



# BRIGHTON STEINER SCHOOL NEWS

10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2007  
SPRING TERM ISSUE 1

And when I am in Spirit-depths  
Within my soul's deep ground,  
Vain notions of my self-bound nature  
Are filled from the hearts' own worlds of love  
With fiery strength of the Word of Worlds.

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul

## Farewells and arrivals

A warm welcome to the new pupils and families joining the school this term, they are:

Meg Forshaw in Sharon's Kindergarten. A welcome return to the Noelle Olsons – Abraham & Katy in Carrie's Kindergarten and Sophia in Class 1. We also welcome Carolin Biele who is joining Class 9 as a visiting pupil from Germany.

A fond farewell to Maya Lock from Class 7; we wish her a successful and happy future, though it is not a final farewell as her brother is still in class 8.

## Reception Notices

- We had quite a few children who didn't make it back to school last Thursday (some on unauthorised holiday – naughty naughty!) and some parents who said "Oh, we thought it was Monday!" despite it being in the newsheet! If you ever have any queries about term dates check our website!
- If any of your details have changed eg. you have moved or changed telephone/mobile numbers please inform me as soon as possible. We also need up to date medical information, a work no. if applicable and a friend's no. in case we can't get hold of you in an emergency.
- If your child is absent please ring in before 9.30am if possible and send a note in with your child when they return. We need to know where your child is during a school day and on occasion have had the Education Welfare Officer from the Council asking for confirmation of a child's absence. We require a doctor's certificate for any absences due to illness lasting more than 7 consecutive days.
- If you are visiting the school at any time other than to pick up your child/ren please make sure you sign in at reception and then sign out when you leave.

Thank you, Sara

## Promise Auction 2007

This year the auction will be run as a live event on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, but if you can't make it on the night you can place silent bids before then. The evening will be similar to last year with a meal, drink, a celebrity after dinner speaker, a lively auctioneer and amazing live music plus the added excitement of a chance to outbid everyone else at the auction.

Here is a brief account of how the Promise Auction will work:

1. Parents, friends, families and local businesses donate pledges to the PTA auction, with the pledge form accompanying this newsheet – all pledge forms must be returned by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.
2. A booklet of pledges is compiled and distributed to all the families at the school.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Parents Evenings

Class 9	Wed 17 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm
Class 10	Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup>	6.30pm
Playgroup	Wed 24 <sup>th</sup>	5.30pm
Class 8	Mon 29 <sup>th</sup>	6pm
Class 1	Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	5.30pm

### January

Tues 16 <sup>th</sup>	5.30pm	Dr Bodo's talk
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.30-11.30am	School tour & Early Years talk
	6pm	Class 9 play for parents
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>		Farmer's Market
Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	9.30-11.30am	School tour & Lower/Middle School talk

### Early Years

Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup>	3.15pm	Class 1 rising preparation talk
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30	Valentine market

3. Families and friends fill out the Silent auction forms and return them to reception.
4. The silent bids are collated and the highest bid for each item becomes the reserve price for the live auction.
5. The live auction takes place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March and the highest bid (be it silent or live) purchases each lot.
6. Payments are made to the PTA before the end of the spring term and a certificate of purchase issued.
7. All pledges must be taken up by the end of August 2007 (unless alternative arrangements are made).

This is a really great fundraising event but it can only succeed with help from everyone in the school, so please think hard and give generously. Examples of previous pledges are; home grown vegetables for a year, a story featuring your own child, a night in a boutique hotel, a pottery course, babysitting, cakes – in fact anything you can offer that someone else might pay for.

Thank you very much to everyone who has made pledges already – we have some brilliant ones. You will find the pledge form with this newsheet, so decide what to offer and return it to the box on reception **BY FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY**.  
Thank you

### PTA

Steering Group meeting next Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> at 8.45am.

### BSS Choir News

Our choir practise will begin again this Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January, 6 – 7.30pm in the school hall. Please bring along any songs you would like to sing – remember this is your choir! For more information please call Jack.

