

## STEINER PEDAGOGIES & WALDORF SCHOOLS

### A SHORT OVERVIEW

## RUDOLF STEINER - BIOGRAPHY

- Rudolf Steiner was born in Kraljevec (then Austria, today Croatia) on February 27, 1861, as the first child
- studies at the Technical College, Vienna, initially with the aim of becoming a secondary school teacher
- Steiner works a lot with Goethe literature also in the Goethe and Schiller Archives. He edits some parts of Goethe's work on natural science which appears 1891–1896



## RUDOLF STEINER - BIOGRAPHY

- begins to develop a new art of movement called eurythmy (1911). Eurythmy is an expressive movement art which combines language, music and movement and is especially used in Waldorf education
- lectures in various cities inside and outside of Germany on Reincarnation and Karma, the Gospels, Life Between Death and Rebirth, History of the Mysteries, Teaching of the Senses, History of Evolution, etc. Builds up anthroposophical branches inside and outside of Germany



## RUDOLF STEINER - BIOGRAPHY

- In autumn 1919, after intensive preparations, the Independent Waldorf School opens in Stuttgart, Germany. Its patron is the director of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette company, Emil Molt. Steiner is the school's director until his death in 1925. He offers the teachers courses in education to help them prepare for their task
- Steiner dies in Dornach on March 30, 1925



## ANTHROPOSOPHY

***Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge aiming to guide the spiritual element in the human being to the spiritual in the universe.*** Rudolf Steiner

- the word "anthroposophy" means "wisdom of the human being," or, for us today, "awareness of one's humanity"
- it is a kind of study and schooling that leads to concrete experience of the spiritual dimensions of the human being and the world

## ANTHROPOSOPHY

- spiritual knowledge can be fruitful in various fields of life – in art, religion and science.
- examples are education, medicine, pharmacy, agriculture, social work, economics and much else.
- over time, about 10,000 institutions and initiatives have been founded that endeavor to apply anthroposophy: schools (often called Rudolf Steiner schools, Waldorf schools or independent schools), homes, workshops and schools working within curative education and social therapy, clinics, doctor's practices, pharmaceutical companies, biodynamic farms, banks, art schools, stage groups, businesses, etc. The thing that connects these endeavors is their mutual basis in anthroposophy



### Steiner Education

*The priority of the Steiner ethos is to provide an **unhurried** and **creative learning environment** where children can find the **joy in learning** and experience the richness of childhood rather than early specialisation or academic hot-housing.*

*The teaching of all stages of learning is based on this **understanding of the child**.*

### What is Steiner education?

- Works **for all children** irrespective of academic ability, class, ethnicity or religion
- Takes account of the **needs of the whole child** – academic, physical, emotional and spiritual
- Is based on an understanding of the relevance of the **different phases of child development**
- Develops a love of **learning** and an **enthusiasm** for school
- Sees artistic activity and the development of the **imagination** as integral to learning

### Steiner Curriculum

- a flexible set of pedagogical guidelines, founded on Steiner's principles that take account of the whole child.
- It gives equal attention to the physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural and spiritual needs of each pupil
- is designed to work in harmony with the different phases of the child's development
- The core subjects of the curriculum are taught in **thematic blocks**

### A Different Style of Education

- **Whole class teaching is the norm and all pupils study all subjects.** (*all children sing daily, learn to play musical instruments and to read music*)
- **7-14 y.old: same Class Teacher** → *sense of security and continuity*.
- **7-14y.old: their own illustrated and hand-written main lesson books**

### A Different Style of Education

- *the **teacher continuously observing** the physical, emotional, social and academic development of each child.*
- **non-hierarchical collegiate**

### General ideas of Steiner schools

*The **first Steiner school** opened in **Stuttgart in 1919** for children of workers at the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory*

- co-educational
- fully comprehensive
- from 3 to ideally eighteen
- children of all abilities
- from all faiths and backgrounds.

### Steiner Preschool (3-7)

The child's emotional, intellectual and spiritual life are strengthened

- imaginative play
- artistic activities
- simple crafts
- Puppetry and fairy tales, dramatic play — memory and imagination.
- Songs and nursery rhymes  
→ world of words
- Mixed groups



### Steiner Lower School (7-14)

- **Class Teacher.**
- **child's imagination and learning readiness.**
- "abstract and conceptual thinking come more children at a later stage and young children learn best when the teaching appeals foremost to their **feelings** and **artistic sense**."
- All the core subjects such as English, Maths, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, are studied in block periods of **3-4 weeks** in the **Main Lesson**, which form the first lesson on every school day.
- **Rhythm, routine and repetition.**



### Steiner Upper School (14-19)

- independent thinking and pupils are encouraged to explore ideas that can lead them to ideals
- specialist teachers
- independent, capable and responsible adult.
- whole class teaching with general subject lessons
- languages, arts and crafts, religious studies, sports, drama and music.

The **Main Lessons** including:  
English Literature, World Literature,  
the History of Drama and Poetry



### IDEA OF RUDOLF STEINER

"The human being is respected by his individual soul regardless of environment and inheritance"

"Everyone needs an individual attention, adapted to the constitution, state of health and age."

### CHANCES OF INTEGRATIVE STEINER SCHOOLS

As a basic principle steiner schools have a good framework being an integrative school.

- the time structure
- social communities
- flexible timetable
- interdisciplinary work
- no achievement pressure

### CONSTRAINTS OF INTEGRATIVE STEINER SCHOOLS

- teachers need to want integration and they need to individualize pupils
- a balanced heterogeneous group is important to develop a good community.
- financial
- pressure of the state
- if there are communication and interaction problems in a heterogeneous group, integration can also be failed in a Steiner school