

THREE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEAVES: COMPASSION, TRUTH AND LOVE

"Take me to the places on the earth that teach you how to dance, the places where you can risk letting the world break your heart. And I will take you to the places where the earth beneath my feet and the stars overhead make my heart whole again and again."

From The Dance – Oriah Mountain Dreamer



DATES FOR THE DIARY

MAY

WEDNESDAY 22

Class 3 Excursion – Pickering Brook

WEDNESDAY 22

Warmth Session/Information Evening
for Early Childhood Parents – 7pm

FRIDAY 24

Running Club – back oval – 7.50am

WEDNESDAY 29

Classes 5/6 German Excursion

THURSDAY 30

Strings Assembly in the Performance
Room. Everyone is welcome

FRIDAY 31

Pupil Free Day

JUNE

MONDAY 3

Public Holiday

FRIDAY 7

Kindergarten Information Session -
9.00am

TUESDAY 18

Lantern Making Workshop – The Hub

WEDNESDAY 19

School Tour

FRIDAY 21

Winter Festival

THURSDAY 27

Last day of Term 2 for students

FRIDAY 28

Parent/Teacher Interviews

DEAR EVERYONE

I hope you are in a *place where your heart is made whole again and again*, as you read this Gazette.

My heart was similarly moved again last Sunday, as I gathered with company in a courtyard framed by beautifully coloured still leafy autumn trees. The 'Happy Wanderer' tune accompanied the warm voices of the group present. My gaze was taken by an old lady who, listening to the music, paused, re-positioned her walking frame, and stooped to retrieve three fallen leaves from the path. As the voices of the group heartily and laughingly rendered the, *Val-deri, Val-dera ha ha ha ha ha - My knapsack on my back*, refrain of the song, the old lady began to make her way back along the path, handling the frame whilst juggling the three leaves, determinedly.

"Phew" - she made it to our cluster of chairs, reached over and placed the three leaves on our table, as we caught breath before Verse 4 - *Oh may I go a wandering until the day...* Today those words would have to wait as she exclaimed, "Thank you. Please, accept this as a gift from me ..."

As the tears welled up inside me at the effort involved, underlying the sacrifice and love to share nature's generous offering, I reflected on the lesson; 'Life's simple answer when faced with adversity is to love and love without condition, again and again'.

"Let my life be measured not in years, not in days, but by the length of my endeavours, the weight of my deeds, the capacity of my love, and the value of my service to others."

Rudolf Steiner

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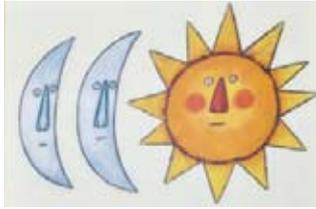
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A DAY AND AN EVENING

How lovely and helpful is a beautiful lullaby. It is truly an honour to have opportunity to visit the classrooms each day and see and hear the children at work, from the richness of literacy and numeracy woven through Main Lesson, the integrated and accompanying expressions of movement and art in Class Four, to the dexterity and busyness of the Kindy Rose children creating warm beanies for the coming Winter, to the warm slippers being created in Play-group for the cooler temperatures on our doorstep, to the Senators of Class Six as they demonstrate both a competence and confidence befitting that role, a readiness for their soaring together into an adult future. Have you seen the creations of Woodwork, so lovingly and finely chiselled, grooved and formed?.

As I reflect on a day at West Coast Steiner School, it is the heart that takes me to that place above, again and again. The evening colours and shadows of Autumn draw a picture that a wonderful lullaby can capture a little, a lullaby that one can simply appreciate for its depth, resonance and beauty, to a lullaby that you may find helpful in gently crooning your little one(s) to sleep.

Wiegenlied and *Carra Barra Wirra Canna* are two such lullabies the children are learning. Please feel welcome to invite your child(ren) to sing their beautiful tunes. The original *Wiegenlied*, I have learnt during the week, on a visit to Class 1, is also sung in German at home. The children, so well immersed in our German language programme, have developed the skills to adeptly learn and articulate the lyrics with meaning and expression.

Wiegenlied

Below is *Wiegenlied*, once known as Mozart's Cradle Song, in German and with the English translation. The link below the words is the lullaby sung by Olivia Newton John in the English words the children are also learning at school.

WIEGENLIED (IN GERMAN)

Schlafe, mein Prinzchen, schlaf ein,
Schäfchen ruh'n und Vögelein,
Garten und Wiese verstummt,
auch nicht ein Bienchen mehr summt,
Luna mit silbernem Schein
guckt zum Fenster herein,
schlafe bei silbernem Schein,
schlafe, mein Prinzchen, schlaf ein,
schlaf ein, schlaf ein!

Auch in dem Schlosse schon liegt
alles in Schlummer gewiegt,
reget kein Mäuschen sich mehr,
Keller und Küche sind leer,
nur in der Zofe Gemach
tönt ein schmachtendes Ach!
Was für ein Ach mag das sein?
Schlafe, mein Prinzchen, schlaf ein,
schlaf ein, schlaf ein!

Wer ist beglückter als du?
Nichts als Vergnügen und Ruh'!
Spielwerk und Zucker vollauf
und noch Karossen im Lauf,
Alles besorgt und bereit,
dass nur mein Prinzchen nicht schreit.
Was wird da künftig erst sein?
Schlafe, mein Prinzchen, schlaf' ein,
schlaf ein, schlaf ein![3]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzS70ZGZFNw>

CARRA BARRA WIRRA CANNA

An Aboriginal Lullaby from Morva Coogan. The link below is it sung by Morva.

