



### Overview:

At Cardiff Steiner School, the fundamental principles of our curriculum arise from a picture of human development given by the visionary philosopher, Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925). This picture describes how, as the child grows and matures physically, the individuality of the human being they are to become is learning to inhabit the physical body in order to be effective in the world. The interaction of these two journeys gives rise to developmental needs which can be met by an education that brings the most appropriate content, experiences and approaches at the right time.

Since the founding of The Waldorf School in Stuttgart in 1919, Steiner Waldorf schools across the world have worked to develop a coherent body of practices and approaches that can be called The Steiner Waldorf Curriculum.

At the same time, central to the Steiner approach, is the responsibility of the teacher to sense the needs of the children and develop a pedagogical instinct for how to respond effectively. This means that our curriculum is not so much a programme to be followed but, rather, a smorgasbord of rich educational opportunities from which the teacher builds the most nourishing experience for the children.

### Welsh Context:

We are proud to be a school situated in the capital city of Wales and so aim to ensure that our curriculum, throughout the school, reflects the rich culture, history, geography and language of Wales. Teachers use situational Welsh and draw from Welsh sources as widely as possible.

### Restorative Approaches:

Throughout the school pupils participate in weekly (sometimes daily) circle practice to encourage active listening, compassionate communication skills and empathy. This also builds the class community and provides a safe, respectful environment that is a prerequisite for effective learning.

### PSE & RSE:

For two weeks in the school year the normal timetable is suspended in the Lower, Middle and Upper School for our “Learning for Life Weeks” to immerse pupils in PSE & RSE themes.

During the rest of the year the curriculum is woven into our cross-curricular Main Lessons and explored in weekly Circle Time (Lower School) or Guardian (Upper School) lessons. Refer to the relevant curriculum documents for more detail.

## Kindergarten: Ages 3 – 6/7

In Steiner Waldorf Kindertagesstätten children benefit from an extended childhood. They have the opportunity to embed basic skills (physical, emotional, social and cognitive) and develop lifelong learning habits that enable them to become enthusiastic, imaginative, resilient, creative and eager to learn students. Experiential learning, discovery through creative play and social interaction with peers and teachers constitute the main education themes. Skills and knowledge are acquired through play, daily activities and social interaction.

Children stay in the same Kindergarten with the same teacher for three years. In the final year (age 5 - 6/7) there is an additional curriculum including special projects to meet the children's growing independence and developing skills. Please see 'The Embedded Curriculum Framework' and 'Curricular Activities for 5–6-Year-Olds' documents for a detailed breakdown.

### **Activities to Develop Language, Literacy and Communication:**

- Singing and recitation of poetry and rhymes to develop oracy, articulation and syntax, a sense for the musicality of language and memory capacity.
- Story Telling: to develop listening skills, syntax and a rich vocabulary.
- Cooperative play to develop communication skills;

### **Activities to Develop Numeracy:**

- Food Preparation to provide an opportunity to weigh, measure, count and recognise numbers on scales;
- Movement Games to develop spatial awareness and pattern recognition.
- Counting, sorting and ordering of natural objects during free play.
- Daily jobs involving placing, sorting and ordering: tidying up, laying the table etc.
- Cooperative play to develop the capacity for problem solving;

### **Activities to Develop Physical Coordination, Fine and Gross Motor Skills:**

- Large body movements in free play and directed movement activities.
- Opportunities to climb, swing, balance and manage risk in a safe environment.
- A range of directed and child-initiated activities to develop hand-to-eye co-ordination, manual dexterity and orientation: finger games, sewing, weaving and other crafts.
- Controlled hand-eye movements in Drawing and Painting.

### **Activities to Promote Positive Relationships, Health and Wellbeing:**

- Teacher modelling of calm, kind, respectful behaviour.
- Free play providing opportunities for sharing, cooperation and negotiation.
- Traditional Fairy Stories to awaken a moral sense for knowing right from wrong.
- Making gifts for family members.

### **Activities to Develop and Understanding of Science and Technology:**

- Direct and related opportunities to experience the awe and wonder of the natural world.

- Domestic tasks and craft activities to experience tool use and natural forces.
- Using natural craft materials: wool, fleece etc.
- Walking in the local area to observe the natural world, the weather and the changing seasons.
- Activities to reflect the cycle of the year and celebration of seasonal festivals.

### **Expressive Arts to Develop Imagination and Creativity**

- Painting, drawing, modelling with beeswax.
- Crafts: sewing, felting, simple woodworking, making dolls, simple toys and decorations.
- Creative play with a range of unformed materials.

## **Lower School: Ages 6 – 14**

During Lower School the children will be taught primarily by the same class teacher for a number of years. It may be that the teacher will start with Class 1 and stay with the class until the end of Class 7/8. This builds security in the pupil-teacher relationship and enables the teacher to form a deep understanding of each individual pupil, their needs and how they learn. It also enables the teacher to draw from and build upon work they have done together in previous years.

Children in our school begin formal learning at the age of 6 or 7, later than most educational settings in the Wales. However, since we are starting at a point when the children are more physically mature and developmentally ready to learn, they make rapid progress and WRATs tests administered in Class 3/4 evidence equivalent standards in Literacy and Numeracy.

In Cardiff Steiner School we operate combined classes composed of two year groups. In order to dovetail into the NZCSE Curriculum in Class 10, generally the class teacher will teach the curriculum content outlined for the younger class – so Class 2/3 will follow the Class 2 curriculum, for instance. There is flexibility for the teacher to bring elements of the next year’s material in the summer term.

