

Steiner Education

Architecture that Educates
Holywood: a tolerant place
Gender
Sustainable Education



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The creation of a building of this size and significance within the UK Waldorf community is a rare occurrence, one we felt it appropriate to celebrate. Gary Turner's building is beautiful, innovative and translates pedagogical principles into architecture that supports the educational tasks of the movement curriculum.

A tolerant place: *A portrait of the Holywood Rudolf Steiner School in Northern Ireland*

One of the editorial policies we established was to feature individual schools. This is a first attempt at doing so. Given that *SE* does not have a large staff of journalists, it has taken a while to produce this feature. We hope it will be followed by other schools in subsequent numbers.

Gender: *A case for practice-based research?*

There are many aspects of our curriculum that need to be reviewed in the light of experience and recent studies. We know that children change and circumstances change and our curriculum must adapt in response. Recent studies have shown that there are significant differences between boys and girls in their development and this article highlights some of the issues. It first appeared in November in German in the *Erziehungskunst* magazine.

Sustainable Education: *A new Upper School approach – Waldorf College, Stroud, enters its third year* by Will Cretney

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SE regrets that, owing to illness, there is no article from Dr. Bettina Lohn in this issue

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Roxane Simon reviews *Foodwise. Understanding what we eat and how it affects us. The story of human nutrition* by Wendy E. Cook
Martyn Rawson reviews *Understanding Waldorf Education from the Inside Out* by Jack Petrash
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New feature

Children's Page: Lysandra Lumley, aged 10, invented and designed this page, including the game, puzzle, jokes and helpful book titles. We hope she and her friends will be providing us with more in coming editions.

Steiner Education...
is a magazine for parents, teachers and others interested in Steiner Waldorf education. Though based in the UK, it has an international perspective. The magazine is dependent on people sending in material and the editorial group welcomes contributions (sent as hard copy and – if possible – electronically as a word file)

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Editorial

A thought for Easter

"We see in the child how the spirit descends and weds human physicality. When we see that... our teaching will express what we can call a true belief in life, and this can be expressed as follows:

*The richness of matter
Impinges upon human senses
From the mysterious depths of the cosmos.
The clear light of the spirit
Floods the depths of the soul
From the heights of the cosmos.
They unite within the human being
To create wisdom-filled reality."*



This is how Rudolf Steiner described the task of the teacher in a lecture on 14th November 1910 in Nuremberg, almost a decade before the Waldorf School was founded.

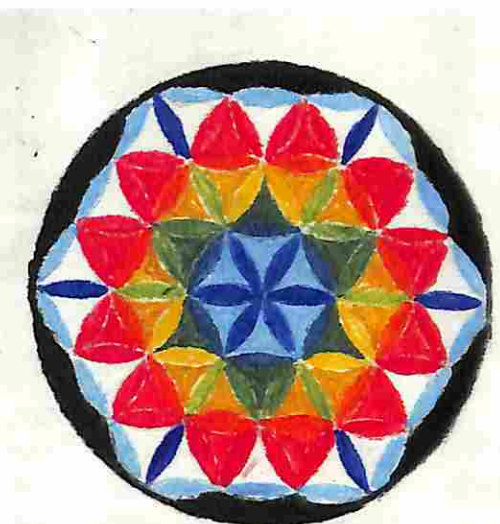
As teachers, we are called upon to carry a love of life to the children. The teacher must stand in life to be able to love it. To love something we must know it. To know something means not only to recognise its outer form, but also to have a sense of what the world reveals to us of its inner being. To really know something we have to engage with it. It is not enough to merely live in the world in a detached way like a spectator. We must learn to dwell in the world, which means to be embedded in a living context as a participant.

As Professor Tim Ingold puts it, "We do not need to think the world in order to live in it, but we do have to live in the world to think it".¹ We dwell in the world when we work, create and play. All these activities help us to create meaning. Meaning grows layer by layer in dialogue with the world. Knowing this has major consequences for education.

The ability we need in order to be able to engage meaningfully with the world is imagination. Intelligence alone is not sufficient. Our intellect operates at a distance from the world of reality, in creating mental pictures *in here* of the world *out there*. That kind of world becomes devoid of meaning because it is detached from its living context.

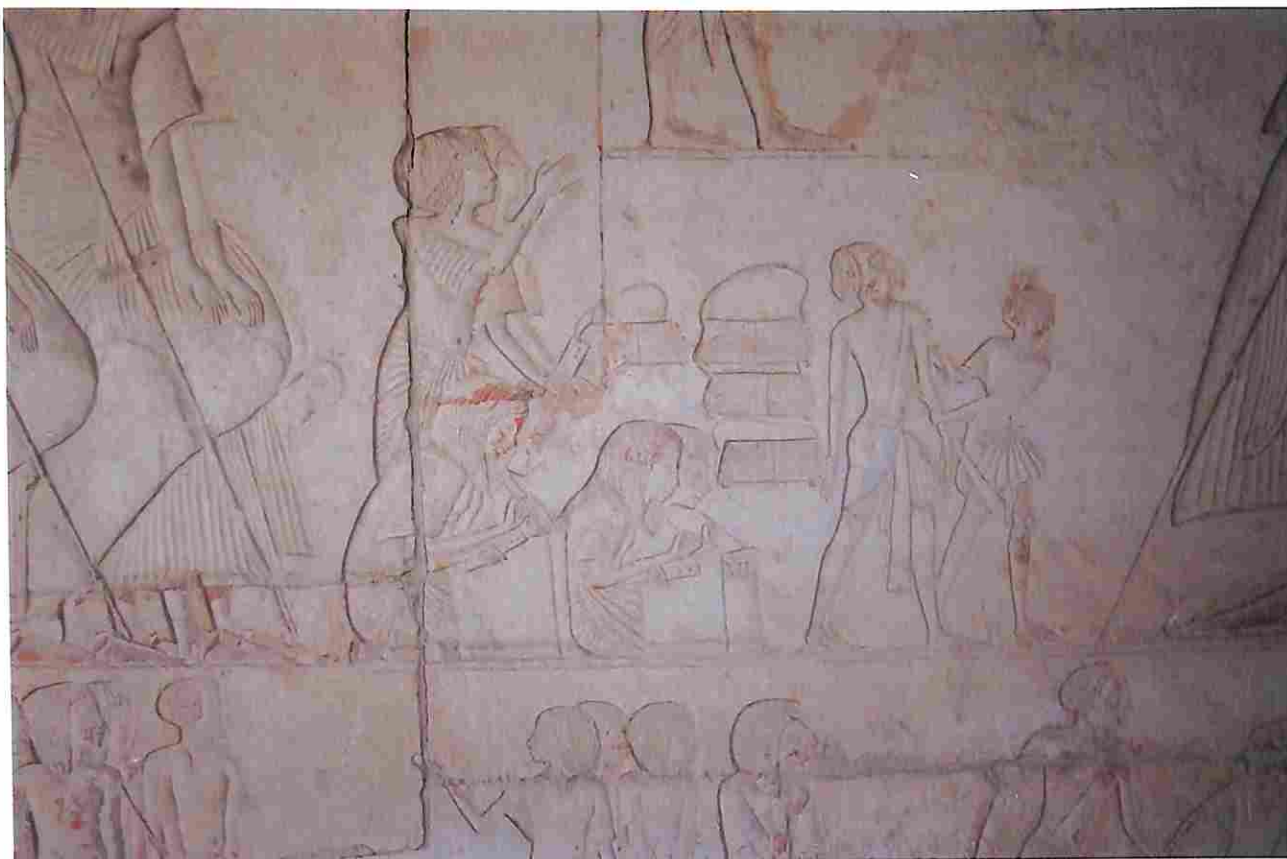
Imagination, on the other hand, does not arise detached from life but within its stream of activity. Imagination arises when we dwell in the world and engage with reality. Our powers of imagination are particularly stimulated by art and by nature. That is why education has to be an art (and not just the teaching of art). By presenting complex information in artistic form, in story for example, the imagination is awakened. To grasp the nature of processes is more useful than accumulating facts. When we engage in the world with warm-hearted interest, with empathy, nature reveals far more to us and at the same time we derive inner energy in the form of inspiration and imagination. The process is reciprocal. It is not only a question of what we get from the world but of what we are given. When the inner nature of life is recognised in the human heart, nature itself is enhanced – or, in religious terms, we would say redeemed. That is an Easter thought.

1. Ingold, T., *The Perception of the Environment: essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill*, Routledge, 2000.





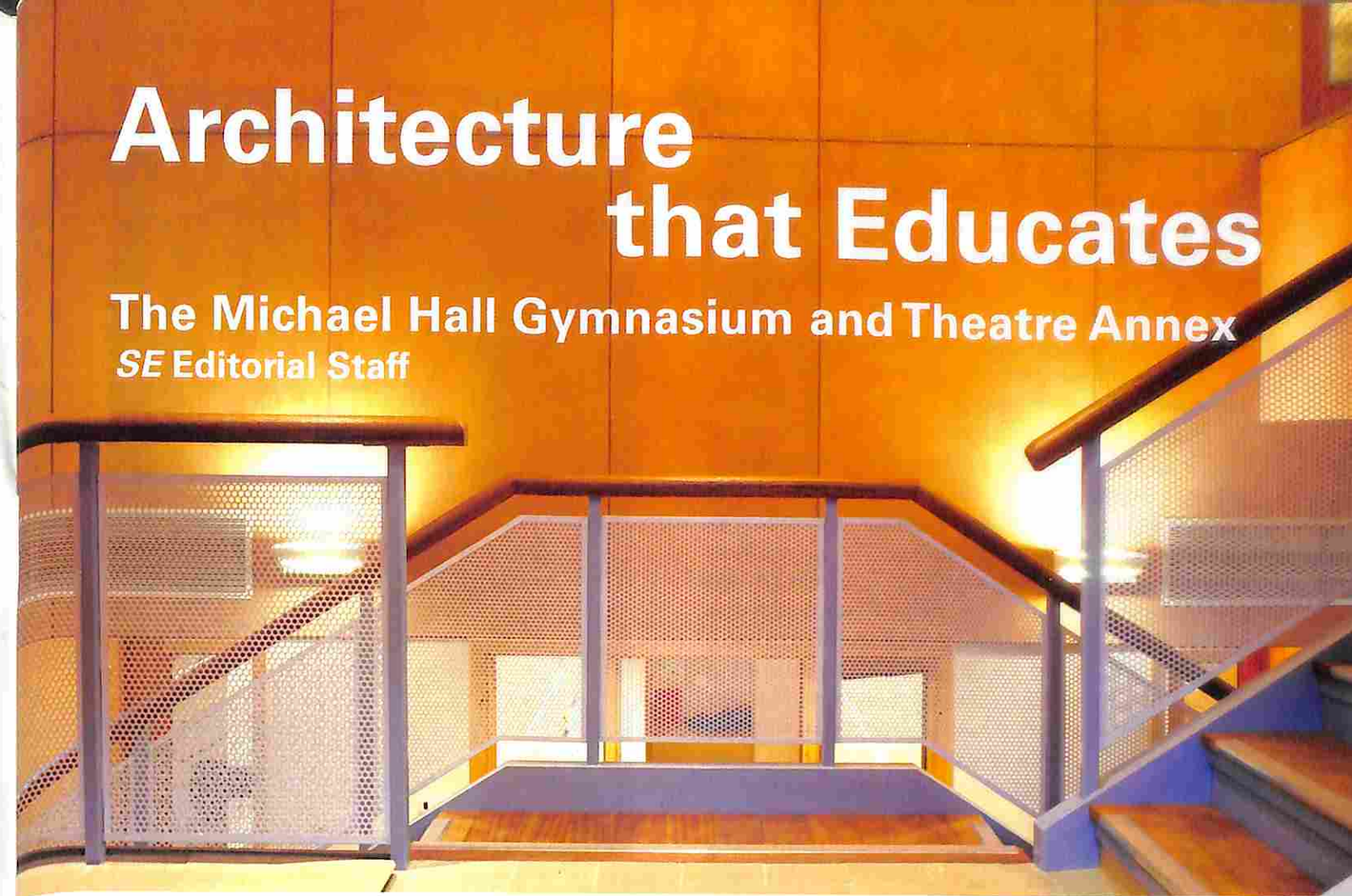
This magnificent sunflower from the Hollywood school is included to remind us of summer.



Many schools are discussing new furniture for the Lower School and many have dispensed with desks and chairs. This picture from Ancient Egypt shows us that there are no really new ideas. Bob Hamblett took this picture. It is from the recently discovered tomb of Horemheb at Saqqara and is dated around 1300 BC. It portrays the occupant of the tomb's fond memories of his childhood at the school of the scribes (notice the quiet contemplation, the posture and the slope of the desks).

Architecture that Educates

The Michael Hall Gymnasium and Theatre Annex
SE Editorial Staff



The environment in which a child is educated contributes to that education. This is especially true of school buildings, which is why Steiner Waldorf education pays such attention to its architecture – when it has the resources. A building provides both an *internal* and *external* environment. Internal spaces influence the way people experience themselves in space; one can feel centred or disoriented, oppressed or liberated, welcomed or rejected, burdened or uplifted. The external impact of architecture helps us relate to the location, the place. At its best architecture enhances and ‘*en-cultures*’ the landscape and supports and sustains the people who move in and through it. Good architecture helps us *dwell* in a place and not simply live (or work) there. It creates a physical cultural environment and the values it incorporates provide not only a space for human activity but also a meaningful context. Both form and function have to relate to the activities within a building in an active and not merely passive way. Buildings are realised thoughts and, as such, they influence the thoughts we have.

Perhaps the quintessential human quality is uprightness. Uprightness forms the basis for the way we stand in the world, how we orientate ourselves within the world and how we move. Movement education has the crucial task of developing individuality in and through

movement and uprightness. It also nurtures the social activity of interaction. A gymnasium is an educational environment for movement education and as such contributes particularly to the way that education works in support of those central aims. So it is particularly relevant what kind of environment is provided to support these educational tasks.

The new gymnasium at Michael Hall School is a wonderful example of how the educational principles of Steiner Waldorf education and those of architecture can meet creatively.

The Brief

The basic brief for the building, evolved over long consultations with teachers, students and professionals, specified a number of criteria, which related ultimately to the dimensions of the courts it was to encompass. Four badminton courts and a full size basketball court provided the essential dimensions of height (just over 9 metres), width (20 metres) and length (33 metres). Within this space other courts have been integrated such as volleyball and indoor tennis.

It was also required that the space be divided by a visual and acoustic screen so that two classes could be taught at the same time. The presence of the space was to be gentle rather than sharp

and echoing, as many sports halls tend to be. The acoustic qualities were particularly important as the voice of the teacher should not have to be loud to be heard and the sounds of the activities (running and jumping, ball games and the like) were not, as far as possible, to echo.

The teachers had views on how the space should feel. They wanted a sympathetic, non-industrial quality. It should feel uncluttered and with a minimum of visible fixings, fixtures and services. Sports halls often have a lot of technical detail visible in the walls and ceilings. This requirement was essentially met by providing an internal and external cladding to the primary steel structure.

Changing rooms were to provide facilities for two classes at the same time, as well as disabled access and toilets, separate staff toilets and changing facilities, a first aid room, service rooms and a central office space. A viewing gallery with room for at least 100 people was to be integrated into the main hall in such a way that the viewers felt close to the games being played. It was constructed with maximum sight lines and, especially, an unimpaired view for younger children. This was provided by a glass balustrade and angling the walls. The school has a lively sports programme with a number of basketball and volleyball teams, who have always had to play 'away from home'. Now the school expects to host several visits by opposing school teams each week in one or other of the team categories. A glazed lobby was also created in an anteroom to provide space for refreshments for visitors and spectators.

Furthermore, one end wall was specially constructed to provide a climbing wall.

There was a strong wish on the part of the school to maximise the use of natural light in the building, without compromising the requirements that there be no direct light and glare in the games area, especially for ball games. The building was to use ecologically sound materials and techniques wherever possible.