1. There's a lake in south Australia,
Little lake with lovely name
And the story woven round it,
From the piccaninnies came
Every night the native mothers
Croon this lovely lullaby,
Croon across the moonlit waters,
To the star up in the sky

English Translation

Sleep, my little prince, sleep,
The sheep and the birdies rest,
The garden and the meadow are quiet,
Not even a little bee buzzes anymore.
Luna, with a silverly glow
Looks in through the window,
Sleep by the silverly glow,
Sleep, my little prince, sleep,
Sleep, sleep!

By now, all are in bed in the castle,
All lulled into a slumber,
No more mice stir,
The basement and kitchen are empty.
Only in the maid's chambers
There sounds a languishing sigh!
What might this sigh be for?
Sleep, my little prince, sleep,
Sleep, sleep!

Who is happier than you?
Nothing but pleasure and peace!
All trinkets and sugar,
And a trotting stage-coach.
Everyone's anxious and ready
That my little prince will just not cry.
What will the future bring?
Sleep, my little prince, sleep,
Sleep, sleep![4]

CHORUS: Carra Barra Wirra Canna,
Little star upon the lake
Guide me through the hours of darkness,
Keep me safely till I wake
2. Piccaninnies' heads are nodding
Drowsy crooning fills the air.
Little eyes at last are closing,
And the boat of dreams is there.
Guide my boat across the waters,
Cross the waters still and deep,
Light me with your little candle,
Safely to the land of sleep

CHORUS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H98yZVj7HSY>





“REFLECTION”

A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love. (Mary Teresa Bojaxhiu)

As one reflects at any moment on what is important in life, perhaps there is opportunity to consider the Threeed Leaves Story. The three leaves, for me, on witnessing the gratitude of the old lady last Sunday are, ‘Compassion, Love and Truth’ and the lesson could be named ‘Transformational’.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What inspires me most in others - who gives me life?

When have I felt really good about myself - what were the ingredients?

What sacrifices have I made to help others - how do I truly give?

It is through giving that we truly receive.

STAFF PROFILE

This Gazette edition will include a brief profile of Marie our amazing music teacher and some of the interesting things she has been involved with so far this year.

REMINDERS

Come one and all Kindergarten parents to the evening of May 22, when the Term Two Kindergarten Parent Information Session will be followed by a ‘Warmth’ presentation. Enjoy the company and spirit of others from our West Coast Steiner School Community. Share the learning and love together.

NCCD (Nationally Consistent Collection of Data)

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data is an annual collection of information about Australian school students with disability.

The NCCD enables schools, education authorities and governments to better understand the needs of students with disability and how they can be best supported at school. For more information visit the school website.

ALL STAFF STEINER SCHOOLS DAY

West Coast Steiner School is to host the All Staff Steiner Schools Day this year, to be held on Friday the 27th of Septem-

ber for the Steiner education journey here in Western Australia as staff from all WA Steiner schools come together for professional development and sharing. Being privileged and honoured to be the host this year will provide opportunity for each of us to provide that wonderful witness to life-giving leadership, as models of virtue, growth, professionalism and unconditional love.

KISS AND DRIVE

We require more volunteers for our Kiss and Drive service please let Stephanie or Di at Reception know and/or email marketing@wcss.wa.edu.au This time can be dedicated to Family Commitment Hours.

PARKING

The Water Corporation is carrying out extensive work on Myimbar Way. We advise parking at neighbouring streets or Nollamara Shopping Centre until the work is completed.

WCSS VISION

Working from the indications of Rudolf

Steiner, we strive to educate the whole being of each child in head, heart and hands. We envision this education set within a community guided by goodness, beauty and truth. Further, we seek to plant the seeds for our students to enter the changing world with purpose, as self-directed adults, with a lifelong love of learning, who are intellectually and spiritually free, socially responsible and emotionally balanced.

VISION IN ACTION

In her twilight years the beautiful lady in the Three Leaves Story, continues to express her heart filled joy and appreciation, contributing to an improved human condition for all. She contributes to this 'changing world with purpose, as a self-directed adult'. What simple acts of kindness can I perform, as a purposeful self-directed adult, who can provide a loving presence and spiritual succour for others?

PONDERING

At what point does empathy become compassion?

NB!

The English and German lyrics for the Happy Wanderer tune are below:

THE HAPPY WANDERER

*'I love to go a-wandering,
Along the mountain track,
And as I go, I love to sing,
My knapsack on my back.*

Chorus:

*Val-deri, Val-dera,
Val-deri,
Val-dera-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
Val-deri, Val-dera.*

My knapsack on my back.

*I love to wander by the stream
That dances in the sun,
So joyously it calls to me,
"Come! Join my happy song!"*

*I wave my hat to all I meet,
And they wave back to me,
And blackbirds call so loud and sweet
From ev'ry green wood tree.*

*High overhead, the skylarks wing,
They never rest at home
But just like me, they love to sing,
As o'er the world we roam.*

*Oh, may I go a-wandering
Until the day I die!
Oh, may I always laugh and sing,
Beneath God's clear blue sky!'*

MEIN VATER WAR EIN WANDERSMANN (IN GERMAN)

*Und mir steckt's auch im Blut;
Drum wandr' ich flott, so lang ich kann,*

Und schwenke meinen Hut.

