general tendency to the policy of sharing lifts where possible. **It is important that parents check with their car insurers regarding cover.**

Bicycles

During this autumn term, Lambeth Council will be installing bicycle racks just outside the school. Until then, please park your bicycles just inside the gate to the right where they do not pose any risks to children playing.

Pushchairs, Prams and Buggies

Please endeavour to leave these outside of the building, under the shelter, for safety reasons and to give us more space in the building.

Dogs in School

The school currently allows dogs belonging to members of our community on site, but asks the

following: If a dog has not been at the school before, please keep on a lead close to you and ask children to let the dog get used to being at school before petting, as the new situation may make the dog nervous. Dogs are not allowed into the building without a lead and not in rooms where food is being prepared. Dogs known as safe to the community may be allowed off the lead in the playground, except during busy times and when any food is being served, for instance fund-raising sales or festivals. Dogs must be offered water to drink and owners must always clean up after their dog and be alert to their behaviour. They will be asked to leave the site if a member of staff of the school considers a dog to pose any problem.

After School Clubs

The school currently runs two sessions, from Monday to Thursday. The first is from 12.30 to 3.30pm for children who finish early and the second is from 3.30 to 5.30pm for children who need to stay a bit later. The routine includes a sociable lunch together (please bring packed lunches), a little rest, creative seasonal activities, including playtime indoors and outdoors. At the later session a snack is provided plus time to do homework. Speak to the office to book in advance.

Medical Issues

Parents should ensure that the School is informed of any changes to their child's health, emergency contact and medical information.

In this School a child's general medical care is held to be the responsibility of the child's parents. There are no routine health inspections such as take place in some other schools and we do not arrange for the children to have inoculations at school. We recommend that you speak to your General Practitioner or Local Health Authority. An Anthroposophical doctor visits the School once a term and sees children referred to her/him by the teachers with the consent of parents.

It is the School's policy to have members of staff trained in first aid.

It is good practice for parents to sign the first aid report in cases, other than minor cuts and grazes, where a child has had treatment from the first-aiders. Parents of kindergarten children will always be asked to sign this form.

Whilst they are at school, if there is any need for medicines to be administered to your child or for the child to be supervised whilst taking the medicine themselves, only named members of staff may do so. Staff are not contractually obliged to administer or supervise self-administration and must be asked to volunteer, then given written permission by you, and finally given suitable instruction/training. Please ask for a form for administering medicines. In cases of real need, for instance severe toothache or earache, staff will seek verbal permission to administer pain relief, by telephone, from any person on the child's emergency contact list, and fill in the form indicating permission given verbally.

In the case of injury needing hospital attention, we will seek to inform parents immediately. If the parents cannot be contacted in an emergency, we will ensure that an injured pupil is accompanied to hospital. Children are usually taken to St. George's hospital in Tooting. Examples of injury that we would call an ambulance for are; unconsciousness, heavy blood loss, suspected broken bones, deep wounds, difficulty in breathing, and severe allergic reaction.

If your child has had an injury to the head, or if they have not been inoculated against tetanus and have an injury considered to be a risk, the School will give the child a copy of the first aid report to give to you to inform you of the details so that you can further supervise care of the injury.

It is important that the School is kept informed of pertinent details of your child's health. You should keep any child with an infectious illness at home until the child is no longer infectious. We would appreciate your informing the School at the earliest opportunity.

Head Lice

Although we do not generally check the children's hair, in cases where there have been many cases

over a prolonged period of time, we have members of staff willing to make checks and inform parents of individual children and we seek permission by form (usually as part of the admissions process) which is kept on file for the whole time that the child is in the school. Parents, however, are responsible for both prevention and for treatment. If you notice or suspect a case of head lice, please inform the child's class teacher or the School office, who will alert the community through e-mails and the newsletter, to be alert and check their children's hair. Please always respond to such an alert, checking every couple of days for at least a couple of weeks. Alerts are accompanied by information and advice about treatment and prevention.

Mobile Telephones And Other Electronic Gadgets

Although the school does not encourage the use of mobile telephones (phones) by children, we recognise that parents may wish that children travelling to and from school alone have a phone with them. The School will not accept any financial responsibility for damages. We require that all phones and any other electronic gadgets of any kind be handed in to the school office first thing in the morning. Please ensure that these are labelled with the child's name. They may be collected at the end of the School day. If a pupil is found using any electronic gadget during the day, this will be confiscated and only returned at the request of a parent.

Equipment and Clothing

Most of the teaching materials are provided by the School from the charges paid with the parents' contributions; however, parents are asked to make sure that their children have the following: block and stick crayons, coloured pencils and a pencil sharpener – the quality of the children's work is greatly enhanced by their use of a full range of colours.

From Class 5 upwards the children also need graphite pencils, erasers, a geometry set, rulers and a good quality fountain pen, with ink and blotting paper.

The negotiations surrounding the acquisition of equipment during lessons can greatly disrupt the lesson and reduce teaching time considerably.

We also ask parents to make sure that their children do not bring any kind of biro, felt tip or marker pen into school. We never require children to use them and they will be confiscated because of possible damage/defacing of the fabric of the School.

Extras such as recorders and flutes, crayons and pencils, rulers and rubbers can be obtained from the school for a charge, and are sold at a regular weekly time, as announced in the newsletter. Parents are also asked to provide indoor shoes, waterproofs and Wellington boots, sports clothing, sun hats and sun cream and a bag of spare clothes in case the children get very muddy or wet.

Lost Property

Children's clothing and belongings should all have name labels, or the names written somewhere with permanent marker, especially on slippers, Wellington boots, coats and jumpers. Please help your children to keep track of their belongings and look through the lost property box regularly, whether you think you have lost something or not. As the school does not have much space, unnamed lost property will be kept for a term and will be given away on the last day of term for kindergarten, which is usually a day or two earlier than the rest of the school.

Packed Lunches

Parents are asked to provide food enough for two meals at school – the first (morning) break and if the children stay for the afternoon, for the lunch break also. Food should be varied and healthy and preferably not pre-packaged. Food with sugar should be minimal and sweets, crisps, fizzy drinks and chocolate are not allowed. Children should bring bottles of water.

Birthday Celebrations

In the ring of annual festivals a child's birthday particularly stands out. It is a returning day of celebration but this time just for the individual. Therefore, we celebrate birthdays in school as well, putting the birthday child in the centre for a while in Kindergarten and the lower classes. Each class will develop their own ceremonies and traditions, which will change as the child gets older.

Before your child's birthday please talk to your child's teacher and discuss when the children can celebrate the birthday at school, and how. Parents usually like to bring a cake or cup cakes to share after the celebration. We ask that the cakes are home-made (children love to help with things to share with their class) preferably not chocolate or covered with sugar icing, as the character of the food does affect the school day. Also talk about the class dynamics if you plan a celebration outside of school

Children are not born as social, moral beings; in the Kindergarten and lower school the children learn to connect and socialise with a wider circle of friends and the celebration of festivals and birthdays are a particular learning tool, teaching them to enjoy with others and share amongst other qualities. For this reason, and because our classes are quite small and intimate we ask parents to guide and encourage the child to invite everyone in the class to a birthday celebration outside of school. It can cause great upset and may have long term effects if a young child (Kindergarten through class 3 or 4) is the only one not invited. Naturally as they grow older their friendships are more individual and one can only suggest that invitations are all inclusive. Yet for the young children it is of importance that the class is also seen and experienced as a whole.

School Outings

Parents are asked to fill in a permission form at the beginning of their time in the School and this will cover all outings. Trips that involve overnight stays and high risk activities will require extra permission, usually asked for in letters informing parents of details. Trips are often funded by fundraising activities by each class, though parents are often requested to provide extra funds, food and clothing. Parents may also be asked to accompany the classes to help with supervision, making these outings possible. Volunteers are requested to have DBS (formerly CRB) checks.

Timetables

These are posted in classrooms, on the notice board and handed out to the older children. They can be sent out by e-mail so that parents can support the children with reminders of homework, having the correct equipment, etc. They are subject to change at short notice, for instance in the case of teachers being absent on trips or due to staff illness. The School office has details of these changes.

Code of Conduct

This applies to all members of the School community and reflects our policies and ethos. Please read through it with your child and help them to view it positively.

The ethos behind our whole education aims to foster an atmosphere of appropriate behaviour, mutual understanding, respect and tolerance within all members of the school community. We aim to encourage self-discipline, to allow a positive, safe and happy community to be both stimulating and successful.

Everyone must follow the code whilst in school, on outings with the school, or when representing the school and pupils should also do so on their journey to and from school.

Everyone should treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration.

Be peaceful, thoughtful and positive to each other.

Be mindful of the health, safety and the rights of others.

Care for each other, our surroundings, and each other's belongings.

Do not harass, insult, fight or bully others.

The School Rules

These are in the appendix of the Parents Handbook

We appreciate parents reading through, discussing them with their children and helping their children to comply with them.

These rules are subject to change whereupon every family will be notified by e-mail/letter and/or in the School newsletter.

Rules for Lessons

These rules are in place to help children to remember what we expect of them during lessons in order to have a good learning environment and for lessons to proceed smoothly and at a good pace.

The Home–School Agreement

We ask each family to sign this agreement to show recognition of responsibility towards each other, the School and the education of the children. It is the responsibility of every parent/guardian to ensure that their child is regularly made aware of their responsibilities. When children reach class 6 age, their class teacher will begin to prepare the children for taking more responsibility for their behaviour and the children will be asked to sign the agreement for their time in classes 7 and 8.

Promotion of Good Behaviour and Anti - Bullying Policies

These policies are attached to the Parents Handbook and must be read by all parents along with the School Rules, Rules for Lessons and the Home–School agreement. It is the responsibility of every parent/guardian to ensure that their child/children are regularly made aware of their contents. Parents should also read the policies and procedures for the suspension and exclusion of pupils, both during (Admissions Policy Part Two) and after the child's trial period.

Home Life

Parents should inform the Class Teacher of any changes in the home life that may affect a child's behaviour, for instance - parents' absences, serious illness in the family, bereavement and the need for medication.

We ask parents to support their children in encouraging regular and adequate sleeping routines, using the following guidelines for bedtimes when there is school the following day.

Kindergarten----7-7.30pm	Class 5-----8.30pm
Class 1-----7.30pm	Class 6-----8.45pm
Class 2-----7.45pm	Class 7-----9.00pm
Class 3-----8.00pm	Class 8-----9.00pm
Class 4-----8.15pm	

We also ask that you encourage a varied diet with minimal sugar and artificial additives

We request that children not be allowed any exposure to electronic stimulation when they have school the following day and that in any case it is restricted.