Externally the site had a number of major limitations and factors to take into account. The proximity to the Grade 2* listed building of the school's Kidbrooke Mansion and its location within the historic landscaped park, in part designed by Humphrey Repton, one of the leading landscape architects in the 18th Century, were the major considerations. Secondly the building had to relate to the existing and uncompleted school theatre building, as well as to the group of classroom buildings and other buildings that comprise the site. The planning authority was particularly concerned that the building should 'complete' the overall layout of the somewhat sprawling site. This also included the removal half a dozen ('temporary') large wooden huts that had been used during the Second World War as dormitories and had subsequently provided the school with large classroom spaces



for decades, but were now in a very poor state of repair. Their removal and [the] placing of the new building were to unify the remaining site. Finally the topography itself had to be taken into account. The site was a steep slope, with a fall of over 3.5 metres across the building's footprint. The ground had the added complications of groundwater in the form of several springs (a problem which had plagued the existing theatre building), and terraces of alluvial clay and little firm bedrock, sloping down to the river Kid.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge was to relate to and link up with the existing theatre (which is set into the steep slope). The new building was to include a theatre annex with entrance to [both] the stage and auditorium, green rooms, changing rooms, costume stores, toilets, a costume/handwork workshop, scene dock and stage workshop, as well as a loading bay.



Architecturally the two buildings had to find an aesthetically successful relationship.

Further requirements were for the building to have low maintenance for both the internal and external elements, since previous buildings on the school's site were felt to have failed in this respect and the school has a major ongoing building maintenance problem.

Overall the teachers required a space that was friendly, sympathetic, with human proportions that would enhance the sense of uprightness and movement. The child was to be met by qualities of sensory experience that were both calming or stimulating where they needed to be, embracing and warm, open and related to the outside environment visually and in terms of form. The spaces were to feel safe, secure and yet light in both senses as well as transparent. The building should contribute to the state of relaxed awareness that is the optimum condition for learning and development. Finally the building should be an integrated, intelligent whole in form and function.

The Solutions

The solutions arrived at by Gary Turner, the architect, and his team of consultant colleagues (engineers, quantity surveyors and of course the building contractors Sunninghill Construction) can be summarised under the following headings:

The ground and structure

The issues outlined above were addressed in the design and by cutting the building into the slope so that levels matched up with access routes and the theatre, whilst at the same time ensuring that through cut and fill the spoil could largely be accommodated on site. This was achieved and in so doing the ecological burden of transporting large quantities of spoil in lorries through the village was avoided.

Though originally conceived as a timber-framed





building with laminated portals, cost factors led to a more conventional steel frame, though with internal and external cladding and a thick layer of insulation using 'breathing wall' technology. The first three metres consist of robust masonry plinth, clad externally with locally-made multi-stock brick using clays from the locality with a range of colours from yellow, through red to buff. Above this plinth the external walls are clad in natural sawn cedar, whose colour (varying naturally in wet and dry conditions and weathering with age). The roof is a lead-grey aluminium material. The colour (and texture) of the cedar and the local brick provide not only a wonderful aesthetic response to the overall presence of the building in the landscape but also complement the buff colours of the local sandstone of Kidbrooke Mansion.

Internally, the main spaces have been clad in stained plywood, and the plinth plastered up to three metres. The colour scheme reflects the external appearance but enhances this through warm buff and ochre tones. Together with the rich tones of the oak floor, the ceiling of the gymnasium, which consists of wooden laths, visually completes the colour environment.

The form

Externally the building has a sculptural form which is achieved by the profiled eaves and

the angles and planes of the roof shapes. This sculptured form is further emphasised by the change from sawn to planed cedar boards at right angles to each other. The building appears smaller than it is and presents a range of fascinating and different shapes to the eye as one moves around the building, through the subtle play of many planes on the smaller roofs of the theatre annex, changing rooms, equipment store and curtain tower.

The planes

The lines of the existing adjacent theatre are taken up and transformed so that the two (three including the theatre annex) buildings merge into an integrated skyline, yet retain their identity as separate buildings. With the removal of the old wooden huts the new gymnasium and theatre together now form and define the overall context of the school buildings so that the central (yet to be) landscaped space provides a heart for the school site.

Internally, the shape of the gymnasium – perhaps the greatest challenge in the design, since most sports halls end up as vast rectangular spaces determined by the shape of such functions as basketball courts – has an embracing feel to it. One is not overwhelmed by the volume of space, and yet the volume seems surprising in relation to how big the building appears from outside. The internal spatial qualities reflect the external sculptured forms. This is achieved through a transition from the transformation of the rectangular floor plan (determined by the full-size basketball court) to sculptured forms at ceiling level. The vertical lines of the walls are interrupted and opened out by an outward slope at three metres (a transition from plastered wall to ply cladding). The low pitch of the ceiling is also angled and tapered at the upper corners. The viewing gallery, with its glass balustrade, is so positioned that from the perspective of the viewer it feels part of the hall space rather than attached to it. It has sight lines which enable viewers to see right into the corners of the hall. Overall, this gives the impression of several height levels, widening gently and then closing in again above. The sculptured element is also reflected in the plan. Whilst starting with the rectangular court shape at floor level, the walls taper in above the three-metre line to enhance the embracing feeling of the space.

The changing rooms and showers – another problematic area in many sports halls – have been designed to feel part of the overall circulation spaces, yet providing appropriate intimacy. They are separated from the main lobby space

by floor to ceiling wooden louvres that provide visibility and acoustic access for staff supervision with privacy for male and female changing areas. The changing rooms and lobby space are united by a sloping roof that, from the entrance, gives the impression of an open space and yet provides visual connection to the lower levels and access to the gymnasium. The spaces are shaped to provide an embracing and friendly feeling, in spite of the hard-tiled wall and floor surfaces. Colours are warm and the rooms are well lit with natural light. A staff office has windows that enable all-round supervision of both the gymnasium and circulation spaces. The galley is accessed through a bridge over the lower entrance lobby.

All three levels of the building are visually linked in what is, in effect, one continuous space at ceiling level.

The colour scheme and materials enhance the friendliness of the environment. All tactile surfaces, such as handrails, stair treads and seating have been done in natural-finish wood.

Many buildings that attempt to realise the sculptural qualities of anthroposophical architecture end up looking like beautiful sculptures from the outside but do not work internally, where spaces are limited and impractical, with odd shaped rooms and corridors. Such buildings are often heavy inside and are frequently dark because of the mass of the sculptured external skin. The achievement of this building is that the internal spaces are light; they relate inside to outside and above all they are harmonious and practical.

Light

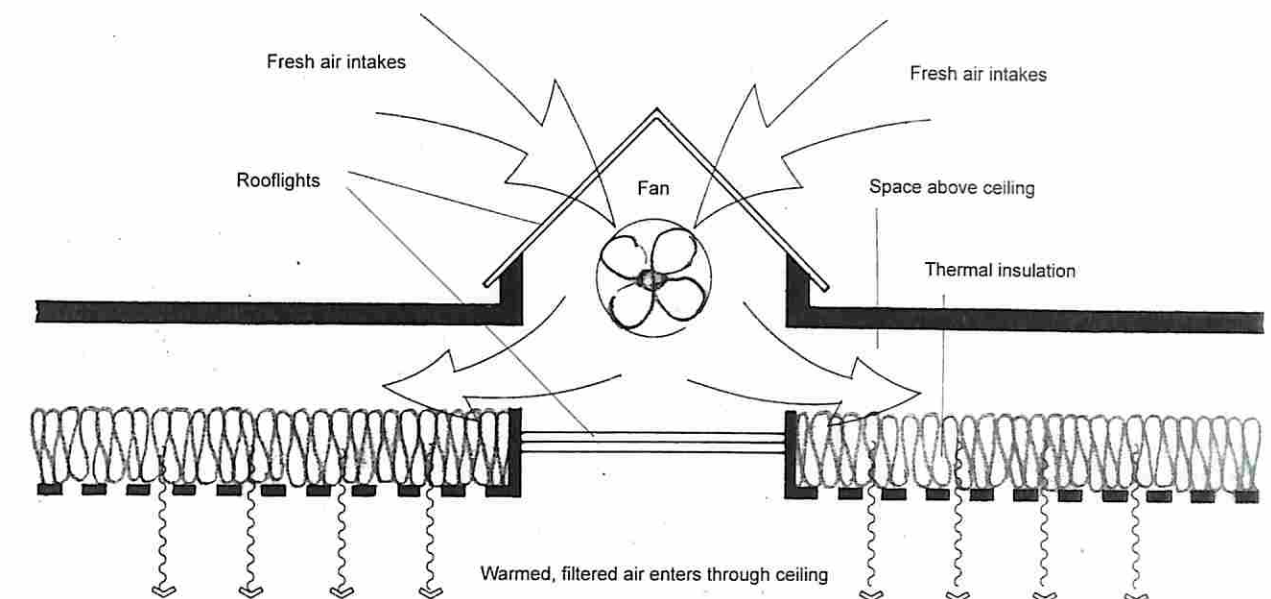
The building makes maximum use of natural

light yet avoids glare in the main gymnasium. Indirect lighting is essential for sports involving high, fast-moving objects, such as volleyballs and badminton shuttlecocks. This is achieved through three transverse pitched roof lights which span the main roof. These project daylight which is reflected via wooden baffles in the ceiling. In the theatre annex borrowed light is directed through large glazed surfaces into lower rooms. The workshops and costume stores are lit through large high windows. Changing rooms and green rooms are lit through high-level frosted glass and all circulation spaces are lit through large glazed areas from three sides. This not only provides daylight but does so in a dynamic relationship to the passage of the sun throughout the day. This feature, which gives a constantly changing light quality, more than anything else, links the internal spaces of the building to the external natural environment. Furthermore the large number of windows provides many, often surprising views of the Kidbrooke estate and surrounding landscape.

The artificial lighting is unobtrusive (in the gymnasium strip lights are placed within the baffles) and can be regulated to complement the natural lighting.

Air

Sports halls are notoriously difficult to heat and ventilate. Systems often involve crude fans and blowers which take up a lot of space, are noisy and wasteful of energy. In such spaces the overriding impression is of sweat and stale air. For this reason Gary Turner chose the very recent and innovative system known as PORE ventilation. This is only the second building in the UK to use it, though it has been used more frequently in Scandinavia.



The system essentially involves small low-energy fans at roof level blowing fresh air into the space between ceiling and roof. Because of the slight pressure gradient that is generated the air is drawn down through a layer of insulation material (Warmcell – made from re-cycled newsprint). The air arrives in the gymnasium space filtered and warmed by the heat absorbed in the insulation material – heat which would otherwise be lost. Theoretically, if correctly balanced, the system should prevent all heat loss through the roof. Additionally, small fans draw the air from the large gymnasium space through the circulation spaces and into the changing rooms and showers where it is drawn out again. The overall effect is a quiet (the fans are basically inaudible), pleasant, comfortable and fresh atmosphere. Furthermore it is very energy efficient.

Warmth

Underfloor heating (through water pipes) has the advantage that it prevents condensation on an otherwise cold floor and wall and glazed surfaces. This also prevents stale air settling at floor level. Underfloor heating obviously also means that the main warmth is radiated in the lower part of the building where all the activity takes place. It cools at higher levels where it meets the incoming warmed air at the ceiling.

The floor

Throughout the evolution of this building, which naturally went through many costing (read cost-cutting) exercises, the quality of this floor always retained the highest priority and indeed it meets the highest possible specification for a natural timber floor. Essentially it is a double sprung construction in oak. Built on a lattice structure, it is equally sprung across its entire length (as opposed to sprung between the floor joists). This provides a highly sympathetic response to jumping and springing and is very kind to ankles and hip joints. Those who have already played basketball and volleyball on it or done gymnastics have immediately noticed these astonishing qualities. It also looks beautiful and is expected to have a very long life. The oak was chosen by the games teachers who inspected the material in use in other buildings.

The theatre annex

This building provides access to the auditorium and stage;



a ramped loading bay provides external access. There are green rooms, changing rooms, two costume stores, toilets, a high stage dock store and a costume workshop that can double as a handwork room. All are provided with direct or borrowed daylight. This complex group of spaces is nevertheless integrated by a central passageway.

A building for the future

The creation and funding of this building mark a significant moment in the development of Michael Hall School. It took a long time and many hard decisions but both were part of a process of transformation that the school has gone through in its educational and organisational development. Architecturally the school has taken a major step towards unifying and modernising its facilities. The removal of the old wooden huts and the renovation of the two old games halls – one into the new library and the other into the Dick Chester Studio Theatre for eurythmy and smaller studio performances – were adjuncts to the new building project. Once the school has resolved the issue of renovating its old Clockhouse building (closed due to major structural damage) it will have a very comprehensive and varied building stock.

New buildings are events – not to say works of art – in their own right. But they are also expressions of a vision. This new building has arisen out of an educational vision that relates especially to the renewal of movement education which the school's movement department has pioneered. Martin Baker, as the senior member of that team, has done more than anybody in the educational world to develop a thoroughly new and vital approach to movement education. In designing this building Gary Turner has made a significant architectural contribution to education too.



A Tolerant Place

The Hollywood Rudolf Steiner School

SE Editorial Staff

Teacher: "Why did the Bronze Age people settle here in Hollywood?"

Jake (Class Four): "I suppose it was handy for the newsagents".

The newsagents was not only where Jake's Gran worked, but also where the children gathered to buy sweets and spend their pocket money – so the answer seemed very reasonable indeed. Hollywood still has a small-town feel, though it is rapidly becoming upwardly mobile with bistros, smart shops and associated property prices. But up until recently this small town – five miles from Belfast city centre – had, like much of Northern Ireland, a provincial feel to it, and you might see Van Morrison in the window of a High Street café behind dark glasses and beneath a sombre black hat. You can see the giant cranes of the famous Harland and Woolf shipyards, City Airport in the foreground and from up the hill you can see across the misty stretch of grey waters that are Belfast Lough to the dark brooding mountains overlooking the great and often troubled city.

Being Ireland the air can also be incredibly clear with sharp, bright, earth colours and sparkles on the waters, as it was memorably on that famous

Good Friday when the world paused to mark the birth of the peace process. It seemed so clear nothing could dim the light shining in on that day. Well, the clouds have gathered again, and cleared and darkened again, as the politicians wheel and deal and splutter and shout and the sparks fly, and the bullets too. But for the regular visitor to Northern Ireland the difference is marked as the region races to catch up with the rest of the UK in its normality. People say it will take a generation or two for the wounds to heal. The frustrations and fissures run deep and wide but – don't say it too loud – it's becoming more and more difficult to imagine the Troubles returning to their worst. What will remain are all the ordinary problems of class and crime and resentment and the sorry messes people make of their lives. And all the energy that's always been here, all the wonderful humour and creativity and intelligence that seems so typical of Northern Irish people, will make this a thriving community in due course. But there's a way to go yet.



Parents old and new

“I come from the worst aspects of the conflict”, says Francis Murphy from the Ardoyne area of Belfast, a worker with intravenous drug users and a new parent at the Rudolf Steiner School. “It’s a big cultural shift, but it’s what we want for our wee lad for his future. Sure we’re concerned about the logistics of getting here from North Belfast but it’s down to what we can contribute to the school, it’s down to our support for the values of this school, which are our own. We wanted our wee lad to be educated in an environment with values it can sustain. The previous school also had values and good decent committed people as teachers, but that school couldn’t maintain its values given the external pressures on the curriculum. Jeez, our wee five-year-old was coming home every day with an hour’s homework and he really had to pull himself in and stop being a child. We could see that the flame in him would be extinguished. However he turns out is not for the system to determine, that’s in God’s hands. All we can do is offer him a supportive environment that can nurture him”.

“And you’ll feel at home here” interrupted Angela Croy passionately, a mother with three boys in the school. Angela and three other mothers had given up this morning to meet informally with some new parents who had joined the school and, as the rain teemed down, served endless cups of tea and rounds of buttered toast in a converted old garage at the school. “Your children will want to learn here, they’ll want to know everything”.

