

Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School Eurythmy Curriculum 2018-2019

Sources

The Tasks and Content of the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum, The National Curriculum for Music

Purpose of study

Eurythmy is an art of movement that engages the whole human being and plays an important role in the Steiner Curriculum. It aims to harmonise the child's physical wellbeing with their constantly developing feeling and soul life. Eurythmy was defined by Rudolf Steiner as being 'visible speech and visible singing'. Language and music are means through which elements of children's emotional lives may be expressed. Through learning the gestural vocabulary of sounds and tones, the children develop an inner connection with the qualities inherent in language and music. This then supports their development of linguistic and musical literacy. The work on choreography and interpretation of literature and music deepens the children's aesthetic appreciation of those subjects experientially.

An education in Eurythmy encourages children's physical and spiritual development, engages and inspires pupils to develop their imagination, and helps to increase children's listening skills and confidence and strengthen their control over their movements.

Aims

At Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School the Eurythmy curriculum aims to:

- Strengthen pupils' imitation skills and imagination
- Harmonise their developmental processes stimulating their three major learning faculties: willing, feeling and thinking
- Enhance pupils' listening skills
- Enhance pupils' body awareness and spatial orientation
- Promote feelings of wellbeing
- Encourage good posture
- Strengthen pupils' feeling and understanding of language and music

Method

- In Kindergarten (ages 4-6), Eurythmy is taught through imitation, with the class encouraged to listen and engage with the content as a whole
- In Lower school (ages 7-9), imitation continues to be the main method of learning and engaging with the content, however simple spatial forms and dexterity exercises are also introduced
- In Middle school (ages 10-14), pupils acquire knowledge of the Eurythmy gestures for the alphabet sounds, the musical elements like beat, pitch, rhythm, spatial forms for grammatical elements, and are asked to create their own choreography under the guidance of their teacher
- In Upper school (ages 15-17), pupils are delivered the basic elements of Eurythmy and are asked to reflect on and understand Eurythmy's benefits. Pupils are also encouraged to work independently towards an artistic expression of a music and/or speech piece resulting in a performance

The lessons contain a balanced variety of:

- Warm up exercises: short opening verses
- Dexterity exercises to develop gross motor skills
- Copper rod exercises to enhance fine motor skills
- Rhythm exercises to rhyme or music (clapping, stepping, stamping, skipping)
- Live piano music with a wide variety of short classical pieces that accompany the lessons
- Seasonal verses, age appropriate tales, stories and fables
- Pedagogical Eurythmy group forms suggested by Rudolf Steiner that meet the children's developmental challenges

Outcomes

Kindergarten (ages 4-6)

Imitation and imagination stay at the heart of engaging with the elements of Eurythmy. By the end of this stage pupils should have developed good imitation skills.

Lower school (ages 7-9)

By the end of this stage pupils know how to walk several geometrical forms in space when presented via imaginative pictures (e.g. the square is a house or castle), have basic body awareness and dexterity, recognise some of the Eurythmy alphabet gestures, be aware and able to follow rules and safely handle copper rods, have good listening skills and a well-developed sense of rhythm.

By the end of Class 1 pupils will be able to:

- Engage with the content of lesson in an acceptable way (e.g. change into their Eurythmy shoes, keep quiet and listen to the teacher, raise their hand when they have something to say or ask)
- Form a circle with the whole class
- Follow sound-movement gestures and imitate these
- Differentiate their stepping according to music or the actual narrative
- Follow coordination exercises to simple rhythmic patterns (e.g. anapaest, trochee, 4/4 beat) and 1-2 bar music

By the end of Class 2 pupils will be able to:

- Move in pairs in parallel circles
- Imitate Eurythmy gestures with more confidence
- Walk simple mirror forms (with straight lines and curves)
- Echo back simple rhythmic patterns following clapping or short musical phrases
- Handle simple fine and gross motor exercises (pass on in circle, rolling on arms, follow pitch) with copper rods

By the end of Class 3 pupils will be able to:

- Recognise the Eurythmy sound gestures when shown to them (vowels and most consonants)
- Walk geometrical forms in space (triangle, square, circle, spiral)
- Step or clap rhythmically to poems and music
- Complete dexterity exercises with copper rods (e.g. make up their own short movement pattern jumping over the rods in various forms for a 2-bar music phrase in 4/4)

Middle school (ages 10-14)

By the end of this stage pupils should be able to work semi-independently with the basic Eurythmical elements in both speech and music Eurythmy.