The experience of the teachers is that exposure to **television** - and other such visual and sound recordings, including computer games and cinema - significantly interferes with the educational work of the School. While television may have a justified place in the life of a grown-up, television viewing for the child saps strength and creative energy, interferes with healthy social development and weakens academic performance. There is a great deal of evidence to support our conviction that small children should not watch television at all: the younger the child, the more harmful the effect.

Homework

Parents are asked to encourage the child to complete and enjoy their homework by helping and showing interest, checking their timetable and asking them if they do have homework, giving them a peaceful place (without a background of music or flickering images) and regular time to do the work and ensuring that the work is presented within the time given.

Children usually begin to get homework in class 2 or 3, and are expected to spend up to about 30 minutes in the first year or two. Quantity of work and time spent increases as the children grow older.

The child changes dramatically between classes 5 and 6, which is reflected by the introduction of new subjects such as woodwork, a more academic approach to traditional subjects such as history and a more disciplined and formal homework routine.

Parents are informed of the frequency and nature of the work during the parents' meetings.

General Information

Responsibilities

The smooth running of day-to-day life at the School is enhanced by everyone being familiar with the structure of the School and knowing and following the suggestions and procedures as presented in this Parents' Handbook.

It is vital for the general health of the School that children see that parents and teachers are working together to support them. The Home-School agreement, the Code of Conduct and the School's rules, policies and procedures are laid out for the benefit of all and we need and appreciate the parents' support in using and enforcing them.

Policies

The School has policies and procedures in place that support our ethos and the law, ensuring that the School is a safe and healthy place for all.

All of the School's policies are available on request from the School office, including Admissions, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Policy for the Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits, The Promotion of Good Behaviour and Anti Bullying policies.

Equal Opportunities' Statement

The School aims to provide an educational environment that is open to all, regardless of race, gender, belief, physical ability, sexual orientation, special educational needs, disabilities, differences and perceived differences.

We recognise and value the fact that our School is part of a large multi-cultural, multi-racial society in which we all live. We believe that racial abuse and prejudice are less likely to occur within the atmosphere of respect for others we seek to foster. Through ongoing staff development we strive to ensure that our teaching continues to meet the needs of the children whose parents have chosen our School and who form part of our diverse community.

We will take positive steps to deal with inappropriate attitudes towards any group or individual whether a member of the School community or not.

Safeguarding children

The School endeavors to employ suitable staff who will uphold the ethos and education of the school. To support this, the school uses the guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' issued by the Department for Children, Families and Schools, applied from 1st January 2007.

Child Protection Policy

This is attached to the Parents Handbook in the appendix.

Behaviour of Adults at School

We require that all adults behave according to the school's code of conduct whilst within the school community. We trust that the values that are expressed in the code are seen to be a valid guide for the behaviour of all.

Added to this expectation, and spoken of in other places in the school's documentation are:

- the need for discretion regarding children being aware of adult issues and opinions,
- the confidentiality of our own and each other's affairs,

- the awareness of the appropriate times for dealing with day to day affairs of school life.

Should an adult behave in a way that does not uphold the school's expectations the school reserves the right to take action and challenge the behaviour.

Photographing Children

As part of the School's worldwide outlook, we have an excellent, frequently changing, informative website and our publicity can be far-reaching in order to promote our school and the wider Waldorf School movement. We sometimes commission, take and use photographs of the children to publicise the School; we do not publish the children's names with images.

Occasionally we invite, or have requests for, newspapers, radio, television, researchers, etc. to produce an article about the School or the education. Journalists sometimes require names to be used along with the images.

Photographs, films, etc. of the children are personal data and, therefore, come into the realm of the Data Protection Act 1998. The School will store all images securely and only use any image of any child for whom permission is given. There are named individuals who are authorised to give this permission.

Permission is sought from parents, for each child, for us to use images taken on behalf of the School, for use in publicising the School, whether on the School's website, in publications or within the School itself.

Permission is also sought for allowing journalists, etc. to take pictures, film or recordings and publishing the name of the child with those images.

Permission may be withdrawn at any time. If permission is not withdrawn it is assumed that the school may continue to use images of your child.

The School does not encourage, but cannot prevent, photographs or videos of pupils being taken on occasion by staff, children, parents, friends or visitors of the School and cannot control or take responsibility for the use of such photographs. However, we do ask that permission is sought of the School and that parents sign an agreement not to use any images that they or their family or friends take, in any inappropriate way, with particular regard to those with outside interests - journalists, etc.

The school also discourages parents from taking photographs of performances, as this can be distracting and uncomfortable for the children, particularly if cameras are used with a flash.

Informing the School of Changes

When your child joins the School, you are asked to fill in various forms giving information or permission, it is important that these are returned to the office before the child begins school, and also to inform the School of any changes to information that we have, at the first possible opportunity. This includes change of home or work telephone numbers, mobile numbers and email addresses.

School informing you of changes

Last minute changes to arrangements are sometimes unavoidable and the School endeavours to inform parents as soon as possible by newsletter, e-mail, class telephone trees or direct communication by phone, as appropriate and reasonably possible.

In the case of the School having to close due to extreme circumstances, for instance severe weather conditions, If possible, the decision will be made before 6pm the evening before and a message will be left on the School's answer phone. If it snows, floods or storms in the night, the message will be left as early as possible on the morning of the closure. Please ring the School office after 6am.

Queries, Problems, Concerns and Complaints

Continual, open, honest, direct and timely communication is the foundation of a relationship which centres on the on-going needs of the whole school community. Every attempt should be made to keep the children clear of any critical discussions between and about parents and teachers, thus ensuring a positive atmosphere for the children. Trust and goodwill are essential in the partnership between parent and teacher.

Talk to your child's Class Teacher for all matters concerning the curriculum, discipline, schoolwork, homework, standards, etc.

Talk to the School Secretary regarding questions of school policy, procedures or concerns beyond the parent-teacher relationship.

Talk to your Class Representative or Class Teacher for matters concerning class trips, social events or other class-related issues.

Talk to the Financial Administrator about financial matters.

The policy, procedures and forms for making formal complaints are available from the school office on request from the School Secretary, along with the number of formal complaints made during the preceding year.

The school has a named representative responsible for administering formal complaints, contact details can be found in the School's Address List.

Teachers' Surgeries

Teachers try to set aside a time during their week for talking to parents. This helps to avoid those spontaneous, last minute talks between classes and before school begins, that disrupt the mood of the classes. Look out for details in the Newsletter.

The School Office

This is the administrative hub of the School so all correspondence should be directed firstly to the office. Since it is very busy, please respect the need of the office staff to have uninterrupted periods of time for working – these times will be displayed.

Letters and e-mails

Please check your e-mails and children's bags every day for letters home from the School, about trips, festivals behaviour etc. The School sends, by post, letters about financial arrangements, behaviour and incidents.

Newsletter

Everyone should read every issue. At present, the newsletter is produced weekly and every family will receive this by email and it will be available on our website. A hard copy is available in the school office. Important items of information will appear in the newsletter, which need your immediate attention. For instance, dates of meetings, last minute updates, additional information, events, help needed and thanks given. To place an item in the newsletter, please submit to the editor (email address on newsletter) or to the office no later than the deadline given in each issue.

Website and Intranet

This has regular updates of events and articles. You can also subscribe to the newsletter, look at the online shop, join intranet communication and discussion groups and view documents and minutes of some of the meetings. To join the school's intranet community you can sign up and log in from the top left hand corner of the website's home page waldorflondon.co.uk.

The School Address List

The school currently sends out to every member of the school community, a list of all names, addresses and dates of birth of all children and their parents, along with phone numbers that we have been given permission to use. If you wish to opt out of this list, please inform the school office at the first opportunity and we will only publish the name of your child. Other phone numbers will remain in the records as numbers for use by members of staff in emergency and will not be published to the general community. The Address list also gives general details of the School and its staff, including subjects taught and responsibilities held.

The Skills List

When joining the School, parents are asked to complete a form giving us details of the skills that they have and are willing to share with the School.

Usually this is used only if help cannot be found through the newsletter.

Class Representatives.

Ideally, parents of each class take turns at this responsibility, the representatives volunteering before they have to be asked, parents who have not been in the School for a year being given the chance to settle in first.

One representative usually stays in the role for one year, but the role can be shared between parents or carried for a longer time.

Everyone should offer to be a class representative at least once during their time at the School and if the class is small we may need you to help with this more than once. These arrangements should be discussed during class parents' evenings and made in advance of each new term. The class representatives should all have been found by the first half term of the School year, and names will be advertised in the School's newsletter.

The tasks of the class representative are:

- To liaise with the class teacher and parents, using direct contact, e-mail, text messaging and telephone calls.
- To be available to help with parents' queries.
- To remind parents of meetings, festivals and special dress required.
- To help with organising class outings, activities, parents' meetings, workdays for helping to keep the classroom clean and well organised.
- To attend PTF Meetings, helping to organise the school fairs and festivals, open days etc.
- To make a special effort to welcome new parents and involve them in the activities of the School.
- To delegate some of the many tasks to other parents.

The Telephone Tree

Reminders of meetings, festivals, equipment needed, arrangements for class activities, requests for help that is needed can be conveyed best by personal communication and the telephone tree is a way of sharing the responsibility for this with ease.

Using the address list of your class, the class representative usually (but anyone else can begin a message), calls the first person on the list. If you only get the answer-phone, leave the message and then call the next person on the list so that the message can keep moving. Do the same if you get no answer - keep trying - but also pass the message on down the line. Have the last person on the list ring the first person to confirm that the message has got around.

It is important to pass on calls immediately you receive one.

The Structure of the School

How the School is financed

School fees form the lifeblood of the School's economic well being, but the School cannot operate successfully without the practical help that has always been offered by the parents.

The continued existence of the School depends on its financial and material needs being met by the School community. When parents sign their financial commitment form, they are agreeing, both legally and morally, to contribute regularly to the income and work needed for the School to function. Payments to the School are looked on not as a purchase of education, but as a contribution to the upkeep and running of the School.

Families are asked to commit to at least 32 hours of their time every year for helping the School with practical tasks and you can fulfil this commitment by helping on the workday at the beginning of each term to prepare the School for the oncoming term and helping on Open Days and Education Workshops. When joining the School, parents are asked to complete a form giving us details of the skills that they have and are willing to share with the School. Usually this is used only if help cannot be found through the newsletter.