“I’ve learned so much from my children – imagine boys coming home and teaching us finger knitting! And, what’s more, it was so interesting

when the teachers invited us in and not only showed us what the children were learning but also what finger knitting was good for”. Catherine McBride, another of the active parents in the school, went on to explain how the teachers really care about the children – even how a child sits on a chair is interesting to them because it tells them something about how that child is. Children are really valued for who they are.

Another new parent, Jim who works in building control, said they’d brought their daughter, who was already 15, to the school because she had lost her confidence and was deeply unhappy. “They’ve given me back the girl I had lost. She likes the way they learn here. She finds it so much more interesting and stimulating. The relationship with the teachers is much better, she feels respected and she feels she can trust them. They’ve given her a broader perspective and in its very structure”.

Francis stood up to leave. He had to return to work. He turned to stress one more thing he felt strongly about the school and wished I’d report. “Everything about this place resonates with trust – put that down will you”.

“And you’ll not be let down” called out Angela as Francis went out into the pouring rain.

The state of funding

Unfortunately one cannot say that of the political process as far as the Holywood School is concerned. For many years now the school has been lobbying for state funding in Northern Ireland. It’s a familiar tale but none the easier to accept for that. Every politician or official who comes here makes the same astonished noises... We didn’t know what excellent work is going on here. You have our full support. We think you are doing great things. Just what the community needs. And yet and yet. Politically the time is not right. You don’t meet the criteria. Could you just document everything you do... And the school has. Over the years great mounds of paper have been carted to various ministries and boards. The goal posts keep moving. Of course Northern Ireland is a special case. If only the Assembly would settle down to work. The results of the latest election have not exactly made things easier with a highly polarised coalition forming a government.

Still, nothing daunted, a new group spearheaded (in a non-violent way) by two young Irish mothers, Karin Young and Katherine McBride – supported by the eternally optimistic and incredibly hard-working teacher David Urieli – have, as Kathleen



put it, “walked the road and talked to everyone we were told to talk to until we came to Stormont”. They got a long way down that road to being heard in the Assembly until it was dissolved. Martin McGuinness, the then minister for Education and long time negotiator for Sinn Fein, had shown a remarkably open mind to issues of educational reform. By all, even non-sectarian, accounts he was a good minister. Positive noises have been made, especially by the South Eastern Library Board, the local government body who would be called upon to fund the school were it receive state funding. So there is hope and good reason to believe that one day, not too far off, Northern Ireland will have state funded Steiner Education.

Pioneers

The Holywood Rudolf Steiner School was founded 27 years ago and for a long time was the only non-sectarian school in the province. Uniquely in Northern Ireland, it has integrated families of all backgrounds, Catholic, Protestant and otherwise, by the simple expedient of not making it explicitly or implicitly an issue. Parents are not asked, and *officially* the school does not know, the breakdown of family religious backgrounds – though as anyone who lives in Northern Ireland knows, everyone knows. Suffice it to say the school has always reflected the balance in the community.

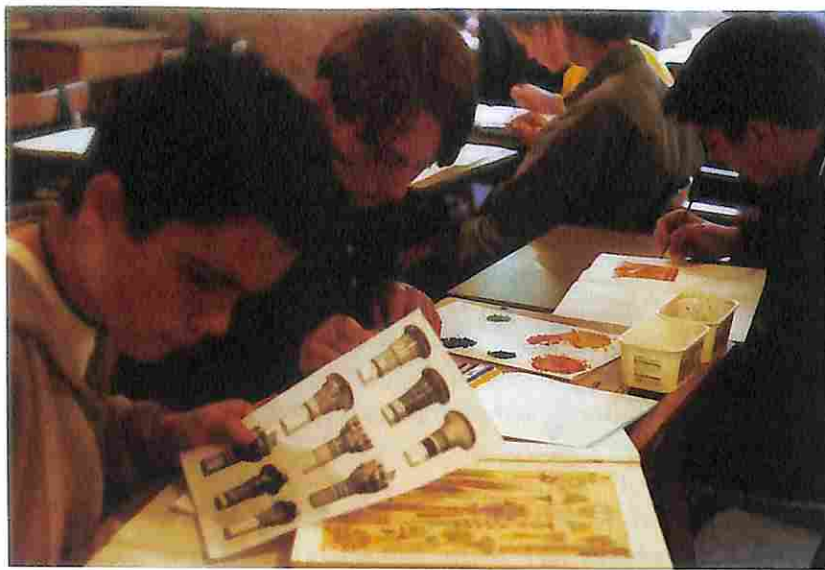
We asked why Holywood – why a Steiner school in Holywood? The answers were intriguingly interesting and varied. Some saw a link to

the location. Holywood was one of the few places during the long Troubles that could have tolerated a school with a difference. Though the area is predominantly Protestant and Presbyterian, it was long home to British regiments from Liverpool with many Catholic soldiers who married local girls thus creating an unusually high proportion of mixed marriages. An obvious link is with the Glencraig Camphill Community, which has given the school support since its birth. But others pointed to less obvious links. Margaret Rutherford has been the Kindergarten teacher from the first day. She put it simply: “It was meant to be here. We could have moved into Belfast or various other places. We could have sold the property for big money but each time the question came up it was decided to stay and I think that was right”.

Deep history

The place is certainly special. The school is based at “Highlands”, in a villa surrounded by beautiful cedar trees on a raised mount overlooking the town. The view in fair weather is broad, across the Lough. The internationally known Slovenian sculptor, author and landscape healer, Marco Pogacnik, on a recent visit, described how special the place was in the spiritual topography of Northern Ireland. The Holy Wood – the Sanctum Boschum – was a sacred place for thousands of years. Following the retreat of the ice sheets after the last Ice Age, Mesolithic hunters passed through. Bronze Age farmers tilled the rich hilltops and erected grave chambers, and the prominent mound called the Motte (its Norman name) or Ard Mac-Nasca (its Irish name). Saint Laiseran founded a Celtic Christian monastery here in AD 640 that was later associated with the famous centre in nearby Bangor. From there monks went out to found communities in Iona, Northumberland, Southern Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Later the Franciscans had a community here until the Plantation, when the English colonised the region and drove out the native Irish. The various wars and civil wars that scarred Ireland from the times of Elizabeth I onwards, left their traces in Holywood too and the earth was rich in shed blood. There is no doubt that the spiritual roots of the school go down deep into that soil. Curiously, the Holywood Rudolf Steiner School has had a long supportive relationship with the Waldorf school in Bochum in Germany – the coincidence of names suggests a deeper connection.

The school was founded by a group of people but the guiding spirit was Saralies van den Briel, a Dutch woman with a tragic biography, but heroic energy. She had suffered, as many of her landsfolk



did during the German occupation, experiencing starvation and the barbarity of war and racism. She came to work in the therapeutic Camphill Community at Glencraig and subsequently joined up with others to found the school. The idea was to found a school to heal the suffering and span the sectarian divide in Belfast.

In a discussion with some of the longer-serving staff members we reflected on the many trials and tribulations that the school had been through. We asked what kept the flame alive. David Urieli spoke for most when he laconically stated "it is all down to the boss". We all understood he was referring to Saralies, who died not long after the founding of the school.

The local community

The school has a warm supportive relationship with the town. People (such as the lady at the newsagents) think of the school as a place where the children are happy. At the recent opening of the National-Lottery-funded new classroom and laboratory building, representatives of all the local political parties were present (it's true there was an election – but it is indicative that they all wished to be seen at the school). The school has a Corporate Bursary Committee made up of local business people who raise funds and support the school. The local Imax Cinema recently provided its theatre for a school fund-raising function.

Though pupils numbers have declined from a highpoint of around 250 down to around 160, there is a positive feel to the school, once more. Many people expressed optimism and a new generation of active parents have been helping the school restructure and renew itself. The school's greatest assets have always been its pupils. Though the pupils have to leave at age 17 to complete their education at local secondary

schools, they are most welcome at them. Local Head teachers speak highly of Holywood students and the school has a very proud record of achievement among its former pupils.

Jacinta McIlhone, current Kindergarten teacher, former class teacher and mother of four children who have gone all the way through the school (one of whom is now teaching there), said, "this school has always given me a sense of coming home. Some of the teachers we have had are among the most remarkable people I have ever come across; best friends have been associated with this school.

It feels good and I feel optimistic about the school at present. And of course the wonderful children. That's why I am here. However, if the Irish Steiner Schools' movement is to make a difference, we need several more schools. The problem is getting teachers. Mind you, having said that, we do seem to get sent the people we need!"

Nancy, the Bursar, an English woman who has lived in Northern Ireland for 27 years ("I wouldn't ever want to go back to England") said that the school is very idealistic about how it runs, but "it does work. We have no hierarchy but we have personalities who can show leadership and who can develop the capabilities we need. That is what makes this place work". She also said it would break her heart if the school ever had to lose a child for financial reasons, a feeling that the school has turned into a policy which belongs to its core values – the kind of deep seated, non-negotiable values that Francis Murphy spoke of. Chrystel Haupt, a teacher with a long connection to the school (so long, her Irish accent would have convinced me) said, "We have a place in the community, maybe with some misunderstandings, but local people have a positive impression of this school. Our pupils speak for themselves in the community and their voices carry the most weight. We have the children of some our old pupils".

As regular visitors to the Holywood Rudolf Steiner School we are always drawn back. It's not the weather "The summers are tempered by cool refreshing breezes which render the air particularly salubrious... the inhabitants are generally healthy and robust" as it says about Holywood in the visitors' guide to County Down. It's the "Craic" as they say, it's the amazingly friendly banter, it's the unmistakable lilt of the local accent, which lends itself to words of optimism, passion and commitment. And it's the deep glow of burning idealism.



Gender: a case for practice-based research?

Martyn Rawson

Alongside a report on the San Francisco earthquake of April 19th 1906, the *Manchester Guardian* newspaper ran a report entitled "Co-Education". According to the report, the Ladybarn School at Withington in Manchester had been following the principles of Froebel and Pestalozzi since 1873. Central to this pedagogical initiative was the concept of co-education. The article concluded with the statement:

The common objection that to exact the same amount of work from girls as from boys must unduly strain the powers of the girls has proved not to be well founded.

Today many people would say that the greatest educational strain on the girls is not the work itself – indeed they generally do better than the boys. No, the greatest educational challenge for the girls is the boys, or at least some of them!

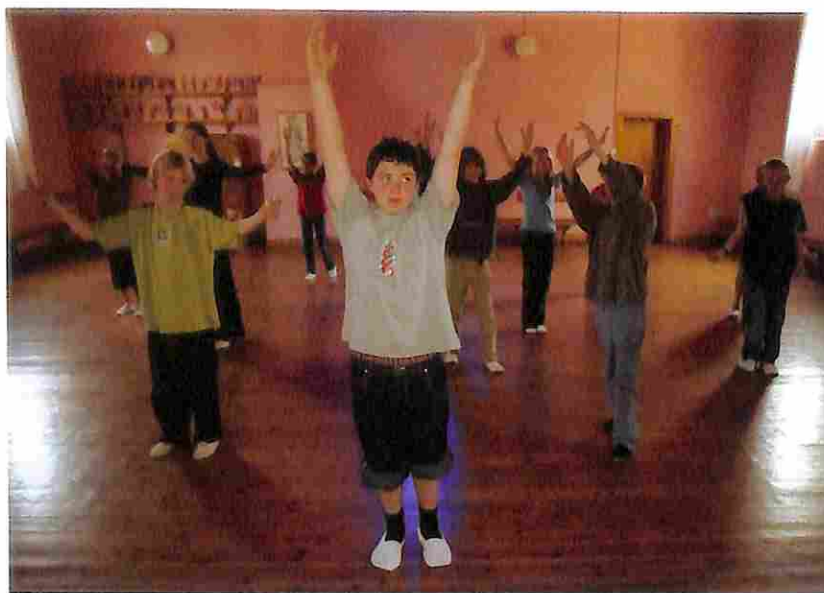
The trouble with boys...

A student teacher recently posed a question, which led me to re-visit a pile of research I have been collecting for some years. Her question was, "why is it that boys are usually the ones to make the lessons difficult?" In the ensuing

conversation, other students (with varying degrees of confidence) supported this view.

As an experienced teacher, I would have to say that this judgement, though somewhat undifferentiated, is broadly true. There is a serious and complex issue here. My impression is that, generally speaking, the number of children in our classes who are difficult to teach in group situations, and require increasing amounts of individual attention, has increased as a percentage of the whole. And of this increasing group of children with behavioural or learning difficulties, the majority are boys.

It does seem to be generally the case (and I can only speak of recent experience in Britain) that many boys do find it more difficult than girls to participate constructively in lessons in a whole variety of different ways. This may manifest as not being able to sit still and listen, in being unrestrainedly attention seeking and noisy, in being socially inept, in having more learning difficulties, in disruptive behaviour and sometimes in being aggressive or destructive. The sum result of these behaviours is that the pace and tone of the lessons is often determined



by the boys and that this is detrimental to the learning processes in the classroom.

Girls generally appear to be more willing to participate in the social context of the classroom, they are more patient and socially aware, more eager to please the teacher and comply with social forms and rules. From the perspective of the new or inexperienced teacher at least they definitely appear to be easier to manage in the classroom.

I would also immediately modify this generalisation by saying that the phenomenon varies greatly with the age of the pupils. Furthermore, it seems equally obvious that girls have probably just as many problems as boys, only they tend to disrupt the lessons less. As we shall see, girls do bring their own problems along too, but they do seem generally easier to work with in class. In fact girls may suffer more from their problems, but this individual suffering has less impact on classroom management.

Do girls pay the price?

The question that really worried me, however, was the suggestion that because girls are generally more tolerant, or at least more compliant, they take a back seat in class and let the difficult boys dominate. One further comment really made me sit up. "Yes and it seems to me that girls pay the price for dealing with this".

Can this be true? Anecdotal evidence suggests that boys do get the lion's share of attention; and they set the pace ("we can only start when everyone is ready"); they get the biggest rewards (because their efforts to behave and be socially constructive appear the more significant); and they set the tone of the lessons. Furthermore, my students asked, could it be that boys benefit

more than girls from the creativity and freedom that Waldorf education offers? In more rigid educational systems, boys would be suppressed and less able to develop their potential. They may benefit from all the distinctive aspects of Waldorf education (class teacher continuity, strong rhythms and clear structures, teaching through pictures and other imaginative methods, learning through doing, the strong narrative structure of the lessons and so on). However, do the boys benefit at the expense of the girls, whose own development and self-expression is held back by boys? The answer at present seems to be: it appears so but we don't really know. We need to investigate to

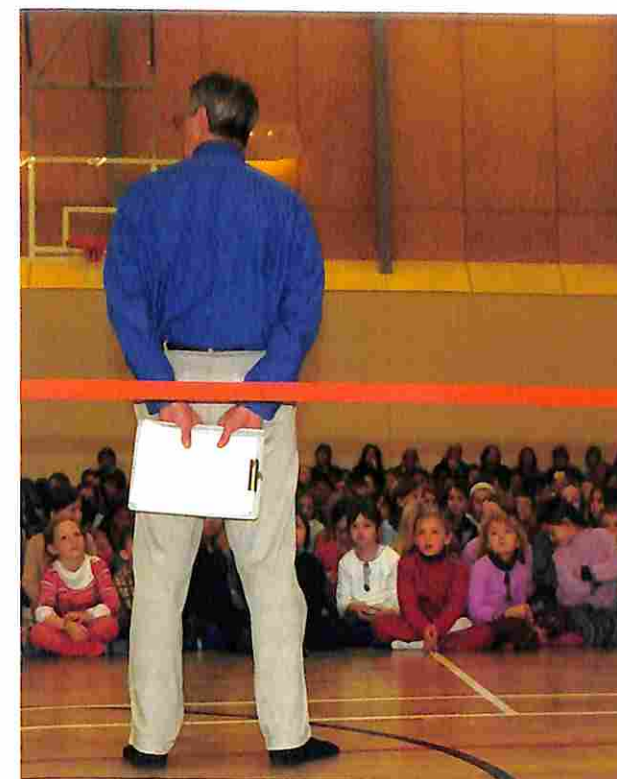
see how much of this superficial appearance reflects an underlying truth.