Refrain 1:

*Faleri, falera, faleri,
Falera ha ha ha ha ha ha
Faleri, falera,
Und schwenke meinen Hut.*

Refrain 2&3:

*Hei-di, hei-da, hei-di, hei-da!
Und schwenke meinen Hut
Das Wandern schafft frische Lust,
Erhält das Herz gesund;
Frei atmet draußen meine Brust,
Froh singet stets mein Mund:*

Refrain:

Warum singt Dir das Vögelein

So freudevoll sein Lied?

Weil's nimmer hockt, landaus, landein

Durch and're Fluren zieht.

Refrain:

*Was murmelt's Bächlein dort und rauscht,
So lustig hin durch's Rohr,
Weil's frei sich regt, mit Wonne lauscht
Ihm dein empfänglich Ohr.*

Refrain:

D'rum trag ich Ränzlein und den Stab

Weit in die Welt hinein,

*Und werde bis an's kühle Grab
Ein Wanderbursche sein!*

Refrain:

The original text was written by Florenz Friedrich Sigismund (1788-1857). The tune was composed by Friedrich-Wilhelm Möller.

WHO AM I

Thank you everyone and I hope you enjoy the opportunities for *happy heart filled moments*. As dutiful stewards of this earth's providence, beneath Lunar and the Sun Star at the centre of the Solar System, let us be mindful of the goodness and beauty of song and dance and their place through this brief 'Who Am I adaptation' from *Tradition, Truth and Tomorrow*:

'Our ceremonies are our universities. Working from the new moon to the full moon, we travel the song cycles that provide guidance, meaning and essence for our people. We seek the moment where everyone is taking their duties and responsibilities in unison; then the ceremonial cycle is balanced. There is no female, no male, no little ones and no big ones; we are all the same. Our ceremonial song cycles which hold our laws, are sung into our ears as babies, disciplined into our bodies through dance and music; inherited knowledge from our Fathers and Mothers. My sisters would call me crystal clear, Djingarra. My Father's Father's totem was a sacred unbreakable rock, Yunupingu, a name he gave to his son. My totem is fire.' **WHO AM I?**

Gerard Tonti-Filippini, School Administrator

A LIFE OF LEARNING

All WCSS staff came together on Monday April 29th for a day of professional development before Term 2 commenced. The day was balanced with practical matters of first aid refreshers for example in the morning before the afternoon session in which staff contemplated the 100 year journey of Waldorf Education. As a reflection of our thoughts we shared eurythmy performances, singing, poems, and drawings.

A contemplative and enriching experience.

*Let my life be measured,
Not in years,
Not in days, But by...
The length of my endeavours,
The weight of my deeds,
The capacity of my love,
And the value of my service to others.*

Rudolf Steiner

CLASS NEWS

CLASS 3 TIME MAIN LESSON

It seems only yesterday that I was asked to contribute a little news about Class 3 in the school Gazette. I remember thinking "Ah, Term 2. No worries I have time". But here I am the night before I must submit...where has the time gone? Time, a mystery in so many ways and yet an essential aspect of our everyday existence. What does time mean to us all? And why must we learn to measure it so exactly?

The children loved to think of me determining one day not to measure time like everyone else and deciding that a warm drink on my sunny verandah was a better option than racing the clock to get to school on time!

