Class One Parent Handbook 2015
“Now We Are Six”

When I was one,
I had just begun.

When I was two,
I was nearly new.

When I was three,
I was hardly me.

When I was four,
I was not much more.

When I was five,
I was just alive.

But now I am six,
I’m as clever as clever.

So I think I’ll be six
now and forever.

Author: A.A. Milne

Welcome to Class One at Sophia Mundi Steiner School.
We look forward to the ongoing journey with you and your child through the school.
We want to make sure you have all the information you need to feel at home in our community.
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Introduction: The 7 Year Old Child

The human being goes through one of life’s big transformational processes during its seventh year. It is quite striking how the body’s outer proportions shift during this phase: the face becomes longer, limbs and fingers are elongated and the round belly of the younger child disappears. These physical changes take time for the child to master. This is often a period during which children are a little more clumsy and frustrated. The child’s sense of self is left vulnerable. Some children feel short periods of chaos and lose for a time their ability to find play as they once did. The children will begin to compare themselves to their friends as they start to develop a sense of themselves as being separate individuals existing within a group. Children of this age slowly turn toward a sense for authority.

"Six – an important year" by Astrid Stunt.

This is where the role of the class teacher becomes so important and holds special relevance to the child and their family. This journey begins on the first day of school as the class forms and moves forward together as a unit bound together by destiny and karma. Some leave along the way and others find their way into the fold.

This unity and bonding brings a sense of comfort and belonging to the six year old child as they begin to experience themselves in relation to their growing identity and the world around them. During the first year of schooling, one of the most important tasks of the teacher is to encourage community within the class and their families.

Within community develops trust and acceptance for individuality and difference. The children experience safety and a sense of well being that permeates and sustains the group throughout the long journey ahead. Freedom to explore the other and learn about the self is expressed through play. Learning becomes a natural part of each day through sharing experiences, planned and discovered as the child is comfortable and embodies the openness to imbibe the environment created in the school environment.

Further online/book reading:
"You’re Not the Boss of Me! Understanding the Six/Seven Year Transformation" by Ruth Ker
School Hours, Arrival and Departure

Class 1 Hours are 8.45am to 3.15pm. The school suggests an arrival time of 8.30am to allow children to hang up their backpacks and greet their friends before the daily rhythm of their school day begins promptly at 8.45am.

It is vital for your child, their classmates and their teacher that your children are at school on time. The school bell to commence class rings at 8:45 am. It would be very much appreciated if the children could be ready to line up with their bags hung up and shoes off before this time.

It is extremely important for the class that we start our day together punctually. This helps immensely with settling the children on many levels, and it creates an atmosphere of inclusion for all the children and their teacher. It is extremely disruptive to the class routine and the cohesion of the class when children are late.

If circumstances are beyond your control and you are running late, could you please sign your child in at the office and wait quietly at the class door, the teacher will greet you and your child when there is a suitable break in the morning circle. If you arrive during morning verse, please wait until it has been completed before opening or knocking at the door.

The school is legally required to have an attendance role marked within a small window of time at the beginning of the day and we are lawfully bound to record absences and late arrivals within this time frame.

The school is responsible for the safety and well being of the students during the normal school day. We provide supervision between the hours of 8:15am and 3:45pm. It is not appropriate to have children arriving before 8:15am or staying after 3:45 pm and parents may arrange to link with other families to avoid this. Primary age children still at school after 3.45pm are taken to the after school care and parents will be charged for this service.

Children may play in the courts area between 3.15pm and 3.45pm providing the child’s parent or caregiver is supervising them. The parent of caregiver is responsible during this time.