The School also runs a charity shop which contributes to the School's income and enables bursaries to be awarded when funds are available.

How the School is Administered

Many members of the adult community, working in various groups, share the task of running the School. The School needs continuing support from parents and teachers to maintain an efficient working system.

Please consider whether you can join one of these groups. A picture of the work involved can be found at PTF Meetings and you can obtain working group details from the school office.

The Trustees

The legal and financial responsibility for the School currently rests with its Trustees who make up a College advisory body set up to assist and/or advise the teachers with the running of the school. The Trustees meet with the Faculty of Teachers once a term.

College of Teachers

Unique to Steiner/Waldorf schools, the schools have no head teacher. The College of Teachers is a group of members of staff who hold responsibility for the spiritual and physical well-being and the direction of the School. Teachers are usually invited to join the College after one year in the faculty.

The College takes a supervisory role in all aspects of the School's life, management and future development. It consults with relevant groups and interested parties and delegates or mandates practical tasks where necessary.

The College ratifies all policies and important school decisions, following consultation when appropriate. The aim is to make decisions by consensus. Consensus is a group decision arrived at without voting, through a process whereby the issues are fully aired, all members feel that they have been adequately heard, and which they feel they can all live with and support. This can take more than one meeting to be concluded.

With the help of meditative work and study, College members strive to bring the best of themselves to College meetings so that, as a group, they can most effectively serve the needs and ideals of the school.

The College chairperson, whose position is one of service and facilitation rather than status, is chosen by the College. The task of chairperson is usually carried by one person for a minimum of one year before being passed on.

Currently the College of Teachers meet weekly, giving a regular time in these meetings to discuss school development with members of the parent's working groups.

The Faculty of Teachers

The educational life and development of the School are carried by the teaching Faculty as a whole, which meets every Thursday for study and a conscious sharing of the rewards and difficulties of their work with the children. This is also a meeting where information is shared and gives an opportunity to review and plan forthcoming events, festivals, etc. Faculty meetings are the heart of the School and all teachers are expected to attend.

The Faculty chairperson, whose position is one of service and facilitation rather than status, is chosen by the Faculty. The task of chairperson is usually carried by one person for a period of one year before being passed on.

Currently the Faculty of Teachers meet weekly on Thursdays.

The Finance Group

The Finance Group is mandated by the College of Teachers to fulfil the following roles. Firstly, as an advisory body it looks at the School finances generally. Its brief includes: staff salaries, monitoring the payment and non-payment of fees and, if deemed necessary, meeting individuals to discuss arrears, monitoring parents' commitment in kind (e.g. hours working for the school). Finances allowing, it looks after the scholarship and building development funds. Secondly, the Finance Group is also an executive body with regard to general expenses. With regard to larger expenditures, the Finance Group will consult with and seek final approval from the College of Teachers as appropriate.

Membership comprises the School's financial administrator, trustees, teachers and parents. It is not, however, a fund-raising body itself. At the beginning of the academic year interested people may state their interest to the School's financial administrator and will then be interviewed and chosen by one or more of its members. The qualifications needed are: a keen interest in helping the School's development, knowledge of the School and its history, some knowledge of Anthropomorphous, the place of Waldorf education in a threefold social order and a keen interest in helping the School's financial situation.

The Finance Group chairperson, whose position is one of service and facilitation rather than status, is chosen by the group. The task of chairperson is usually carried by the School's financial administrator each year.

Currently the Finance Group meet approximately monthly.

The PTF Meeting

This dynamic half-termly meeting is open to all and provides a forum for shared interests at the heart of the life of the School. Members of the school community have formed groups that work towards the development of the School and support its many areas of function, also organising the social events. The PTF Meeting hears reports from the working groups of the school, including the teachers, and provides a chance for discussion of issues and planning. Dates for the meetings and reports to the School community are in the weekly newsletter, on the notice board and by email from the school or your class representative.

The school community helps to promote parents' understanding of Waldorf education by supporting regular talks, new parents' inductions, education workshops, and open days where we invite prospective parents to visit the school, see classes in session and talk to members of our community.

The task of the chairperson is one of service and facilitation rather than status; this position is held by a volunteer, either a member of staff or a parent. Ideally the task of chairperson is agreed at the first meeting of the year and is usually carried by one person for one year.

Currently the PTF meetings are held approximately monthly.

Working Groups

The School has several well-established and new working groups to support the school and staff in some of the many areas of the work of the school. Currently the School does not have a business manager and the work of some of these groups is immensely valuable to the ongoing development of the School. Please consider your areas of expertise and join a working group where you could give valuable help.

Communications Group

This group facilitates internal communications within the school and helps with promotion and advertising of the School, produces the School's weekly newsletter, and maintains the School's Intranet and informative and well-used web site.

Craft Group

This is a good introduction for new parents to socialise and work together, informally, to make dolls and other craft items to sell at the fairs. No experience is necessary. The group meets in different places, usually weekly, and details can be found in the weekly newsletter.

Study Group

This is an informal group that meets fortnightly at school in the evening and is hosted by teachers, to study the works of Rudolf Steiner. Details of meetings are published in the Calendar of Events and the weekly newsletter.

Early Years Group

This is a group of parents and teachers who run the Kindergartens and Parent and Child Groups and work towards the development of stronger early years' facilities and support for parents. They hold weekly meetings.

APPENDIX

Admissions Policy

Contributions policy

Bursary policy

Promotion of Good Behaviour Policy

Anti - Bullying Policy

Policies for Suspension and Exclusion

Code of Conduct

School Rules

Rules for Lessons

Child Protection Policy

School Library_Stock Policy and Borrowing Rules

Absence note

Request for absence note

Admissions Procedures Part One - Application and Interviews

Although admission to the School at the *beginning* of a term is preferable, this is not a fixed policy. Each case will be viewed on an individual basis, all children, including those applying to Class 1 from the Kindergarten, are interviewed; all offers are always on a term's trial basis and parents should consider what they will do if the child is not accepted.

School application: A written application form must be completed and sent to the School. It must include contact and relevant details relating to the child and the child's parents/guardians, together with a biography and a photograph of the child. Full information about any medical/educational/behavioural or other needs plus any other relevant documentation must be provided prior to any interview. The parents should supply reports from the child's previous school, or, if none are available, the parents should give the names of two referees who may be contacted about the child's previous education. Interviewing teachers will in any case endeavour to speak to the relevant teacher from the child's previous school. Please be aware that, at present, the School does not have the staff/facilities necessary to admit pupils who have long term, specific special educational needs. A non-refundable processing fee must be paid and, on receipt of this, parents will be given a copy of "Waldorf Education" by Christopher Clouder and Martyn Rawson plus the school's Parents Handbook, which they are expected to read before the interviews. The child will then be invited to join the prospective class for a given period of time, to observe how the child settles into the social group. Interviews will then be arranged.

Child interview: The child will be interviewed by the prospective Class Teacher and one other teacher. The Eurythmist may also be present at the interview. (The School uses a series of child-friendly diagnostic educational tasks which are designed to provide the School with as much information as possible about the child's development with respect to physical co-ordination and academic faculties, as well as some indication of the child's emotional development. The purpose of the interview is to establish whether the School is the best environment for the child and to give some guidance to the prospective class teacher about any additional teaching the child may need when he/she joins the School.)

Parent interview: When a child has been interviewed, the interviewing teachers will then have a conversation with the parents (**it is highly recommended that both parents/all guardians attend the interviews**). Parents should give their reasons for wanting to send their child to the School and say what they expect from Waldorf Education in general and from this school in particular. The conversation may touch on specific details about the education or the expectations of the teachers or about any specific learning needs or concerns the interviewing teachers noted when interviewing the child. If the child has a medical condition that may be considered to be a disability or may involve the child taking medicines at school, then an agreement between the school and the parents will need to be drafted, to be signed by both parties if the child is accepted. The conversation will also enable the teachers to establish the extent of the parents' knowledge of the education. A list of recommended/informative books is available from the School. The interviewing teachers will also inform the parents about the process which will then be carried out until a decision is made regarding the child's offer of a place in the School.

Financial and practical interview: The parents will be interviewed by the financial administrator or a member of the Finance group, to discuss and agree on the parents' financial and practical commitments if the child is offered a place in the school for a trial term.

The decision:

The usual, but not exclusive, process is for information from all interviews to be taken to the pedagogical meeting. The Teachers will consider all the information before them and make their decision. The decision about whether or not the child should be offered a place in the School for a trial term will be considered from many perspectives: academic, artistic and physical development. Consideration is also given to the child joining the social dynamics of the proposed class and the child in the context of the School as a whole. In certain situations, a decision may be made that a new pupil might need some extra tuition in certain subjects and the teachers may require that the child to see the School Doctor or have Eurythmy Therapy.

The decision - making process takes approximately two weeks. Once a decision has been made, the class teacher will contact the parents as soon as possible, this will be followed by a written offer of a place which outlines what your child needs for school and some of our general expectations. The child will not be allowed to begin school without all forms and agreements signed and returned to the school, and the deposit paid.

Admissions Procedures Part Two - Procedures for the Trial Period

The trial term is an opportunity to assess the compatibility of the family and the School.

During the trial term the parents must attend an introductory talk about Waldorf education during an open day, beginning of the year induction and education workshop to satisfy themselves and the School, that this is really the education they want for their child.

The parents must attend the class parents' meetings.

The Pedagogical Meeting will discuss the child's progress after the first four weeks. After the first half term, the parents must write a letter to the College of Teachers expressing their views and feelings about the School and the child's progress, for this is an essential part of the acceptance process. This letter will be brought to The Pedagogical Meeting, where The Faculty of Teachers discuss and decide whether to fully accept the child. Sometimes the teachers feel that they want more time to make a decision and may extend the trial period.

Possible reasons for not accepting a child after the trial period may include:

- The child has educational needs that the School is unable to meet at the present time.
- The child presents difficult behaviour that the teachers feel unable to meet in the context of the School or class.
- The child is not happy in the School or class.
- The child's parents do not fulfil their financial, practical or administrative commitment to the School.
- The child's parents do not support the child's education, e.g. in the ways indicated in The Parent's Handbook.
- The School discovers that important, relevant information about the child was not disclosed by the parents at the time of the interview, e.g. the child has been statemented or has been excluded from another school.
- The School feels that, in some other way, the best interests of the child are not being served, e.g. the journey to school is too long or attendance or punctuality are very poor.

