

# South Devon Steiner School:

## A guide to our festivals, events and traditions

By Jonathan Hobbs 2016-17

### Introduction

This document hopes to:

- Introduce the traditions around the different festivals within our school.
- Inform the new members of our community as to what we usually do.
- Support new members of staff.
- Outline significant information for each event.
- Give purely logistical information; deeper understanding must be sought elsewhere.

### However

Each year we change and develop, and so may our traditions. As such, this is not to be used prescriptively. A new impulse may wish to do something different, and in concert with colleagues, this document may need amending as time passes.

### List of Events

<b>Festival / Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Pre-term meetings	Late August
Transition Picnic	Before Term
Opening Ceremony	Beg. of year
Michalemas	End of Sept.
Martinmas	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov.
Advent Fair	Mid Nov.
Advent Spiral	Beg. Advent
Christmas Plays	Mid Dec.
Christmas Concert	Early Dec.
Christmas Assembly	End of term
Epiphany Assembly	Beg. of term
Kings Play	Early term
Candlemas	2 <sup>nd</sup> February
Pancake Day	Shrove Tues.
Lent Assembly	Ash Wednes.

<b>Festival / Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Sharing Assemnly	Mid March
Good Friday Assem.	End of term
Easter Assembly	Beg. of term
Maypole festival	Mid May
Whitsun Festival	Late May
Open Saturday	Mid May
Summer Fair	Mid June
St John's	End of June
End of year Ceremony	Last day of term
End of year meetings	After term ends
Report collation	Set date

NB: There are other events put on by Classes, which vary each year.

## Pre-Term Meetings

- Who: Everyone. Some meetings all together, others in departments.
- What: Department, Collegiate and College meetings.
- When: The week before we welcome the children back.
- How: Meeting dates will be set by chair person and communicated to all relevant staff members. Those expected to come will meet in allocated place.

### Other comment:

This is a great way to reconnect as a group of colleagues and prepare the new year together.

## Transition Picnic

- Who: Kindergarten teachers and Class One teacher.
- What: A picnic with the children coming into Class One, leaving Kindergarten. New children joining from outside the school attend too.
- When: The day before the first day of term.
- How: The kindergarten teachers hold a picnic with the children, and then the Class One teacher collects them from Kindergarten and walks with them to their new classroom. The Class One teacher then settles them into their room and tells them a story.

### Other comment:

Please be discrete if you are onsite at this time, to give the children space to arrive in their new room without an audience.

## Opening Ceremony

- Who: Class 8 teacher organises and MC's this event for Lower School and Upper School. Parents are also welcome.
- What: Class 8 meet Class 1 in their classroom (Cl 1's), giving flower posies.

Classes 2 – 7 and 9 – 10 create a corridor for Class 1 and 8 to walk through. The whole school then processes to the venue and the Class 8 teacher sets the tone for the year.

**When:** 15 mins into the first day of the new school year.

**How:** Organisation is led by Class 8 teacher.

**Other comment:**

A flower arch is made by Class 8 parents for Class 1 and 8 to walk through.

## **Weekly Assemblies**

**Who:** **Class 1 – 4 and Class 5 – 8.**

Class teachers take it in turns to hold the assemblies.

**What:** An assembly in which several things can happen:

- Children share their work with each other.
- Teachers celebrate festivals.
- Teachers tell stories.
- Teacher practise good habits.
- Teacher encourage mixed age group craft, games or other activities.

**When:** Once per week, but will change yearly based on timetable.

**How:** As decided by the group of teachers responsible for the classes.

**Other Comment:**

It is helpful to have one teacher to coordinate a rota so that all are clear when their turn to hold an assembly is.

## **Michaelmas**

**Who:** Class 4 Teacher coordinates play and festival for LS and US children. Parent's invited to watch the Class One to Four play.

**What:** Class One to Four play for parents. Then the same play for the whole school in a Michaelmas assembly.

Then on the day there is a meal of soup and crumble, prepared by volunteers, staff and parents. Supplementary food brought in by parents, such as bread, custard, yogurt etc.

Michaelmas challenges and deeds organised by Class teachers and or subject teachers.

**When:** On or around Michaelmas day, 29<sup>th</sup> September

**How:** Class Four teacher organises and coordinates this festival with the help of others.

**Other comment:**

All to wear red for the play and festival days.

Children need to bring in bowl and spoon, labelled.

Class 1 and 8 eat together.

Class 2 and 9 eat together.

Class 3 and 10 eat together.

Classes 4, 5, 6, 7 divide into quarters and mix and then eat in classrooms.