### Talk by Dr Bodo

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January, 5.30pm in the hall.  
An open talk by our school doctor, Dr Bodo Gottschalk for all parents, friends and family on the class 1 – 3 child. The Dr's talks are always of wide interest and roam beyond the immediate topic in a very entertaining and informative way. We will have a basket for donations. Kim will be holding a crèche in Carrie's kindergarten for ages 3 -7 years. Limited spaces available so please book through reception as soon as possible.

### Lunches

Just a reminder that lunch prices have gone up this year and that wholemeal sandwiches are also available on Tuesdays :

**Tuesdays:** Baguettes - Large £2, Small £1.25

or sandwich £2

**Wednesdays:** Jacket potato £2.20

**Thursdays:** Pizza £2 with salad £2.50

And now we also have organic spaghetti with tomato sauce & cheese on Mondays at £2.

We would really appreciate lunches being paid on the day so that we're not constantly harassing debtors or preferably lunches can be paid for in advance for the whole term or half term and a 10% discount will be given. Cheques to be made payable to Rosie Harrison.

### CRB Checks

If you are intending to accompany a class on school trips or assist during lesson times – **YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE BEEN CRB CHECKED**. Please see Annette if you wish to have such a check done. It takes about 6 weeks to process.

### Head Lice



This is the NITTY GRITTY - a fantastic comb that removes all head lice and eggs. It's available over the counter at Boots at around £10 and a very good investment. No more faffing around with herbal or aromatherapy concoctions, and **NO MORE HEAD LICE!** Jo Renshaw

### Help Save Trees While Searching the Web

Simply by searching the internet using <http://www.everyclick.com/uk/thewoodlandtrust> whenever you search the web instead of your usual search engine and you can support the work of the Woodland Trust. There is no charge and it is easy to set up. Every click made on a sponsored link, earns money for the Woodland Trust.

### Early Years News

We have experienced some small part of the mystery of Christmas and even we may not have understood, we come back to school (now with the Christmas tree gone), somehow changed; our mood somewhat stilled.

Here are Caspar, Balthazar and Melchior with their precious gifts, who in their wisdom, traveled to pay homage under the Star, maybe a haughty camel, who had a lesson to learn in humility, and dear familiar Baboushka with her apron and broom....”She’s sweeping, she’s sweeping, she’s sweeping all the day long”... and still journeying.

A warm welcome back to everyone at the start of a new Spring term.

Best wishes, Early Years teachers



# BRIGHTON STEINER SCHOOL NEWS

24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2007  
SPRING TERM ISSUE 3

The plant seeds spring in the womb of earth  
And waters rain from heaven's heights.  
So does love spring in human hearts  
And wisdom water the thoughts of men.

Rudolf Steiner

## Promise Auction

Thank you for the promises of pledges that you have made so far – what a generous, innovative, artistic and talented group of people we are! Local businesses are also being very supportive BUT we still need many more pledges to make this event successful. If you need a pledge form – they are at reception next to the pledge post box. Anne and Thaisa will be in the playground collecting pledges this week also. The deadline for pledges to be in the box at reception is next Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

Tickets for the live event on March 3<sup>rd</sup> will be on sale soon – watch this space!

If anybody would like to help with the event, we need willing waitresses (great fun), people to help with decorating and setting up the hall and a tidying away team. Please phone Anne with any offers of help on 304095 or email [anne@wilburyvets.com](mailto:anne@wilburyvets.com)

## Class 8 Projects Presentation

What a treat to hear the whole of Class 8 present their individual projects on Monday after school. The range of topics was as eclectic and imaginative as the students themselves, from tailoring to cheese, from skateboarding to propaganda, from Marilyn Monroe to Tibet!

They had all done an impressive amount of work, even though many admitted to struggling at the start; they all produced a quality finish. Both their written project books and their oral presentations with whatever additional aids they felt appropriate (including a human digestive system made from what looked like a pair of tights!) showed a range

of skills and talent of which they and we can be proud.