As an Upper School teacher I have certainly witnessed the phenomenon of girls with much greater levels of maturity and sensitivity, say in Class 10, becoming increasingly frustrated by having the quality of their lessons brought down to the level of coltish (or yobbish, if you want to be less sympathetic) behaviour by the boys. These girls may keep quiet about it – withdrawing into their private lives, putting less and less effort into contributing to the lessons – to the general impoverishment of the overall quality. In some not-infrequent cases, they simply give up and leave school. One or two I know have subsequently blossomed in all-girl schools. As one girl put it, "you can just get much better without those stupid boys!" I have also observed, whilst visiting lessons in the Lower School, that girls may lose focus and motivation as the teacher tries to sort out a few disruptive boys. Once they have lost that interest, they then get involved in other things not related to the lesson. It is only a matter of time before this becomes habit and their learning potential is clearly reduced.

Before irritated Waldorf teachers stop reading at this point, let me say here that the best way to redress imbalances between the sexes in terms of overall development is, of course, the Waldorf Curriculum. I don't say that merely to appease the Waldorf community, nor out of faithful solidarity to an ideal. I say it from conviction based on experience. Nevertheless I believe we do have a problem.

Problem, what problem?

Confronted with such observations and questions a range of responses is possible from teachers (the following examples are



not invented, only emphasised for journalistic purposes, i.e., 'sexed up'):

- Denial: this problem does not exist in Waldorf education where the co-education ideal works out...well, ideally.
- The deficit model: this problem has never occurred in my class because I am such a good teacher (and by implication, where the problem occurs, the reason is due to deficient teaching skills).
- The Curriculum is the answer: a less personalised version of the deficit model is the commonly-reiterated statement that the Waldorf Curriculum addresses all imbalances and if taught properly works wonders.
- The GM (gender-modified) Waldorf Curriculum: in some schools (once upon a time in a far-away land) fairy tales, legends and history were restructured to emphasise female role models, and to include female discoverers, painters, architects, scientists and the women in famous men's lives. (This approach also holds good for ethnic/non-European heroes).
- The Karma explanation: if such problems occur (in other people's classes) the resultant tensions are almost certainly the working out of the law of Karma and therefore necessary and beyond the pedagogical remit of the teacher, who aims to educate the higher being of the child, or even address the group soul of the class.
- The Steiner quotation: need more be said?

In response I can briefly reply:

- Sorry, but there is a problem. It may not be critical but it is worthy of our attention for reasons this article seeks to outline.
- Good teachers will always find solutions but the phenomenon is real and requires insight, even if that only means studying what good teachers do to solve it. Teaching method is always at least as important as content. One relevant question is: as an education movement, can we learn from good practice?
- Gender Modification addresses symptoms not causes.
- The point about karma is that we don't just stand back and let it take its course. The point is that we try to recognise and understand its workings, thus creating new karma that frees the individual.
- Obviously our task is to use the anthroposophical approach to deepen our own powers of observation and thinking. As teachers our task is specifically to read the developing child as he/she presents, and respond pedagogically. One interesting aspect of Steiner's main observations on the issue of gender is that they mostly address the period of puberty.¹ Most current research sees gender difference as being significant from much earlier on.

Waldorf education is justly proud of its long history of co-education; that boys learn to knit and girls learn to hammer iron. We expose children early on to archetypes of human individuation through fairy tales, legends and myths (frequently a target of suspicion by feminists for promoting stereotypical gender roles). Social integration is a strong motif throughout the curriculum, as is the theme of emancipation. Our schools are non-hierarchical and thus free of paternalism. Yes, all true and all achievements of significance. "But" asks the persistent and academic-minded feminist, "is there any evidence that Waldorf pupils are less prone to gender stereotyping?" Are the sexes fully socially integrated within age groups? Is there any evidence that Waldorf old scholars show better or worse gender stereotyping in their subsequent careers, compared with people from similar socio-economic backgrounds?" "Er, we don't know", would have to be the answer. This points to the urgent need for research.

Research tasks

On the one hand gender differences in development and learning are questions that call for sensible and creative pedagogical strategies. On the other hand the very issue raises questions about the whole basis of our understanding of the nature of the developing human being. It brings the whole nature/nurture question into

sharp focus. What is genetically predetermined, or at least provided as genetic potential, and what is the result of upbringing and education? What role does individual destiny play in questions of development?

Furthermore, we have to ask to what extent has the anthroposophical understanding of human nature kept pace with the discoveries of modern science? How do we interpret modern science from the perspective of spiritual science? And, equally crucially, we are forced to ask to what extent has Waldorf education kept pace with the actual developmental needs of the children.

What can we learn from contemporary science?

Anyone who reads the popular scientific literature (as a busy teacher one can hardly tackle the endless forest of scientific research papers) will be aware that our contemporary understanding of what it is to be human has been enormously extended by two crucial and related fields of research: the exploration of the human genome and neuroscience. Since science, in spite of its own protestations, always reflects the social mores of the age, we also have to take account of the context in which science contributes to our evolving picture of the human being. Having spent over a dozen years researching the question of human origins in contemporary anthropology,² I am very aware of the influence

of political correctness on current theory – most of it entirely appropriate, one would have to say, and not only in redressing the balance of generations of white, male euro-centricism. However, the question of differences between the sexes is increasingly coming back onto the agenda having been put down exclusively to nurture, rather than nature.

From both the study of genetics and the evolutionary history of our nature, and from the brain sciences, we now have a lot of evidence about the differences between male and female. Most readers will by now be aware that men are from Mars and women are normal!

So let's look at some of the facts about boys and girls that may be relevant in Waldorf education, since they appear to be universal. Let us look at some well-documented behaviour differences between boys and girls.³

Some interesting facts about boys and girls

All the studies cited below refer to averages. Most of the population share equal traits. Most boys and men show the same levels of empathy as girls and women, and most girls show the same level of systematising skills (to quote two of the most important differences). It is only at the extremes that differences pertain. Nevertheless, statistically, the differences are significant.



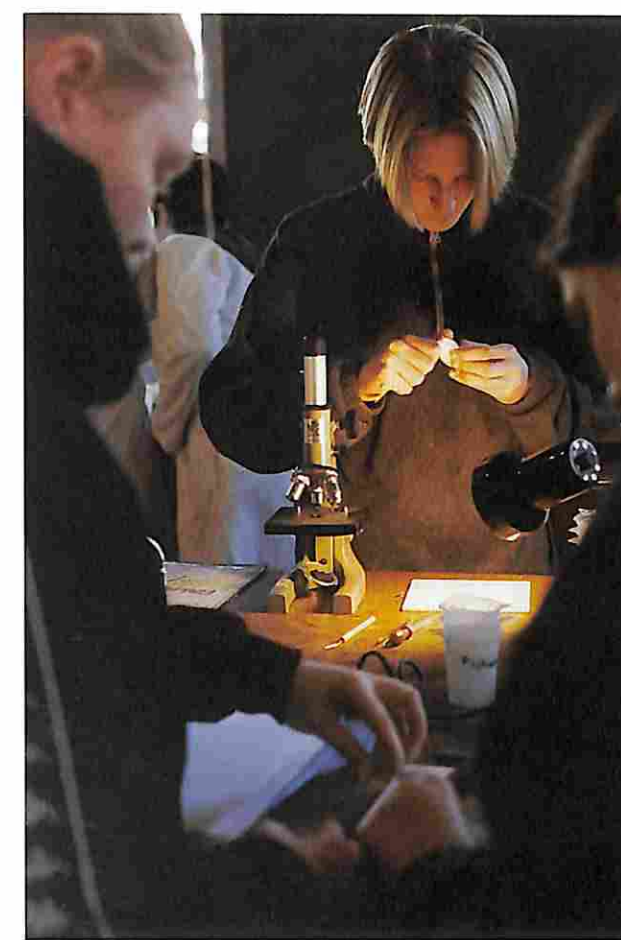
Boys and girls apparently respond in different ways from shortly after birth (leaving aside the fact that boys tend to be physically bigger and heavier at birth). One experiment showed that baby girls looked longer at a picture of a face shown to them whilst baby boys looked longer at an inanimate mechanical object of similar shape and colour to a human face. This study sets the pattern for many observations that suggest that girls are pre-disposed to empathy, whilst boys are pre-disposed to be interested in systems.

Children as young as 19 months prefer a playmate of the same sex.

Three-year-old girls show a strong preference for playing with other children whilst boys of the same age are more solitary. Girls are typically more confident than boys at this age; boys often show 'separation anxiety' when entering playgroup or Kindergarten.

Little boys are more physical when they want something; girls tend to use verbal skills and emotional behaviour to get what they want. Girls will try to persuade; boys will push and grab.

Provided with toy cars, boys will tend to try to crash them into things; girls are more careful. Boys are more likely to play rough and tumble, girls tend to co-operate with other children and share toys and be inclusive in games. One study



quotes boys being 50 times more competitive in play than girls.

Boys from the age of two onwards tend to be more agonistic and aggressive. More boys turn up in clinics diagnosed with "conduct disorder" perhaps simply better described as "hard to manage".

Baby girls, even as young as 12 months, respond more empathetically to the distress of others. Throughout all age ranges women show more comforting behaviour, even to strangers, than do men.

By the age of three girls are better at inferring what other people are thinking or feeling. This also shows in girls being better able to predict how another person is feeling as well showing more tact and sensitivity to what is appropriate behaviour.

Girls use significantly different tactics in social relations to achieve acceptance in a group; they generally use flattery, compliance, charm and respect to influence dominant girls. They use more subtle (often very difficult to observe) means to gain higher social status. Boys on the other hand tend to use physical force and intimidation to deal with rivalries. Boys are less sensitive to the suffering they cause. Girls can be far more emotionally affected by making and losing friends than boys.





Girls tend to form into smaller tight-knit groups, sometimes even just pairs. Boys tend to form larger, looser groupings.

Boys tend to play more structured games with rules. 99% of girls play with dolls at the age of six, while only 17% of boys do. Girls more frequently play 'make-believe' games involving role-play of often bewildering complexity. Many games played by five- to seven-year-old girls involve willing adults who are persuaded to engage in role play (Mummy is the Grandmother to the doll who has toothache and is a bit upset etc.). Such games involve monitoring complex social relationships and anticipation of what other people are (or might be) thinking. Boys tend to do this less. Girls' play tends to involve more co-operative role-playing with frequent changes of roles. Boys tend to role-play more solitary roles involving single action heroes (Robin Hood, Spiderman, Harry Potter) and especially involving combat, guns, magic swords and other weapons. The aim is not to be socially inclusive, as with girls, but rather the opposite, to eliminate the enemy! Winners and losers are more important to boys.

Boys are more directly aggressive (pushing, hitting, kicking). Girls show their aggression in more indirect ways (through talking about someone behind their back, gossip, unkind remarks, verbal abuse etc.).

In girl-girl relationships there is greater intimacy and telling of secrets than in boy-boy relationships. Girls are more emotionally attached to their friends (with consequent greater pain when they break up) than boys. Boys in puberty (or near puberty) tend to bond with other boys who have the same interests and will therefore attach themselves to different groups depending on the activity (one group for sport, another for music and another for

computers). Girls tend to stay in the same group, whatever the activity. (This can be observed when one follows a Class Seven or Eight around the school for a whole day).

In communication, interesting differences in use of language have been observed in boys and girls. Girls usually start talking about a month before boys on average and their vocabulary is greater. Young boys tend to talk to themselves whilst solitary playing, giving a running commentary on what they are doing, called "single-voiced discourse" by researchers, while girls use double-voiced discourse, even

when alone. Girls tend to use more phrases that encourage dialogue and response. Girls will use elaborate language to prolong arguments, whereas boys are more likely to make categorical 'take it or leave it' statements. Boys use more imperatives and prohibitions (give me that, stop it, etc.) than girls. Girls use more elaborate phrases to put over their points of view and allow for the other person's views. Boys tend to brag, taunt each other, threaten, speak when others are speaking, interrupt and ignore others.

A study on the stories two-year-olds tell showed that people were overwhelmingly the main focus for girls, but only for a small minority of boys. By the age of four every story told by girls was people centred but only half the stories told by boys were about people.

Girls are better at spelling and reading

A study involving children in pre-industrial societies showed that boys more often draw machines of some kind (such as tools, weapons, vehicles) than girls. Shown films of cars, young boys watch them for longer than girls.



In several tests designed to examine various map reading abilities, boys consistently score higher.

The Lego Company have done tests which show that boys are better at constructing three dimensional shapes. At the age of nine, boys are better at imagining what a 3-D object would look like flattened out.

Boys remain significantly behind girls in both physical growth and social development as children approach puberty. Around the age of 11 or 12, many girls suddenly become taller; boys begin their growth spurt two years later than girls on average. In England boys are about 9% behind girls on average in academic testing at the age of 16. The exception is in maths, where boys do significantly better on average.

Boys are five times more likely to suffer from delinquency than girls, three to five times more likely to suffer from attention deficit disorder, three times more likely to suffer from learning disabilities.

Extreme forms of the systematising male brain reveal themselves in autism and conditions such as Asperger's Syndrome.

And so on...

Some possible conclusions

The point about this research (and much more described by Cambridge researcher Simon Baron-Cohen) is that many gender differences described here are essentially not the outcome of social influences, but are innate tendencies. This confirms the often-depressing experience of parents who have tried in vain to discourage their sons from playing with trucks and guns and their daughters from being drawn to Barbie dolls!

These fundamental differences in the underlying developmental tendencies go some way to explain why boys find whole-class teaching more difficult, why they have more difficulties communicating their thoughts and feelings, why they are sometimes aggressive and why they frequently lag behind girls in their development at key stages. They also show that the Waldorf approach is in many ways ideally suited to boys and all the anecdotal evidence is that boys do



very well in Waldorf education. That is why, for me, the important question arising out of this research is whether the needs of girls are really being met as much as they should be. Their innate gifts of empathy and communication, which after all are the primary competencies needed in the modern world, are invaluable. There seems to be little or no problem in girls acquiring the systematising skills that typify the male brain, as the numbers of successful women scientists and businesswomen testify. However, we need to know if the demands made by boys, in balancing out their deficits in empathic skills, are not hindering some girls in their development. Are there better ways of dealing with boys so that the overall quality of learning in a class can rise?

The challenge

We now know that nature and nurture have to work hand in hand. Anthroposophy adds a third dimension to the equation of human development, namely the factor of individuality, of destiny, of the spiritual nature of the human being, which is not, as contemporary science would have us believe, either the outcome of nature or nurture. Individuality is not a product of our genes⁴ or our upbringing and experience, but is the third discrete determining factor in what makes us human. Anthroposophical pedagogy has to reckon with all three factors.

Our challenge is to apply anthroposophical anthropology to understanding the question of gender differences. It is obvious from the facts quoted above that the differences cannot be ignored. To our spectrum of diagnostic instruments we will have to add the distinction between the forces of empathy and systematising that seem to characterise the male and female brain. In simplified form, the empathising brain type possesses social sensitivity, communication

sensitivity and the ability to imagine other people's thoughts and feelings. The systematising brain type is characterised by one-sided, non-integrated skills, obsessions with systems and repetitive behaviour. Whilst these extremes have a gender bias this is not exclusive. These are psychological profiles and may apply in varying degrees in both boys and girls. These polarities of innate tendencies have to be recognised and worked with.

Furthermore, we need to explore the extent to which the curriculum and teaching approach takes account of these tendencies, from Kindergarten on. Added to this is the challenge of recognising that many aspects of maturation have shifted chronologically with, for example, girls entering puberty more than two years earlier than in 1925. This will require us to make long-term observations as well as focused studies on the social dynamic in formal and informal learning situations.