## **Marinmas**

**Who:** Kindergarten and Classes One and Two Teachers.

**What:** KG and Classes One and Two host their respective parent communities in their rooms to light their lanterns from a central lantern. They then go on a lantern walk, convening all together on the upper tarmac where a tableau of St Martin can be seen.

**When:** On St Martin's day, 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**How:** KG teachers organise amongst themselves, as do Class One and Two teachers. Then all liaise to confirm plan.

**Other comment:**

Traditional songs are:

I go with my bright little lantern.

Glimmer Lantern Glimmer.

Twinkle Twinkle little star.

All of the lights at the school need to be off. This is supported by the maintenance dept.

## Advent Fair

**Who:** The parent body, along with either a nominated member of staff, or a committee made up by both.

**What:** A fair to celebrate advent. There are many traditional activities including:

- Wreath making.
- Crystal cave.
- Candle dipping.
- Puppet shows.
- Angel Garden.
- Pizza Stall.
- Second hand clothes stall.
- And more.

**When:** Usually the Saturday of the weekend before the first Sunday of Advent.

**How:** Fair organiser(s) link with the teaching body, and parent communities. FiZZ reps organise parent communities.

**Other comment:**

Although teachers are not expected to take part in specific activities, we are needed for administrative aspects of the fair.

External traders have stalls.

This is a fund raising activity to support the cost of the trips.

## Advent Spiral

**Who:** All Classes. Organised by departments, but more specifically, a small group who take on this task each year.

**What:** Kindergarten each have their own spiral.

Classes One to Ten, use the same spiral in the hall.

The children enter the room in darkness, with someone playing a lyre.

An Angel will hand out the apple candles to each in turn. The children walk the spiral with the apple candle, light it from the central candle, and place their apple where they choose, walking out of the spiral.

**When:** The Monday after the first Sunday of Advent.

**How:** The small group set up the spiral on the Sunday.

3 Roles are needed:        Musician – to play the lyre

                                      Angel – to give out the apples

                                      Usher – to ensure quiet outside

**Other Comment:**

A parent spiral is offered on the Sunday evening.

Children are asked to wear dark blue.

## **St Nicholas**

**Who:**        Classes 1 – 5.

**What:**        St Nicholas visits each of these classes, bringing a gift to each child, along with a golden book with a message for each.

**When:**        6<sup>th</sup> December

**How:**        St Nicholas prepares the gifts the night before and then delivers these to the classes throughout the morning.

**Other comment:**

He does often visit the older classes, but usually only leaves a small gift, such as a chocolate coin.

## Staff Advent Angel

**Who:** A member of staff takes on to organise. Jonathan H has does this in recent (2012 - 2016) years.

All members of staff are invited to join.

**What:** Each takes on the active task of giving to another colleague for the last week of term.

The spirit is of giving, not receiving. It can be giving gifts, kind deeds, or anything you wish.

**When:** Colleagues are asked two weeks(ish) before the last week of term.

Names are pulled out of a hat the week before.

The giving happens in the last week of term.

**How:** Anyway you wish.

**Other Comments:**

It is totally voluntary and there is no price limit, low or high.

It is also understood that some colleagues don't wish to participate.

## Christmas Concert

**Who:** Classes 1-10. Organised by the Music Teacher, with support from other colleagues.

**What:** Class 1-10 musical, Christmas concert performed for the parents and community.

Either hosted at the school, or another local venue.

**When:** Mid December.

**How:** Music Teacher prepares content and works with Classes during the previous term.

Music teacher then organises the order and performances for the concert.

Classes are called when ready to perform or arrive at a particular time, and wait in the wings to go on to the stage.

**Other Comment:**

There is a rehearsal the day before, so all of the classes get to see each other perform.

It takes practise and effort to hold the quiet off stage.

Children are asked to wear dark reds, blues and greens.

## **Paradise Play**

**Who:** Class 3 Teacher and Parents.

The play is for classes 3 – 10.

**What:** The Paradise Play, typically the Oberufer.

**When:** During the last week of the Autumn term.

2 or 3 performances. In the day for the school, and then on the same evening as the Shepherd's play. Paradise play is first.

**How:** Organised by the teacher of Class 3, along with the parents.

**Other Comments:**

Not for children under Class 3.

## **Shepherd's Play**

**Who:** Any member of staff.

The play is for Classes 1-10.

A member of staff takes on helping with organisational support.

John Platt often helps direct.

**What:** The Oberufer Shepherd's play, usually.

**When:** During the last week of the Autumn term.

3 performances, 9:00am, 11:00am and 8:00pm for the community.

How: Organised by a member of staff, and performed by the players.

Other Comments:

The players go to the Sea Trout afterwards.