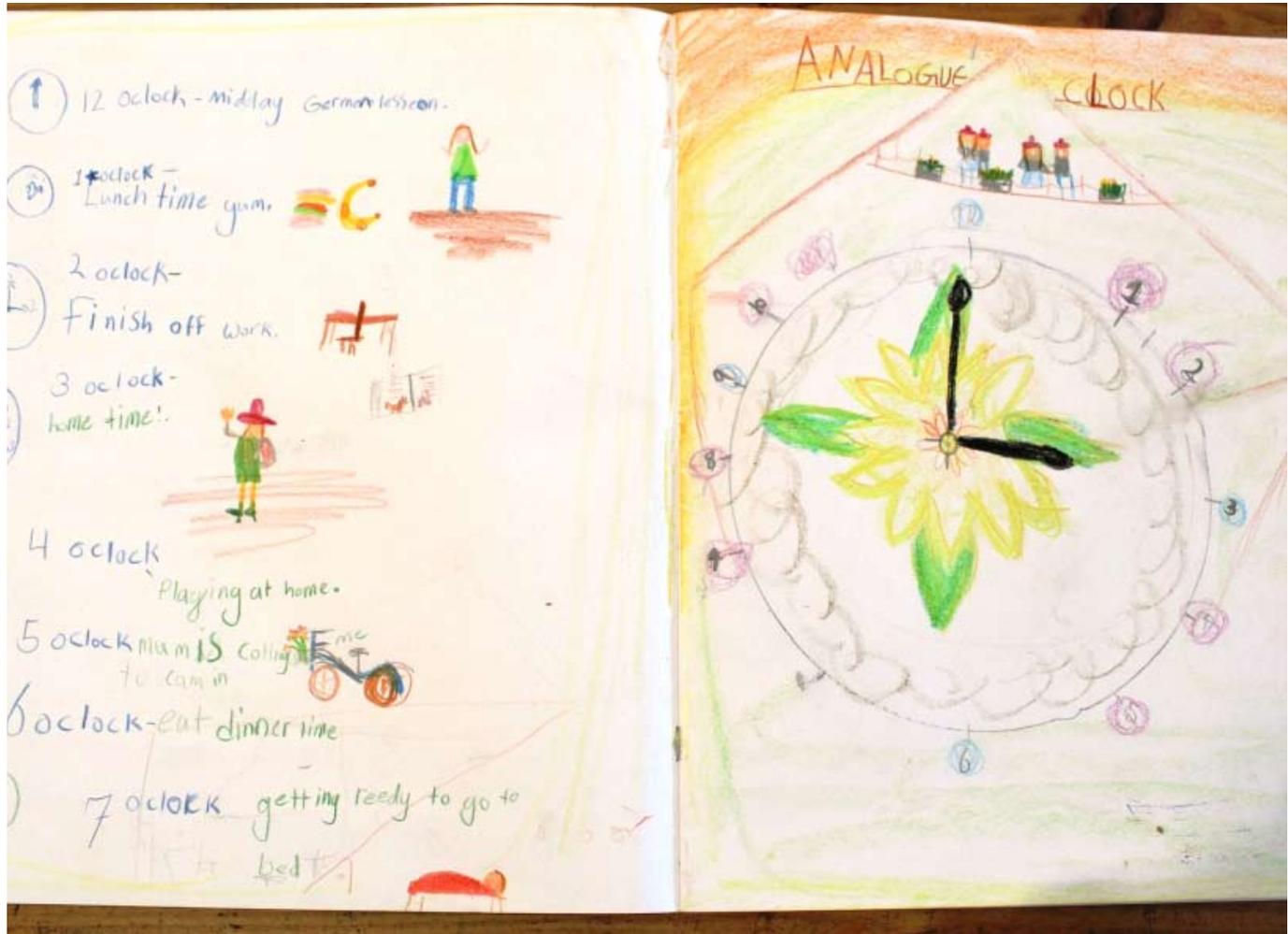
We need to measure time exactly if we want to catch buses or trains or we want to get to school before the bell (a few mischievous comments here) but time is so much more than this.



Once, time was measured with the passing of the seasons. The Noongar Whadjak people knew it was time to move inland

when rains began; they knew the division of the year by the availability of food sources and didn't need a calendar marking to tell them when a new season came. Once, time was measured by the movement of the stars, by the rising of the sun and its position within giant stone circles. Then a time came when people started looking for ways to measure shorter increments of time. Perhaps the pace of life became faster?

Class 3 entered into this topic by closing their eyes and noting what was the first image or thought they had when I said time. 'Life-time!' 'Old people!' 'A clock!' 'Lunch time!'we discussed: 'A time for everything' - there is a time for laughter and a time for tears; a time for loud and a time for soft. A lifetime can be measured in years; years in months, months in weeks, weeks in days, days in hours, hours in minutes and minutes in seconds; the constant passing of seconds is like the constant beating of a heart, beating from the





time of birth until the time of death. The expansion and contraction of the heart, every beat is the expansion and contraction of the Earth in a year, the passing of a life from birth to death, or the great age of a Civilization from its rise to its fall.

Time has always been connected to the movement of Earth, Sun, Moon and Stars. This was a good chance for us to touch on the 12 constellations that each month have their ascendancy in the night sky, the measurement of the moon cycle, and how the seven days of the week are also connected to the planets.

It was fun for the children to discover that the colours of each of the days of our school week derive from the planet of that particular day! Blue for Moonday; red for Mars Day, the red planet; yellow for Mercury Day, active and fast moving. These ideas are little seeds planted in the child's imagination that we come back to at an age-appropriate time.

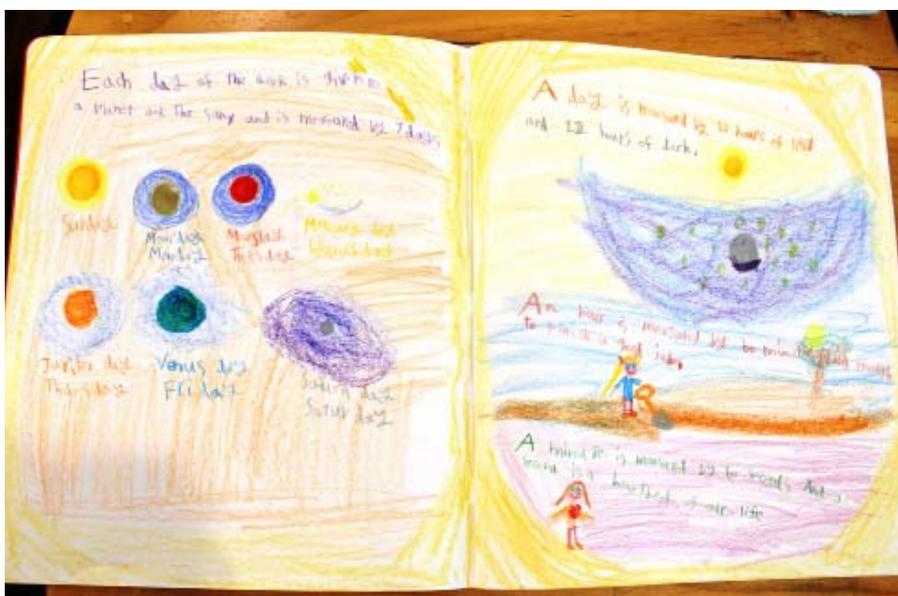
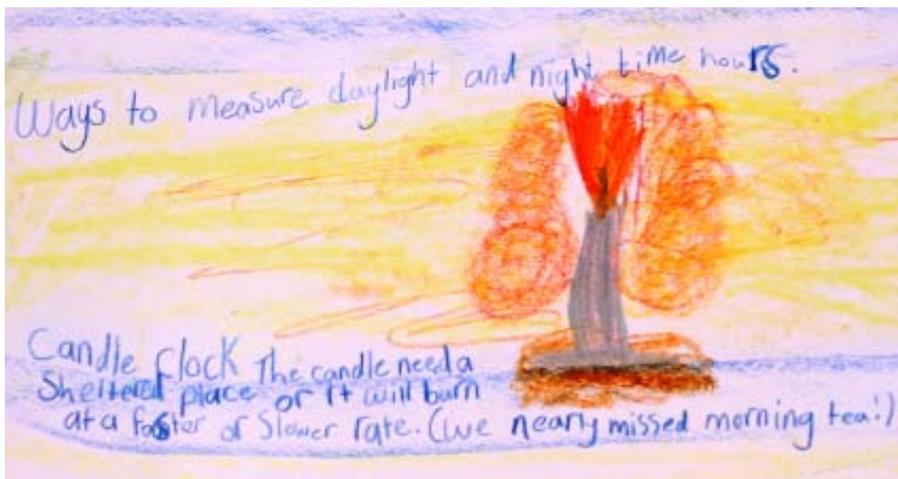
Then we moved on to how we can measure small increments of time so that in our busy lives we can manage to be at the same place at the same time, if and when necessary.

