



Galway Steiner National School

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2017

“TO TRULY KNOW THE WORLD, LOOK DEEPLY WITHIN YOUR OWN BEING; TO TRULY KNOW YOURSELF, TAKE REAL INTEREST IN THE WORLD.”

RUDOLPH STEINER

CONTENT

1. Welcome
2. Volunteer Perspectives
3. Frásaí Nua
4. Upcoming Workshops
5. Parent Teacher Association
6. Volunteer Corner
7. Article: The Sense of Life

DEAR PARENTS & FRIENDS,

Spring has arrived! The children experience the cycle of life and death through their nature experiences. The new life hidden inside the eggs, new born animals and the first sprouting of the seeds planted in the garden, transport the motive of re-birth.

A special welcome to our new students who joined us this month, Milo, Seán and Albert.

LEABHARLANN

We have a range of books on Steiner Education in our library which you can find in the oifig (office). We also hold issues of the Kindling Journal for Steiner Waldorf early childcare and education. If you wish to borrow any of these books and magazines, please sign the take out sheet for the book you are borrowing.



VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVES

"Each human being needs to care deeply about what will become of the next generation"

Rudolf Steiner

After finishing our studies at the University of the Basque Country, being part of a healthy and respectful education environment is essential for us. Each year the Basque Government offers Global Training grants for working abroad in different fields. So when we saw the offer at the Galway Steiner National School, we didn't think twice about applying for it.



The last 3 months have been highly interesting as professionals in the educational field. We have seen how encouraging the philosophical foundation of the Steiner approach is for the children. We have also realised that the school is focused on developing the critical thinking skills of each pupil respecting their individual needs. Moreover, the children are immersed in an educational environment that gives them the chance to learn unconsciously and with freedom by experimental and practical education.

Aside from this, this is the first time that we have been working in a Steiner school. As teachers, being the role models to stimulate creativity and encourage the children to develop their skills through free play, outdoor activities, cooking and baking, handicrafts among others is being a wonderful challenge.

It's a challenge that has helped us confirm our theoretical knowledge and opinion of a more liberal education. This experience has been much more motivating due to having a teacher in Galway Steiner NS as our mentor. His experience in teaching and his strategies for encouraging children has been really revealing not only for a professional view but also for our personal development.

Thanks a million for letting us be part of this community!

Beatriz and Oihane

UPCOMING EVENTS

"Wonder, Empathy & Conscience- The keys to a good Education"

A Public Talk & Conversation with Christopher Clouder

Christopher Clouder, FRSA is an internationally renowned educational consultant & lecturer. His inspiring expertise ranges from the importance of play & imagination to creativity & innovation in education. He is passionate on the subjects of social & emotional educational matters, contemporary social issues, an arts-rich curriculum & Cultural evolution.

Hear him speak at one of these venues:

Castalia, Camphill Ballytobin, Callan, Co. Kilkenny

Friday 10th March at 7.00pm

Contact: training.iska@gmail.com

Kilcullen Town Hall & Heritage Centre, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare

Monday 13th March at 7.00pm

Contact: yukimoyleabbey@gmail.com

Dublin Steiner School, Meath Street, Dublin

Tuesday 14th March at 7.00pm

Contact: dtrentkelly@gmail.com

An ISKA Training Initiative www.iskaireland.org

THE IRISH STEINER KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION IS DELIGHTED TO HOST

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FRÁSAÍ NUA



AM LUÍ

Tá sé am dul a choladh anois a stór.

It's time for bed now my dear.

Téigh isteach sa seomra folctha agus nigh do lámha agus d'aghaidh.

Go into the bathroom and wash your hands and face.

Faigh scuab fiacla agus nigh do chuid fiacla.

Get a toothbrush and clean your teeth.

Cíor do chuid gruaige anois le do thoil.

Comb your hair now please.

Luigh síos anois agus dún do shúile.

Snuggle up and close your eyes.

Téigh a chodladh mo ghrá mo chrói.

Go to sleep my love.

Feicfidh mé ar maidin thú.

I will see you in the morning.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE-ALL WELCOME!

The Parents Association are busy getting ready for Lá Fhéile Pádraig and the concept drawing of our Artist in Residence, Eadain, gives an overview of our plans. Next year our school will more than double in pupil numbers and we will welcome our second teacher. We want to portray a growing and vibrant school to the public on the 17th and so we are calling for all families, present and future to join us on the day.



Parade will start at 11.30am and finish at approximately 1.00pm

MEET OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Ester Febrero

April 24-June 27th



Hello!!