If the child is not accepted, the class teacher will try to speak to the parents personally to explain the reasons. An agreement should be reached between the parents and the class teacher about when and how to tell the child of the decision.

If the child is accepted, the parents will be informed of the decision, in a letter of acceptance by the time the child has spent a full term in the School. The parents should inform the School, in writing, of their intention to take up the offer of a permanent place at the School. This should be done on receipt of the letter of acceptance.

If there is no clear decision, this will be communicated to the parents at this stage and they will be asked to meet with the class teacher and at least one other teacher, to discuss the situation. A new date for the final decision will be set at that meeting.

In extreme situations, the child may be suspended or asked to leave before the end of the trial period. For instance, if the child presents unacceptable behaviour, which is having a detrimental effect on the other children in the class or school, if the child is not happy in the School or class, or if the child's parents do not fulfil their financial commitment to the School.

There will be a right of appeal.

- Parents have the right to state their point of view to the Faculty of Teachers in writing and a meeting will be organised.
- Teachers will give their view of the circumstances and invite comment and a statement from the parents.
- Parents and Teachers will ask and respond to questions.
- After the meeting, the Teachers will decide whether to uphold the original decision to exclude the child and will inform the parents, in writing, of their decision.
- If the child is to return to school, the letter will give the date of return.

Withdrawal of Child from School

The first school term attended by a child is a trial period for all concerned. Notice on either side should be given in writing at least one week before the end of term. If for any reason a child does not complete the trial term, the full term's fees are still payable.

In the event of the College of Teachers deciding, for any reason whatsoever, that a child cannot stay within the school for the full period of the trial term and any agreed extension of this trial period, the deposit will be refunded to the child's parents.

Once fully accepted, parents must give the College of Teachers one full term's written notice of withdrawing a child from The School. If one term's notice is not provided, the fees for the next term will be payable to the school in lieu of notice.

If a child is removed during a term, fees for the remainder of the current term and the next full term are payable.

Parents will be invited to an informal meeting or complete a leaving questionnaire when withdrawing a child from the School.

Contributions Policy

1. Fee Contributions

As an independent school that does not receive state funding, we ask for a 'fee contribution' towards the costs of providing Steiner education to our children. Contributions are intended to be contributions to the cost of providing the education to children across the whole school. i.e. Parents are not being asked directly to pay for the education of their child, but to contribute collectively to the cost of educating all children within London Steiner School.

1.1 Fee Contributions Overview

The collective contributions enable us to each year provide a total bursary scheme of between 25% and 30% to children at our school. This is a commitment to our role of educating children from a broad spectrum of society and to making Steiner/Waldorf education a viable choice to families who may otherwise not be able to afford it. For more information regarding **bursaries** and **multiple child discounts**, please see our **Bursary Policy**.

Contributions cover the following

- All materials used in class (includes your child's first crayon set on entering Class 1)
- Paints & clay
- Handwork materials
- Woodwork materials
- Gardening materials

Additional expenses that may be requested

- Occasional items such as a recorder
- Individual Music Lessons
- Occasional books (such as a dictionary or a classic novel to be studied)
- Class outings
- Your child's mid morning snack. In Early Years (3-6 years – kindergarten), the snack is often prepared with the children and will be something like soup, apple crumble or bread and hummus with fruit. The charge for this varies according to the number of days in a term and will be communicated to you by the class teachers at the beginning of each school term. Classes 1 to 8 are asked to bring their own packed lunch of savoury items, fruit and a flask of something to drink.
- Eurythmy Therapy
- Cost for consultation with the school doctor

Additional Tuition and Learning Support

Additional tuition or therapy required on admission to make a pupil ready for the school is charged for as an extra.

Fee increases

The school will endeavour to give at least one term's notice of a rise in fee contributions; however, they reserve the right to impose a surcharge at any time in the event of a sudden and unpredictable rise in school running costs.

Payment

Fee contributions are paid in advance, an initial deposit for new students is made at the beginning of the year and balance of contributions made yearly, half yearly, quarterly, monthly or weekly. See **1.2 Initial Deposit** and **1.3 Annual Contribution** below.

Application Fee

An application fee of £60 per child is to be submitted with the application form. This is to cover the costs of the interview and administration. Please note that there may be a slight variation in the application fee for kindergarten (first £30 required on application and second £30 at interview) and upcoming Class 1 pupils however, we will advise you accordingly.

Leaving

One full term's notice, in writing, (or the payment of a full term's fees in lieu) is required should you leave the school. This notice should be received by the School on or before the first day of term.

1.2 Initial Deposit

All parents/guardians wishing to educate their children at London Steiner School are required to pay a refundable deposit prior to their child starting school. This deposit may be kept by The School, at its discretion, against any outstanding monies owed to The School when the child leaves.

To secure a place for your child, parents/guardians are required to pay either:

- £1,000 as a deposit at minimum 6 weeks prior to commencement of the school's academic year in September.*
- £1,000 as a deposit within 7 days upon receiving a written offer of a place within the school at any other time during the school year.*

Failure to make the payment within the time frame specified above will mean your child's place is not secured and that the place will be made immediately available to a child on our waiting list.

*Please note that this figure is £500 for kindergarten deposits, with the balance deposit of £500 to be made upon your child moving up to Class 1.

1.3 Annual Contribution

After payment of the Initial Deposit outlined above, parents/guardians are required to fulfill the annual contribution by one of the following arrangements:

Yearly in advance

Payment in full made on the 5th day of the month prior in which your child commences. A 3% discount will apply to payments made yearly in advance.

Direct Debit

Direct Debit can be established in the following two ways:

- **Monthly in advance over 12 months**, starting on 5th of the month prior in which your child commences.
- **Weekly in advance over 52 weeks**, starting on the last Friday of the month prior to your child commencing.

1.4 Payment Details

Payment details for the school are as follows:

Cheques are payable to 'London Steiner School' and can be posted to:

London Steiner School

9 Weir Road

London SW12 0LT

Direct Bank Transfer (includes standing orders)

Bank: HSBC / Sort Code: 40 06 32 / Account Number: 21276751

Name: London Steiner School

Ref: Child's Name (eg. Joe Smith)

1.5 Parent/Guardian Voluntary Contribution

The ethos of a Steiner/Waldorf School emphasises that all parents/guardians should contribute to the school where their child is being educated, as this aids both the school and their child's development. In this spirit the school asks that you wholeheartedly commit to volunteering your time and expertise during your child's education with us. Every family is asked to donate 32 hours a year to the school - in particular by helping at school fairs and at the termly workdays, but you could also help with working groups, festivals, fund-raising events and the school's charity shop. We ask that you fill in a skills list, so we know who we can call on for specific help.

The parents/guardians support of the children's life at the school is essential -: supporting the child's class teacher by ensuring regular and clear communication through letters, forms, meetings and telephone calls; attending parents/guardians evenings and inviting teachers to make visits to the child's home. Also important is participating in the day-to-day life of the school and attending talks and workshops offered by the school to parents/guardians.

1.6 Trial Period

The first school term attended by a child is a trial period for all concerned. Notice on either side should be given in writing at least one week before the end of term. If for any reason a child does not complete the trial term, the full term's fees are still payable.

In the event of the College of Teachers deciding, for any reason whatsoever, that a child cannot stay within the school for the full period of the trial term and any agreed extension of this trial period, the deposit will be refunded to the child's parents.

Once fully accepted, parents must give the College of Teachers one full term's written notice of withdrawing a child from The School. If one term's notice is not provided, the fees for the next term will be payable to the school in lieu of notice.

If a child is removed during a term, fees for the remainder of the current term and the next full term are payable.

1.7 Financial Difficulty Notification

London Steiner School is committed to assisting all parents/guardians within our community and understands that, from time to time, persons may encounter financial difficulty which may result in an interim inability to meet the required contribution fees. Any difficulty in making due payment of fee contributions must be made known immediately to the school.

This should be done by contacting both the Financial Administrator directly on 01296 660 988 & the School on 020 8772 3504, and must be followed up with notification in writing addressed via the Finance Group, c/o the Financial Administrator at the school's address/email.

If you are unable to speak to either the Financial Administrator or the School Secretary in person do not leave a message, keep trying and also write as detailed above.

Please note:

Unless acknowledged by return email from the addressee, all email correspondence must be confirmed with hard copies to the School secretary as proof of sending. The School cannot and will not accept responsibility in the event of emails not being received or missed.

All notifications of financial difficulty are dealt with the utmost confidentiality and discretion.

A list of the two acceptable contact methods and addresses are listed below:

Written notification

London Steiner School

Att: Financial Administrator and Finance Group / 9 Weir Road/ London SW12 0LT

Email notification

info@waldorf-swLondon.org

Subject: Financial Difficulty with Annual Contribution

The school will assess all notifications within 24 hours of receipt and will contact the concerned parties directly to arrange a **financial meeting** with the Financial Administrator and, where necessary, members of the Finance Group within 48 hours of the initial assessment.

If you are uncertain whether you require assistance or need any clarification of our financial difficulty assistance, please contact the school directly on 020 8772 3504 and we will be happy to provide a quick analysis of your situation and confirm the procedure for you.

1.8 Financial Difficulty Agreements

After notifying the school of financial difficulty and having attended a financial meeting, terms of payment for any outstanding and ongoing contributions will have been agreed. Following this verbal agreement, a **Financial Difficulty Agreement** will be formally completed and signed between the parents/guardians and the school to confirm the payment plan, including subsequent reviews of the agreement at set intervals over the remaining months of the payment plan.

A Financial Difficulty Agreement made between the parents/guardians and the school is a binding agreement between both parties. Subsequent contribution arrears and failure to meet the terms of the Financial Difficulty Agreement will automatically result in a request for withdrawal of a child as per **section 1.9 c) below**.

1.9 Arrears Procedures

The following contains the procedure and time-line for fee contribution arrears:

- a) Parents/guardians who have not contacted the School as per section **1.4 Financial Difficulty Notification**, and who subsequently fall into arrears of one payment against their nominated payment method, will immediately be contacted asking them to rectify the situation with payment of the overdue contributions due within two weeks from the date of the contact.
- b) If no further communication has been made with the School and the contribution arrears have not been made in full by the end of the two week period, the parents/guardian must immediately attend a financial meeting to resolve the non-payment with the Financial Administrator and members of the Finance Group.
- c) Failure to attend the requested meeting, or if the situation cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties at such a meeting, the parents/guardian will be formally requested in writing to withdraw their child from School within two weeks of the date of the withdrawal letter or the end of the school term, whichever is sooner.