If your child is absent from school for any reason, please call the office on 9419 9229 by 10am on the morning of the absence.
Calendar for the Year: Class 1

**Term Dates, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 15 January</td>
<td>School Office Re-opens after Christmas / New Year break</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 28 January</td>
<td>First Day, Term 1: Classes 2 – 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 29 January</td>
<td>First Day, Prep and Class 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 3 February</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 6 February</td>
<td><strong>Community Evening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 17 February</td>
<td>Shrove Tuesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 9 March</td>
<td>Labour Day (Public Holiday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 11 March</td>
<td>Interview Evening – Secondary Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 27 March</td>
<td>Harvest Festival &amp; Last Day of Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 13 April</td>
<td>First Day, Term 2: Classes 1 – 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 14 April</td>
<td>First Day, Prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, 15 May</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum Day (no school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 8 June</td>
<td>Queens Birthday (Public Holiday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 18 June</td>
<td>Winter Spiral &amp; Lantern Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 19 June</td>
<td>Interview Day – Primary &amp; Last Day of Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 13 July</td>
<td>First Day, Term 3: Classes 1 – 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 14 July</td>
<td>First Day, Prep</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 22 July</td>
<td>Interview Evening – Secondary Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>To be advised</td>
<td>(Mid) Term Break (no school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 19 August</td>
<td>** Victorian Steiner Schools’ PD (no school P-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 16 September</td>
<td>Spring Festival &amp; Last Day of Term 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 6 October</td>
<td>First Day, Term 4: Classes 1 – 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 6 October</td>
<td>First Day, Prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 2 November</td>
<td>Mid Term Break (no school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 3 November</td>
<td>Melbourne Cup Day (no school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, 8 November</td>
<td>Spring Fair &amp; Open Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 9 November</td>
<td>Post-Fair Holiday (no school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 4 December</td>
<td>** Primary Interview Day / Secondary PD (no school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9 December</td>
<td>** Christmas Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 10 December</td>
<td>Summer Festival and Last Day of Term 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 11 December</td>
<td>Staff Conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**dates to be confirmed**
Class 1
Curriculum Outline

A sense of unity is fostered through all learning activities in class one. As individuals the children learn to accept and acknowledge each other with respect as members of a class embarking on a long journey together with their teacher. This is an exciting adventure where everyone, children, teacher and parents are full of anticipation and curiosity.

Story Telling

Through the primary years stories are told to enliven the imagination of the children, to create vivid pictures within their thinking and feeling so that they can live into the time and place of the tales. Drawings and writing support this understanding and provide opportunities for discussion to explore further as a class.

In class one the stories are fairy stories from many sources, including Indigenous stories and considering cultural influences within the class community. Often the teacher will create their own stories with the needs of the class in mind. Some may be therapeutic in order to assist with a difficult situation, such as death or a conflict of interests; these may be reflected through animal stories or fabrications using fictitious characters.

Literacy Learning

The First Main Lesson – Form Drawing

The Class One child arrives at school needing form and direction in order to function within a group. This group becomes their school family. Initially we want the group to be able to form into a circle and follow directions.

Class 1 begins with a main lesson block in form drawing, during which the children experience straight and curved lines. They first walk the lines on the floor; later they draw straight and curved lines in various combinations on paper. Precision and clarity of line, essential to good writing skills, are emphasized. Form drawing helps develop eye-hand coordination, the sense of uprightness in space, right/left and up/down orientation, and the ability to mirror, all skills that are needed in reading.

After this introduction, the children learn the upper-case consonants in imagery from stories, through the progression from story to picture to letter. After, the vowels, both short and long, are introduced. Next, words and phrases are constructed as a class activity and written on the board by the teacher. Students copy these words into main lesson books. Thus, writing precedes reading, and the main lesson books that the children create become their first readers. Lower case letters are learned by year’s end. Through song, verse, speech exercises, games, and drills, phonics and a basic sight word vocabulary are learned. In addition, through the telling of fairy tales and the recitation of poetry, children are exposed to other cultures and skills in listening, re-telling, sequencing, and articulate speaking are practiced.

