

## Waldorf Teachers' Standards

### Preamble

Teachers make the education of their pupils their vocational concern, and are committed to achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

### PART 1: Teaching

(Pages 1-5)

These are the Teachers' Standards for use in member schools and settings of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship from September 2020. The standards express the minimum level of practice expected of practising teachers, and those towards which student teachers should be working.

### PART 2: Personal and Professional Conduct

(Page 5)

The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) will use Part Two of the Teachers' Standards, which relates to personal and professional conduct, when assessing cases of serious misconduct, **regardless of the education sector in which the teacher works**. The wording for Part 2 of the standards, therefore, is identical to the wording in the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011)<sup>i</sup>.

These teachers' standards were developed by a working group drawn from the Executive Group of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and members of the Association of Steiner Waldorf Teacher Educators in June 2020. They took as their starting point the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) and the Teachers Standards (Early Years) (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2013). They drew on a number of consultation workshops with teachers across the movement and have been reviewed by the Executive Group and trustees of SWSF and by representative members of ASWTE.

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<sup>i</sup> Apart from the word 'tolerance', see footnote on page 5.

## **PART 1: Teaching**

### **1. A commitment to personal and professional development, and an openness to exploring the principles underlying Waldorf education**

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of a picture of child development informed by the insights of Rudolf Steiner.
- Create an environment in which children can realise their potential for self-development.
- Engage in Steiner Waldorf continuing professional development and training.
- Engage regularly in individual and collegiate study, as an active member of a learning community.
- Engage continuously in reflective and reflexive practice.

### **2. Inspire and motivate children's progress**

- Build a learning community: an environment of expectation that encourages children to own their learning, and ensures that they are working to the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the rhythmical psychological processes of learning.
- Endeavour to give equal value to providing children with rich experiences and to assessing the impact of those experiences.
- Have a knowledge and understanding of contemporary thinking on mental and emotional health, and its impact on learning (for example attachment theories, adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed practice).

### **3. Demonstrate good subject, curriculum and pedagogical knowledge**

- Have a secure and up-to-date knowledge of relevant subjects and curriculum areas, maintain interest and enthusiasm in these, and be able to communicate both knowledge and enthusiasm in a meaningful way.
- Contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum.
- Promote high standards of literacy, and competent and articulate use of standard English.
- Have a clear understanding of effective teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy.
- Have an understanding of transitions within the educational continuum.
- Have a working knowledge of the preconditions of learning.

#### **4. Planning and teaching: creativity and effectiveness**

- Demonstrate a clear and logical thread to the order in which content is planned to be delivered in the course of the block, project, term or year, building on increasing competence, understanding and sense of coherence.
- Create planning which takes into account children's development and their previous learning, allows for time to practise skills, to deepen knowledge and understanding and for the introduction of new content.
- Create planning which allows for a healthy balance of activities enabling pupils to move between experiences of comfort, consolidation, stretch and challenge.
- Demonstrate creative, artistic, narrative, organisational and personal skills in classroom practice.
- Reflect frequently and systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching.

#### **5. Adapt all classroom practice to the strengths and needs of all pupils**

- Adapt teaching for different stages and support children through a range of transitions, demonstrating an understanding of child development informed by the insights of Rudolf Steiner, a wide range of research from across the educational landscape, and direct observation.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development and communication needs of children and know how to adapt practice to support children.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including those demonstrating high ability and those with English as an additional language, and respond to these appropriately.
- Have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these.
- Know when and how to use and evaluate a range of strategies, approaches, adaptations, accommodations and resources to differentiate appropriately and effectively.
- Know how to access support, from both internal and external sources; welcome and respect input from other professionals.

## **6. Productive and contextual use of observation and assessment**

- Know, understand and be able to use a range of observation and assessment techniques (such as assessment for learning, formative, summative, ongoing and ipsative assessment) and use these assessments to inform planning.
- Provide regular and appropriate feedback, both orally and written, that is kind, specific and helpful, that supports children's progress and that invites their constructive response.
- Engage with the setting's systematic approach to assessment and use it effectively.
- Engage effectively with parents/carers and other professionals in the on-going assessment and provision for each child.
- Engage with and regularly contribute to collegial child studies.

## **7. Promote children's wellbeing and welfare through awareness, practice and conscious modelling**

- Create an environment that promotes healthy habits of self-care and positive learning dispositions of resilience, confidence and empathy.
- Demonstrate and encourage enthusiasm and appreciation for the cultural heritage of all children's communities, their current interests and their future potential.
- Create an environment that encourages age-appropriate reflection on ethical and spiritual questions.
- Create a social environment in which the child can regard themselves as making a significant contribution to their school and other communities and understand the benefits of belonging to these.
- Know and act upon the legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Establish and sustain an environment that keeps children safe from serious harm, whilst creating opportunities for developing a sense of agency through activities which involve appropriate levels of risk.
- Know and understand child protection policies and procedures, be able to recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse or bullying, and know how to act to protect them.

## **8. Teachers keep the child at the centre of their wider professional activities, responsibilities and relationships**

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school, by attending meetings, festivals, school events, parents' evenings and other community activities.
- Model social responsibility and demonstrate a commitment to actively promoting equality, challenging discriminatory practice and stereotypes, and developing anti-racist attitudes and ways of working.
- Develop effective and co-operative relationships with colleagues, parents and other professionals.
- Demonstrate professional conduct and integrity.

## **PART 2: Personal and Professional Conduct**

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
- Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Showing appreciation of and respect for the rights of others.
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and appreciation for those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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<sup>i</sup> The concept of 'tolerance' of races and cultures has been identified as being problematic in the current discourse. In this document it has, therefore, been replaced with 'appreciation for'.