Sustainable Education

A new Upper School approach – Waldorf College, Stroud, enters its third year

Will Cretney



Notes and references

- 1 Important Steiner references here include the lectures: 16 June 1921, Stuttgart, GA 302, and 21 June, 1922, Stuttgart, GA302a.
- 2 See M. Rawson, *The Spirit in Human Evolution*, AWSNA Publications, Colorado, U.S.A., 2003.
- 3 To keep the text uncluttered with individual references, most of the relevant research is summarised in the following books:
Steve Biddulph, *Raising Boys*, Thorsons, 1997.
Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Essential Difference; men, women and the extreme male brain*, Penguin Allen Lane, 2003.
Clive Bromhall, *The Eternal Child*, Ebury Press, 2003.
Robert Winston, *Human Instincts: how primeval impulses shape our modern lives*, Bantam Press, 2002.
Matt Ridley, *Nature Via Nurture: genes, experience and what makes us human*, Fourth Estate, 2003.
- 4 There are good arguments from people such as the philosopher Daniel Dennett or scientist Matt Ridley that our genes predetermine the potential for free will, but that is another long story.

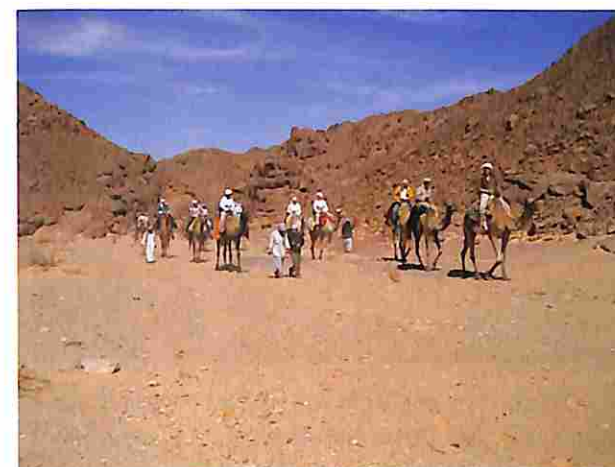
Five valleys meet at Stroud in the heart of the Cotswolds, in South Gloucestershire. The rivers, punctuated by watermills known as the “string of pearls” share a heritage of cloth-making, which has helped to produce an extended community of independence and non-conformity. Where the valleys meet, a new educational initiative for 16 – 19-year-olds has developed, arising from a pluralistic vision together with an unease at the current options being offered, and driven by the concept of a network.

Initial meetings between founding parents and young people concluded that education should involve more contact with the world outside, give greater emphasis to individuality and independence, and allow young people to share in aspects of education usually thought of as “adult” concerns – whether hiring tutors, deciding on behaviour guidelines, or even fixing broken taps. Young people expressed their unease – “I was feeling trapped and uninspired, and you could see it in my work and in my behaviour... I was hungry for things that were not being offered”. A parent suggested that mainstream education lacked “the raw taste of wind and fire, of wood and clay”. What

has emerged is a two-year programme, with a number of clear and distinctive characteristics, with potentially far-reaching benefits.

Although small in scale, the college has become well known with a global catchment – a practical and invaluable consequence of its roots in the Waldorf education movement, inspired by Rudolf Steiner. Starting up in September 2000 as The Waldorf College Project, the college currently includes young people from America, mainland Europe and the U.K., as well as from Sweden, Hawaii and Canada in previous years. This global context is complemented by an equally significant element of local involvement. The tutors – craftspeople, artists, scientists and entrepreneurs – bring to their teaching the authority of their primary activity in the world beyond education. The students' learning programmes, likewise, involve much time spent out of college. This demonstrates an exciting example of a contemporary and sustainable model of education. Both globally and locally, the college is sustained by responsive networks, rather than being determined and controlled by the inflexible hierarchies of large, centralised administrations. Significantly, it places education for individuality and sustainability at the heart of its curriculum.

The college's programme springs from the belief that, at this age, a key requirement is freedom with responsibility – the freedom to learn about what you love, what is most important to you, allied to the responsibility of participating in the organisation and management of your own educational programme. This naturally extends out into the development and management of the college – in which the students participate at all levels – and beyond that, into the local community of which the college is a part. The students prepare a ‘learning quest’, setting out what they aim to achieve and how they will go about achieving it. A significant part of the second year consists of an independent year project devised by the student.



There is a weekly review of how the programme is running, involving staff and students. This forum looks carefully at a wide range of matters – students' decisions about their futures, difficulties in relationships, daily tasks – and can be a place of laughter and tears, heartfelt pleas and inner wisdom, as the teenagers are given their voice, often resulting in movement from grievance to initiative. Freedom and responsibility are not wishful thinking here; the principles are enshrined in the practical business of shared management, in turn providing a sense of ownership that builds the confidence and fires the will of the young person. Skills in communication and human relationships are greatly enhanced through this process and it prepares the student for taking up the freedom with responsibility involved in being a global citizen.

The fundamental approach throughout the programme is holistic. In particular there is a conscious fusion of science and art. Conventional “core” subjects are studied through a series of thematic projects – each of which is multi-disciplinary and cross-curricular – focusing on topics such as Environmental Science and Citizenship, Computer Technology with Maths, or Human Physiology with Life Drawing. A Chemistry project for instance, works with the connections between chemistry and music – the number relationships between atomic weights



and musical intervals – an English project works on a given stimulus which develops into a complex web of ideas which are suspended and examined by the group and then woven into a creative whole, rather like weaving a hedgerow basket which integrates found and given material with strands of “self.”

The holistic approach means that each project is experiential and practical. Students bring enormous, constructive and creative enthusiasm to activities where art and science are combined with academic work. This is not simply because it is practical in the sense of “useful”, but because it engages the whole of the person; the hand is part of the educational process too, as is the body – so Art and Science is a primary theme of the programme, integrating the work of the mind, the will and, indeed, with the work of the spirit.

The idea of the journey is central to the ethos of this place. Education is a journey – part of the journey of personal development – and for the 16-19 group the journey can sometimes be treacherous; from adolescence into adulthood, from school into community, from dependence into independence. Before this stage, individuality and personal growth are nourished and safeguarded by the family. After it, the young people should be better able to nourish themselves. This college seeks to ensure that the bridge between the two phases is one that sustains individual development, whilst helping the young person to find their place in the wider world.

The programme encourages students to consider and reflect upon both their inner and their outer journey. This takes many forms but is powerfully demonstrated, practically and symbolically, by a Journey to Sinai. This journey, travelling with the Bedouin, sleeping on Mt. Sinai and attending a service in St. Catherine’s Monastery, is preceded by a study of comparative religion and relates to artistic project work, and also involves learning about Middle Eastern history and survival skills. “When I came back from the desert”, said one student, “I looked around my room and said to myself ‘why the hell do I need all this stuff?’ ”

This educational initiative emerges from the needs of the individual rather than the need to meet targets. Standards, by definition, ‘standardise’, leading to pressures to conform, to meet the expectations of others. This can be counter-productive to personal growth and development, not only constraining choices

in terms of subject, pace and outcome, but also constraining who we are allowed to be. Mainstream education itself is concerned that the system is driven by the need to generate the appropriate statistics, whether A-level points or league tables, and that measuring only the quantifiable often overlooks the very qualities that are of greater significance. Employers don’t look for A-level points or credit accumulation scores, they look for creative thinking, team-working, initiative, innovation, social skills and self-confidence. It is these qualities that drive this college. Here students produce a portfolio of project work, which is accredited by the Open College Network.

This college, arising where five valleys meet, is energised by realistic and practical principles; it flows from the response to vital needs. The enterprise reaches out from the wellsprings of its Waldorf origins, out into the local community and out towards the educational mainstream, to others who will recognise in this initiative an exciting and positive contribution to the development of sustainability in education.

The college can be contacted at The Waldorf College Project, Centre for Science & Art, Landsdown, Stroud, GL5 1BB, England.
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Will Cretney is a freelance writer and lecturer/practitioner in landscape architecture.

SE Interviews

former pupils of the Holywood Rudolf Steiner School

SE asks Harry Whalley...



SE: What have you done since you left school?

After leaving the Holywood School I decided to focus my attention on music and started a music diploma in Bangor. However my main musical links were made in the last few years at the Steiner school where I met Mark, Max and Theo Buckingham, the other side of a music company we formed, called *Grunt Productions*.

SE: Tell us about the millennium commission

The commission is a lottery-funded organisation which funds projects of various sizes. We sent off an application at the last minute, not expecting anything to come of it. So we were surprised when a few months later a letter arrived accepting our project; however, we hadn’t had time to make a copy of our application so we had to ask for one! We received funding to purchase drums and to get training to facilitate drum circles and improvisation workshops in schools around Belfast.

SE: So what are drum circles?

The idea behind drums circles is to involve everybody in creating a communal rhythm with drums. The way we facilitated it is with one of us leading rhythmically, one with hand signals and the other helping individuals. Drum circles require confidence and therefore the drum circles are relaxed so that people

can explore creative ideas without feeling self conscious. It requires a huge amount of focus in both co-ordination and reception of the rest of the circle. We are often told how it benefits the unity and concentration of a class and an enthusiasm for music.

SE: And have you also done improvisation workshops in schools?

Yes, as well as taking the drum Circles to schools, we also created a workshop based on improvising within the blues idiom. This is more specialist as some musical knowledge is needed. It is a challenge to work with the varying types of instruments that come to this workshop.

SE: What sort of instruments do you work with?

The workshops are a hotchpotch of whatever a particular class plays, whereas the drums for the drum circles are chosen to balance and complement each other tonally. They include: Djembes, Dumbeks, Surdos, small hand percussion, and many other drums from around the world. It is important to have a drum for any need. We have a full set of drums for about 15 people both in London and Belfast.

SE: What are your plans for the future?

I am applying for university music courses around England and hope to continue creating music full time. I have also started to teach Class Eleven and am open to teaching as an area for me in the future.

SE: Thank you, Harry.

Harry Whalley was born in 1984. He attended the Holywood Steiner School from nursery and left after Class Eleven to study music.

Grunt Productions are available to facilitate workshops and drum circles in both the London and Belfast areas and may be contacted at: www.gruntproductions.com



SE: I hear you were a reluctant pupil at first?

Yeah. My father was the farm manager at the Ulster Folk Museum and he used to take me to work when I was little. I loved the plough horses and the other animals and all the beautiful little cottages. I didn't want to leave and go to school. My parents gave up the first year. But when I was five my father took me down there and left me in spite of my hanging on to him and said he had to feed the cows and off he went. I had to sit on to the teacher's lap. That was Luc Walpert. He was a great Kindergarten teacher. He's now a professional musician, I believe, and has made several CDs. Anyway I soon got to love it there, though my classmates still remind me that I had to sit on the teacher's lap when they all sat in the circle.

SE: What were your best memories of school?

I enjoyed the freedom one had as a child. There weren't the constraints there appeared to be in other schools. It's difficult to identify individual moments because it was all pretty good.

SE: When did you become aware that the school was different?

Well you discover that pretty soon, when the neighbour children can read and write and they're asking you to spell words and I had to explain we hadn't done that yet. There was a

perception in the community that this was a school where you didn't have to work if you didn't want to.

SE: Was that in fact the case?

No, not at all, of course not! But I was aware of the stress that other children had, with the 11 plus, which we still have in Northern Ireland and then later with GCSE exams. We managed all that without too much stress.

SE: What do you think you gained?

Let me give you an example. I worked from the age of 12 to 16 as a shop assistant. People always said that the Steiner pupils had self-confidence and were articulate, and we were. This had to do with the relationship we had with the teachers. There was always respect between us. We were on first names with the teachers and this led to real mutual interest and respect. My sister later went to Bethany School in Belfast and said they were still treating them as kids when they were 18.

SE: Then you won a scholarship to Atlantic College; can you tell us about that please?

I had a scholarship paid by Laing Construction. At Atlantic I did the International Baccalaureate which has a much broader subject range than A levels so you don't narrow down your options. They have a strong ethos of community service. While I was there I qualified as a coastguard. The best thing, however, is the fact that you live together with students from so many different countries and cultures.

SE: What are your plans now?

I'm studying law at Sheffield University. It's very interesting and I reckon it will provide me with a very good basis for journalism, or politics or business. I want to train as a lawyer and then go into business. I can't envisage working under someone else's control. I want to be my own boss. I intend to work hard and make enough money to retire by the time I'm 35. Then I'd like to spend time giving something back to those who gave me so much, such as the Steiner movement and Atlantic College.

SE: Thank you for this interview.

Alliance for Childhood



What is the Alliance?

The Alliance for Childhood is a partnership of individuals and organisations who work together out of respect for childhood in a worldwide effort to improve children's lives. They align themselves with the following:

Aims and Objectives

- To support family life
- To promote a developmentally appropriate early years curriculum
- To work for better physical and emotional health of children
- To fight poverty and neglect in all forms
- To question the role electronic media in child development
- To highlight the danger of commercialism aimed at children
- To improve childcare facilities

How does the Alliance work?

The Alliance for Childhood strives to create a focal point for reflection and action by people with vision and devotion who place child education and care within a larger social context through sharing research, mutual support and the Alliance website.

Website

For more information see the website:
www.allianceforchildhood.org.uk

Robert Winston, Professor of Fertility Studies at Imperial College, London, wrote recently in *The Guardian* of an experiment that he found extremely revealing. "Four three-year-olds sit in a room where they view events in an adjoining playroom on a TV screen. An actor enters the playroom and the three-year-olds see the man gently cuddling a life-size rubber doll. Then the children are led individually into the same room and each is filmed. Without prompting, all stroke or kiss the doll, mimicking what they have just seen.

A little later, the children are back in the viewing room. This time the TV shows a man coming into the playroom with a large wooden hammer. The toddlers see him beating the doll vigorously. When these normally well-behaved children are led back into the playroom, each attacks the doll viciously. One toddler, normally shy and retiring, is completely carried away – his violence continuing even when his mother comes in and tells him to stop. It is some time before he can be dragged off and calmed down".

He also cites studies of boys – initiated in the 60s, with follow-up studies 15 or more years later – which showed that children aged six to ten, exposed to violent behaviour on TV, were far more likely to demonstrate aggressive behaviour than adults.

A recent study conducted by *Mother and Baby* magazine found that children as young as one to three spend an average of five hours a day on a home computer or watching television. By three, 42% have television in the bedroom. Given that by the time they are 18 an average American child will have seen 16,000 simulated murders and 200,000 acts of violence on television, the cultural effects of all this can no longer be underestimated. For many years the producers of such programmes have proclaimed that there is no evidence of an adverse effect on children.

But now the tide is turning – notably supported by the Kaiser Family Foundation's report "Zero to Six", which appeared at the end of 2003, and is a study of how children under six use the electronic media. This report alarmed the American Academy of Paediatrics to the extent that it has urged that infants and toddlers do not watch television at all. The data collected showed the children were using electronic media much earlier than was thought, and having a television in the bedroom meant that much of it was unmonitored. In 65% of the households television was an ever-present companion, regardless of whether anybody was actually watching it or not. Television viewing started within a few months of birth, which is well before the age recommended by the medical community; there are programmes being launched specifically targeted at children of 12 months. Although the majority of parents regard this viewing as pro-social there is also a majority (59%) who said that their four- to six-year-old boys imitated aggressive behaviour from TV. Less so with girls (35%). The study concludes that this is a potentially revolutionary phenomenon in society and its true impact on children's development is unknown, yet "One thing is certain: it is an issue that demands immediate attention from parents, educators, researchers and health professionals".

This conclusion is underscored by the fact that hundreds and thousands of babies are watching television before they can talk and, given the effect that Professor Winston witnessed, society is facing extraordinary educational challenges of own making. This is not a particularly new concern, but that it is now becoming a more widespread issue, with substantial research highlighting the potential dangers, gives grounds for a more effectual debate.

Christopher Clouder

Thailand

An alternative to drill – Waldorf Education in Bangkok

Education in Thailand basically consists of school drill followed by “laissez-faire”. With no afternoon school, most children spend their time watching TV or in Internet cafés playing video games. For some years now the criticism of the poor standards in state schools has led to the founding of many alternative schools. Their curricula vary little from the state schools but their teachers are generally more motivated.

