

## **School Food Policy**

In our experience food that contains artificial sweeteners, colourings, flavourings and sugar can be damaging to some children's concentration and behaviour. This undermines their ability to learn. Our wish for the children is that they eat healthy nourishing food.

We have a clear policy on the food that children bring to school: SIMPLE AND GOOD.

More research is coming to light on the negative effects on health and behaviour of sweets, soft drinks, food additives and flavourings (often labelled as 'natural' flavourings). Another aspect less often mentioned is the effect of the junk food industries on agriculture. Teachers may ask a child to take home unsuitable items rather than eat them in the classroom.

For Health & Safety reasons we expect all eating to take place in the classroom and not in the corridors, communal areas or playground. This is especially important to ensure the well being of children with food allergies.

Brighton Steiner School has an Open Policy on Nut Free Foods, where it asks for the cooperation and understanding of all parents and pupils to support that other individuals may have adverse reactions to environments containing nut derivatives. We therefore request that all foods brought to school contain no nuts or sesame seeds.

## **Television, Video, Cinema, Computer**

When you become a parent in a Steiner School you will be aware that "television" is a well-worn word. Not in the context of 'Did you watch so and so last night?' but as a question: 'What harm or good are television, video, cinema and/or computer games doing to your child?'

Television and computers have their uses in society today, but through the whole of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum everything has its right time and place to be brought to the developing child. We are, as a society, extremely unaware of how sensitive and open children are. They absorb everything from the environment around them and recreate it in their play and work.

In the school and as parents we aim to give the children a warm, nurturing environment that is worthy of re-creation. But so often today what children have around them is not nurturing. They see violence and anger, distorted human forms and cruelty. Many of these images come via the media, through television, computers, comic books and videos. If we are conscious of how much children

absorb from their surroundings, how they imitate it in every detail and look up to it, then we begin to see how these images that come from the media are damaging to the healthy development of children's minds and bodies. Over exposure to television and computer games impair concentration and creativity and deprives the child of the normal responses to the outside world.

## **Drugs Policy**

The use of and possession of drugs (hard drugs, solvents, cannabis, alcohol and tobacco) on school premises or whilst on school activities (ie. camps and outings) is strictly forbidden. The school finds the use of these drugs, whether in school or outside it, harmful to the students' physical and psychological health and at odds with the pedagogical aims of the school.

Any offence will result in suspension followed by an interview with parents and two college members. This may result in permanent exclusion, even for a first offence.

In the world outside school we would also highlight the negative effects of drug use and the fact that using any such substance severely limits the student's ability to gain the benefits that the education brings. The effects of these drugs do not end when the student enters the school to begin a new day. Drugs in society are increasingly encroaching into the lives of young people and the age at which they are exposed to them is getting ever younger. If we are to be effective in helping our children deal with the pressures they are often subjected to it is vital that we deal with this issue both within and outside the school.

We request that all students refrain from using any illegal substances while they are a student at Brighton Steiner School. The school considers the present age limits, which the law prescribes for obtaining and consuming cigarettes and alcohol to be the minimum acceptable guideline – that is 16 for tobacco and 18 for obtaining alcohol. For illegal substances we request complete abstinence.

In the event that we suspect or become aware of a student using illegal drugs then a meeting will be held with the student to discuss the situation. As previously stated we feel that drug use is incompatible with our pedagogical approach, however this does not necessarily mean we would be looking to exclude or expel a student on this basis. We would however be looking for some commitment to a process whereby the drug use could be reduced and ideally stopped and support would be offered to achieve this. Only in the event that such commitment was not forthcoming and the student's behaviour was considered to be detrimental to the school community would suspension or exclusion be considered.

With this policy we hope to support a healthy, safe social environment both within and outside the school; one in which all students may freely participate without

there being drug use, peer pressure or tacit acceptance of alcohol consumption, smoking or drug use as a prerequisite for invitations to social events. Your parental support and effective supervision of any social activities which involve your son or daughter will go a long way to the building of an overall support network for the child at a time when drug use in society is becoming more the norm than the exception.

## **Clothing and Appearance**

Clothing, footwear, accessories, hairstyles and appearance must be suitable for school activities.

- All garments must be clean, mended, where necessary and suitable for each season and occasion. Colour, fabric and size must be carefully chosen. All garments should be marked with the owner's name
- No logos, pictures or bold designs and patterns.
- Hair should be regularly checked at home for headlice. Children with headlice will be sent home with a note and must be treated before returning to school
- Shoulders, midribs and necklines should be covered.
- Upper School only:
- All tattoos and piercing and other alterations to the individual's physicality should be covered or removed during school.
- All cosmetics should be subtle, all hair products and dyes should be natural and all hairstyles should be subtle and conducive to learning.
- All jewellery should be subtle and not impinge or risk the individual
  
- All infringements of the dress code will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

In order to provide clarity over issues of dress code, the school will issue a notice to any child in breach of the dress code with a clear indication as to what item/appearance breaches the code. We would request that your child not wear that particular item again or anything of a similar nature. A further breach of dress code will trigger a second slip, again detailing which item is in breach of the code and stating that a third breach will result in the child being sent home to change. In the event of this not being possible then the child will be suspended for the following day. If you are in any doubt as to whether your child's outfit breaches the code, suggest they change it.

We have clear reasons why certain items or styles of dress are not appropriate for school and we would ask that you respect these. If the school had a uniform then the issue of compliance would be mandatory. We support our students

expressing their individuality in the clothes they choose to wear for school, within the guidelines of the dress code. Please support us in ensuring that your children are appropriately and adequately clothed for the school day.