## **Christmas Gatherings**

Who: Class Teachers / Sponsors invite their respective parent communities.

NB: not all teachers wish to do this, and it is optional.

What: A sharing of Christmas songs or games for the class communities.

When: As decided by the relevant teacher.

How: As decided by the relevant teacher.

Teachers work together to ensure clashes are avoided so that parents with more than one child are able to accept all invitations, should they wish.

Other Comments:

Subject teachers are welcome to attend if they wish.

## **Christmas Assembly**

Who: Class 6 and their teacher.

What: A Christmas assembly including singing, an image, and contributions from teachers and students.

When: The last day of term, an hour or so before school finishes.

How: The Class 6 teacher organises and hosts the assembly.

Other comments:

Classes will go back to their classrooms to say farewell to each other after the assembly.

## Staff Christmas Lunch

Who: A member of staff takes it on to organise.

All members of staff are welcome.

What: A Christmas meal is prepared and shared.

Any who wish are invited to contribute their skills, gifts, voices, music, humour etc.

When: After the children have gone home, usually at around 1:30 on the last day of term.

How: One or more colleagues organise, but many help with preparation and cleaning up.

The meal happens in the Hall.

Other Comments:

Children are not invited.

Partners are sometimes welcome, but not always.

## Three Kings Assembly

Who: Class 9 Sponsors

What: A whole school assembly celebrating the three kings and epiphany.

When: At a date early in the Spring term.

How: Responsible colleagues organise an assembly with the appropriate mood and content.

Other Comments:

There is a play which is sometimes taken on by parents or John Platt or members of the Christian community.

## **Candlemas**

**Who:** Class 1 and 2 teachers organise a celebration of Candlemas, either together, or for their classes independently.

**What:** A planting of a clay tea light or candle holder into the ground, during school hours.

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**How:** Teachers to arrange between them.

**Other Comments:**

Clay can be sought from the craft teacher, Almut, at the time of writing this.

## **Pancake Day / Shrove Tuesday**

**Who:** Class 7 and their teacher

**What:** Cl 7 cook pancakes for Classes 1 – 10, and prepare a series of age variable games and activities.

There is a tradition of a teachers fancy dress race, which is organised by the games department.

**When:** Shrove Tuesday, variable date as dependent on Easter.

**How:** To be decided by Class 7, their teacher and the adult community that supports them.

**Other comments:**

This typically takes the format of pancake cooking in the morning, and then games in the afternoon.

There is a mood to develop more of a carnival theme, and as such, dressing is permitted.

## **Lent Assembly / Ash Wednesday**

**Who:** Class 8 and their teacher

**What:** Prepare an assembly for Classes 1 – 10.

**When:** On Ash Wednesday.

**How:** To be decided and organised by Class 8 teacher and class, but will include contributions from other colleagues.

**Other Comments:**

There is some music being played by children or colleagues.

There is a quiet and calm mood.

## **Good Friday Assembly**

**Who:** Class 9 and their sponsors

**What:** A whole school assembly celebrating the festival. It will include music, singing, and an image brought by the teachers and or children.

**When:** On the last Friday of the Spring Term.

**How:** Class 9 and their sponsors to hold and organise.

**Other comments:**

## **Sharing Assemblies**

**Who:** An individual colleague, often a subject teacher who doesn't have to hold a class.

**What:** An assembly in which all classes, (sometimes not Class 1), present some of their work, be it song, dance, poem, play, movement etc.

**When:** On a Friday, on a date fixed at the beginning of the year, usually in March.

**How:** There is a rehearsal for the whole school on the previous Thursday, and then the assembly for the parents happens on the Friday morning.

**Other comments:**

An MC is needed to host.

Ushers are needed to call classes.

A running order is decided.

It is good to get a balance of not just songs and poems.

Parents are asked to stay for the whole assembly, and not leave part way through, but this is difficult for some who have work commitments.

## **Easter Assembly**

Who: Class 5 and their teacher

What: A whole school assembly celebrating the festival of Easter. This will typically include some music, singing and an image, sometimes with some explanation of the traditions of Easter.

When: On an agreed day of the week back after the Easter holidays.

How: Class 5 hold and direct.

Other comments:

We traditionally sing "Now the Green Blade Riset".

There is a branch with painted eggs supplied by Classes 1-3.

## **Maypole Festival**

Who: Music and Eurythmy teachers

What: A Maypole dancing festival with Classes 1 – 5 and their parents.

When: Mid May, usually a Wednesday.

How: Class teachers and music and eurythmy teachers work together on this festival.

Other comments:

The children need a good few weeks to become sufficiently practised.

An MC is needed.