Almost 20 years ago the Baan Rak Kindergarten was founded. Its founder Abhiseree Charanjavanaphet discovered Waldorf education in 1988 and since then has been practising it in her Kindergarten (see below). The first Waldorf school, Panyotai, was founded by the paediatrician Dr. Porn Panosot seven years ago and now has some 70 children. Dr. Panosot originally began working with disadvantaged children. The Network for Freedom in Education, which he helped to found, led to the passing of a new Education Law making it possible for more pluralism in education. Following this change in the law Dr. Panosot was given the task of carrying out a study for the national Education Committee into alternative education worldwide.

An article by Dr. Panosot in the *Bangkok Post* led the founding of a second school initiative in the city, with the name of Tridhaksa. Founded by Mrs. Khun Usa Thanomophonphandh, a Judge, this school deals primarily with very poor children with the intention of keeping them out of prison. In the summer of 2000 she founded a Kindergarten with

23 children and asked Maria Domning, an experienced Waldorf Kindergarten teacher to provide intensive support. The initiative has grown quickly and today there are four groups with around 100 children and three classes with 52 children.

2001 brought various milestones in the Waldorf movement in Thailand. The first teacher training programme, to which many foreign visiting tutors had contributed, graduated after three years with 15 teachers. The Panyotai school had to move to a larger building (from what had been the Panosot family home). A piece of land has been bought and money is being raised to build classrooms. The Tridhaska School opened its first classes and the Director of a school for very poor children on the outskirts of the city began to introduce Waldorf methods into his school, such as stopping the teaching of reading and writing in the Kindergarten. Furthermore, Waldorf education is now being represented in the Chulalongkorn University, especially by tutors teaching in the Early Years department.

The Baan Rak (House of Love) Kindergarten by Maria Domning

In 1984 the founder of Baan Rak, Abhiseree, discovered Waldorf education and travelled to Germany to visit a Kindergarten in Seeheim, where I was working. She watched with great intensity for 10 days everything we did and then she went home. In 1993 I was able to visit Bangkok to lecture there but it was three years later that I was able to visit Abhiseree in her Kindergarten. When I saw her there in the light-flooded garden full of beautiful trees and flowers, with birdsong and the splash of running water, surrounded by her children, radiating joy,

warmth of heart and natural authority – I recognised a mood in which Waldorf education could grow.

In 1997 I worked for four months intensively with Abhiseree and her teachers on developing new daily and weekly rhythms, on working with puppets, creating new toys, water-colour painting, fairy tales, creating an inner space, lazuring the walls and developing collegial working.

Abhiseree asked me to establish a kind of model Waldorf group within her large institution, where parents, teachers and other interested parties could come and learn about Waldorf education – in German since I don't speak Thai. I found a suitable room and within a few days we had redecorated it with lazure paint. I established

a clear daily rhythm for the children and introduced, among other familiar Waldorf activities, puppets. I was astonished to see how quickly the children imitated and within three months the children were all speaking and singing in German!

Abhiseree completed her Waldorf training in Sacramento and began to work as an officially recognised Waldorf Kindergarten with over 140 children. I continued to support the work for a while but have since been much more involved in the work at the University. The Kindergarten now has three houses for the children, a beautiful garden, a fourth house with a hall, visitors' rooms, library and study spaces and has since become a cultural meeting centre.



WOW Day

Waldorf One World

Once a year pupils in many Waldorf Schools around Europe devote a whole day to raising money for projects to help children in the Third World. The idea for WOW day was born in the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Schools in 1994. Astrid Bjønnes, a Waldorf teacher from Norway reported on the Norwegian tradition of “Operasjon Dagsverk” in which all Norwegian secondary students devote a day a year to raising money for good causes. The idea was taken up the Council who decided to try to

do something similar within the Waldorf Schools' movement.

Astrid Bjønnes of the *Friends* suggested that the first money raised should go to help the Waldorf School in Santiago de Chile. A further suggestion was to help the Extra Muros Project for street children in Bogota.

The funds raised by WOW Day have helped not only the children in Santiago de Chile and Bogota but also abused children in Bangkok, handicapped and blind children in St. Petersburg.

In the first year 20 schools

participated; now twice that number are active, including 13 schools in Germany, 10 in Sweden, 5 in Norway, and 4 in the U.K. Contributions for WOW also came last year from the U.S.A. The biggest contribution is an annual sum of around £45,000 from five schools in Germany.

Pupils in the York School have regularly raised large sums by busking in the city – and that from a school that has always had to struggle to raise every penny to pay its own teachers and run the school. The York School always had the philosophy that those in need do best in helping others.

Russia

A day in the life of a Waldorf Kindergarten

In the following article a father describes in a highly personal way a conversation in the office of a Waldorf Kindergarten. This situation is not unusual and gives a picture typical of many. The names have been changed.

*Waldorf Kindergarten
'Swjosdotscha' – a Wednesday
in April*

Unusually the Kindergarten does not end punctually at 13.00 today. As I go to collect my son Igor, the children are still in their groups. It is very quiet. I go round the corner to see Lena, the director of the Kindergarten. She is sitting in her tiny niche with her computer, the accounts and all the important documents. It's the only place that can be locked up. Here she does the books whenever she has time.

Some time ago she said to me, in passing, it would be good to talk about the finances. Since I was one of the founding parents in the Kindergarten association I am jointly responsible for money matters. So I go to her to pass a few minutes while waiting for Igor.

"You wanted to speak to me?"
"Ah Victor, we simply don't have enough money. The heating costs have just been raised from 200 to 3,000 Roubles!"
"What!"

"Yes, I'm afraid so. That is now the normal price. Up until now we had a cheap rate. Now we have had to sign a new contract. I have calculated it. We have 220 square metres, what they are charging is correct. I've just



done the monthly balance – we are quite a bit behind with the payments, I've just done last October. What time do I get to do the books? There is always someone ill. First I have to cover for one, then for the other. I have to clean the stairs, help in the kitchen, then carry out all the interviews with parents. This week Katya is ill and Olga has just let me know that she can't get here at 9 o'clock in the mornings now but will be two hours late every day because of transport problems. Shall I change her contract? And look here, what a state the playground is in! And the uncertainty about whether we can go on using the premises! The city has already said it will cancel our tenancy but I don't know when. When I went to see them the official said, 'well I might help you but then again someone else might claim the use of the rooms... I can't guarantee anything'." I say, "I have to go and get my little one". And indeed the children were now coming out. I tell Igor that I'm in the corner talking to Aunt Lena and that he should get himself dressed to go out. I haven't long to speak to her.

I go back and look at the figures on the computer screen. We

sit on the wooden bench side by side in what counts as the 'office'. The monitor sits far too high in the old cupboard and you read the screen in a sitting position and anyway you have to sit sideways because your knees press into the printer. We discuss whether it might not be easier to read the figures from a book... with a simple income-expenditure breakdown. Most bills are monthly and so we would only need a monthly balance. Nevertheless it is a huge amount of work (even for so little money!).

"What do the teachers get paid?" I ask. I've been out of touch for some time".
"Still 3000," answered Lena, "that hasn't changed". Silence. One cannot live on 3000 Roubles (about £60 a month). Everyone knows that. Lena said, "I pay 1500 school fees. In reality I'm only working to pay for the school". (The Waldorf school her daughter Wanja is attending is also struggling to pay its way.)

A conversation develops; one that we have had many times. Increase the fees from the parents? The Kindergarten costs about 2,500 Roubles a month for each child. We can't raise them again.

I run round again to see how Igor is getting on. But he is taking his time. I check that he knows where to find me when he's ready, then go back to Lena. "It can't go on like this", I say decisively, "we have to raise the salaries". She replied with the usual answers. OK, where will we get it from? This is not a productive conversation.

I say, "it doesn't matter where we get it from. It just can't go on like this". Lena agrees and adds that the Kindergarten staff

all have second jobs. "They all creep here like cockroaches (which means that they are all on their last legs). Then a mother turns up who says she can't afford the monthly fees and asks whether we have work for her! Its true some of the Mums do wonderful handwork but how can I pay for it?"

I recall the new initiative to found an anthroposophical shop in the city. But Lena had little interest in this at that moment. For every suggestion she has a 'but'. By now my little son has arrived, wrapped up with gloves and scarf on. We'll have to go soon or he will get too hot squashed in here with us and him sitting on my knee.

I try again. "3000 is simply not enough. That is a fact". I hear Lena starting to say 'but' again. I put my hand on her arm and say, "really it is not enough!" I wave my hand optimistically at the accounts, click onto the next page and see further unpaid bills and accounts.

We need help. I ask about our partner school in Germany. Yes some funds do come. But the last letter suggesting we could send things to sell at their school market took a month to get here – too late for the market. Then we have to find help from elsewhere. A Kindergarten like ours with two full groups, a good College of experienced teachers and a high quality of provision should really stop begging from the West!

But Lena can find no other way out of our situation. I say, "Let's look at our situation again". The staff need 5000, not 3000. So we need an extra 2000 for each a month, that's about 15,000 a month, 108,000 a year. That's about £4,000 a year. Terrible! Yes, but true. We need

£4,000 a year more in order to pay our staff an absolute minimum. They all have second jobs except Lena, who is always here, even in the holidays because there is so much to do. She only survives because her husband supports her.

We were just about to stand up, Lena, Igor and I, when Tanya, our longest-serving teacher came by. She had even begun with Kindergarten work before Perestroika and she participated in the very first training course. Now Igor is happy to have her as his 'Aunt'. Tanya smiled at him first and then said in a quiet voice, "Lena, I just wanted to remind you that I am not here on Friday. I told you about it some time ago. I just can't carry on, I really can't". Looking up from my sitting position I can see a hint of tension between the two women. I understand both, value them both and see the consternation – one who is struggling to keep the whole institution together, the other giving her life substance to the



education. It just can't go on. Both are at the end of their resources.

I make a conciliatory comment along the lines of, "well we've just been talking about the problems..." Tanya supplements her income with music lessons. She begins to explain that she can anyway only work four days a week in the Kindergarten in future because she has to do more work elsewhere.

It is as if our conversation had become reality. I ask Tanya if it would make a difference if she could earn in the Kindergarten what she earns through her music teaching. She looks at me critically. That is so unrealistic and anyway she doesn't want to discuss it here. In principle that is nothing new. Only this is the first time that I've heard that my son's Kindergarten teacher can only work four days.

How does one end such a snatched conversation – especially one that deals with such fundamental matters? Bye, we really must go now. On the way out I suddenly had the need to record this conversation.

China

**Saying Grace before a Meal
by Wu Bei**
translated by Yang Hai Yan

Having a meal seems routine for us. Family members take their seats, holding chopsticks, and start eating. Yet as I have observed, whether in Christian, Buddhist or some other cultures, having a meal is more often a ceremony. It is more than just about food.

In the *Book of Anthems* that a Christian friend gave me several years ago, I came across a short song named *Thank you for the meals*:

We have come together to express heartfelt thanks to God for favour and to our fellowmen for each meal that has never come easy. We accept it and serve you with joy.

I taught my eight-year-old daughter this song and asked her to sing it before every meal. We are not Christians, but we understand the hard work of providing food. The food in each meal contains farmers' labour and mothers' love. There is a Chinese poem: "Sweat goes down into the earth beneath the crop. Every single grain is harvested with the farmers' toil". For us, God's favour can be understood as Nature's blessing. Children are taught gratitude as they sing this song. They also learn to work for others while enjoying food provided by them. A. J. Heschel, the American Judaic philosopher, once said: *The world is like this: while facing it, man realises that he is not the master but the beneficiary. The world is like this: when you are aware of its niceties, you must answer the call; at the same time you must shoulder the responsibility.*

I spent two days last August at the Cypress Zen Buddhist Monastery located in Zhao County, Hebei Province. The ceremony of having meals in the temple left a deep impression on me.

Most of the women disciples, who came from the countryside and were fond of chatting and gossiping, turned very quiet and solemn as they proceeded toward the dining hall. Not a single noise came from the crowd of over a hundred people. I was among them, deeply moved by the solemn atmosphere. Everyone stood up to show respect when the masters walked in through the front door. Then all of them began chanting scriptures. Before breakfast they usually chant: "There are ten good things about porridge which benefit people a lot. Rewards are boundless and powerful. Happiness is long-lasting until the end". Before lunch they recite: "Three virtues and six flavours are supplied to Buddhas and Sanghas. The dharma world is so sympathetic that every creature is provided with food. May all living creatures enjoy their food with a heart filled with happiness from Zen Buddhism".

After reciting the scriptures, they concentrated on Five Views: My food comes with hard work. I eat everyday not to satisfy my desire for delicious food but to continue to live and fulfill my spiritual purpose. Nobody eats until after the Five Views is chanted.

As we may see now, for the Buddhists, having meal is a form of cultivation; it is a ceremony to worship and to revere. Master Minghai explained to me that on the one hand the pre-meal ceremony

can awaken the believers' sense of respect because food comes through the labour of many people. On the other hand, the ceremony is held to express their gratitude to all the life that has been sacrificed for us, since all food, even vegetables, is produced with the loss of some life forms (insects and field animals etc.).

In a Zen Buddhist Study Centre in Thailand, the teacher taught students from all over the world to think thrice before meals. First they asked themselves: Why do I eat? It is because food provides the energy we need. Secondly: we should cherish our food because many people around the world are still starving. Thirdly they pondered where food comes from, imagining a map indicating rice from Thailand, wheat from China, beef from America... Food also comes with sunlight, soil, water, air and peasants' hard work. We are closely linked with all creatures in the world. It is only after having contemplated these questions then they begin eating.

In ancient Japan, Ayinro people made pancakes from ground millet. Then the elders in the family prayed to the pancakes: "Ah, we worship you, God of grain. May you keep nourishing people. Now we are going to eat you. We worship you and feel indebted". Only after praying may the family eat the pancakes. This practice of saying grace to nature and gods can be found in many cultures and ethnic groups. However it is only rarely observed among civilised societies today with advanced science and technology.

Fortunately, from a book introducing Rudolf Steiner's philosophy of education, I have learned that in Steiner Waldorf

schools and Kindergartens, founded 80 years ago, students sing the following song before daily meals:

*Land is for us to cultivate
Sun brings us flowers and fruits
We thank you both very truly
Thank you land, thank you sun*

Then they all pray together:

*Bread is made of grain
Grain lives on sunlight
Sunlight shines on the face
of God
God's ray and fruits on the land
Please brighten my heart with
light*

Rudolf Steiner once said:

In order to make their life plentiful, humankind adds into their life all sorts of things taken from the external surroundings. Yet, without heartfelt gratitude and respect toward things from outside, they will never really be internalized to become their own. The case is the same with either food transformed into nutrients in our body or knowledge stored in our brain to use. Gratitude and reverence are two important feelings by which human beings are connected with the outside world.

We have long forgotten to meditate and say grace before meals. The whole family gobbles up their breakfast and hurries to school or office. Lunch is usually eaten at one's workplace or school. Finally dinnertime comes when the family can afford to eat quietly together. It is then frequently ruined by interruptions from the cartoons or TV news. Everybody is gazing at the screen while blood concentrates at the cerebral cortex and stops supplying the digestive tract. The stimulation to the nerve centre by food's color, fragrance and taste is therefore diminished. How can they then feel the least bit grateful?

What makes it worse is that parents often turn mealtime into an occasion for venting all their worries in life and work, or for scolding their children. In fact we all have this experience: we eat far less when our spirits are low. The symptoms last a few more days: feeling weak and exhausted. Then through the brain, this psychological state can cause indigestion by affecting the normal functioning of digestive glands. It has been proved by modern medical research that many diseases like gastric ulcers, anorexia nervosa, diabetes, cholelithiasis, and high blood pressure, etc. may be caused by the neglect of mental health during meals.

However, meditating and saying grace before meals will drive away our anxieties and fill our minds with peace and joy. With grace, we can return to the original state of *eating for eating's sake*, to the harmonious relation between man and nature, man and man. We will come to realise our love of nature, respect of other's work, cherish food and praise to the All Mighty in the Universe. A. J. Heschel holds the view that saying grace means to undertake tasks and answer calls. He interprets life as being given to rather than taken from. Its substance is to feel grateful for receiving the gift. Being grateful is not only a form of feeling, but also an essence of being human.