We had so much fun thinking and trying out ways to accurately measure the passing time so that we didn't miss the bell that calls us to play! Our first candle clock had us happily singing until a sneaky glance at a 'real' clock made us realise we were almost a half hour behind schedule! We then had fun trying to work out what went wrong. Was it the open window when we measured the first candle? Or the fan we had on? We had slightly more success with our water clock and didn't miss any play bells and then we measured the hours on our sundial. It moves anti-clockwise here in the southern hemisphere. A wonderful mystery/surprise that the children can look forward to solving later in upper primary school!

Finally, the children made an analogue clock each and have started learning to read the time on it.

After all, we decided, we do sometimes need to be exact with our measurement of time. However nice that hot cuppa would have been on the verandah, we all agreed it was a whole lot more exciting coming to school and discovering about all these sorts of things!

Renee Bowyer, Class 3 Teacher



KINDERGARTEN NEWS

Enrolments are now open for Kindy 4 2020!

Applications are currently being accepted for next year's Kindy 4 Program. Places are limited so if you are planning to apply please visit Reception or the website for the Application Form and submit by Friday May 31. Kindy 4 is the perfect start for our little ones comprised of two gentle sessions per week with indoor and outdoor play, activities, singing and story.

KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION SESSION - JUNE 7, 9AM

Would you like to know more about our Early Childhood years, or know someone interested in Steiner Kindergarten? We will be holding a Kindergarten Information Session on Friday June 7 from 9am-10am in the Performance Room. Our experienced Kindy teachers will discuss the uniqueness of a Steiner Kindy, child development from 4-6yrs and the way the curriculum meets the child. The session will be followed by a cuppa and conversation. Please note this session is for adults only and RSVP is appreciated. For more information or to register your interest: T: 9440 1771 E: marketing@wcss.wa.edu.au

LIVING WOODWORK MUSEUM

The Woodwork Room has many wonderful antique hand tools that the students use in class.

I would like to create a "living museum" which will allow these tools to be displayed beautifully with historical information and available for students to use.

As such, I am seeking a glass display cabinet measuring approximately:

1210mm width-320mm depth- 1080mm height that will be able to display these tools. I also need a large blackboard.

If you happen to have anything that fits this description or could make one please come and see me in the Woodwork Room on Tuesdays after drop off. I am also always happy to receive donations of antique hand tools if you happen to come across some.

Thank you

*Yolanda Millar
Woodwork Teacher*



STAFF PROFILE



NAME:

Marie Limondin

TITLE:

Strings Specialist

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT WCSS?

I started teaching music at WCSS at the beginning of this year.

BIOGRAPHY

I was born in France, Normandy and I started playing the violin when I was 7 years old. After finishing my musical studies at the “Conservatoire”, I worked as a full time musician in the

“Orquesta Sinfonica de Yucatan” in Merida, Mexico. I came to Australia in 2005 and lived for 13 years in beautiful Denmark, where I taught the violin and played in nearly all the local bands and orchestras! During that time, I created a close relationship with the Golden Hill Steiner School community, where I took my 2 daughters to playgroup when they were babies. They are now 5 and 7 years old and we live in Scarborough with my lovely partner Ross who is a musician as well. Music is my passion but I also love practicing yoga, hiking in the mountains, rock climbing and surfing.

MAIN DUTIES

I teach violin, viola and cello in class 3, 4, 5 and 6. I also conduct our wonderful upper school string orchestra and choir.

I work on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays where I see the children 4 times a week: at their instrumental lesson in small groups of 2 to 4, the whole class theory or practice lesson, the orchestra rehearsal and the choir practice.

Every term we have a great opportunity to share our work with the younger students, the teachers and the parents at our Thursday morning Strings Assembly.