Well done to all the students and to their supportive parents who nagged and chivvied and supported them and of course to Henry who has guided the Class for the last 8 years so successfully. With their Fairy Tale Eurythmy performance and Class 8 Play still to come it looks like being an interesting and entertaining year for all of us.

Thank you Class 8. Jacqui Firth

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Parents Evenings

Playgroup	Tonight	5.30pm
Class 9	Tonight	7pm
Class 8	Mon 29 <sup>th</sup>	6pm
Class 2	Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	6pm – Not class 1 as stated last week!
Class 9	Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	6pm with GCSE teachers
Class 3	Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	6pm
Class 4	Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm
Class 6	Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	6pm

### January

Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	9.30am	School tour & Lower/ Middle School talk
	6-10pm	Class 9 play for parents

### February

Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm - 9.30pm	Vaccination talk with Trevor Gunn
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### Early Years

Tues 30 <sup>th</sup>	5.30pm	Class 1 readiness talk - SKG
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am	Valentine market

**Half term: 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> February**

## More about League Tables

By Sarah James

After reading Jacqui Firth's piece in last week's newsletter about how the league tables give a very distorted view of Steiner education, I thought I would share with parents a number of further points on this topic that have emerged through my PR work with the school.

Firstly truancy; it seems very misleading to lump in term time holidays with truancy in the statistics. The former may not be advisable in an ideal world but the latter represents a serious failing of the school towards individual pupils, generally older pupils. In reality our school has a fantastic record of almost zero truancy, a fact mainstream Deputy Head Sue Kelly picked up on when she did the Teachers' TV programme on us (still available on our website for those that haven't seen it).

She put this down to a culture of mutual respect between staff and pupils whereby pupils felt that they were a valued part of the school, that it was their space, and attended freely of their own choice. Steiner education offers a very different approach to working with teenage pupils than exists in most mainstream schools and when I have worked with the Upper School pupils on PR projects, I have been very impressed by the open, engaged and articulate young adults I've encountered. (For more information on approach, see Upper School pages on our website [www.brightonsteinerschool.org.uk](http://www.brightonsteinerschool.org.uk)).

As to the GCSE results, we are not alone in feeling that the tables skew the information in an unfavourable light. Last year the Argus ran a story in which most of the mainstream schools in the area commented that they did not feel the results reflected their performance. Sec Ed magazine, a specialist secondary education title, are considering running a campaign, with schools' support, to ban the tables altogether. Non-selective schools may do marvellous work with a pupil body of mixed ability but those schools which select only the most able will always remain at the top. There is now talk of measuring pupil progress, rather than just academic achievement. And obviously there is no measure within these narrow statistics for the emotional well-being of the pupils who may be scoring highly on the Government's check list.

There is much debate amongst educationalists as to the damage exam pressure is putting on precious young lives. A public health worker confided to me recently after a Child Health Conference, "The thing that would make the most difference to child health is relieving the pressures of testing and exams." I have written a piece about this for the next issue of ABC entitled Educating for Happiness that I will put in next week's newsletter for those who are interested.

Damian Mooncie has been invited to attend a Teachers' TV debate hosted by Jonathan Dimpleby next week on the topic Is School Killing Childhood? asking the following questions:

- 1) Are children too heavily assessed/tested too soon?
- 2) Is there still a place for fun in primary education?
- 3) Should the curriculum take greater note of discoveries made in cognitive and behavioural sciences about the ways in which children's brains develop?

(See also Professor Alexander's Times Educational Supplement article of October 13<sup>th</sup> 2006.)

As Steiner parents we are more inclined to measure 'success' by criteria other than a league table and it is valuable occasionally to stop and think what you would like your child to take away from their educational experience. As part of a project to keep in touch with past pupils I've been looking at what our students went on to do with their education and the results are impressive. I was particularly struck with the choice of topics at A level. Many went on to do Science despite it being an area we feel we'd like to do more on and many were able to undertake seemingly diverse subjects - Physics and Philosophy being one example, or Maths and Drama. This type of interdisciplinary education is now valued at University level (Sussex being one of the pioneers of interdisciplinary study) but I suspect would not be seen in students from the mainstream. In all likelihood, they would have had to make a choice whether to pursue Science or Humanities.