Let us, now, sing together with students in the Waldorf School:

*Dear farmers, thank you !
Dear sun, thank you !
Dear rain, dear land,
Dear rice, thank you !
Light from the sun
Favour of the land
We'll never forget
All you've bestowed.*

**Wu Bei has written the
following story...**

The Ferryman

Many years ago, Qing Ming the ferryman carried people in his boat across a clean wide river. The old brown wood boat and oar had accompanied him for more than 40 years. He loved his work. Every morning it was Qing Ming who was the first to arrive at the river. Every evening when nobody else needed to cross he left the river behind him.

When Qing Ming was five years old, an illness had deprived him of the ability to speak. He became dumb. It was difficult for him to communicate with others. His muteness cut him off from the community. When he was a young man, he had fallen in love with a girl named Xiang Cao. She had a pair of long plaits. But Qing Ming never expressed his feelings to her. He knew it was impossible. No girl would wish to marry a mute. In his imagination he called the river the girl's name – Xiang Cao. So he could live with Xiang Cao all his life.

The river reflected the blue sky, white clouds, and bright moon. He liked the sound of the oars paddling through the water. Occasionally the fish jumped into his boat. On those evenings he cooked a fish and enjoyed a fish meal. When his boat was loaded with people and crossed the river, he felt satisfied and happy.

One day, some people were talking on his boat. "Hello, did you hear the news that the government will build a bridge on the river?" "Yes, I know. If there is a bridge,

it will save us time. The ferry is too slow”.

“I think so. I feel excited. Many things will change”.

“We will have a papermaking factory and a big hen house. All of these things will bring us good fortune”.

“We will have the chance to earn money. Then we can buy TVs, fridges, beautiful dresses and fine houses”.

That night Qing Ming sat on the bank and, as he listened to the rippling of the water, he felt uneasy and uncomfortable. He thought and thought. He could not sleep.

About a year later Qing Ming found the river had changed. It was not clear as before. There was some unpleasant smell coming from the river. Qing Ming was worried by this ill omen. He tried to tell others. But nobody paid any attention to the river. What they were interested in was wealth. They talked about the new house, who were the richest people, TV programmes, etc. When the bridge began to be built, the noise of machines broke the quiet of the river. The sound was so loud that Qing Ming couldn't hear the oars paddling through the water.

How monstrous was the bridge that crossed the river. Every day cars, motorcycles and roaring lorries rolled along the bridge. At the beginning Qing Ming still went to the river, sat on his boat and waited for people to ferry across as usual. But no

one needed the ferryman any more. People often saw Qing Ming pacing back and forth day and night along the riverbank. They were puzzled at what Qing Ming wanted to do.

The Xiang Cao River turned black and filthy. There was rubbish floating in the water current. The smell of the river became more and more stinking. He realised his Xiang Cao River was gradually dying. He knelt down on the bank slumped in dejection. “My beloved Xiang Cao River, what is happening to you? Who put poison in you? Who is killing you? I do not know where you come from, where you go. What I understand is that you are my companion, my lover and my life. I could not die for you. But I want to die with you. I long to become a part of you”.

He cut his familiar old brown boat into pieces. Then he placed the pieces and his oars lightly on the river. He watched over them with the tenderest care until they disappeared in the distance. He took off his clothes and shoes. He walked naked toward the river and stepped in. He went down on the bed of the river. The water was rising above his ankles, his legs and his waist. Nothing could stop him. He felt the water touching his chest, his neck and his face so gentle and kind. When he felt the full tide of the river flowing through him, a song resounded from the river:

*Who will carry me over the river?
Ferryman, carry me over
the river
Over, Over, Over.*



Wu Bei

Wu Bei was a lecturer in Physics at the University of Beijing for 14 years. She decided to change her life and came to Britain. She studied at Emerson College, doing both the Foundation and Education Years. She is now back in Beijing trying to introduce Waldorf education. She is translating several books on Waldorf education into Chinese and is seeking funds to support this work.

Book Reviews

Roxanne Simon reviews **FOODWISE**
Understanding what we eat and how it affects us.
The story of human nutrition, by Wendy E. Cook

As the debate about genetically modified food intensifies, Wendy Cook's wise and well-crafted book arrives at an opportune moment, and should be read by anyone who is interested in making an informed choice about the food they eat.

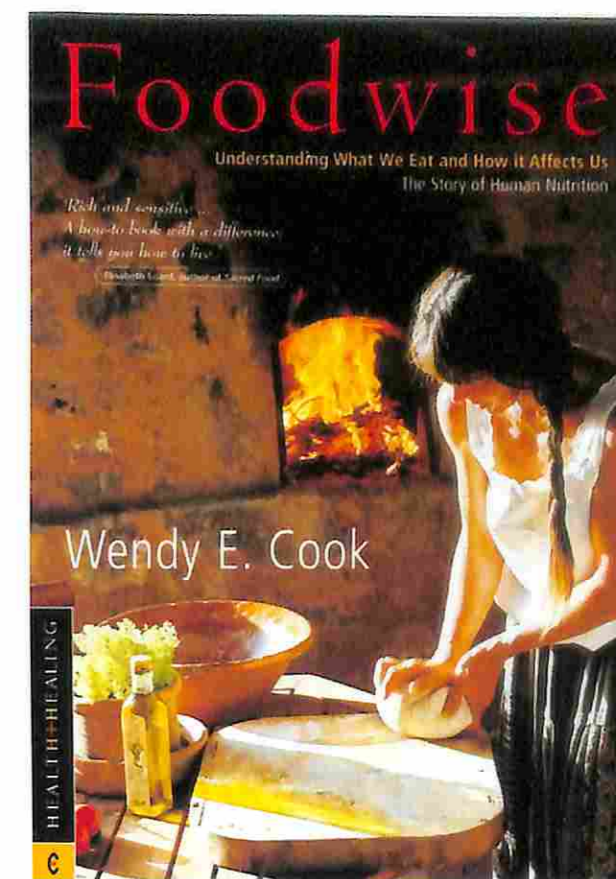
Foodwise begins with Wendy's rural childhood, during the Second World War. In the countryside they did not suffer the same privations that the city dwellers had to endure, and she draws thought-provoking conclusions from her childhood observations.

Short-sighted agricultural policies left Britain vulnerable and unable to be self-sufficient when that was crucial to survival. She observed the war-time drift of the youth, from the land and agriculture to the city in search of white-collar work, leaving the land with few workers, to become more mechanised and more reliant on fertilisers: “nitrates were a by-product of the manufacture of bombs” (p. 6).

A quest for a cure for her younger daughter's severe asthma turned what had been a personal interest in food and cooking into a highly intelligent, systematic search for an alternative to the adrenalin injections and steroids offered by the medical establishment. The quest became a life-style choice, taking Wendy and her daughters via Findhorn, Michael Hall School and Emerson College, to a 60-acre mountain farm in North Majorca as an experiment in alternative living.

Foodwise is a book written as an open-ended question, in three parts. It is a brave and honest book, more than a “you are what you eat” book, though it shows that we have been influenced dramatically by what our ancestors have eaten. It is also far more than just a book of the interesting and healthy recipes it contains.

Part One charts the history of nutrition, a study of the evolution of food and human consciousness, how we have become what we are now (for better or for worse), what our ancestors have eaten in the past, and how the human organism has adapted to the conditions and nutrition of its time. This section includes the decline in historic farming methods and the rise of monoculture and intensive farming. More questions emerge as we progress. “How is it – presuming all events to



be random or chance – one event bears fruit and another does not? What would have happened if Goethe's theory of colour had prevailed over Newton's?... if Al Gore had become the President of the United States of America rather than George Bush in these particularly daunting times? What soil had been prepared for Darwin's ideas to take such firm root?” (p. 57) We are given answers “Britain buys over 80% of her food from supermarkets (Soil Association figures). In having so many choices, are we awake to what we are choosing?” (p. 56).

In this section we are introduced to Steiner's work and organic and biodynamic farming principles, as well as grasses and grains and the mythology and origins of our cereals.

In Part Two “What happens in nutrition” we are taken into our bodies and what happens to our food once we have eaten it. Included here is vegetarianism and Rudolf Steiner's words from 1923, where he discussed how too much meat protein can “cause deposits of uric acids which in excess become toxic in bodily tissues” (p. 138). Did Steiner predict or warn us of mad cow disease, all those years ago, when he wrote... “these salts of uric acid have their own special habits. They have a liking for the nervous system and the brain and if the cow were to eat meat enormous quantities of uric acid salts would be deposited; they would be deposited in the brain and the cow would become deranged;...”

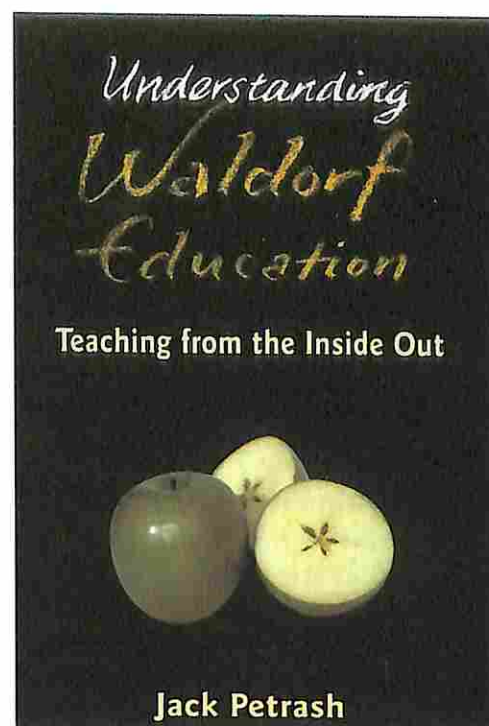
In the chapter "The protein question – which sort should we eat?" the different blood groups are analysed... "blood type is other than race, more fundamentally revealing than our ethnicity and shows we are all potentially brothers and sisters in blood" (p. 146). This is with reference to food suitable to our blood type.

On the question of protein, Steiner states, "By eating too much protein one calls forth the dominance of the reproductive forces. The control of the sexual passions is therefore made very difficult... it is actually impossible for a person to eat too little protein" (p. 147, quoted in Gerhard Schmid's *Essentials of Nutrition* p. 91).

Part Three deals with the foods we eat; milk and dairy products, fats and carbohydrates and sweeteners, where it is astonishing to think that honey, which we take so much for granted in the array of sweetness at our fingertips... "takes something like 2,000 hours of work on the part of the bee to make one teaspoonful of honey" but "...for the bee there is no difference between work and play" (p. 166).

Stimulants – coffee, tea and chocolate – are all analysed and discussed. Steiner spoke of coffee as being "the drink of the journalist or person of letters" (p. 253), while tea is "the drink of diplomats, who need to be witty, scintillating and sometimes superficial" (p. 255). Although in Steiner's time chocolate was the "celebratory beverage of comfortable German bourgeoisie for weddings and christenings...", now Wendy Cook informs us: "Behind the glamorous advertisements lies a much less publicized aspect of all these products – vast plantations of monoculture for luxury goods, using the labour of women whose daily wages often amount to no more than £3... Usually these crops are heavily sprayed with pesticides... More tropical forests in Brazil, Indonesia and Malaysia are being cleared to grow crops such as cocoa. Can we really justify the exploitation of land and people to supply non-essential luxury items for our society?" (p. 256).

The book closes with a section on menu-planning, cooking and some mouth-watering recipes. It is not all doom and gloom; we still have free-will and choices are available to us here in the wealthy West, and by our choices of what we eat and where we buy our food, we have the opportunity to improve the lot of others less fortunate. Wendy Cook reminds us that "there is plenty for all if we choose to live within our needs rather than our greed... what is ultimately good for me is good for the rest of the world... The purpose of the world is Love" (p. 315).



Martyn Rawson reviews *Understanding Waldorf education from the inside out*, by Jack Petrash. Floris Books

Good teachers give themselves to their work the same way that children give themselves to theirs – actively, emotionally and thoughtfully... Good teachers come to school early or they stay late. They teach when they're ill rather than call a substitute, and they'll do school work even when they're off. They sometimes dream about their students and they talk shop. In short, good teachers care. Good teachers care about the students and stand by them during difficult times.

Self-evaluation is an integral part of good teaching... demanding work, work that asks for one's best; it means change. The more seriously teachers give themselves to their work and reflect on it, the more they can be transformed by the process... Self-evaluation is an essential part of good teaching. But it is willingness to change and persistent efforts to make changes occur that determine how much we actually improve.

Jack Petrash is best when he writes about teaching and teachers. The moral, philosophical dimensions of the tasks are more than complemented by the practical advice he gives and the anecdotes he recalls. But he is also very good at the context, the situations in which children grow up today. This is a very well-researched discussion of contemporary issues in education and belongs in the best tradition of Waldorf literature in English that has so internalised the material and lived it that its anthroposophy shines through without the need for continuous affirmative reference to Steiner.

In fact, the best quotations have been expertly

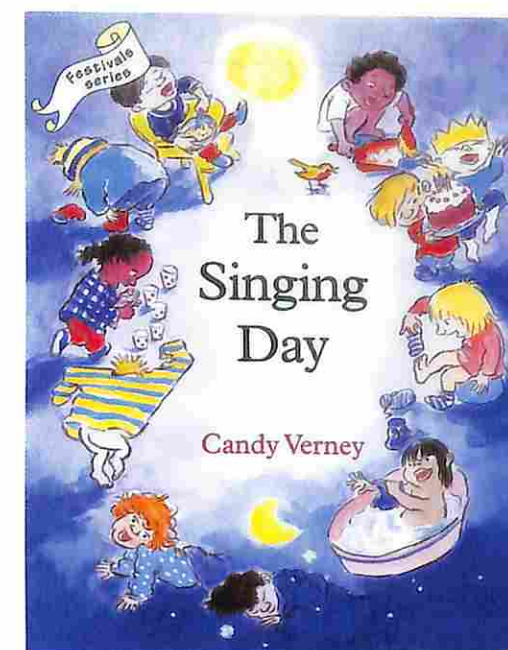
chosen from a wide range of contemporary authors, so that one has the impression that all the best minds recognise how things really are. This makes the book convincing without preaching. It also avoids the pathos that sometimes arises when Waldorf representatives seek to align themselves to the great and famous with broad appeals on behalf of childhood in general. Actually, Waldorf has a lot to say that few others, especially education theorists, even recognise and Petrash handles this well. It is clear that Waldorf education is more than feel good.

Non-American readers will find themselves in somewhat unfamiliar social and educational settings, but this curiously has the effect of highlighting the universal aspects of Waldorf Education. One has the feeling "I'd trust this man with my children".

Order *Understanding Waldorf Education* from Steiner Education for the special price of £7.99 (normal price £9.99) plus £1.50 postage. Send a cheque or credit card details, and your delivery address, to SE (see inside cover for details).

Sally Schweizer reviews *The Singing Day* by Candy Verney, illustrated by Claudio Muñoz. Hawthorn Press, £16.99, ISBN 1 903 458 250

Here are treasures for the family to sing for every occasion in a young child's life. Both movement and music should be central to children's education as a whole; this book combines the two in an inspiring way. What more lovely for a child than to sit on someone's knee for a knee ride? "Den! Den!" (again!). This repetition is what the young child so much needs, not ever-more novelty and stimulation. Over-active or bored children don't need new experiences. 'Again and again' consolidates learning and leads to good memory, security and serenity. Candy Verney speaks of these essential needs of the young child in her introduction, which is a little book in itself: full of valuable thoughts, observations and guidance. She writes of various aspects of music making which are helpful for parents and carers and shows us how we can support children through music. Many children hear little but pop and complicated music nowadays. Candy warns against "Exposure to loud sounds over extended periods of time..." and speaks of the healing force of music, illustrating this with several anecdotes. There are many songs and rhymes to help problematic situations throughout the day, so they magically turn into joyful ones: getting dressed, meal times and going to sleep, among others. Incentives are



given to create all-important rhythms in daily life, which the author describes at some length in her introduction. Songs from other lands, finger- and ring-games, rhymes to support every kind of activity, wonderful language and humour fill this book, and it is delightfully woven throughout with childhood memories.