The first main lesson supports this objective and is called Form Drawing. This lesson is a literacy-based lesson that introduces pre-writing skills using many techniques and a wide variety of materials. The children move the forms in play, verses and singing prior to any formal representation of the shapes and forms inherent in the alphabet. In during this the class learns to work together as a whole, to follow directions, sequence, take turns and co-operate.
Introducing the Alphabet

All lessons are introduced and supported through stories told by the teacher every day. This underpins the developing relationship between listening, speaking, writing and reading. Upper case consonants are taught as the names of the letters, while the sounds of the letters and the beginning of reading takes place with the introduction of lower case letters throughout the first year. Shapes and forms for the letters are initially discovered during nature walks as bird wings form a ‘M’ and branches meet in a ‘T’. A world of wonder surrounds learning as the children write and read their newly found letters. Vowels are introduced after consonants to enable meaningful reading to unfold. The sounds of words change with the magic of vowels and their placement within words. Sentences are created and shared from stories told in class. Over the year the first class child gathers the literacy skills to listen, retell, write and read through many exciting experiences with their peers.

Mathematical Development

Mathematical thinking is established through many play activities throughout the first years of primary school. This develops into working with numbers and learning to manipulate processes with growing understanding. Children awaken to the wonder of mathematics through the discovery of the inherent patterns in numbers through exploration. Mathematical ‘play’ using many found objects and given concrete materials inspires and motivates learning.

In class one the children begin making mathematical relationships immediately with songs and movement games that involve numbers relating to content and in context with the main lessons. Joyfully, one to one correspondence begins to unfold through meaningful activities. The numbers from one to twelve are introduced using both Arabic and Roman numerals, then sets of numbers follow, beginning with pairs and groups of numbers. This work is then developed further with times tables in class two.

Arithmetic is taught through movement - walking and stamping, clapping, throwing a beanbag - and through lively oral games. Class 1 are introduced to Roman and Arabic numerals and learn to count by ones, twos, threes, fours, fives, and tens. Through imaginative stories, the four processes (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) are practiced. Students also learn to solve simple number problems.

Seeds for future learning are constantly being planted in all learning experiences, be it a word or a concept.
Home Surroundings

Following the nurturing environment of the prep year, class one maintains an encircling warmth to foster the health and well being of the child turning seven. This time of imitation and loving those in authority is of paramount importance to a future of loving learning. Our Home Surrounding main lessons bring home, school and nature together through a celebration and integration of all three. Young children love life and observing the changes in nature in their world. At school we cultivate an appreciation for the changes in seasons through various modalities. Seasonal festivals play a significant part in our daily work as we discover our environment changing before our eyes, on walks, as we play outside and as we feel the weather cooling or warming. Songs, poems and stories help build pictures and heighten awareness that underpin scientific observation skills in later learning.

Our place in the world is slowly revealed, beginning with sharing stories from home of family, friends and animals, all the beginnings of geography in the later years. We begin with the our home surroundings and move out into the world as the child’s consciousness develops.

Throughout the primary school, Science, while not treated as a separate subject, is woven into the curriculum. In the early elementary years, teachers focus on the natural environment the children experience every day. First through stories, and then through daily discussion of the weather, close observation of animals, and the study of farming and gardening, the child’s sense of belonging in nature and a reverent responsibility toward the natural world are nurtured.