Outstanding fee contributions are still liable to be paid to the School even after a child has been withdrawn and debts will be pursued by legal means if necessary.

Bursary Policy

1. Bursaries

London Steiner School is committed to providing children an inspiring alternative education for a changing world. The School expects all parents, staff, volunteers and our extended community to share this commitment.

One of the ways in which we do this is by providing a **bursary** to those who may otherwise not be able to afford the education. The collective contributions made by the school community enable us each year to provide a total bursary scheme of up to 30% to children at our school (see our **Contributions Policy** for further details).

1.1 Authority and circulation

This policy has been authorised by the College of Teachers which is the governing body of London Steiner School and is a group of members of staff of the School, The policy's status is final. It is addressed to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

This policy contains an overview of the Bursary Scheme which is in operation at the School. Ancillary documentation includes: a financial means questionnaire, which is made available to all parents and prospective parents on request, a Bursary Application Form, an Exceptional Circumstances Application and a Financial Difficulty Agreement (also see **Contributions Policy** for further details).

1.2 Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to widen pupil access to the School and ensure that Steiner/Waldorf education is provided to children from as broad a spectrum as possible from financial, ethnic & religious backgrounds within society;
- to continue the School's long tradition of providing public benefit;
- to meet and if possible exceed the Charity Commission's public benefit requirements

1.3 Introduction

The School is a non profit making Private Limited Company and a Registered Charity that is committed to providing significant public benefit. The School is aware of its obligations under the Charities Act 2006 and seeks to adhere to the public benefit principles identified by the Charity Commission. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to take into consideration the latest guidance from the Charity Commission.

The School has a long history of providing financial assistance to pupils and their families. While the costs of running the School require that those who can pay full fee contributions must do so, every year the School forgoes fee contributions through bursaries.

The School's Bursary Scheme is limited. It has not been and is currently not available to Kindergarten pupils of new families in the middle school in their first academic year. In very exceptional cases variations to this may be considered. Any decision made by the College of Teachers and Finance Group is final.

The School does work with local authorities where they provide Nursery Funding for a limited number of hours per week for children between the ages of 3 & 5 years. On the child's 5th birthday this currently ceases. Furthermore this provision is subject to the implementation of any changes instigated by local and central government that the School has no control over.

The School's Bursary Scheme is designed to assist parents on low incomes who, for financial reasons, might otherwise be unable to send/continue to send their child to the School. Additionally, bursaries for pupils of parents experiencing financial hardship or whose financial position worsens unexpectedly once their child is already at the School can apply, when - if there is adequate Bursary Funding still available - their request will be considered.

Bursaries are entirely means tested and are awarded on an annual basis to parents who are financially eligible and who meet the application requirements set out below in full. The School aims to provide a bursary pool of 25% of total annual fee contributions to parents who are financially eligible. There are times when applications may not be successful due to a full allocation of bursary funding. Any decisions by the College of Teachers and Finance Groups are final.

All bursary applications are treated in the strictest confidence. Pupils will not be made aware that they benefit from a bursary unless informed by their parents.

In some circumstances up to 100% fee contributions remission will be considered where appropriate, excluding costs for materials.

There is a Bursary Cap in place for families with multiple children in attendance at the School. Sibling discounts are currently given, with 10% discount for the 2nd child and 25% discount for the 3rd and any subsequent child's fee contributions. A family may receive up to 75% bursary in total for multiple children, currently capped annually at £7,500 in bursary per family, subject to eligibility and approval from the School's Finance Group. This figure is reviewed annually to ensure that the cap is relative to any increases/decreases in school contribution limits.

1.4 Publicity

We view a socially diverse pupil population as a key component of a full and balanced education. The availability of bursaries at the School is advertised locally.

1.5 Eligibility and Procedure

All parents and prospective parents of pupils at the School are eligible to apply for a bursary, and should contact the School Secretary or Financial Administrator at the School in the first instance for more information. The deadline for any Bursary applications is the end of the spring term in the school year prior to entry and must be made in writing with a completed Bursary Application Form. Later applications may be considered as long as there is funding available.

Step One

All applicants for a bursary are required to complete a Financial Means Questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to provide a full picture of the income, assets, outgoings and liabilities of applicants so that the School's Financial Administrator can make recommendations to the Finance Group to determine those to whom an offer of a bursary would be appropriate. **Please note that families who may be classified as 'low income' but have substantial assets may be ineligible to receive a bursary.**

Step Two

The Financial Administrator assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. This may involve the Financial Administrator, or members of the Finance Group, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. After careful analysis and consideration of the application, an interview with a member of the College of Teachers and the Financial Administrator may be requested with parents/guardians.

Step Three

Upon completion of the interviews, the Financial Administrator prepares a recommendation for the College of Teachers' and Finance Groups' consideration, when a joint recommendation is then reached.

Step Four

The school will write within 21 days of your interview to notify applicants whether they have been successful.

Step Five

Successful applicants are required to confirm the acceptance of a bursary by completing, signing and returning an acceptance form to the school within 7 days. An acknowledgement/Commitment Form agreeing to any conditions relating to the Bursary must also be signed. NB This may be at the interview in anticipation of a positive decision from the School.

IMPORTANT

Each Bursary offer will reflect the particular circumstances of the recipient and be expressed as a % remission of requested fee contributions. All Bursaries are awarded for one academic year and remain subject throughout that period to the conditions of award provided with the letter of offer. It is incumbent on the parents or guardians to advise the School immediately if their financial position improves or changes when they might be able to reduce their bursary for the benefit of other children that may be in need. Failure to do so could result in the immediate withdrawal of part, or all, of the family's bursary.

1.6 The Case for Assistance

The Financial Administrator may take advice from The Faculty of Teachers to consider a number of factors when making the assessment regarding the requirement for granting support. This includes the child's suitability and support/likely support of the class group as a whole.

1.7 Validity of the Family for Bursary

This is an overriding and principle requirement. After completion of a Bursary Application Form & providing copies of all supporting documentation as may be requested, the School will make a considered judgement which, when decided, will be final. The parents/guardians will be required to undertake an interview with a member of the College of Teachers and the Financial Administrator /representative of the Finance Group.

Bursary funds are limited so those judged most in need and most likely to gain from the educational provision provided by the School will be advised only after consideration by both the College of Teachers & Finance Group. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Faculty of Teachers, be likely to make sound progress under the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum and would benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School.

Where the pupil is already attending the school, a report may be sought from teachers as to the spiritual progress and ongoing potential of the child. Previous school reports may be consulted for evidence of good behaviour and development in both cases.

In addition: the way the family supports the administrative side of their child's school life by communicating with teachers and, for example, writing notes for absences; also the willingness of a family to commit additional hours of work/assistance to the school, as and when required, will form part of the consideration when assessing the suitability of a bursary.

1.8 Financial Limitations

The amount of the Bursary award is influenced by the extent of need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the School's ability to fund these within the overall Bursary budget. It is recognised that judgments about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal to that family. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are allocated appropriately and so, as well as current earnings, other factors will be considered in determining the level of any bursary grant to be awarded.

These will include (but are not limited to):

The ability to improve the financial position or earning capacity of the family.

For example, where there are two partners, both would be expected to be employed unless one is prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependents, or the requirements of their partner's work.

The opportunities available to release any capital to fund school fees.

Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity values in houses.

In cases of separation, any contribution made by the absent parent.

Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the School's grant will take into account all these outgoings.

Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:

Frequent or expensive holidays

Investment in significant home improvements / significant purchases of luxury items

A second property / land holdings

1.9 Other Factors

It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered. These include:

Where a child has siblings at the School.

Where the social needs of the child need to be taken into account.

Where a parent/guardian is unable to secure permanent employment due to health problems or disability within the family.

Where a parental separation or parental bereavement may result in the child having to be withdrawn from the School.

1.10 Existing Pupils – Change in Family Circumstances

Within the overall Bursary budget, the School will in normal circumstances endeavor to set aside each year an Exceptional Circumstances Fund, for cases of sudden, unforeseen need or where applications meriting Bursary assistance are received out of the normal calendar cycle. This sum will be set within budgetary constraints.

Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change are advised to discuss the matter with the Financial Administrator, who will be able to supply an application form to the Exceptional Circumstances Fund. Such awards are subject to the availability of the funding and cannot be guaranteed.

1.11 Review

All bursaries are subject to a bi-annual means-test review and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on financial circumstances. Nevertheless, should any of the information disclosed in response to the questionnaire change at a later date, the School must be informed without delay. For example, should the financial position of parents/guardians with a pupil already at the School worsen unexpectedly, they should contact the Financial Administrator as soon as possible so that a way forward can be agreed (**see Contributions Policy for details**).

Failure to divulge requested information or a change in circumstances to the School could lead to a bursary being withdrawn or withheld. The College of Teachers and Financial Administrator, in making their joint recommendation to the Finance Group, have the discretion to recommend the reduction or withdrawal of a bursary where a pupil's progress, attitude or behavior has been unsatisfactory or disruptive to the education of others within their group.

1.12 Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the School's Bursary Fund, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. In the majority of cases, these are to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain. London Steiner School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance may be obtained from:

London Steiner School

Att: Financial Administrator and Finance Group

9 Weir Road, London, SW12 0LT

Email: info@waldorf-sw-london.org

The Educational Trusts Forum and also The Joint Educational Trust

6 Lovat Lane

London EC3R 8DT

Email: admin@jetcharity.org

Website: www.jetcharity.org

Policy For The Promotion Of Good Behaviour

The School recognises that growth is a process of acquiring self-knowledge and learning how to manage one's own individual characteristics and reactions, also, circumstances present hurdles to overcome and for some children this can result in incidental or longer-term behavioural difficulties.

The School works with the principle of striving to find ways to support the children through their growth processes by thorough study of the children and by using the understanding gained, to work with the indications given for the Steiner / Waldorf education. The adult's growing knowledge of a pupil's circumstances and behaviour patterns, and the suitability of particular discipline methods will help effective behaviour management. All adults placed in positions of responsibility with the children should work together to share their knowledge of the individual children for this purpose. Adults should also work on the development of their own self-knowledge in order to recognise their own abilities and to retain self-control and seek assistance in difficult situations.

Teachers are committed to respect and value each individual child. Positive encouragement and positive criticism in every possible circumstance is seen as the most therapeutic educational tool.

