



SAE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 109 22ND MARCH

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mon 25 th - Fri 29 th March	Mental Health Awareness week - events in school
Tues 26 th March 17.45 for a 18.00 start	Parents training on 'Normal Magic' part of Mental Health Awareness week
Thurs 28 th March	Music concert for pupils during the school day
Thurs 28 th March 17.30 - 18.30	Class 8 options evening
Thurs 28 th March 17.00 - 18.00	Class parent meetings for classes 1 - 7
Thurs 28 th and 29 th March	Vision screen for reception children
Fri 29 th March 10 - 12	Open day for prospective parents
Thurs 4 th April 18.00 - 20.00	Steiner's got Talent - tickets on sale
Fri 5 th April	Last day of term, school finishes at 14.00, no afternoon care

Tues 23 rd April	Inset day - school closed to all pupils
Wed 24 th April	School opens to all pupils
Wed 24 th April - 3 rd May	Class 9 Exams
Wed 24 th and Thurs 25 th April	GCSE Art Exam
Thurs 25 th April 14.30 and 18.00	Class 7W play
1 st and 2 nd May	GCSE French Orals
Thurs 2 nd May	Individual Photos
Fri 3 rd May	Class Photos
Mon 6 th May	Bank holiday - no school

OUR WEEK IN PHOTOS



IMPORTANT REVISION OF MORNING TIMINGS

To support the success of embedding broader improvements in Kindergarten and the rest of the school, and sustain them, we have reviewed the routine at the start of the day. From **Monday 25th March** the morning routine will be as follows:

- The Kindergarten will continue to open from 8.45 for parents to come into the classrooms and spend time settling their child and joining in with some of the activities. We continue to ask all parents to leave by 9.15 or to have dropped their child off by 9.15
- The main school site will also be open from 8.45 and parents are welcome to come into the classrooms and meet with the teachers. In order to keep all of our students safe, we would request that all parents are off site by 9.15 at the latest, which is when registration closes
- **At 9.15 the main gate by the entrance to the Kindergarten will close**, and anyone wishing to enter or exit the school site after this time will need to do so via the other gate by the car park and access via the buzzer entry system
- **Should you arrive after 9.15 please go to the reception to sign in. Any Kindergarten parents and children arriving after 9.15 will need to be escorted down to the classes in order to adhere to our safeguarding policy.** Safeguarding and facilities teams.

CAKE AND HAPPINESS



It was Monday mid-morning, the children had been a bit unsettled with returning from their weekend and I was feeling tired. I starting to think: “it is only three more weeks to go” (and yes us teaching staff have got those thoughts from time to time...) When opening the door to the staffroom I was greeted by a table full of cake, lovingly baked by parents. There was a joy amongst the people in the room, the cakes were

tasty and thoughtfully made, and there was an overall feeling of being appreciated for what we do.

It made me think about how important food (including cake) is when wanting to build a community. Food can take centre stage in helping people to connect with each other and it can be used to show gratitude. Making the effort of baking the cakes (gluten free /vegan included) I felt that the parents wanted to connect and show appreciation and the feeling amongst the staff was just that. So I want to say thank you to all the cake makers, but also to all parents who makes us feel supported and cared for. Andrea Bomanson, LSA class 2M

PLEASE BE EXTRA VIGILANT ...

when entering our school site via the pedestrian gates especially during this windy weather. There are two main pedestrian gate entry points, one located at the main car park and one at the opposite end of Kindergarten. These gates are controlled by an electronic locking system. When entering please allow for a “click” sound after the gate shuts and then check the gate is secure before continuing on your way. This is a safeguarding matter which is everyone’s responsibility. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter. Safeguarding and facilities teams.

SEND UPDATE

As we are coming to the end of my first term here at Steiner Academy Exeter, I thought now would be a good time to update you on the progress made towards SEND provision.

I am happy to announce that despite a national shortage of Educational Psychologists, and after a countywide search for support, I have managed to secure no fewer than 18 Educational Psychology assessments and reports from 3 different highly experienced and talented Educational Psychologists. These assessments have already begun, but will take until the end of the summer term to complete as they are working flat out and have squeezed us in to different slots as best they can. This will go most of the way to getting through the large waiting list that we were carrying. It is unprecedented to have this many assessments carried out in literally one and a half terms, but they will go a long way to helping us apply for and hopefully secure the requests for EHCP Assessments which need to happen for our most vulnerable learners within the community.

We have also identified a greater than expected level of need around both Social, Emotional and mental Health needs, and Autism. With regards to the Autism, we are looking at ways to support these children in a whole school way, making us more of an Autistic friendly community, as well training staff in practical ways to support children with Autism or Communication and Interaction Needs within the classroom. With regards to the Pupils with SEMH needs, we have taken the decision to up the amount of provision we have for children with tier 2 mental health needs by increasing the time we buy in from Young Devon for counselling, and we have also employed a tier 3 trained counsellor for 1 day a week to help support our pupils with more severe needs.