It needs to be well organised.

Musicians are needed.

Children are asked to wear bright spring colours.

## Open Morning

Who: The admissions member of the admin team organises all department holding colleagues to support and attend.

What: A celebration of our work. Each classroom is turned into an exhibition space, which members of the community and wider public are invited to.

Workshops are provided by colleagues.

When: On a Saturday, decided at the beginning of the year, typically in May.

How: Teachers prepare their spaces and are there to speak to those who come to them.

Other comments:

Class 7 run a cafe, supported by their parents.

Despite a huge effort put into, the attendance to these events is not always as high as we would like.

There is a conversation to shift the model, possibly incorporating the open day exhibitions into the Advent and Summer fairs.

## Whitsun Festival

Who: Class 10 and their sponsor

What: A whole school assembly where there is a poem created from a line or two from each class.

Members of the community from other cultures also share some speech in their native tongue.

When: Whitsun is 7 Sunday's after Easter. We will celebrate at a time near to this.

How: Class Ten and their sponsor will organise.

Other comments:

Whitsun doves are made by Classes 1-3 to decorate the hall.

Children and teachers are asked to wear white.

## Summer Fair

Who: The parent body, along with either a nominated member of staff, or a committee made up by both.

What: A fair to celebrate the summer. There are many traditional activities.

When: Usually a Saturday in the middle of June.

How: Fair organiser(s) link with the teaching body, and parent communities. FiZZ reps organise parent communities.

Other comment:

Although teachers are not expected to take part in specific activities, we are needed for administrative aspects of the fair.

We want to celebrate the traditional British fair with games and fun.

This is more low key than the Advent fair.

This is a fund raising activity to support the cost of the trips.

## St John's Festival

Who: Class Four and their teacher

What: A whole school festival involving:

- A shared picnic with classes and their parent communities, approx 12:30.
- A procession of classes 1 to 9 onto the far field carrying their banners, approx 1:15.
- The banner from each class is placed on the a large fire.
- The fire is lit by Class 10 who shoot fire arrows at the fire.
- Class 10 speak a poem.

- Classes 1 – 10, plus parents, offer promises of transformation to the fire.
- When the fire has burnt down, Class 6 and above jump the fire.
- The festival ends, and all classes return to their classrooms to say good bye, approx 3:00.

**When:** On or shortly after the eve of St John's (23<sup>rd</sup> of June). Sometimes it is done on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**How:** Class Four and their teacher organise, but there is usually a lot of support from Upper School.

**Other comments:**

Several songs are commonly sung; Laughing over the world, Rise up O flame, Fire child.

Sometimes a mummer's style play is performed.

Parents and all members so of the community are welcome.

Everyone wears bright firey colours.

Wet weather plan is organised in advance, and is typically postpone to the next sunny day.

The Gardening teacher builds the fire with classes.

Someone needs to be on first aid.

All hair must be tied back, shoes must be worn, and no flowing clothes.

## **End of Year Assembly**

**Who:** Class Three and Class Ten and their teachers

**What:** An end of year ceremony in which we say farewell to departing students and colleagues. It usually includes:

- Class Three giving flowers to Class Ten.
- Class Eight saying farewell to their Class teacher.
- Class Ten saying farewell to their teachers (this will change as Class Eleven establishes).
- Class Nine singing to Class Ten.
- A whole school handshake at the end.

When: On the last day of the school year, at 11:00.  
How: The whole school sit behind hood manor, bringing their own chairs.

Class Ten sponsors usually hold.

Other Comments:

Sun hats are often needed, plus water bottles.

It is a lot of talking for the younger children to listen to, and can be hard for some.

Afterwards all staff are invited to go for a lunch at the Sea Trout. Individuals pay for their own food and drink.

## End of year meetings

Who: **Everyone.** Some meetings all together, others in departments.

What: Department, Collegiate and College meetings.

When: The week or days after the children have broken up.

How: Meeting dates will be set by chair person and communicated to all relevant staff members. Those expected to come will meet in allocated place.

Other comment:

This is a great way to reflect on the year passed, and to look at what we can develop moving into next year.

## Report Collation

Who: **All members of Lower School Department.**

What: The printing and collation of school report to be sent to the children or their parents.

When: A date after term ends, although there is conversation about moving this to the last day of the school year.

How: Class teachers and Subject teachers work together to help with this task.

#### Other Comment

It is a great way to end the year, mutually helping each other, and is a joyous thing to be a part of.

Often there is a social of some sort afterwards.

Report writing is an alive topic for us at the moment, and we make changes to how we do this soon.

**Jonathan Hobbs**

On behalf of us all.

June 2017