One of the most valuable aspects of Steiner education is that all pupils participate in all

subjects, regardless of ability, because each subject has intrinsic value to the overall education of the pupil. This might mean that we don't look good on a league table, but the achievements of our Upper School pupils - socially as well as academically - speak for themselves.

### **Post GCSE Waldorf Programme**

Michael Hall is holding an evening on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February to inform interested parents and pupils about the Class 11 & Class 12 Programmes for exam and non-exam accreditation. For more information please call 01342 822275.

### **Early Years News**

Dr Bodo gave an evening talk to the school community last week and it was great to see so many of you there.

In seeking to give us some understanding of anthroposophical medicine, working with the

concept that everything exists in a transient state which is now overlooked with the present scientific interest in static details of existence, he took us on a wide-ranging journey of ideas, planting seeds for thought along the way

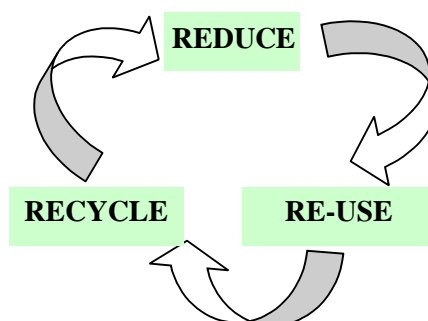
How the metabolism interrelates with Thought, Feeling and Will, the many-fold aspects of the human being and the elements, in both their physical and spiritual dimensions. This he related to health and dis-ease on all levels and to problems with alcohol and drugs.

A particularly poignant suggestion for us as parents and teachers was that we should aim to help the child form metaphysically as a really fine candle, so that their flame can shine alight in later life.

Best wishes

Early Years teachers

## **ECO SCHOOLS RECYCLING**



### **EVERY WEEK OUR SCHOOL SENDS 3 WHEELIE BINS OF RUBBISH TO LANDFILL - WE CAN GET THIS DOWN TO 2 NOW!**

We are aware that many of the families in our community are conscious of the environment and we are working to institute this behaviour in our school too.

Each classroom has now been issued with a box for paper recycling, but most classroom waste comes from packed lunches so please consider the following when making your child's meal:

- Reduce the amount of food packaging: tin-foil, plastics, cardboard etc.

- Invest in reusable containers for food and drink bearing in mind that plastic bottles are reported to leach harmful properties into liquids.
- Consider decanting yoghurt and spreads from large pots and tubes into portion-sized reusable containers.
- Inform your children to bring home anything from their lunch-boxes that cannot be composted and recycle it at home. The class teachers will also help to remind them of this.

Many of you provide wonderful voluntary support for the school in the form of class-contacting and fund-raising. When using our building's facilities, please think about creating as little waste as possible.

Overleaf is a list of practices we would ask you to adopt and please tell us of any other waste saving ideas you may have:

- Paper for recycling needs to be taken to the blue council paper-recycling bin round the side of the school near the waste bins. Cardboard needs to be flat-packed and stowed in the large white Magpie bag located in the same area.
- We have observed that the disposal of landfill waste generated by the school can be carried out in a very ad hoc and unpleasant way. Items need to be as flat as possible and bags done up.
- Be conscious about your paper usage when communicating with fellow parents. Photocopy or print on both sides of paper and provide just enough copies. Is it possible to pass messages via email?
- Reuse out-of-date letters from school as scrap paper for drawing etc *then* recycle.
- Communicate and encourage fellow parents on these issues.

**YOUR CO-OPERATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE VITAL AND VALUED.**

**If you have any comments *or* suggestions please address them to Jack on 271084 or [jacknmatt@ntlworld.com](mailto:jacknmatt@ntlworld.com)**

**Thank you for your attention,  
The Recycling Group from within the Eco-Schools Action Team.**