History

History organically unfolds as we explore further afield into our wider community and meet our neighbours present and past. Being situated in the Abbotsford Convent, with the Children’s Farm next door, there are many wonderful opportunities as we explore further afield.
## Academic Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Steiner – play context learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Steiner – structured, sequential, creative &amp; imaginative experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 1 to 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Steiner – the growth of independent learning and research skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 7 - 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Steiner – consolidation of independent learning and research skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior School</td>
<td>IB Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 11 - 12</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Main Lesson Timetable for Classes 1 to 6 (Example from 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WK</th>
<th>TERM 1</th>
<th>CLASS 1</th>
<th>CLASS 2</th>
<th>CLASS 3</th>
<th>CLASS 4</th>
<th>CLASS 5</th>
<th>CLASS 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29/1-1/2</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Indian Mythology</td>
<td>Greek History LM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scribes Journey</td>
<td>From Drawing King of Ireland Son</td>
<td>In the beginning</td>
<td>Katina Kondos</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4/2-8/2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11/2-15/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18/2-22/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25/2-1/3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4/3-8/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11/3-15/3</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>18/3-22/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>25/3-28/3</td>
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<td>8.4 weeks, 42 school days, public holiday: 11/3</td>
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| TERM 2 | |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1  | 15/4-19/4 | Literacy | Literacy | English | Geography | Early Civilization |
| 2  | 22/4-26/4 |        |        |        |        | Zarathustra |
| 3  | 29/4-3/5 |        |        | Cursive Writing | Home surroundings | Ancient Persia |
| 4  | 6/5-10/5 |        |        |        |        | English |
| 5  | 13/5-17/5 |        |        |        |        | Ilissiad |
| 6  | 20/5-24/5 |        |        |        |        | LM |
| 7  | 27/5-31/5 |        |        |        |        | Botany |
| 8  | 3/6-7/6 |        |        |        |        |        |
| 9  | 10/6-14/6 |        |        |        |        |        |
| 10 | 17/6-21/6 |        |        |        |        |        |
| 11 | 24/6-28/6 |        |        |        |        |        |
| 11 weeks, 53 school days, public holidays: 25/4 & 10/6 |

| TERM 3 | |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1  | 15/7-19/7 | Literacy | Literacy | Building | Literacy | Egypt -Literacy |
| 2  | 22/7-26/7 |        |        |        |        | Geology LM |
| 3  | 29/7-2/8 |        |        |        |        | Our Earth |
| 4  | 5/8-9/8 |        |        |        |        | Land of the Nile |
| 5  | 12/8-16/8 |        |        |        |        | 4 |
| 6  | 19/8-23/8 |        |        |        |        | Camp |
| 7  | 26/8-30/8 |        |        |        |        | Ancient Rome |
| 8  | 2/9-6/9 |        |        |        |        | Seven Kings |
| 9  | 9/9-13/9 |        |        |        |        | 3 |
| 10 weeks, 54 school days, curriculum and planning day: 16/8 |

| TERM 4 | |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1  | 7/10-11/10 | Numeracy | Numeracy | Play | Mathematics | English - Play |
| 2  | 14/10-16/10 |        | Four Process | DP | Geometry | Camp |
| 3  | 21/10-25/10 |        | Number Patterns | 3 | 3 | Hall |
| 4  | 28/10-11/11 |        | Home Surroundings |        |        | Science |
| 5  | 4/11-8/11 |        |        |        |        | Magazitmic & Electricity |
| 6  | 11/11-15/11 |        |        |        |        | Physics |
| 7  | 18/11-22/11 |        |        |        |        | Mathematics |
| 8  | 25/11-29/11 |        |        |        |        | Geometry |
| 9  | 2/12-6/12 |        |        |        |        | Ancient Greece |
| 10 | 9/12-12/12 |        |        |        |        | 3 |
| 9.8 weeks, 46 school days, public holiday and mid-term break 4&5/11, Fair Recovery 11/11 |
Rhythm of the Day
The rhythm of the day supports the development of the three-fold integration of thinking, feeling and willing. The morning begins with Morning Circle and Main Lesson when activities stimulate the thinking realm. After morning tea and play time the middle lessons engage activities to enliven the feeling realm, such as language lessons, music and singing. After lunch the last lessons of the day actively engage the children in doing craft, creating games together, painting, cooking and cleaning.

Rhythm of the Week
The Class One child
As children complete the first phase of development at around six or seven years, they become ready for a more formal education. However they are not yet ready for the conceptual academic intellect that develops later on. What is now eager to be exercised is a new capacity for memory, one that is nourished by a rich pictorial, feeling style of thinking. They learn through what they feel. They need to feel both the laughter and the tears of life each day. For this reason the primary years of education are characterised by an artistically rich story-based curriculum that gives the child a harmoniously balanced day. The more academic features are introduced at the beginning of each day, integrated with movement, music, poetry and art (the main lesson). The focus of this period is to awaken a living creative activity in the developing thought life. Subjects such as a foreign language (French), practice lessons in Maths and English, Music, Eurythmy and Craft are best taught in the middle lessons and activities such as games, gardening, cooking or going for a walk are best in the afternoons.