It is a beautiful experience that brings a lot of joy to our whole school, a ripple effect that spreads good energy, harmony and a sense of belonging.

FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT WCSS

I love hearing the children sing in class while walking on the veranda, I also love reading the weekly inspirational quote on the blackboard in our staff room and I absolutely love it that we have The Hub because I can get the best coffee ever!

WCSS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

HELLO ALL

A warm welcome to Term 2 for our wonderful WCSS community!

Following our AGM on April 30 and subsequent Committee Member drive, we would like to introduce the Community Association Committee for 2019:

CHAIRPERSON: Rose Vassila

DUTY CHAIRPERSON AND CRAFT COORDINATOR:

Sarah Jordan

TREASURER: Vacant

SECRETARY: Jennifer Alispahic and Chrissy Reeve

ORDINARY MEMBERS: Jane Fisher (Golden Threads Manager); Maria Dau (Market Day Coordinator); Ben McMillen (Hub Captain); Chris Wilkinson; Emma TeRangi; Helmut Maertin (Fathering Group Rep); Sophia Virgin; Ruth Tigges; Ruth Drake-Brockman; Julia Nevols; Kirrilli Heath; Marisa Bozanich; Natasha Harper; Melissa Jay and Damien Ganzer.

Please speak to any of the committee members, or contact us any time at wcssca@wcss.wa.edu.au if you would like to be a part of the team.

MARKET DAY

As you are reading this gazette we will have held our very first Jumper Swap/Sale at Market Day (Tuesday May 21), an example that Market Day is not only about food (as much as we love all those delicious treats!). If you have an idea for a stall that falls within homemade, handmade, Steiner inspired guidelines then get in touch with our Market Day Coordinator, Maria.

*Maria Dau
Market Day Coordinator
M: 0403 765 447
E: maria dau@outlook.com*

EARN AND LEARN

The Woolworths Earn and Learn promotion is underway. Please drop your stickers into the boxes at the Hub. The promotion closes on June 25.

LANTERN MAKING

The Lantern Making Winter Craft Morning for all our parents will be held after morning drop off on Tuesday June 18 at the Hub (weather permitting). Keep an eye on the notice boards for more details.

QUIZ NIGHT

WCSS Quiz Night is making a comeback! We are planning for early Term 3 so keep an eye on this space and let us know if you would like to help out in any way.

SAVE THE DATE

Please save the date for our annual Open Day Fair to be held on Saturday November 2.

*West Coast Steiner School
Community Association Committee
E: wcssca@wcss.wa.edu.au*

GOLDEN THREADS

It's such a pleasure to see so many parents enjoying the Hub, and welcoming new families into this space and our school. We are very lucky to have this space for community to gather. It's a highlight of my week to meet new parents and of course, get cuddles with all the Hub Bubs.

Ice blocks will still be on sale for now, but will cease once the cold weather sets in. Speaking of cold weather, it's completely heart warming (and foot warming) to see little ones choosing their warm felt slippers, and then proudly wearing them out of the shop. 100% wool felt is such a beautiful, natural, warm fibre for slippers. We have most child and adult sizes available.

For the first time, we have Grapat Nins available in the shop, they are truly lovely and can be played with in so many ways. We also have wooden playsilk clips/pegs, as requested by a few people.

Thank you to everyone who has be-



come a member of WCSSCA (the Community Association) or joined the WCSSCA Committee. Our last meeting had the biggest attendance I have seen in the past 3 years! We will be advertising meeting times on class noticeboards for anyone else who would like to join, offer assistance, or come along to a meeting.

As always, a huge thank you to all volunteers who help keep Golden Threads running smoothly. Shopkeepers, bakers, wool winders, tea towel washers, people who collect local orders for me, and everyone who helps in any way, it's such a wonderful team effort and directly nurtures our community. Thank you.

*Jane Fisher
Golden Threads Manager*

WHY EURYTHMY SHOES?

Eurythmy is a great help toward the Steiner educational aim of helping the growing child incarnate on this Earth in a healthy and harmonious way. The body then becomes an instrument through which the child's spirit can fulfil its earthly task. Many Eurythmy exercises are directed toward increasing dexterity and awareness in the feet. This gives the child a solid grounding for any future activity. (At puberty the established dexterity in fingers and toes will metamorphose into flexibility of thinking.) Exercises for the feet are

particularly important for children who are pulled into their nerves and senses too early. Unfortunately, children who are at the mercy of the adverse effects of our modern Australian culture are becoming more common. The sensory "head" realm is overstimulated by noise, light, the mechanised experience of being driven in a car, the confusion of shopping centres, technology, television, etc., and cannot assimilate it all in a healthy way.

If sport shoes are too clumsy for the Eurythmy feet exercises, why can't the child go barefoot in summer and wear socks in winter? Aside from the unpleasant aesthetics of dirty bare feet, it is harmful to the bones of growing young feet to stamp or jump on a hard floor. The Eurythmy shoe not only provides an aesthetic sheath for this fine instrument of the foot, but healthy support. For most children the cushioning of the non-skid flexible rubber sole is sufficient. For children with foot problems I suggest buying cushioned insoles available from the chemist which can be cut to size and inserted into the Eurythmy shoes. (As I am in Eurythmy shoes for many hours of the day, I find the added cushioning very comfortable.) Wearing socks with Eurythmy shoes is also helpful. Socks without shoes do not provide enough support on hard floors, and also invite slipping and sliding games!