Individual Education Plans should be coming out to parents with children who need additional interventions by Monday. If you receive an IEP, could you send a signed copy back to school, and if you would like to discuss them further with class teachers, arrange for a 15 minute consultation after school.

Lastly, can I thank you all for your continued patience as we all work hard to make sure your children's needs are being met across the school, and I look forward to continuing that work with you over the coming weeks and months. Claire Jefferies SENDCo

BOOKING FRIDAY AFTERNOON CARE

We are introducing a new system for booking afternoon care on a Friday. We need to know the number of children who are going to afternoon care so we can ensure we have the correct amount of staff and the right activities planned for the children.

You can now book your child into afternoon care on Arbor under clubs. Further information and help can be found on our website <http://www.steineracademyexeter.org.uk/information/parents-information>

Please book by TUESDAY 09.00 if you wish your child to attend that week. If you need any further help with Arbor please contact reception.

Please watch this space for a booking system for class 1 and 2 afternoon care.

WELCOME

We are delighted to introduce two new members of staff who will be working with the Maths department. Despina joins us as Upper School Maths Teacher and

Michelle has already been with us for a few weeks working a Maths HTLA supporting classes and running intervention groups for Upper and Middle School.

MICHELLE SPIESS



Michelle has spent most of her life involved in education. After university, she taught Physics in a top Chinese school, and also worked as a private maths tutor. Following a move to the UK with her husband, she worked in secondary schools for eight years. She is now focused on her favourite subject of Maths, helping students develop their numeracy and encouraging a passion for the subject. She finds working with young people extremely rewarding, not just seeing their academic progress, but also helping guide their personal development. Her number one motto is "work hard and play hard; do your best and nothing can stop you".

DESPINA POND



Like Jane Pickering, Despina came from a Science background and has recently finished a TSST course at Exeter Maths School.

She has worked in education since 2004, starting as a middle school teacher with Maths and Science specialism for KS2. Despina has worked in the

secondary sector for over 10 years and is still to date, an enthusiastic teacher who engages children at all levels. She is overjoyed at the welcome and atmosphere within the Steiner school.

ATTEND TODAY, DISCOVER TOMORROW

Attendance Matters: We know that there is a direct line between your good attendance and punctuality in school, and your success in education and the discovery of your future.

Be in, be on time.

Our current attendance is 89.4%

Our target attendance is 95.0%

To advise us of an absence you can: Email: absence: steineracademyexeter.org.uk Phone: 01392 757371 -select option 3

KINDERGARTEN NEWS



We have had a busy and productive week in Cherry Tree; starting crafting our Easter Baskets, learning new circle games, forging new friendships, finding our beautiful singing voices emerging confidently, and admiring the flowers of springtime. What a joy!



SECOND PHASE OF THOMAS HALL ROOF REPLACEMENT WORKS



Scaffolding works required for the second phase of the reroofing of Thomas Hall will start on Monday 25th March. The scaffolders will build the scaffold from either side towards the main entrance and finish over the main entrance to Thomas Hall after 2.30pm on Friday 29th March. The second phase of reroofing works will take place over Easter and continue into next term.

The scaffold lorry will act as a movable barrier between the scaffold work and staff/pupils, etc. Please ensure that children are aware that they are not allowed to go beyond the barriers or onto/under any of the scaffolding at any time. We will aim to minimise disruption to pupils, visitors and staff accessing Reception, but there may be occasions when the main front door is closed for safety reasons, an alternative route will be signposted if this is necessary. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter. Alice Knight Facilities Manager.

WEST GARTH ROAD CLOSED FOR ROADWORKS



West Garth Road will be closed to through traffic from Mon 1st April for resurfacing. We have negotiated with Glendinning (carrying out the work on behalf of Devon County Council) that they will only close the top half of the road (Lower Ridgeway junction upwards) for that week, so access will still be possible from Cowley Bridge Road for drop off and

pick-up, but all vehicles will need to turn around using 'the triangle', and parking will be limited.

- Please do not park on any of the roadway around 'the triangle' as all vehicles, including lorries, etc., will be needing to use 'the triangle' to turn around.
- If possible please drop older children further away to reduce congestion.

