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| CVSE Kindergarten Curriculum  |
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CALDER VALLEY STEINER EDUCATION

### CURRICULUM DOCUMENT

**§ Introduction.** *Calder Valley Steiner Education* runs one of more than a thousand Kindergartens across more than sixty countries teaching children through the educational principles first established by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Steiner Education (also known as Waldorf Education[[1]](#endnote-1)) and the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum grow out of Rudolf Steiner’s insights into the nature of the human being, and specifically the growing child in their developing relationship to the world. The essential aim of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum is to establish good rhythm and balance in all aspects of the child's development. The curriculum, and the teaching methods which flow from it, take account of the growing child's physical and emotional (feeling) needs, as well as their intellectual needs. Every aspect of the teaching, whatever the subject, aims to balance these needs at each stage of the child's development. The Steiner Waldorf curriculum provides the child with educational challenges at such a time that they can meet them in a way that their interest in the actual process of learning (whatever the subject) is continually renewed. It is the task of the Steiner Waldorf teacher to foster this positive relationship to learning across all subjects, thereby laying the foundations for life-long learning. The core text, "The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum" (2005, revised 2014) [in future referred to as ETCSWC] states that 'the Waldorf Curriculum has a fundamentally therapeutic task in that it enables and supports the healthy development of the whole person. Health in this sense means a dynamic balance of the forces within the child and that the individual can relate to other people and the world in a balanced way. It also means that the realization of each child's potential is fostered in an optimal way.' [p. 7.]

• The aim of Calder Valley Steiner Education is to deliver high quality education in a nurturing environment based on Steiner Waldorf principles. CVSE currently provides an infant education following Steiner-Waldorf education principles in keeping with the EYFS and the specific exemptions it has. CVSE also adapts where necessary the Steiner Waldorf curriculum and teaching methods to local requirements of diversity, ethnicity and the Kindergarten’s local setting and heritage.

**§ Teaching Methods. The Steiner Waldorf teaching method.**

• Ages 3-5. During these kindergarten years, the child learns mainly through play and imitation. Play is vital to a child's healthy development and to establishing the best possible grounding for formal. 'In the Early Years phase the task of education is to provide an environment in which good habits of behaviour, such as memory, reverence, orderliness, listening and enjoyment of the natural world can be established.' [ETCSWC, p. 16.] The young child’s inate sense of wonder is nurtured throughout their time at kindergarten, alongside trust and co-operation. Three of the principal pillars of the Steiner Waldorf Kindergarten by which the kindergarten teacher achieves this are: the establishment of good *rhythm* throughout the day, week and year; *repetition*, by which the child has the chance to learn through imitation; and *reverence*, by which the child establishes for themselves a secure and trust-filled place in the world.

• Special Educational Needs. Because of its gentle, child-centred approach, Steiner Waldorf education is suited to many children with special educational challenges. Steiner Waldorf Schools and Kindergartens have been delivering all ability teaching since their inception; alongside which they have developed many complementary ways of helping individual children, both within the whole class and through special lessons. Although a small setting, we seek to make provision for children of all abilities within the setting’s educational ethos and curriculum. See the CVSE SEN policy for more details.

**PSHE (Physical, Social and Health Education)**

Personal, Social and Health Education is an integral part of children’s everyday Kindergarten experience. Useful skills such as vegetable preparation, bread making, and whittling are acquired through imitation in the kindergarten. Healthy eating, cleanliness, sharing are also practiced and encouraged. PSHE is also an essential element of the multicultural ethos of the Kindergarten (see the CVSE K. British-Values-Policy).

**Visual Art**

Painting and drawing are activities integral to the rhythm of the Kindergarten week. The use of natural pigment primary colour water-colours on wet paper is the preferred medium for painting. Wax crayons are generally used for drawing. Basic painting and drawing techniques are introduced, along with care and respect for the materials.

**Music**

Singing and instrumental work (notably pentatonic lyre) are presented to the children for imitation as a regular part of the Kindergarten week (e.g. singing grace before mealtimes; singing as part of Ring Time, lyre music before story or a puppet play).

**Handwork**

This element of the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum is important for the development of co-ordination for both hands, concentration, practical number work in a creative context, and the fostering of an appreciation of the work behind common manufactured objects. Children have opportunities to make simple objects in a vairiety of media, e.g. through finger knitting, or simple sewing projects such as making pin cushions, felt gnomes or dolls. Care of materials and good and safe use of tools such as scissors and needles is encouraged.

**Movement, physical activity and out-door pursuits**

Physical movement is a core aspect of the Steiner-Waldorf approach. It is an integral part of the Kindergarten day. Illustrative movements are modelled during Ring Time. During outdoor play time, children have opportunities to imitate model meaningful activities such as sweeping, or working with water or sand.

**Information Technology**

Regarding the use of computers in the Kindergarten, the teacher will make a judgment based on the view that, 'The ultimate aim [of Steiner-Waldorf education] is to equip the students to be able to make judgments for themselves how best to use the computer as a tool in the service of real perceived needs.' [ETCSWC, p. 164.] Computers are not currently used in the Kindergarten. There is a mobile phone for emergencies, and a digital camera. When using these and other technological devises in front of the children, staff are asked to use them in a responsible way so that, as children imitate them, the children learn good responsible use themselves.

**Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness**

* This document will be reviewed annually
* This document will be discussed and reviewed at EY Teachers’ Meetings

**§ Related Policies**

**•** CVSE K. British-Values-Policy).

• CVSE K. SENCO policy.

1. The word Waldorf comes from the name of the first such school set up in 1919 in the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart. At the request of Emil Molt, the managing director, Rudolf Steiner helped found a school to educate the children of the factory’s workforce. Both “Steiner” and “Waldorf” are terms which have continued to be used interchangeably. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)