Now what if Raphael or Leonardo Da Vinci were never given a paintbrush,

but had to be content with finger-painting? While we may or may not be teaching such exalted individuals, every child in a Steiner School is considered precious, whose special gift to the world will be revealed in due course. It is our task to enable the potential of each child to be realised.

Clean, well-fitted Eurythmy shoes in good condition are an essential tool along the way!

*Kristina Hamilton,
Eurythmy Teacher*



FEATURE ARTICLE

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE VERY YOUNG CHILD

BY SUSAN WEBER

Few areas of children's development bring us more questions than their social and emotional development. Perhaps it is because we know that this is an extremely complex area of human development, fraught with sensitivity; perhaps we are also aware of its central place in life's journey. We carry our social selves into every situation of life, and as contemporary psycholo-

gist and researcher Daniel Goleman has confirmed, our social capacities far outweigh our cognitive ones in determining success and satisfaction in our lives. It is also the area in which we have so much to contribute to the future of humanity; in addressing the world's most complex problems. This is the realm in which our soul forces – thinking, feeling, and willing – inter-

sect, and require balance and inner development to manifest their potential. But where do these capacities begin? It is a long journey from infancy to a maturity of our social capacities that enables us to wear a garment that aligns our social capacities with our spiritual hopes and intentions – that enables us to walk through daily life meeting the world out of our best selves.



REVERENCE AND GRATITUDE

As both parents and teachers, we are surrounded by societal expectations around the social capacities of our children. How do we prepare the children for the world in which they live, giving them age appropriate guidance that meets their needs? How do we develop the virtues of generosity and compassion that make us fully human? How do we meet conflict healthily in our both conflict ridden and conflict averse world?

From several perspectives, we may recognize that these are processes that only unfold over time. The expectations we hold, the approach we bring to children in the early years is highly dependent upon their stage of development. Appropriate expectations for a two year old will differ greatly from those for a four year old, and from those for ourselves as adults. As we become increasingly aware of the children's subtle developmental stages and develop our capacity for observation, we can support them more successfully.

In guiding children into social life in the early childhood years, there are three aspects out of which we build a secure and rhythmic environment for them.

The first is imitation, the underlying and guiding principle of young children's learning. Imitation stands first and foremost as the means by which children learn the virtues that will support them for their entire lives: reverence and gratitude. Our hope and task is to bring them, through our own

example of reverence and gratitude, a feeling in their wills that will enable them to live with these two virtues throughout their lives in an active way. By respecting this area of the child's spiritual freedom, we offer a gift for his entire life.

Rudolf Steiner describes this phenomenon in the following way:

And yet gratitude is a virtue that, in order to play a proper role in the human soul, must grow with the child. Gratitude is something that must already flow into the human being when the growth forces—working in the child in an inward direction—are liveliest, when they are at the peak of their shaping and molding activities. Gratitude is something that has to be developed out of the bodily-religious relationship I described as the dominant feature in the child from birth until the change of teeth. At the same time, however, gratitude spontaneously during this first period of life, as long as the child is treated properly. All that flows, with devotion and love, from a child's inner being toward whatever comes from the periphery through the parents or other educators—will be permeated with a natural mood of gratitude. We only have to act in ways that are worthy of a child's gratitude and it will flow toward us, especially in the first period of life. This gratitude then develops further by flowing into the forces of growth that make the limbs grow, and that alter even the chemical composition of the blood and other bodily fluids. This gratitude lives in the physi-

*cal body and must dwell in it, since otherwise it would not be anchored deeply enough.**

I am quoting at length, because of the mis-perception that gratitude may be equated with social habit or manners. While we do, in fact, work in the realm of social habit, this is not the realm of the virtues of gratitude and reverence in which the child's spiritual freedom must be allowed to be active, as Steiner so clearly describes in the passage above.

The capacity for compassion, for entering into the suffering of another human being with true empathy, is a highly evolved one and a capacity that Rudolf Steiner shares will only be fully developed in the far distant future. For the young child, it is only the tenderest beginning that shows itself for his own self is just finding a home as he begins to refer to himself as 'I', as he begins to be a distinctive individual with his own biography and life story. Surely it is first that we learn to know ourselves before we can see the other through the eyes of compassion. We may see in even babies a hint of empathy when the other child cries, or expresses feelings through facial expression. But whether these are learned capacities or innate gifts is difficult to know. Further and of importance in developing appropriate expectations of young children, is to consider whether this is a capacity that the outside world can call upon or is whether this is a tiny spark of an essentially nascent capacity that will be available to the child only later in life, one that we do not wish to draw upon prematurely in a conscious teaching or expectation.

An example of this might be the request to the child to express that he is sorry for something that he did that may have caused discomfort to another. In the child, under perhaps age five – and in some children only later – there may not even be awareness that, in fact, discomfort was caused by his activity. Awareness of cause and effect are not early capacities!

What we can do as adults is to model the response that we would hope the child can later offer out of himself. We can strive to be a living example of compassion again and again, offering

the healing gesture that the child can not yet offer out of himself.

The foundation for our work with children in the first seven years wants to stand firmly grounded in this understanding. We cannot teach these virtues, nor can we train gratitude through the social habits of manners. Good manners are culturally determined and vary greatly throughout the world – think of the difference among cultures in eating habits where in some cultures it is expected that one eats with ones fingers, while in other places this would be the greatest breach of etiquette.

