



# SteinerAcademyExeter Newsletter

Issue No 89 28<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018

## Dates for your Diary

Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> Sept 18.00 - 21.00	Friends Ceilidh - all welcome		Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 09.00	Friends meeting
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 19.45	Class 9 Drama trip to Theatre Royal - The Unreturning		Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19.00	Class 7W and 6R parents' evening
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 19.30	Friends meeting Thomas Hall		Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19.30	Class 5 parents' evening Parent and child parents'
Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct after drop off	Parent support group in Thomas Hall		Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19.00	Open evening for prospective families for year 7 2019
Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 17.30	Class 2M parents' evening 2V parents' evening Rescheduled till Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> Oct		Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct after drop off	Parent choir
Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19.30	Silverbirch, Elmwood and Class 9 and 10 parents' evening		Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> 19.00	Class 1Z Bibliography evening
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct 09.00	Friends meeting in Thomas Hall		Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> 17.30	2V parents' evening
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct 10.00 - 12.00	Open day for prospective families (year 7 2019)		Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct - Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	2 week half term including 2 inset days on Wed 31 <sup>st</sup> , Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup> and Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup>

## Michaelmas Photos



## Message from Aegir Morgan Acting Principal

Last Saturday's Open House was well attended (despite the rain) and it was wonderful to see so many people interested in what we are offering here at our school. This event, coupled with the two parent forums we held this week, has meant that we have been engaged in a lot of talking (and listening) about our school. The Open Day gave us the opportunity as educators to speak about the higher ideals and intentions of a Steiner Waldorf education and the parent forums gave us the opportunity to get a perspective on whether these ideals are being realised in the classrooms and in the school as a whole.

As Paul mentions below, we have myriad examples of excellent Steiner Waldorf practice being carried out on a daily basis at the school and a wide range of qualitative, inspirational educational experiences being had by the students. We need to get better at celebrating these with you and the wider community in order to share our story more widely.

We are also aware of areas in which we need to improve and the feedback and opinions shared in the parent forums this week give us a flavour of the issues we need to be putting greater attention towards.

It is worth noting that as a school we are entering our 6th year of existence. Extrapolating this to the picture of biographical development we work with in Steiner pedagogy, we are coming out of the Kindergarten years and entering Class 1. As those of you who have had children cross this threshold, you will know that an important transition takes place at this time and children go through a type of transformation as they shed the 'skin' of early childhood. I think we are going through a similar time of transition and we are looking to embrace the changes we need to make as we grow up and enter the world more fully.

I would like to link this to Michaelmas. Kindergarten celebrated their festival in the warm sunshine on Thursday and the rest of the school did the same today. Coming together like this as a school helps to build a strong social fabric and connects to the rhythms of the seasons. However, there is also a deeper element to Michaelmas. I feel that there is no coincidence that we are embarking on a transitional phase of greater reflection on who we are as a school at this time of year. The story of Michael and the dragon gives us a picture of the inner and outer struggles that are in continuous ebb and flow in the human journey. There are always "dragons" lurking around, usually in the form of fear, ignorance, conflict and misunderstanding and such like. Michael with his sword reminds us that courage and clear thinking also lives within us and can be called upon to tackle our "dragons". If we can use these positives attributes as we navigate the vicissitudes of growth we will move forwards with strength of purpose.

Happy Michaelmas everyone! Yours, Aegir

## Message from Paul Hougham Acting Vice Principal

*Summary if you don't want to read the full page:*

- *3 new acting staff members across safeguarding, behaviour, wellbeing & SEND,*
- *school currently in a transitional phase, responding to immediate operational needs and also initiating reviews of provision, policies & processes in:*
  - *safeguarding, behaviour, wellbeing, SEND*
  - *organisational structure*
  - *culture & communications*
- *medium and long term strategic planning for school excellence (quality assurance of teaching) sustainability and external benchmarking currently under way.*

Whilst another newsletter so soon might seem profligate, our pace is such that it feels important we update you with the week's developments and deliberations.

Last week I said that there were a number of imminent new appointments and I am very pleased to share with you that our additional (rather than replacement) provision includes a new (acting) SENDCO, a new member of the Safeguarding Team and a Behaviour Officer (to be confirmed). Whilst we recognise and appreciate the immediate impact these appointments will make on the ground, we are also aware that we are very much in a transitional phase, and the need to align our structures and processes with the school (children)'s needs is very much a priority. Alongside these appointments, therefore, we have initiated a review of our provision, policies and processes across safeguarding, SEND, behaviour and

wellbeing, in order to establish a more effective medium and long term strategy and ensure that the expertise within our school is empowered and enabled to fulfil its vision and values.

