

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. It is for distribution to parents and friends of the education. We hope that it will give you a brief snapshot of some of the things that are happening in and around our member schools.

### An update on Glasgow Steiner School:

Following the devastating fire in April, the Glasgow Steiner School was unfortunately forced to go into liquidation over the summer. Children, teachers and parents managed to keep things together somehow to see the academic year through, with the end of term celebrations held in a park local to the old school.

Since then, the 'Glasgow Steiner Community' has been established with the hope of creating a new Steiner school in Glasgow

[www.steinerforward.co.uk](http://www.steinerforward.co.uk). A playgroup for kindergarten aged

children has also been set up, with two teachers from the old school heading up the **Steiner Seedlings** (please 'like' our Facebook page to watch us grow! <https://www.facebook.com/Steinerseedlings>).

Despite not having an actual school, the sense of community in Glasgow is still strong and we have just held our Michaelmas celebrations with over 60 people sharing soup and Dragon bread made by the Seedlings children!

The Community would like to thank everyone for their support and thoughts through this difficult time; it really is greatly appreciated.

Vicki Kakos



### 'Starting the Journey': a conference for teachers starting Class One, July, 2013:

As I came away from the conference for teachers preparing to take Class One in September, I was reminded of a remark I'd once heard from one of the Camphill pioneers. He said that he never resented going to conferences because they are a modern equivalent of the mediaeval pilgrimage: we come back from them sustained, enriched and restored. Perhaps there was less sustenance to be gained from a car journey to Ringwood immediately after the end of term, as travelling through holiday traffic for an early start was a frenetic experience. (By the time this is being read, the midsummer heat-wave may seem like a tale told to deceive the credulous). However, stepping into the Class One classroom only just vacated by Elaine Holt's youngsters was immediately refreshing, like a total immersion.

Discovering the shared questions and nervous anticipation of colleagues from across the country, (with one going abroad to join a pioneering venture in Belgium), and being enriched by the fresh experiences of Elaine and her colleagues at Ringwood, was a wonderful way to begin the task of

preparing oneself. Some pilgrims were young, and fresh to the challenge; others of us were older and experienced, had even taken a class through and come back for more; but today's children are the riddle and challenge that are facing us all alike.

These conferences can seem one more task to fit into busy schedules; but, like pilgrimages, they give us the opportunity to go deeper and further; going deeper into ourselves to discover the resources we need; going further through the enrichment and encouragement of others.

This was a masterpiece of planning, by Kevin and Jane Avison; Elaine Holt's reflections on her Class One were endlessly inspiring and thought-provoking; the wisdom of Ann Swain, and the movement sessions of Bobo Ijadic (Games) and Juliet Hurner (Eurythmy) emphasised the curative context that education requires of us today, and gave us practical ideas and exercises with which we could support all children in their learning.



This was both a fine beginning to the holiday, and a deep feeding for the soul; of course, the real journey is only just beginning, and we are left still feeling like Chaucer's gathering of expectant pilgrims at the Tabard Inn (although we didn't go to the pub, this time); but connections were made which will help us support one another throughout the journey, and wisdom was shared to sustain us in any moments of doubt on the road ahead!

Martin Gulbis



### Steiner Public Relations: Standing Together:

In just a few years since its inception, the Steiner Waldorf PR Group has met in London at Steiner House and at our schools in Kings Langley, York and Forest Row. Initiated by Alan Swindell before he took the post of Principal at Exeter Steiner Academy, we are delighted that our next meeting later this year will be held there as we continue our work together.

PR meetings have been a space to share best practice with colleagues and to brainstorm ways in which we can better work together to be a more effective voice in British education. We have shared advertising in targeted publications including The Green Parent and The Guardian as well as shared representation at school trade fairs. This has significantly reduced our marketing costs as we have received preferential rates on advertising space, but perhaps more importantly, has woven an invisible thread of connection and community between us.

Our work has not just been limited to meetings. Working with email groups of up to fifty people, it has been necessary to outline clear and accountable processes with previously agreed timeframes to ensure that all the goodwill, ideas and expertise in our schools is channelled constructively into definitive actions and outcomes. Perhaps similar to how mandates work for those of us familiar with them. As a result, the PR Group has gone from strength to strength. The willingness of colleagues to engage wholeheartedly with the process and to work with sincerity has made the experience of working together both inspiring and a pleasure to be a part of.

Our latest campaign "Ripple Day" is another initiative that has arisen from our group. Research from the schools reflects clearly that word of mouth referrals are our greatest source of new leads for prospective parents and pupils. To this end, we have circulated "Ripple Day" leaflets to parents in nineteen of the schools who have wholeheartedly stepped on board. This campaign also goes live on Ripple Day - Friday 18th October, where posts will be shared across our various social media networks,



including facebook and twitter. The aim is clear - to raise awareness of Steiner Waldorf Education in the UK.

The call to action is to invite parents, colleagues and friends to like our "Imagine a School Where," facebook page. This is an independently created community space sharing inspirational messages as well as highlighting the benefits of a Steiner Waldorf education. It is also a space to celebrate and support children to just be children! Please do "like" the page and help us spread the word.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Imagine-a-School-Where/1424308824458019?ref=hl>

If you have any brilliant ideas to help get our message out there, we would love to hear from you. Please email [pr@steinerwaldorf.org](mailto:pr@steinerwaldorf.org)

Priya Mahtani

The SWSF are pleased that Priya has taken on our facebook page and look forward to working with her. We are concerned that since Alan left we have not been able to replace him due to financial restrictions. We see a need for training for those in schools working in this area, also seed money to support the work being done by the PR Group and welcome donations to enable this to happen.

## Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship

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