- In Speech Eurythmy they should be able to carry out the alphabet sound gestures, know and apply the grammatical forms of speech, contribute to a group form and work towards a short performance
- In Music Eurythmy pupils should know the angles for a variety of major and minor scales and the interval gestures, and be able to express harmonies in a group form. Age appropriate geometrical transition forms as indicated by Rudolf Steiner are mastered and performed
- Raised spacial and social awareness is attained as well

By the end of Class 4 pupils will be able to:

- Recognise and step to alliterative poetry
- Carry out copper rod exercises with precision (e.g. the 7-fold basic rod exercise suggested by Rudolf Steiner)
- Recognise and move in space the grammatical elements presented to them in a poem (e.g. verbs and nouns)
- Carry out concentration exercises and rhythmical patterns in canon form

By the end of Class 5 pupils will be able to:

- Walk with ease using the 3-fold stepping method
- Recognise and carry out all alphabet-sound Eurythmy gestures with confidence
- Walk more complicated geometrical forms (e.g. the archetypal 5-pointed star - in group and alone, forms that involve constant change of direction like continuous loops forward and back)
- Carry out the basic rod exercises like the 7-fold, 12-fold, spiral and waterfall
- Show the gestures for some major scales (e.g. C major, G major, F major)

By the end of Class 6 pupils will be able to:

- Read simple Eurythmy forms off the blackboard
- Walk geometrical transitions in group (e.g. triangle and diamond transition)
- Carry out the gestures for minor scales (A minor, E minor, D minor) and more major scales, the interval gesture for the octave
- Carry out with confidence the basic rod exercises (including throwing)
- Walk all grammar forms and be able to use them in the context of a poem

By the end of Class 7 pupils will be able to:

- Identify and carry out with precision all scales in the circle of 5th (major and minor)
- Carry out all intervals gestures and forms
- Walk continuous forms (e.g. double curve into a spiral in and retrace)
- Consciously work with speech Eurythmy elements like (head and foot positions, affirmation and negation)
- Recognise and step the beat of a music piece
- Contribute to a variation of coordination and dexterity exercises using copper rods

By the end of Class 8 pupils will be able to:

- Carry out dramatic Eurythmy gestures to an excerpt of a drama piece (e.g. Shakespeare)
- Work together with their peers and contribute to finding musical gestures for a music piece

(interval, harmony, tone gestures)

- Recognise and carry out forms of I, You, He in a text (prose or poem – ballad or humorous pieces)
- Recognise some soul gestures (yes/no, sympathy/antipathy, hope, fulfilment, sorrow, laughter)
- Master all rod exercises with great precision

Upper School (ages 15-17)

By the end of this stage pupils have a conscious understanding and master most Eurythmy elements in both speech and music with confidence. Are able to read drawn choreography and/or create their own group forms. Pupils should have excellent listening skills and be able to hear and decide which elements of Eurythmy to incorporate to express content on a performance level. Control and mastery of own movement, raised body, spacial and social awareness is attained as well.

By the end of Upper school pupils will be able to:

- Carry out all Eurythmy sound gestures and apply them in a piece of text by creating artistic choreography (vowels, consonants, dramatic gestures, soul gestures)
- Carry out all musical elements and apply them to a piece of music by creating artistic choreography (tone gestures, intervals, harmony, rhythm, beat, pitch)
- Carry out group forms with precision and high levels of coordination (forms based on single and double symmetry, forms with complicated continuous loops and double curves)

Assessment

MISSING