Within the introduction, indications and exercises are given as to how to sing to children, and practical encouragement and advice to those who think they can't. The accompanying CD is a valuable aid to those who cannot read music. (I hope that children will not hear the CD, but just real, warm voices). It is a wonderful breath of fresh air to hear the simple singing on the disc without synthesiser: what a joy! I find some are a bit fast for young children to grasp, and a few have awkward intervals, but good ideas are given for helping children to sing. I should have liked to see more pentatonic tunes which, as she says, are "particularly suited to young children" (they number about a quarter of the total). Candy describes a certain aspect of the pentatonic scale (mood of the fifth) which is "without a strong pull down to the 'home' note, the tonic, as in our major and minor scales", belonging to the dreamy quality of young children. Yet only a very few of this kind are in the collection.

Diagrams for finger games are helpful. However, the illustrations are cartoon-like caricatures, which don't reflect the true nature of children. The useful index shows all songs in the book and on the CD, but strangely there is none for the rhymes without music.

This lovely collection is a fine recipe book to put by the stove in the heart of the home and use till it falls apart.

Children's page

Start →

Admire a clump of blue-bells. Miss a go.

Slide down a slope. Move forward 2 spaces.

Finish

Have lunch by a stream to lose your sandwiches. Miss a go.

Climb the ivy. Move forward 2 spaces.

Knock, knock!
Who's there?
Mandy
Mandy who?
Mandy lifeboats;
we're sinking!

Knock, knock!
Who's there?
Des
Des who?
Des only one lifeboat, the
rest have sunk!!

Book Titles

Breeding Pet Snakes by Sir Pent
Tea for Two by Roland Butter
Bell Ringing by Paula Rope
Popular Songs by Mel O'Dee

Can't find your bag. Miss a go.

Climb a tree. Miss a go.

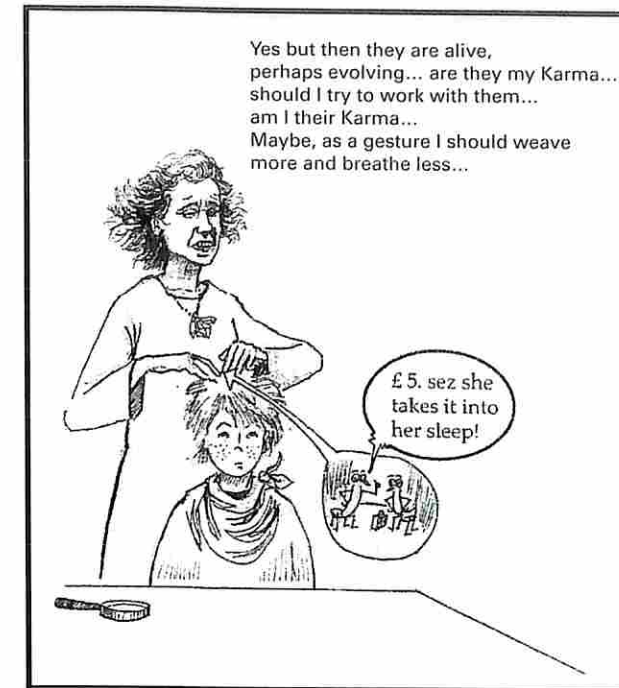
Find a short cut. Move forward 2 spaces.

Pick some flowers. Move forward 3 spaces.

Fall over a log & go to hospital. Miss 2 gos.

Find the words in the square

s	t	a	r	n	z	e	r	t	r
n	s	h	a	d	o	w	b	p	o
o	s	t	i	a	d	e	e	s	o
w	l	r	e	w	p	g	n	u	k
t	n	o	m	n	m	i	z	n	x
n	o	b	z	x	y	g	d	p	m
a	x	i	h	w	w	a	t	g	o
j	i	n	v	o	t	o	e	u	o
p	t	z	l	r	r	u	r	p	n
i	c	l	x	o	t	s	l	m	l
h	i	r	n	z	b	e	e	i	i
w	c	d	v	n	z	v	x	z	p



Cartoon by Brain Gold

FIVE PLAYS FOR WALDORF FESTIVALS
by
RICHARD MOORE

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Gilly of the Goat, Pen and the Churl of the Townland of Mischance

A Handbook for
Waldorf Class Teachers
Compiled by Kevin Avison

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Rudolf Steiner School Kings Langley

Founded in 1949 the school occupies a fine elevated site of historical interest overlooking rural landscape, 30 minutes by train from London and close to Junction 20 on the M25. The school accepts children from Kindergarten through to Class 13. We have an immediate opening for a:

Class 6 Teacher

Applications are now invited for the following vacancies to commence in September 2004:

Class 1 Teacher
German Teacher

And candidates who could offer some combination of Upper School Sciences, Drama, History, Geography, or Woodwork. For further possible vacancies, an application form and other information please contact: Diane Simoneau, Personnel Administrator, Rudolf Steiner School, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 9HG
Tel: 01923 270959 Fax: 01923 270958
e-mail: diane@rudolfsteiner.herts.sch.uk

Ysgol Steiner Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School
 Llanycfefn, Clunderwan, Pembrokeshire, SA66 7JZ
 Tel: (01437) 563 640

Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School in Wales
 have the Following Vacancies:-

Either for a **Class 1 Teacher Commencing September 2004**
 or
Class 4&5 Teacher Commencing September 2004

We are a small school, currently Teaching 55 pupils, set in a beautiful wooded valley in West Wales, with double (but small) classes.

Please apply with a full CV showing experiences/time spent in Steiner Education

www.nant-y-cwm.co.uk info@nant-y-cwm.co.uk

THE ST MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL in Wandsworth is inviting applications for the following vacancies to commence in September 2004:

Steiner Waldorf qualified Class One teacher. An additional subject would be an advantage.

An experienced, qualified Steiner Waldorf Kindergarten teacher. The candidate will be leading a new kindergarten group.

An Administrator with excellent communication skills and knowledge of Waldorf Education. The St Michael Steiner School was founded in 2001 and now has sixty children. The cosmopolitan nature of life in London brings our school's children into daily contact with people of many different backgrounds and nationalities. This makes for a vibrant and exciting school experience for children and teachers alike.

For more information or to arrange a visit please contact Amanda Bell or Juanna Corcoran (class teachers) on 020 8870 0500. Applications should be made in writing, with a CV and covering letter to: The Chair of the Faculty, The St Michael Steiner School, 5 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 5ST.

www.stmichaelsteiner.wandsworth.sch.uk
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Waldorf School Windhoek



Association Not For Gain

In January 2004 our school will start with the Junior Secondary Phase (grades 7 – 10) on a new property on the edge of town. For this we need a **Waldorf class teacher** for grade 8, with a lot of engagement and pioneer spirit as well as excellent knowledge of the ENGLISH language.

The subject gardening is recommended.

Please send your applications to:

Waldorf School Windhoek

For attention: Mrs Peter

P.O.Box 90326,

Windhoek, NAMIBIA

Tel./Fax. 264-61-242499

Email: waldorf@namibnet.com

Website: <http://www.candor.com/waldorf>

HEREFORD WALDORF SCHOOL

Much Dewchurch, Hereford HR2 8DL

Tel: 01981 540221 Fax 01981 541237

Web: www.herefordwaldorfschool.org

Email: info@herefordwaldorfschool.org

TEACHER VACANCY

We are urgently seeking to fill the following full-time post from **January 2004**:

Maths and Science Teacher

to join our Upper School team of three full-time teachers

The successful applicant should be able to teach Maths to GCSE level (Welsh Board), and offer Science Main Lessons - particularly Physics and Chemistry in Classes IX and X, and possibly in Classes VII and VIII depending on timetable commitments. Ability to take on an Upper School craft such as woodwork, forge-work, or other craft, would be an added bonus.

Our warm and friendly school is located in rural Herefordshire about 6 miles south of the city of Hereford. We have over 220 pupils on our roll from Nursery to Class X. We recently bought and converted a farm-house into custom-built kindergartens and staff and admin rooms, and are now entering the second phase of our planning to build a new school hall and additional classroom and craft-room space.

To learn more about the school, please visit our website. Applications and/or enquiries should be sent to the Chairman of the College of Teachers or the Administrator at the above postal or email address.



BA (Hons) Degree in Steiner Waldorf Education

This course has been developed at the University of Plymouth in partnership with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship. Based at the University's Exmouth campus since 1992, it is integrated within the School of Education. It offers training over three years in Steiner Waldorf teaching combined with Education Studies at degree level.

Students on the course are offered a broad-based introduction to Steiner Waldorf education with emphasis on teaching children in the Class Teacher period (6-14 years). The course is modular and includes units in:

- Introduction to the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum
- Practical Pedagogy: classroom management and classroom skills
- Perspectives on Child Development
- Artistic activities including eurythmy, music, painting, drawing, modelling, and speech

- School-based observation and teaching practice
- Evolution of consciousness
- Anthroposophy and Philosophy
- Physiology and medical studies: the image of the human being derived from anthroposophy
- The esoteric basis of Steiner Waldorf education
- Education in the early years
- Science Teaching
- Education through the crafts
- Comparative Studies
- Independent Study Options

In addition, students are able to select alternative modules within the broad programme offered within the Faculty.

For further details, please contact:

Rolle School of Education
 Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AT
 T: 01395 255475, E: j.burnett@plymouth.ac.uk
www.plymouth.ac.uk/steinerwaldorf

**PIONEERING CLASS TEACHING OPPORTUNITY
 NORWICH, UK**

Vacancy for September 2004: an enthusiastic, committed Class 1 Teacher (probably to teach a combined class) to join our growing community and help to develop our new school. Previous experience is desirable but newly qualified teachers are encouraged to apply.

Founded in 1998, and after nearly six years of concerted community building, we now comprise:

- five thriving weekly Parent & Toddler Groups (involving 60+ families and children);
- an OFSTED-registered, steadily growing Kindergarten;
- a registered charitable company;
- a thriving local Steiner community comprising: the Initiative group, Board of Trustees, Support Group, School Founding Committee, Fund-Raising Ethics Committee, Crafts Group, and Toddler Group and Kindergarten administration groups.

Norwich is an attractive, medium-sized city around 100 miles from London, with a rich cultural life, an historic heritage and a high-status university, all set in this delightful part of rural England.

Salary is negotiable, but we intend to match the salary level found in comparable positions in the British Waldorf movement. **Closing Date for Applications: 20th May 2004** (this date may be extended; please check first before submitting applications after this date). Please send a full Curriculum Vitae, with names and addresses of three referees and a hand-written covering letter to: Sandie Tolhurst, NISS School Founding Committee, 27 Ramsey Close, Norwich NR4 7BQ, United Kingdom

For further information, to register an interest or arrange a visit, please contact Sandie Tolhurst on 01603-503795 (answerphone), or e-mail - info@norwichsteinerschool.co.uk - from whom our School Brochure can also be obtained. Our developing, informative website can be visited at www.norwichsteinerschool.co.uk

The Norfolk Initiative Steiner School
 Private, Ltd by guarantee, Co. no. 4815492
 Registered Charity No. 1099377

**Elmfield Rudolf
 Steiner School**

Vacancies September 2004

Class One Teacher

To take the new Class One in September 2004.

Crafts Teacher

Full-time or part-time crafts teacher(s) for middle and upper school crafts. The ideal candidate(s) will have good skills and teaching experience in art and crafts, ideally including ceramics, pottery, metalwork, basketwork, sewing, woodwork. Some of the work may involve preparation for CDT examinations.

Please contact Carrie Smith for further information. Elmfield Steiner School, Love Lane, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 2EA.

Tel. 01384 394633,
 fax 01384 393608
 email: info@elmfield.com

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ANNOUNCING: A FOUNDATION DEGREE IN STEINER WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

The new programme in Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood, with its flexible delivery systems, offers opportunities for Early Years Practitioners, teaching assistants, parents and those wishing to specialise in early childhood to achieve a professional qualification.

This new programme is currently going through the accreditation process of the University of Plymouth, and the intention is to have it up and running by September 2004.

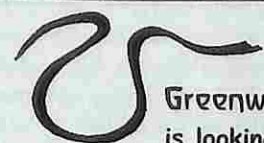
Current levels of interest indicate that the programme will run in Northern England/Midlands, and in the south-west. The course will take place over two years, but the modules

can be completed within a five year period should it be difficult to attend all the sessions required.

For potential students who have previous experience of Steiner Early Childhood Education, it would be possible to apply for previous learning and experience to be accredited, where relevant.

Contact the address below for a preliminary application form to register your interest.

Abi McCullough, Faculty of Education, University of Plymouth, Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AT
abi.mccullough@plymouth.ac.uk Tel: 01395 255325



Greenwich Steiner School
 is looking for a Class 1 teacher &
 Kindergarten teacher for September
 2004.



Our growing school is based in Greenwich, South-East London and serves a diverse community providing an uniquely rewarding teaching experience.

We are able to offer good rates of remuneration starting at 16k pa and rising with experience

Should you be interested in discussing any of these positions with us or if you would like information about any other teaching possibilities, please contact our administrator on 020 8318 9790, email us on info@greenwichsteiner.co.uk or write to Greenwich Steiner School, St George's Church, Kirkside Rd, London, SE3 7SO.

We look forward to hearing from you.

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01725 517085 www.myriadonline.co.uk

Vacancies at the Rudolf Steiner School South Devon

Upper School

Due to departures an exciting opportunity to get involved teaching in a vibrant and emerging Upper School have arisen.

Opportunities exist in Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Ecology, German, Sports, Art, English, History and various crafts.

We would like to meet energetic and enthusiastic teachers who can teach a combination of the above with the background in Waldorf education and a desire not to teach the National Curriculum.

Middle School

We are currently recruiting for a Class 1 teacher and a Class 6 teacher for September 2004. We would be particularly interested in candidates who have abilities in subject areas such as those mentioned above and with the ability to work in both Upper and Lower School.

Early Years

Following the completion of our new Early Years department, we are looking for a Nursery teacher.

For a fuller picture of the career opportunities that are available at the South Devon School, please go to our web site at www.steiner-south-devon.org

Wynstones

is a vibrant Steiner school near Gloucester, taking children from 3 to 18, offering a full Waldorf curriculum, GCSEs and A levels. Next year Wynstones will have parallel class 1 and many full classes with over 320 children.

Come and join our team.

Needed For Sept 2004
Class Teachers,

Upper School Teachers - Maths f-t or p-t, English f-t or p-t, Geography p-t, and Biology p-t, possibly part-time crafts/textiles. Teaching experience and enthusiasm for working with teenagers are especially valued, knowledge of Steiner Waldorf Curriculum is important.

NOW: Skilled maintenance workers, f-t and short term
Wynstones also offers training for teachers in Steiner Waldorf Education.

All enquiries and applications (letter and CV + 3 referees) to the Administrator, Wynstones School, e-mail info@wynstones.com
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*"...Whatever you can do,
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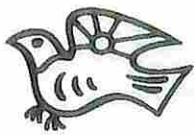
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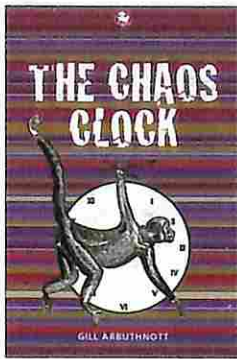
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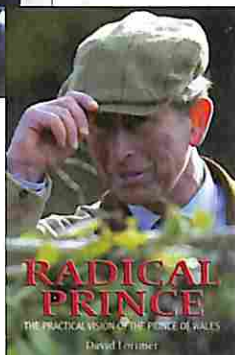
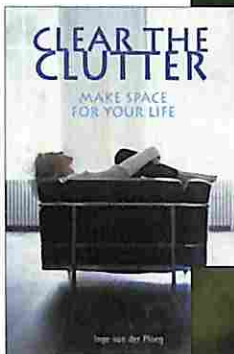
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