Thank you. Alice Knight, Travel Plan Co-ordinator

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Our work as a school next week takes a distinct turn towards mental health. Claire Gilpin is visiting on Tuesday for a workshop with parents in the Panelled Room on the 'Normal Magic' approach to mental health that has been promoted so successfully in other schools, and will be familiar to Steiner Waldorf teachers in a variety of contexts, not least the Class 7 Nutrition, Health & Wellbeing main lesson. I was pleased to be back in the classroom this week for an impromptu few days with Class 10. We explored a number of subjects, but focused on drafting executive summaries for their CVs, the role of complexity in the context of defence against the dark arts (totalitarianism & prejudice), and even sang together. If I'm lucky, the class will follow through on their promise for us to sing together again at Class 9's *Steiner's Got Talent* show just before the Easter break. More importantly, and urgently perhaps, were the exam and revision technique conversations we looked at arising from daily routine and basic self-care. Having worked within mental healthcare in one of my many previous lives, I appreciate the simplicity of its guidance, and will be continuing a dialogue with Claire, Lyndsey and colleagues as to how we continue to embed our work on wellbeing within the curriculum and to follow it ourselves.

All best wishes, Paul

PTA UPDATE

Our PTA needs a wider participation of parents for this association to be effective in contributing positively to our children's experience of education at this school. Mirroring the schools improvements, the PTA is significantly working on improving its structure.

At this important stage of development there is a PTA meeting every Wednesday morning 9:30 - 11am in the Panel Room.

Everybody is welcome and everyone with children on role are automatically members of the PTA. Let's make the PTA the heart of the much-needed rejuvenation of our school!

The parent body of SAE need to present themselves to the MAT in a clear coherent way for our voice to be heard and valued. We need to optimise this current change of ownership our school is undergoing, for the greater long-term progress of Steiner/Waldorf (SW) education in the UK. **Our parent body hopes to influence the future identity of progressive state funded SW education in UK.** For our collective voice to be heard, we need the organisation to have a solid and effective structure to enhance the education of our children and strengthen our school community.

Rebranding and relaunch of PTA

We need to clarify and publicise what the PTA is: it is the Parent and Teacher Association, which is a member of ParentKind - the national organisation for PTA's, that promote best practise procedures for school parent organisations.

Everyone who has children at SAE is automatically a member of the PTA.

Involvement is voluntary and inclusivity is greatly valued. The PTA needs parents to get involved in varying capacities throughout the school, as and when they can.

Bringing home and school together

Who are the PTA?

Oops! Our gnomes are confused...

...We all are,

parents and carers are all automatically members,
come along and support your child's learning journey,
make friends, eat cake and make a difference.
Everyone welcome.

9:30-11:00 Wednesdays,
The panelled room, Thomas Hall

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
a member of ParentKind.UK, for everyone, to strengthen the school community.

How to promote PTA?

Various ideas:

- Website is currently being created, including constitution and important roles.
- Relaunch event (TBC)
- Noticeboard adverts, information & inspiration
- Stamping activity and sandwich board promotion
- PTA logo

PTA restructuring

The PTA's new structure is based on ParentKind guidelines and provides clear channels for two-way communication between the parents and school and vice versa.

Class link role definition - a fairly elected person from each class to disseminate PTA information to the class by whichever means best suits that class (parent's evening, email, facebook, whatsapp) - the Class Link will need all the parents' email addresses for this purpose.

NB note: The *phase lead* is the person any parent can contact regarding parent teacher issues.

Class Links will need to attend some PTA meetings, or send a class representative, to meetings as there is great value in face-to-face communication.

Working Groups

Definition: A subgroup of PTA with particular goals for how parents can contribute to the educational experience of the children and enhance the school community. Role sharing is encouraged, eg. sharing leadership of craft group.

Please communicate your action group ideas to the PTA by coming to a Wednesday morning meeting in the Panel room, or emailing everyone.pta.sae@gmail.com, or dropping a note into the PTA letterbox outside the library. The potential for different working groups is endless and

community involvement is required to get these working groups into action!

Next Wednesday PTA meeting agenda is -

- 1) Feedback from other Academies on their PTA's
- 2) Working Group developments
- 3) Website content

Please note the new PTA email address is everyone.pta.sae@gmail.com

Student Council update

Student council has continued to meet weekly (classes 8-10). However, classes 5-7 are still keen to be involved. Pete Scott has been elected by the council to be their mentor. There is a plan to reintroduce the younger classes to ensure wider representation. Paul considers any recommendation from the council and feeds back on any actions taken.

Moving Forward Campaign update

The campaign team have tried to ascertain when news of the selected MAT will reach us. Nobody knows at this stage when this will happen. The RSC (Regional Schools Commission) and the HTB (Head Teacher's Board) met on Monday (following interviews with all three MATs the previous week) to discuss which MAT would be selected, but so far no decision has been made. This is frustrating for everyone. The next HTB meeting is at the end of April. Paul has assured us that as soon as he knows he will communicate the decision with the parent body.