My name is Ester and I am 34 years old. I am very quiet, peaceful and easy-going person. I live with my partner Oscar in a little flat in Mataró (Barcelona). Mataró is the city where I work. I work as a teacher in Marta Mata school. I have been working in the same school for six years and I love it, it is a big school but we are like a little family. People around me are very kind, familiar and transparent. This year I am finishing my Bachelor's degree in Nursery Education at UNIR University and I have had the opportunity to come to Galway Steiner National School in order to learn more about my job. I really want to come to the school because I think that I would learn a lot: new children, new methodology, new opportunities, new city, new adventures, new dreams.

I have very happy to stay with a family that is part of the school community because I will have the chance to get to know more about the life of an Irish family.

Hope to see you soon! I will come with a lot of energy!

Itamar Treves

May 21st - June 6th



Hello everybody! My name is Itamar Treves. I was born in Israel 31 years ago and spent also many years in Austria and Switzerland, where I currently live now with my wife Martina and my 14 months old son Arik. I like to spend my time with my little family, playing football, hearing stories, visiting new places and meeting new cultures.

Right now, I am in the middle of my studies at the Academy for Anthroposophic Pedagogy in Dornach, Switzerland. My dream is to become one day a teacher for English and History, therefore I am very grateful about this opportunity and I am already looking forward to getting my Galway-experience started.

Susie McLoughlin

24th of April to May



Susie is thrilled to have the opportunity to complete her teaching practice at Galway Steiner National School, as part of her Advanced Diploma in Steiner Education.

She completed her Arts Degree in Galway and has ten years classroom teaching experience in primary schools. Susie's first year of teaching was in her hometown of Strandhill, where she enjoys the beach and surfing.

Susie, who currently lives in Australia, is looking forward to spending time in Galway once again and getting to know the Steiner community there.

THE SENSE OF LIFE

In our last newsletter we looked at the twelve senses as recognized by Rudolf Steiner. The first four form a group known as the **Foundational Senses**. Upon the strength or weakness of these four senses, the human being will meet the world with certainty or hesitation. To review, these **Foundational Senses** build three capacities in a child: Body Geography (knowing where the parts of your body are), Spatial Orientation knowing where you are in space) and Dominance (having an established preference for one side of the body to do tasks). These three capacities are basic in order for children to perform many practical activities in school and at home, from brushing teeth to writing words on a page.

Following the sense of touch, the second is the **sense of life**. It informs us about our well being. We are not so concerned with the life sense when we are well; it is when we have an ache, an illness, are tired or hungry or foggy that we think about the life sense. Some of us feel the life sense the day after consuming alcohol, sugar, or foods that we don't digest well. When we feel unwell, we are reluctant to get up and face the day; we want to stay curled up in bed. What we may learn is that the trigger, be it lack of sleep, the wrong food, the overbooked schedule, the loud music, etc. does not promote health. Feeling unwell is not pleasant! The pain or discomfort signals us that something is not right, so we might take steps to avoid a repetition. **The life sense schools us- it teaches us to pay attention to discomfort and in the best scenario it helps us to get enough sleep, to eat well, exercise and to rest if we are sick. From this, we know how to help our child get back on track.**

The **life sense** also teaches us about appropriate suffering, which is important. Without these experiences, we could not develop fully as humans. We do not have to engineer adverse situations for our children-don't we all know that life itself brings us opportunities to experience suffering? By letting our children experience the bruised knee, the fall off the bike, the toy we will not be buying, the dessert we will not serve, and sadly, the pet who died, they learn to handle life's disappointments. We learn to ride our bike more safely, to be more patient when we want something, to deal with sadness. We become wiser. This is the hidden gem in classic fairy tales from every culture: we meet with adversity (holding our breath), we courageously overcome it and then we can let out a sigh of relief.

The **life sense** needs much attention in our world today. Before industrialization, we lived by the rhythms of nature. We rose with the sun and went to bed at dark. In many cultures families gathered together to eat wholesome foods, sing and tell stories at night and rest

when they were tired. If you were a baby boomer, you can easily recognize that the 21st century is not so friendly to the life sense. Today, we try to stretch the day, to tamper with the rhythms of time, and overload ourselves with information. It's not unusual in our culture to find children at sports practice until 8 pm on a school night several times a week. What happened to family time and down time for children? Children suffer from always being on the treadmill, and the adults driving the children around are sacrificing their evening time to breathe out also. If a child has trouble falling asleep, consider if too much scheduled activity is the cause.