For the Lower School, the curriculum content, Age Related Learning Opportunities (ARLOs) and Learning Descriptors for each year are detailed in the “Art of Teaching” app, developed by the UK Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship. This app takes the place of a curriculum document, allowing teachers across the UK to collaborate in building, deepening and resourcing the learning journey. It also provides teachers with a powerful planning tool. All Lower School teachers are required to use the Art of Teaching app to prepare and plan their learning blocks. (The app is still in development and currently only covers the Lower School curriculum.)

In Lower School the school day comprises Main Lesson which usually runs from 8.50am – 11am. During this time a class will study a curriculum theme or topic for 3 – 4 weeks in a deeply immersive way, usually drawing strands from different areas of learning. In addition to this, from 11.30am, the classes have subject lessons, either with the class teacher or with specialist subject teachers.

**Literacy:** In Class One the children will begin the Sounds-Write literacy programme to learn to link the sounds in speech to written spellings. During Classes 2/3 and 3/4 they continue progressing through the Initial Code, Extended Code and Polysyllabic words, following the lessons detailed in the Sounds-Write Manual. All of our class teachers are trained to deliver the programme.

**Maths:** Lower School Maths Lessons incorporate the Maths for Love Openers, Games and Rich Tasks to develop mathematical understanding. Learning of number facts is necessary but generally we expect teachers to plan Maths lessons that promote active engagement, excitement, curiosity, playfulness and discovery, whilst ensuring age-appropriate proficiency and competence.

**Curriculum Outline** (as detailed in the Art of Teaching app):

Class	Age	English / Literacy	Maths	Social Science	Science
1 & 1/2	6 – 8	Straight Line and Curve. Stories of Sounds and Spellings	Opening the Book of Number	Fairy Stories and Traditional Tales.	Observing the World Around Us
2 / 3	8 - 9	Use of Language: Types of words and punctuation.	The Place and Value of Numbers.	Fables, Legends & Noble Deeds.	Observing the World Around Us
3 / 4	9 – 10	Function of language: the main parts of speech.	Fluency in the Four Operations. Made to Measure	Stories of the Hebrew People.	Stories of Archetypal and Practical Life and Living.
4 / 5	10 - 11	Welsh, Celtic & Norse Mythology. Use of language: time, place and space.	Numbers and their many parts (Fractions)	Near to Me (Local History & Geography)	Human and Animal Puberty
5 / 6	11 - 12	Use of language: accuracy, nuance, subtlety and complexity.	Maths: rules and methods Geometry	Cities and Nomads: From Myth to History. Human Society & the Environment: The British Isles	The Living, Growing Earth (Botany)
6 / 7	12 - 13	Use of language: nuance, subtlety and complexity of expression.	Maths: doing business: how money works.	Digital Citizenship Further afield: Societies,	Physics: Sound, light, heat, magnetism and electricity.

			Geometrical Construction.	Environments and Geology. Roman and Mediaeval History	Zoology & Botany continued.
7/ 8	13 - 14	Wish, Wonder and Surprise: the art of writing.	Algebra Pythagoras and Perspective; dealing with data.	World Exploration. Astronomy Regional & Continental Geography. Early Modern History. Digital Citizenship	Physics: Mechanics; Thermo-dynamics; Sound, light, heat, magnetism and electricity. Chemistry: Transformation in matter. Human Nutrition and Health.

### Lower School Subject Lessons:

- Art: Painting, drawing and Modelling.
- Bothmer Gymnastics (from Class 5/6).
- Circle Time: Restorative Approaches.
- Craft (from Class 5/6) or Outdoor Curriculum (Class 1 – 4/5).
- Form Drawing (Class 1 – 4/5) or Geometry (from Class 5/6).
- Games
- Handwork: Knitting, Crochet, Cross Stitch, Sewing, Design, Felting etc.
- Music: singing, playing, notation and theory.
- Spanish.
- Stories of the World.

## Upper School: Ages 14 - 18

The Upper School programme is designed to give the students a foundation in a broad range of subjects, to develop practical and study skills and to encourage initiative and independence in learning. In order to keep the curriculum broad, in Classes 9 and 10, there is a course of compulsory modules for all students throughout the year.

### **The subjects covered are :**

Maths, English, Biology, Ecology, Physics, Chemistry, Art, Craft, P.E., Bothmer, Music, Drama, History, Geography, Social Science, History of Art, PSE/RSE.

Midway through Class 10, and then again in Class 11, students are consulted about their wishes and plans for the future. We refer to what they tell us, as well as our own knowledge and experience, in our planning for Classes 11 & 12 Extension courses.

### **Compulsory core Main Lessons continue throughout the Upper School:**

Maths, English, Biology, Botany, Ecology, Physics, Chemistry, Art, Craft, P.E., Bothmer, Music, Drama, History, Philosophy, Geography, Social Science, History of Art/Architecture, PSE/RSE.

Beginning in Class 11, there is an increasing number of optional blocks, expanding considerably in Class 12, so that students can give more time to their areas of particular interest.

These are chosen by the students in consultation with teachers who may also advise them which courses to undertake with reference to any desired workplace situation or University course.

For detail about the above, please refer to the Upper School Course Directory and the NZCSE Assessment Information and Criteria books for the various Levels.