This transitional phase is much broader, however, as we also recognise that our operational needs during the start of this term need to feed into a sustainable and effective strategy for school improvement more generally. Accordingly, we have also pressed the green button for a review of our organisational structure as a whole, as well as another one that will address our culture and communications. Last Saturday's open day reflected to us the scale of the need for what we can offer as a school, but also the extent as to which we need to upgrade our quality, content and regularity of communications. There is a clear responsibility to promote what we do, more often, more loudly, and more effectively, as well as offering a more in depth explanations of our pedagogical rationale, lest any lack of information allow default assumptions of error. Alan's erudite explanation of our school uniform rules was held up as an excellent example of this last term, but I acknowledge that we have more work to do over, for instance: screen time and the use of technology, the embrace of GCSEs in Upper School, and our recruitment and training policy.

In addition to our internal quality assurance of all of the above, our overall direction as a school, our external benchmarking and our place within a broader educational quest is something that we are needing to address, and in particular the uniqueness (or otherwise) of a state funded Steiner school. The school's governors will ultimately set such a bearing, but the dialogue surrounding such a quest has already begun in earnest, and over space and time we are starting to explore more deeply Gaugin's catechisms: *"Where are we from? What are we? Where are we going?"*

## GCSE Art Work

**After the Lost Soldier** by Angus Sambrook, Leaver (2017-18 class 10)



Angus is currently one of only 14 successful candidates (out of over 350 applicants) accepted onto the Aviation Engineering course at Exeter College. He was known throughout his years at SAE as a place of refuge and support for pupils in need, for his kindness and integrity. Fascinated by military history, he participated in the centenary commemorations of the First World War, travelling to the western front battlefields in France, in March 2016.

**After a Hopi Katchina** - by Ellie Greatorex, Class 10 (Year 11)



Ellie's confidence in art and design was slow to develop, having considered herself to be stronger in academic subjects and to have poor drawing skills. Her journey in Class 9, however, included a broadening in her appreciation of art itself as well as her own skills. Her interests include sculptural art and she has created several different pieces. On moving into Class 10 her interests have evolved to include black and white photography. Ellie is also a keen rower, dedicating 4 days a week to the sport and contributing to the J16 quadruple skulls team, who became the West of England champions in their category in August.

## New Scientist Live



Last weekend I had the opportunity to visit the New Scientist Live show at the Excel centre in London. The event runs over four days with 5 stages hosting talks ranging from 'what is time?' by Carlo Rovelli to a talk hosted by Dr Chris and Xand van Tulleken on how to 'live life better'. The event hosted over 100 interactive stalls and presentations and was attended by over 35,000 during the show days. I thoroughly enjoyed it and would advise anyone to go, even just for the sheer knowledge you learn from such a thing. **Buzz Medeema class 10.**



## Congratulations!

Archie Whittall in 7W got distinction for his grade three piano exam over the summer and with a mark of 93 out of 100! For his three pieces, Hound dog, Rainbow and Sad Song he got 63 marks in total out of a possible 66 marks. Wow! Well done Archie!



## Congratulations to all of our talented poets!

In May this year, Upper School students were invited to compose a poem focusing on a contemporary theme with a positive ending. Out of 6,000 entries six poems written by SAE students were selected by *Young Writers* and will now be published in *The Poetry Games - South West Voices*. These copies will be available from 30<sup>th</sup> November. Please contact the English department if you are interested.

The published poets are as follows: Maeve Salmon, George Smith-Easton, Kaya Ballantyne, Evie Derbyshire, Karina Gilbert and Sam Moffat-Yeates.

Jane Berry, Upper School English Lead



**WELCOME  
CEILIDH**  
(BARN DANCE)  
*this year the band is*  
**Spinach for Norman**  
on **SATURDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER...**

Steiner Academy Exeter Welcomes pupils, staff and their families to an evening of Autumn Celebration together. We will enjoy delicious vegetarian food, music, dancing and more! Tickets available from the school reception or on the door on the night.

**£5 per adult, children free. Hot food included.**  
**Doors open 5.30, Music starts at 6.15, food served until 8pm, music ends at 9.15.**

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