Rudolf Steiner stated, "Rhythm restores power." We must attend to the rhythms children need: daily rituals and routines, physical warmth, and tending to when they are sick (which means temporarily giving up our work or our plans). Children need to play, do chores, move and rest, and... they need to experience quiet and boredom- for out of boredom rises creativity. They need to become so physically tired that they fall asleep easily and wake bright eyed, bushy tailed and hungry the next morning. Once, I had a bright eyed and bushy tailed eight year old boy come to me in the morning. Later, I asked his mother what his bedtime was. She said 7:30-8 at the latest. Let me tell you how rare it is for school teachers to see bright eyed and bushy tailed children in today's world! You cannot believe what a difference it makes when children go to bed at 8:30 or 9 pm. It seems harmless, but their **life sense** is off the next day, and cumulatively this is counterproductive to health and well being.

Nutrition plays a huge part to support the **life sense**. Almost all children are **very intelligent**; the more we can support nerve fiber myelination, the more their brains are able to expand the pathways. Many children today do not get enough protein, vegetables, fruits or proper fats -we live in such a carbohydrate laden society and a fat phobic society. **But our children need the right fats for brain development.** Every time a new task is learned, the nerve pathways get coated with myelin- a white, waxy, fatty coating. The best fats are fresh butter from raw milk, coconut oil, good quality olive oil, palm oil, cold pressed sesame oil, flax oil, and animal fats-lard, chicken fat, etc., plus whole milk. If a child has skim milk and boxed cereal for breakfast and went to bed at 9, she will likely be dragging in school.

Warmth is an overlooked issue in modern culture, but it also is critical in developing a healthy **life sense**. I once attended a lecture by an Anthroposophical doctor from Germany. He stated that for a newborn, the most critical factor is warmth, not food (mother's milk). The newborn needs warmth immediately and for several months must be kept

appropriately layered. Warmth for children ages 0-7 is a protection for the organs that will support them throughout life. Here in Vermont, it is not uncommon to see children from all social strata on a cold, damp winter day wearing no jacket, no hat and sometimes even shorts. The parents give in to their children or the children sneak away shedding layers. If only they knew the ramifications of this behavior-kidneys unprotected from the cold, more susceptibility to illness, and a child who is not well grounded in the physical body, and therefore not really ready for school.

Information overload is an issue confronting adults, with all the devices we have at our fingertips, and we must be steadfast in setting our limits around it. It is even more crucial to keep our children protected from all the media, screens, and news in the world today. The visual images and aural information settle into the soul of a child and cause disturbances for months and even years. I can still remember the black and white police sketch of a wanted criminal on the front page of the newspaper when I was about seven years old; it has never left me even after 50 years. These impressions are best left to confront children after they turn nine or ten years old, when they are ready to face the fact that the world is mostly good, but there are also bad deeds in the sphere of humanity. **Until then, think of too much information as indigestion for the child, literally.** Children should be wondering about crickets chirping in the grass, the sparkle of a raindrop on a leaf, and baking cookies for a person in need of cheer. Doing and observing, not cramming the intellect.

How parents can support a healthy life sense:

Warmth: Insist on layers appropriate for the season. Say this: "If you wear a jacket, you will use your body's energy to grow. If you don't wear a jacket, you will be using your body's energy to stay warm instead of using energy to grow."

Rhythm: It's one of nature's best kept secrets. Start with one ritual- stick to it every day without fail. Add more as you and your child are ready. Soon, the rhythm moves you both along. Rhythm and routine are security.

Protection: Limit media exposure everywhere you go (allow a movie at grandparents or with cousins the child rarely sees) and do not discuss sensitive topics about the world in front of children. Too much information fills the mind with clutter when children should be developing their bodies and their feelings.

Sleep: Always remember that sleep is like money in the bank. Try not to sacrifice sleep except on special occasions-holidays, visitors from out of town, a theatre performance, etc. and then try to fit in a rest the next afternoon.

Nutrition: Daily, serve good fats and other wholesome foods. Limit carbohydrates and sugar. Plenty of fresh fruits and raw veggies for enzymes-carrot sticks and edible pea pods at the very least. Small but regular protein portions.

Challenges: Age appropriate challenges are healthy for a child to experience. This can include roughhouse play, getting breathless and tired, physical work like household chores and outdoor chores. It also includes learning life's lessons, big or small.

The **sense of life** is linked to the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. If there is stress in the system, it affects our breathing, digestion, our heart, and our sleep life. **Pain, discomfort or unwellness is the Life Sense speaking to us**



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