Mutual respect is the basis for all sound relationships between children and adults. Teachers are expected to model respect in their own dealings with each other, with parents and with pupils. The School's code of conduct sets an example for all to use.

Where mutual respect is lacking, rules are difficult to maintain and discipline becomes a problem. A disruptive child, lacking in respect, denies the freedom of others to enjoy learning.

In seeking to fulfil their responsibilities, teachers require an orderly working environment, in which respect for others is evident.

Teachers expect their pupils to behave with respect to each other, to all class and subject teachers, staff, volunteers and parents within the School as well as respect for each other's and the School's buildings and equipment.

The School's staff use the following guidelines for working with behavioural issues. Steps taken to work with difficulties are chosen according to each situation and also each individual child's circumstances.

The School expects full open-minded support from Parents/Guardians in the realisation that a good working relationship between Parents/Guardians and Teachers will help a child to behave appropriately.

Parents are asked to help in building a respect for the school and its procedures. This requires willingness to support the aims of the school in the child's home life. When this is present, a child will relate more fully to the school. Where it is lacking, a conflict may arise which the child can find difficult to resolve, which may be one cause of bad behaviour.

Parents should inform the Class Teacher of any changes in the home life that may affect a child's behaviour, for instance - parents' absences, serious illness in the family, bereavement and the need for medication.

We ask parents to support their children in encouraging regular and adequate sleeping routines, using the guidelines given in the Parents' Handbook for bedtimes when there is school the following day.

We also ask that you provide and encourage a varied diet with minimal sugar and artificial additives.

The experience of the teachers is that exposure to television - and other such visual and sound recordings, including computer games and cinema - significantly interferes with the educational work of the School. Television viewing for the child saps strength and creative energy, interferes with healthy social development and weakens academic performance. We request that children not be allowed any exposure to electronic stimulation when they have school the following day and that in any case it is restricted.

Parents are asked to encourage the child to complete and enjoy their homework by helping and showing interest, checking their timetable and asking them if they do have homework, giving them a peaceful place (without a background of music or flickering images) and regular time to do the work and ensuring that the work is presented within the time given.

Parents with queries, insights, criticisms or problems about any aspect of a child's or a group of children's behaviour should first approach their child's Class Teacher, then, if necessary, speak to a member of the College of Teachers or write to the College of Teachers.

Teachers will make every effort to keep parents informed of events that affect their children.

All views expressed by children, parents or teachers have value and must be treated with respect. It is recognised that when teachers and parents discuss issues or exchange views, they do so with recognition that each is acting with sincerity and is offering their best.

This policy is attached to the Parents Handbook and must be read by all parents along with the Anti - Bullying policy, School Rules, Rules for Lessons and the Home–School agreement. It is the responsibility of every Parent/Guardian to ensure that their child/children are regularly made aware of their contents. .Parents should also read the policies and procedures for the suspension and exclusion of pupils, both during and (Admissions Policy Part Two) after the child's trial period.

Guidelines for discipline and sanctions

We believe that our deeds and 'how we are' in front of the children influence and provide models for their behaviour. We endeavour to create a caring and purposeful mood for the time spent in school and work with example and imitation.

In the earlier years the Kindergarten teachers guide and direct children through gesture, songs and rhymes which are present throughout the morning, especially during transition times, i.e. between play and tidy time or before story time. Responding to challenging behaviour in an imaginative way, using creative discipline to work with the forces of the child and not against them often can enable the children to easily and happily respond to requests to participate or to behave in the right way. The children are encouraged to self-manage and when a teacher requests something from a child it is seen as an opportunity that the child is being given. For instance: 'you may put your hat on'; 'you may join in'; 'everyone is welcome in kindergarten'; 'hands are for work and play'.

The older children also set a good example for the younger ones and often help with remembering the best thing to do. Imitation of peers is a large part of learning and a culture of self discipline spreads both upwards and downwards through the ages of the children in the school.

As children grow older and face new challenges in behaviour management, when they misbehave we endeavour in all cases not to label the child, but to point out the inappropriate behaviour, and address the situation in the most appropriate of the following ways:

Make an assessment of the incident

- Objectively assess the situation, paying particular attention to the posture, approach and speech of the people involved, including oneself.
- Consider the individuals involved with regard to age, temperament, history and personal circumstances. Is it an isolated incident or a repeated one? How serious is it?
- Discuss the incident with the people involved. How did it happen and why?

Decide what steps need to be taken, for example:

- Give an invitation, guidance or instruction on the right thing to do;
- Give a reminder of the school's expectations of good behaviour;
- Remain calm and show no immediate reaction and then later deal with the incident at a more appropriate, less emotionally charged, moment;
- Divert attention away from the incident if possible, to avoid escalation;
- Give a clear request to stop the inappropriate behaviour, speaking calmly and repeating any request politely and firmly, using a stricter voice if necessary;
- Show willingness to talk when unacceptable behaviour stops;
- Use humour to lighten a situation, being careful not to allow any unkind or negative humour to be used against the pupil;
- Ask the child to leave the room - 'time out' - and go to work with or be supervised with another class or member of staff;
- Send a couple of responsible children to the Office or another class to seek additional adult support;
- Ask the children to write or draw what happened. Children may be asked to discuss the incident with the teacher involved: how and why it is unacceptable behaviour; how it could have been avoided; what reparation can and should be made;
- Ask the children to make a card of apology or do a suitable task to make amends. A typical task for older children who swear and in order to help them overcome such a poor use of language is to ask them to produce a beautiful verse or poem. Children who cause damage to property may be asked to repair items or be involved in extra cleaning tasks. The child may be detained at break-time;

- The class teachers will be informed and may be asked to help with the situation. Class teachers can work with the children in more subtle ways such as - with younger children a pedagogical story may be told, or a special verse or prayer - since the child still lives strongly in a pictorial consciousness - this more subtle approach can be very effective. Children who are often in conflict with each other may be asked to work or sit together in the class, or parents encouraged to make arrangements for the children to play together, as dynamics can change when out of the school situation. With older children some elements of the 'no-blame' approach may be used, for example: discussing the situation with the class or a group;
- Parents may be informed and asked for support or help;
- Physical intervention should not be used unless its use is to prevent a child from harming him/herself or others, or from damaging property; it should only be used as a last resort when all other strategies have been applied or where there is an immediate apprehension of danger to the pupil or to others. Physical force should never be used to coerce a pupil to gain compliance with an adult's instruction, nor if you are feeling exasperation, frustration or anger. In circumstances where physical intervention needs to be used, always try to obtain assistance of another responsible adult. The degree of force used should be for the purpose of restraint only and should not exceed the level of force of the presenting behaviour. Certain physical contact is not acceptable, e.g. applying hands or pressure to sensitive parts of the body, placing pressure on joints or taking hold of pupils by the limbs.
- A written behaviour warning may be given to the child to pass on to their parents. If a child receives 3 written behaviour warnings, parents will be telephoned and the child may be suspended from school for a period. A meeting with the parents will be arranged;
- Sometimes, when it is considered appropriate, and usually for children of class 6 upwards, a child may be given a detention, sent home or suspended from school with immediate effect. Parents will be telephoned and informed and may be asked to collect the child immediately. The child may be removed from classes under supervision until collected;
- Children may be required to attend a formal meeting with at least two teachers - a 'panel', maybe with their parents, and will discuss the incident, how and why it is unacceptable behaviour, how it could have been avoided, and what reparation can and should be made;
- Children may be 'put on report' - each teacher writing how the child has been behaving in each lesson, contributing to a more comprehensive picture of the situation;
- A problem concerning discipline may be taken to the Faculty and College of Teachers, both to inform them and to seek their assistance in dealing with it;
- The teachers may decide to hold a 'child study' or 'class study' where needed;
- The advice of the School doctor may be sought;
- In rare cases, a child may be excluded from the School.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind and views incidents of suspected bullying and repeated incidents as serious issues. It is particularly important that both the school and the parents adopt a similar approach so that the pupil experiences consistency. In some situations it has been very helpful to bring the pupils together outside the school. Usually this takes the form of an outing or some semi structured activity. By working together in this way preconceptions and old behaviour and relationship patterns may be positively affected.

What is bullying?

- Physical violence and/or the threat of physical violence
- Persistent verbal abuse
- Prolonged, repeated or aggressive exclusion of another from the group activity
- Intimidation
- Interference with the property of others
- Encouraging others to carry out any of the points mentioned here

The 'no blame' approach to bullying

Punishing a child is seldom effective in bullying, particularly in the long term. Even if a bully is punished strongly and the bullying stops in that particular case, both the bully and the group often experience this as a type of negative role modelling. There are, however, benefits from using a positive and caring 'no blame' approach:

- The bully does not gain status amongst his/her peers - Gaining status is one of the main motivating forces in perpetuating bullying. The need to rise higher in the social order and increase 'security' at another's expense. By making an 'example' of a bully and berating him/her in front of a group will usually succeed in 'making a martyr' and increase the likelihood of further incidents. The group will also seek to protect the bully.
- The bully does not receive attention for his deeds - Receiving unfocused, open-ended attention, especially from adults, even if it is punitive, can often encourage both bully and victim to perpetuate the cycle they have become involved in.
- The victim is not put under extra pressure. - If the bully is punished this very often leads to reprisals against the victim and increases his/her isolation from the group. These reprisals simply become more hidden and therefore more difficult to detect. The 'shame and guilt' that victims often feel is deepened.
- Peers and victims feel free to 'tell' about the incident - Because so much bullying is covert, creating an environment where 'telling' becomes socially accepted is vital if incidents are to be detected.

When a bullying incident is observed or reported, the following steps can be taken.

- Meet the victim

The Class teacher, together with another member of staff, do not spend much time discussing the incident, but need to know who was involved and where and when it took place. They may ask the victim to write down or draw a picture showing how they feel about the situation. This must be recorded in the incident book. They may ask the child to tell him/her about the various symbols or colours etc. that have been used. This diffuses and deflects the situation, rather than polarising and inflaming it, which can easily happen if the whole class is involved. The parents of the children more directly involved are contacted.

Consider the age of those involved and adapt the guidelines accordingly. (For example, for the six, seven and eight year olds, a story may be told. A special verse or prayer may be given. Since the child still lives strongly in a pictorial consciousness these more subtle approaches can be very effective. For the nine year old and above these methods still have value but around this age the child is more aware of him/herself and you may chose to adopt and adapt the 'no blame' approach that follows).