These culturally determined habits stand in contrast to virtues that are spiritually and universally rooted. The culturally determined social capacities flow through the path of imitation of the adults in the child's life, and later, we hope that the child will have developed the sensitivity to recognize when he is in an environment in which these need to be modified or changed altogether. The virtues of reverence, gratitude, and compassion remain forever universal.

In addition to these central human virtues – the path of reverence and gratitude – we are entering into a second area in which we work as early childhood teachers to develop the healthy social capacities in the very young child. This is the area in which we support the development of the child's self initiated compliance. This is the area in which we strive to offer the child opportunities within daily life in which he comes gradually toward socially mature behavior out of his own initiative, learning through the exercise of habit, through the activity within his choice, to respond to the guidance and example around him. Social manners fall into this area, as does the early learning to respond to behavioral expectations – dressing oneself, washing ones hands, returning from outdoor play when the transition time comes. There are innumerable such moments throughout the day which we make use of in strengthening the child's will to flow through time and space as part of a social group.

Working sensitively in this area strengthens resilience and flexibility, the capacity to cope with frustra-

tion, and to meet the limitations of the world in which the child lives. These strengths are supported and are developed through the clarity of the adult's thought and will: developing healthy rhythms that take into consideration the developmental stages of the child or children, the physical environment, and utilizing the foundational principles of rhythm and repetition.

CONFLICT

A further area of social experience for the very young child is that of conflict. Eva Kallo, psychologist and pedagogical support staff member of the Pikler Institute in Budapest, describes conflict as a natural coinciding of interests and therefore an inevitability in life. But without skills in meeting conflict, it easily becomes a source of discomfort or avoidance. How can we prepare our children to later meet conflict with age-appropriate skills, with a recognition that conflict is a potential source of creativity?

Living and working with toddlers puts us on the forefront of this question, for as they begin to feel themselves as individuals, literally meeting the world with the creative tension of self discovery, conflict is a necessary effect as each child strives to understand what happens as she reaches out to encounter the world with the force of her being. How we respond gives the child a picture of his effect on the world around and begins to mold his actions in a positive way.

We also encounter as adults with very young children the area in which the adult leads and guides the children's behavior with firmness and clarity, setting clear, objective boundaries around unacceptable social behavior. This may well be defined through three principles that the teacher or parent both models and enforces through word and deed when necessary, without hesitation or apology, that:

- The child may not hurt another person (child or adult)
- The child may not hurt, damage, or destroy the physical environment
- The child may not harm themselves

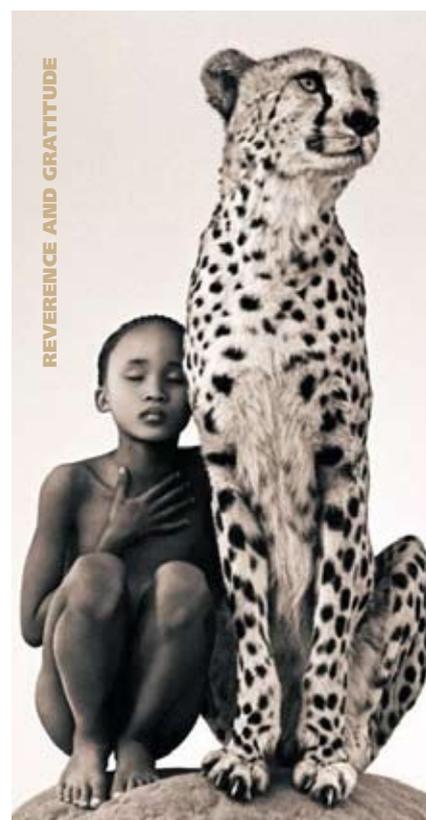
The more clearly and unapologetically these principles are brought to the child and lived around her, the

more easily the child can imitate and build healthy habits for life. The child is then increasingly free in her social life and interactions with the world around her, because these habits create a framework for play, for friendship, for work.

It is highly helpful to recognize that there are differentiated and mutually supportive areas in which the child grows into becoming a social being who lives in freedom, with grace, and in comfortable relationship with the other human beings around him. He will have a joy in daily life that grows with increasing practice of these capacities and in the experience of the empathy of adults around, as he tenderly unfolds the beginnings of social capacities.

*Steiner, Rudolf, *The Child's Changing Consciousness and Waldorf Education*, Lecture 6, p. 125

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Class 6 Woodwork



FANTASTIC WORK CLASS 6

**PERTH WALDORF SCHOOL
HIGH SCHOOL JOURNEY AND BEYOND**
Thursday 6th June 2019, 6.30pm, Williams Hall

Bruce Lee – PWS Administrator

Welcome

Acknowledgement of traditional owners

High School Verse

Introduction to the evening

PWS High School – the Big Picture

Mark Phillips – High School Coordinator

PWS High School Curriculum, Students and Teachers

Penny Champ – Class 12 Project

Brett Kranz-Little – Transitions & Maths

Anthony MacLeod – Art

Paddy Hocking – Camp programme

Donna Kerr – Drama

Wendy Belford – Sport Programme

Pam Moore – English

Annabelle Kellenberger – Science & IT

Parent – The High School Journey from a parent's perspective

Past Students – Reflections on their experiences

A range of teachers will talk about various subjects and be available afterwards to answer questions

Q&A

Close 8.30pm - Hot drinks and light refreshments served



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