- Meet with the people involved

The class teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This may include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. A group of six to eight children usually works well.

The parents of the central figures are informed of the meeting and may be asked to contribute ideas.

The group is told about the way the victim is feeling. A poem, painting, drawing or story may be used. These feelings could either be written or communicated by the victim to the teacher or parent. Some published material may be used; however, the emphasis should be placed on communicating to the group the situation the victim finds him/herself in. Generally with pupils under twelve these feelings are best spoken by the teacher. The victim may like to be present and contribute, but alternatively may not wish to be present. At no time does the teacher discuss the incident or allocate any blame.

- Share responsibility

At this stage there are two options: Talking to the class could be considered. This is helpful particularly if the bullying is non-specific in focus and a majority of the class are involved. However, it may be more appropriate to limit the discussion to those immediately involved. What is important is to let the group know that you have confidence that together they can do things to make the situation better.

- Ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. Guidelines and rules for problematic games or regularly occurring 'trigger' situations could be mutually agreed. The teacher gives a positive response but is careful not to extract a promise of improved behaviour. Look for ways in which to realistically support the groups' ideas. Record should be kept in the incident book.

- Leave it up to them

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over responsibility to the group to solve the problem, making it clear that any recurrence may be reported by anyone involved and help, not punishment will be given. They arrange to meet with the group again to see how things are going. It is best for these meetings to happen in school time and away from play and lunch times as the children feel they are being punished and can become resentful if it happens in their free time.

- Communicate with the faculty of teachers

The ideas the pupils are trying to initiate should be reported in the Faculty meetings so that the whole staff is aware and can support them.

- Meet with them all again

About a week later the teacher and the group, including the victim, discuss how things are going. This allows for the monitoring of the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process. Record should be kept in the incident book.

- Continue to monitor the situation at regular intervals

Further meetings may take place over a period of a couple of months but should become less frequent. It is valuable if the teacher makes a point regularly to initiate informal discussion with the group and generally keep any eye on things especially in the playground.

Policy and Procedure for Suspension of Pupils

A pupil may be suspended from the School for serious or repeated disregard for school rules; acts of vandalism; truancy; leaving the School grounds or class outings; violent, disruptive, defiant, dangerous or abusive behaviour.

The length of the period of suspension will depend on the seriousness of the offence and will be decided by the Class Teacher and one other teacher. Suspensions will not total more than 15 days in one term and 45 days in a school year.

Parents will be informed by telephone (if the suspension is immediate) and in writing of the period of suspension and the reasons for it.

Tasks or conditions may be set which must be completed before the pupil returns to school. These will be made clear to the pupil and his/her parents.

Parents will be informed of their right to state their point of view to the College of Teachers in writing. The Class Teacher will usually request to meet with the parents to discuss the situation.

Policy and Procedure for Permanent Exclusion

When a child is accepted into the School, the interview procedure and the terms and conditions of the trial period must be followed.

The procedure for excluding a child during or at the end of the trial period is laid out in the Admissions Policy.

Possible reasons for excluding a child from the School at any time after the trial period may include:

- The child is found to have educational needs that the School is unable to meet at the present time.
- The child presents unacceptable behaviour which teachers feel unable to meet in the context of the School or class, given the limitation of the facilities available, e.g. if there are already difficult children in the class or the child's behaviour is having a detrimental effect on the other children in the class or school.
- The child is not happy in the School or class.
- The child's parents do not fulfil their financial commitment to the School.
- The child's parents are not willing to support the child's education, e.g. in the way indicated in this Handbook.
- The School discovers that important, relevant information about the child was not disclosed by the parents at the time of the interview, e.g. that the child has been statemented or has been expelled from another school.
- The School feels that, in some other way, the best interests of the child are not being served, e.g. the journey to school is too long or attendance or punctuality are very poor.

Before the decision to exclude a child is made the teachers will:

- Seek advice and support from the child's parents about difficulties as soon as there is cause for concern.
- Consult colleagues for help and advice.
- Consult other professionals where available and if appropriate, e.g. where there is reason to believe that they may be able to help, where a delay will not have serious adverse consequences for the child or other children (e.g. in cases of abuse) and where the principles and methods of the professionals are not at odds with those of the School (e.g. the use of keyboards in school for dyslexic children is not acceptable before class 9).
- Inform the child's parents and consult with them as soon as the possibility of exclusion is being considered.
- Ensure that every reasonable effort has been made to meet the needs of the child in the context of the class, the School and the child's home environment.

When the decision has been made to exclude a child from the School at any time after the trial period, his/her parents will be given ten weeks' notice in writing of the date of exclusion.

If it is in the interests of any of the children, parents may be asked to remove the excluded child from school before the date of exclusion.

In extreme situations a child may be suspended from school until the date of exclusion.

There will be a right of appeal, in the form of a meeting with the relevant teachers, the parents, and the child if appropriate.

Parents have the right to state their point of view to the College of Teachers in writing. A meeting will be organised. Staff from the School will give their view of the circumstances and invite comment and a statement from the parents. Parents and Staff will ask and respond to questions. After the meeting, the College of Teachers will decide whether to uphold the original decision to exclude the child and will inform the parents, in writing, of their decision. If the child is to return to school, the letter will give the date of return.

Code of Conduct

The ethos behind our whole education aims to foster an atmosphere of appropriate behaviour, mutual understanding, respect and tolerance within all members of the school community.

We aim to encourage self-discipline, to allow a positive, safe and happy community to be both stimulating and successful.

**Everyone must follow the code
whilst in school,
on outings with the school,
or when representing the school
and pupils should also do so on their journey
to and from school.**

**Everyone should treat each other with respect,
courtesy and consideration.**

Be peaceful, thoughtful and positive to each other.

Be mindful of the health, safety and the rights of others.

**Care for each other, our surroundings
and each other's belongings.**

Do not harass, insult, fight or bully others.

The School Rules

We appreciate parents reading through, discussing them with their children and helping their children to comply with them.

These rules are subject to change whereupon every family will be notified by e-mail/letter and/or in the School newsletter.

1. Everybody is required to follow the School's Code of Conduct.
2. Pupils should not be at school before 8am. Children of Class 4 and under should be under their parents/carers' supervision when on site before school and after their school day has ended. Children should not be at school unsupervised after their last lesson. It is essential that they be **picked up promptly**. Children dropped off or waiting to be picked up should stay in the school garden. Pupils are not permitted beyond the gate without an adult or written permission from a responsible adult. ('Home Alone' forms for classes 5-8 can be obtained from the office.)
3. Kicking games are not allowed at any time.
4. Children should not climb buildings, fences or trees.
5. No riding of bicycles, skateboards, scooters or roller blades/skates/wheelies is permitted in the School grounds. Furthermore it is discouraged in the immediate vicinity of the school to minimize annoyance to the neighbours.
6. Children must not bring to school articles that can be offensive, harmful or dangerous – e.g.: knives, fireworks, aerosol cans, lighters or matches.
7. Children may not bring to school any kind of biro, marker pen or felt tip pen.
8. Fights or major disagreements should be reported to a member of staff immediately.
9. All 'phones and other electronic gadgets, games and toys of any kind must be handed in to the school office first thing in the morning. They may be collected at the end of the school day. If a pupil is found using their 'phone during the day, this will be confiscated and only returned at the request of a parent.
10. Chewing or bubble gum, sweets, chocolate in any form, crisps and fizzy drinks are not allowed at the School.
11. The requirements for school dress are based on a consideration of health, neatness, cleanliness and suitability for school. Clothes should be warm, clean, non-restrictive and appropriate for school. Specifically the following are not acceptable: low-cut tops, very short skirts, clothing with pictures and slogans, jewellery with dangling or protruding parts, studs or rings worn on any part of the body apart from ears (studs) or fingers (rings). Hair should not be unkempt or worn so that it covers the eyes. Make-up, nail varnish and hair colour may be worn to school only by pupils from Class 8. Indoor shoes, sunhats, jackets, Wellington boots, waterproofs, safety clothing, and special clothes for festivals and sports/games or other lessons must be worn when advised by the teachers.
12. During school hours, pupils are required to remain within the School grounds.
13. It is not allowed to swear, smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs whilst at school.

Rules for Lessons

Bring the correct books and equipment to each lesson.

Arrive on time to lessons and enter the room quietly.

Stand politely behind your chair to begin and end lessons.

Listen carefully to instructions the first time they are given out.

Work with quiet concentration.

Present your work neatly and always do your best.

Treat others, their work and property with respect.

Use School materials responsibly with care about their cost to the School and the environment.

Try to keep your own movements as quiet as possible so that they are not distracting to others.

Try to keep chatter with friends to times when it is clear that the teacher has given permission.

Raise your hand and wait to be asked before answering or speaking. Do not shout out.

Do not run and play inside the classroom unless it is part of the lesson or the Teacher has given permission.

No eating or chewing in lessons.

Complete homework and hand it in on time.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

It is the School's intention to provide a secure environment in which the children can feel safe and able to speak about their concerns. This document has been drawn up to support the well being of the children in our care and to comply with the Children's Act 1989 and the Education Act 2002. The Children's Act 1989 brings together, in a single, coherent legislative framework, the private and public law relating to children. It aims to strike a balance between the rights of children to express their views on decisions made about their lives, the rights of the parents to exercise their responsibilities towards the children and the duty of the state to intervene where the child's welfare requires it. The Education Act 2002 makes it clear that the responsibility of Local Education Authorities, governing bodies and schools is to "make arrangements for ensuring that the functions ... are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children".

Whatever our particular role is in the School, it is the responsibility of each of us to be alert to the possibility of child abuse and to acknowledge and alleviate, where possible, any suffering a child may experience. If you suspect that a child has been or is suffering, or someone approaches you with these concerns, contact any one of the designated members of staff, named in the School's Address List and the Child Protection Policy. Decisions about how to deal with allegations of child abuse should be taken by, or in consultation with, an appropriately trained person. As an educational establishment, we are obliged to follow the Local Authority guidelines for reporting cases of suspected abuse to the Social Services Department.

The school has a Child Protection Officer and one Deputy Child Protection Officer, each of whom is equally known as a "Designated Person" and who are responsible for Child Protection issues. However, all staff are personally responsible for ensuring that they are sufficiently trained in Child Protection matters. The Child Protection Officer will ensure that he/she is trained every two years and will organise or encourage training for other members of staff on a three-year basis.

'Child Protection: Information, Guidance and Procedures'

The Facts

- Child abuse is an exploitation of the power that adults have over children.
- Children may be abused regardless of gender, culture, class, religious belief, race or disability.
- In the majority of reported incidents, the abuser is someone known to the child.
- Boys are abused as well as girls.
- Social Services will only remove children if they are in real danger of future abuse.
- Abusers are clever and will manoeuvre themselves into positions of trust in order to gain access to children.
- Abuse is a criminal act.
- Abused children often feel (or are told by the abuser) that they are to blame and will try to hide their unhappiness and distress.
- Children seldom make false accusations that they have been abused, and more commonly deny that they have been abused or retract their accusations.

Categories of Harm

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of any of the above, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. It also includes the use of excessive force when carrying out tasks of caring (feeding, etc.)

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in any sexual activity, regardless of whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging the same.

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive. Examples of neglect could include under-nourishment, untreated illness or abrasions, inadequate carer (eg: a child who is dirty, ill-clad, etc.) and persistent fatigue.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may also include exposing children to disturbing emotional scenes which may affect the child's own emotional security. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Possible signs of Physical Abuse:

- unexplained injuries or refusal to discuss them
- cigarette burns
- long bruises
- slapmarks
- fingertip marks
- teeth marks
- history of bruises
- injuries with inconsistent explanations
- bilateral black eyes
- self destruction tendencies
- aggression towards others
- untreated injuries
- fear of medical treatment
- unexplained patterns of absence that could be in order to hide injuries.

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- depression
- suicidal
- self harming
- anorexic/bulimic
- acting in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults/peers
- unexplained pregnancies
- running away
- telling about a “friend with a problem of abuse”
- sexually abusing a younger child
- sudden changes in school or work habits
- fear of certain people
- “chronic” medical problems (stomach pains, headaches)
- withdrawn
- excessively isolated.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- excessive fear of parent, carer or other adult
- developmental delay
- inappropriate emotional responses
- self mutilation
- extreme passivity or aggression
- running away
- drug/solvent abuse
- excessive fear of situations or people
- social isolation
- depression.

Possible Signs of Neglect:

- non-compliance with specific medical care
- inadequate or dirty clothing
- child unsupervised
- child dirty or smelly
- poor child health surveillance
- domestic violence
- severe dental decay
- not registered with GP or dentist
- frequent accidents or injuries to child
- poor feeding or sleeping patterns
- refusal to accept social services input.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF HARM

There may be other factors in the family background that will add to your concern, for example:

- **Poor relationship between parents and child**
- **High levels of stress within the family**
- **Unrealistic expectations of a child**
- **Scapegoating**
- **Inadequate parental co-operation**

You should also be aware of the possible significance of poor attendance. A reluctance to participate in Games/Gym lessons may also be an indicator.

GUIDANCE FOR ALL ADULTS

If you suspect a child has been or is being **physically** or **emotionally** abused or is being **neglected** or someone approaches you with these concerns (makes a “disclosure”), contact any of the Designated Persons at the school immediately.

Do not question a child about any disclosure, but listen carefully to what the child tells you, then write it down as accurately as you can. If you are in the position of making an examination of a child, use the same levels of courtesy and consent that would apply if the child had received an accidental injury.

If you suspect that a child has been sexually abused, do not consider investigating the matter further yourself, but, where it is possible, urgently contact any of the Designated Persons at the school who will immediately refer the matter to Social Services. If you are unable to immediately contact any of the Designated Persons and there is a risk that evidence may be lost after an elapse of time, you should contact Social Services and the Police yourself and, as soon as possible afterwards, inform any of the Designated Persons about your referral. They will assist you in dealing with any further matters.

It is important that details of any disclosures, incidents that have given rise to your concerns, as well as any injuries or physical signs of abuse or neglect are recorded and the record signed and dated and passed to any of the Designated Persons as soon as possible. Diagrams may be used to record injuries, but never photographs.

All discussions and reports will be treated in confidence by the Designated Persons and followed up and dealt with in the most appropriate way, which may include investigating the matter themselves and/or referring the matter to Social Services and/or the Police. In any event, Social Services may be contacted for advice and further steps taken will depend on this advice.

Priority is given to the safety of the child/children who may be at immediate risk.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

- Speak to the child. Treat any disclosures by the child with serious respect and show that you believe what they say. Do not promise total confidentiality. Explain that if the child's well being is at risk, the staff member may need to share the knowledge with another adult.
- Keep a record of any pattern of concerning signs, observations or any disclosures (using actual words of the child). Make clear, concise and objective observations. Sign and date the record.
- Speak to the child's parent(s) (except in the case of suspected sexual abuse, which should be reported immediately to one of the Designated Persons so an urgent referral may be made. Certain medical evidence may otherwise be lost after an elapse of time), to ascertain any reason for the sign or disclosure giving rise to the concern. If not confident to speak to the parent(s) directly, ask for assistance from any of the Designated Persons.
- Arrange a meeting with any of the School's Designated Persons and share concerns, information and records with them.
- The Designated Person will consult with either of the other Designated Persons in order to determine the most appropriate action. They will keep a note of all relevant meetings and decisions. In times of emergency, in cases of immediate risk to the child, any Designated Person may act solely (although it is recommended that they first obtain telephone advice from Social Services or the Police).
- If making a referral to the Police or Social Services, be prepared to provide necessary information:
 - Who you are
 - The child's details (name, address, date of birth, etc.)
 - What you have been told or seen
 - Any relevant background information
 - Whether or not you have informed the parents/carers of the situation
- If making a telephone referral, obtain the contact details of the person to whom the referral is made, follow up with a written referral and be determined to check with Social Services and/or the Police (first within 48 hours) to discover who has been appointed as the relevant caseworker. Offer your assistance to work with the relevant authority and the family for the child's interests.
- If dealing with allegations against staff, be supportive to one another. It is common for allegations to arise against staff or the school, where parents/carers feel defensive and/or ashamed. Designated Persons will determine on all courses of action in relation to allegations against staff and will advise the College of Teachers if it is necessary to suspend a member of staff whilst an investigation is underway or action determined. Suspension is not an automatic action in cases of allegations of suspected or acknowledged/proven incidents. The College of Teachers must support the work and actions of the Designated Persons.
- Designated Persons will only release information to other colleagues, including the College of Teachers, after considering whether the value of sharing that information is consistent with the policy of 'safeguarding' the child and acting in the child's "best interests".

GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN

If you feel that yourself or any of your friends are being abused in any way, you MUST:

Tell your class teacher or any other member of staff or any adult that you trust...**Or...**

Go directly to any of the Designated Persons of the school, whose details are at the end of this sheet. You may contact them at home or at school...**Or...**

Telephone Childline on 0800 1111. Calls are free...**Or...**

Tell your Doctor...**Or...**

Tell the Police.

Contact Details

School telephone number: 020 8772-3504

Designated Persons:

- HELEN FRASER -----CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Home: 020 8671- 6524 Mobile: 07792 068 883

- SHEILA CAMPBELL----- CHILD PROTECTION DEPUTY

Office: 020 8772-3504 Mobile: 07711 742 864

Lambeth

Children and Young Peoples Service Referral and Assessment Team
020 7926-7868/020 7926-7856 Fax: 020 7926- 6847
Out of Hours Emergency: 020 7926-1000

Social Services Children's Unit 020 7926-9611

Police Child Protection Team 020 8649-1751

Local Police Brixton 020 7326-1212

Department of Health 08701 555 455

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 020 8800-5000

School Library

The library aims to provide quality books which will support Steiner education in general and the teaching of this School in particular.

The School library has been developed by a professional librarian and much of it is fully catalogued, classified and indexed.

Stock Policy

- To stock books reflecting all aspects of the School's curriculum.
- To stock non-fiction books for children for class/homework purposes.
- To stock reference books for use at School.
- To stock multi-cultural books.
- To stock classic works of children's fiction.
- To stock quality popular children's fiction.
- Not to stock non-book media.
- Not to stock racist or overtly sexist books (but allowing for historical context).
- Not to stock horror or gratuitously violent books.
- Not to stock interactive or cartoon books, comics, television spin-offs, sensationalist or gimmicky books.
- To protect children from unsuitable reading materials through stock categorisation.
- To support parents in their understanding of the principles and practice of Waldorf education.
- To provide parents and friends of the School with access to Rudolf Steiner's work and to other writings on Anthropomorphous.
- To stock books on other aspects of the Anthroposophical movement.
- To broaden and deepen the collection with works on related subjects, which may include works not representative of the views of the Anthroposophical movement.

Please see the School Library Team or ask at the office for recommended reading lists.

Bookshop

The School has a small, parent-run bookshop, which sells books on Waldorf education, parenting, child development, Anthropomorphous and related subjects, together with children's picture books and other works of fiction.

The bookshop is opened on Friday lunchtimes at school, on open days, at education workshops and school fairs.

The profits from this venture fund the School library.

Books on Anthropomorphous and Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and catalogues are also obtained from:

Rudolf Steiner Bookshop at
Rudolf Steiner House,
35 Park Road,
London, NW1 6XT
Telephone: 020-7723-4400

AND

Wellspring Bookshop,
5 New Oxford Street,
London, WC1A 1BA
Telephone: 020-7405-6101

Library Borrowing Rules

For Children

Each child may borrow up to two books, plus additional books for homework purposes.

Books are borrowed for up to four weeks, when they must be returned or renewed.

All books must be returned at the end of each term.

Children under Class III may only borrow books from the Junior Fiction collection and may only borrow non-fiction at the discretion of the librarian.

Only children in Class VI upwards may borrow books from the Senior Fiction section.

Protect the library books by using bags to carry them, by using bookmarks and by not eating or drinking whilst using them.

Books will not be lent out over the summer holidays. Loans over other school holidays are at the discretion of the librarian.

For Parents

Lost or damaged library books (other than wear and tear) must be paid for. The charge will reflect the extent of the damage or the replacement value of the book.

Parents must ensure their children look after and return books that they have borrowed.

A maximum of two books may be borrowed from the parents' library for a maximum of four weeks, when the books must be returned or renewed.

ABSENCE NOTE

Name:.....

Address:.....

Dear (Teacher's name).....,

My child.(Child's name).....

was absent from school on these dates.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Because.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signed:

Relationship to child:.....

Date:.....

REQUEST FOR ABSENCE

Name:.....

Address:.....

This is a request for my child / children

(Names).....

To be absent from school on the following dates:.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

Because.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Relationship to child:.....

Date:.....