The Main Lesson
The main lesson follows morning circle, during the first part of the school day and until morning tea. A main lesson is based on a theme, be it maths, literacy or home surroundings in class one. The main lesson runs over a period of three to four weeks, depending on content and the length of the term.

Practise Lessons
In class one the practice lessons are supported by main lesson content, by perhaps using the characters from a story to practice mathematical work previously introduced or to practice writing letters or introduce letter blends. There are several practice lessons every week and these become more frequent over time.

French
French in class 1 is taught through imitation and an experience of the language through immersion. Most of the class is taught in French with very little translation. Through verses, songs, playing games and engaging in simple activities, the children gain a feeling for the language. Vocabulary and key sentences are used in context, so that the language used is real and explicit to a given situation. The songs and poems are often based on the seasons, but the content otherwise includes greetings, counting, themes around the sea, the different parts of the body and the Alphabet. French is mostly spoken in chorus, with the whole class speaking with or answering after the teacher, but there are also moments within the lessons, particularly in games, where the children speak individually.

The rhythm of the lessons is usually as follows: greetings with a verse and a song (heart); whole class work involving movement and sometimes a story (head); and a game or a drawing (hand) followed by “Au revoir!”

Craft
In addition to creating a balance with academic work, craft in class one provides benefits of far greater depth and value. Craft ultimately helps develop the ‘will’ in the child, fostering the development of both skills and confidence for doing and creating for one self and ultimately the world. A sense of beauty and warmth is nurtured by the tactile experience of natural materials in pure colours, along with a sense of joy and achievement in creating both beautiful and practical items.
In class one the children will begin to learn the foundational skills of embroidery, weaving and knitting which will be developed and expanded throughout their primary school years. Projects this year include an embroidered treasure bag, a knitted class rug, a woven purse and an embroidered cushion/placemat with sunburst design.

**Eurythmy**

In class one the children learn to experience straight and curved forms. It is a time when they are full of imagination and delight in movement. In eurythmy we dance, skip, run, hop and jump and the children are able to experience the joy of music and foundations of geometric form through their whole physical body.

Eurythmy classes endeavour to assist the children to dwell comfortably and happily in their bodies by using their natural abilities of imagination, movement, repetition and rhythm. Inspiration for eurythmy lessons in the first grade comes from the seasons, weather, events of the day, week and the year and all hold great importance.

Each lesson takes on a rhythm in which the children can feel secure but in which they also experience a breathing e.g. quiet listening followed by a little dance with movements and possibly a little game and some silliness before finishing quietly listening again. This also enables space for a few surprises.

Many of the elements brought in class one eurythmy arrive through the form of a story where opportunities are provided for the children to experience the curved and straight lines through their whole body. The child learns to feel, rather than just think, the difference between straight and curved lines.

**Walks**

Each week the Class teacher takes his or her class for a walk around the Convent, down to the river or to parklands nearby. This allows the children to get know and explore their surroundings. The children can experience the changing of the seasons as they walk around the beautiful gardens in the Convent area and there is always the possibility of seeing the wildlife so abundant in the area. Spotting a mother duck with her ducklings on the river, the wonder at seeing Thorny Owls up in a tree and discovering a mother Possum with a little one safely in her hole.

Walking to the various parks close to the school also provides the children with the opportunity to stretch themselves physically on play equipment as well as the wonderful grassy slopes that are ideal for running and rolling down.

The weekly walks can only happen if parents support this by assisting the Class teacher and arranging a roster of volunteers to go on the walks. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to see their child’s class working together.

**Cooking**

Children participate in cooking throughout all year levels. They spend at least one hour per week engaged in preparing and eating food and cleaning and tidying up their work areas and equipment. They will get a chance to smell and taste a variety of ingredients throughout these cooking activities.

During the cooler months the children make warm foods such as soups, toasted sandwiches and pizzas. In the warmer months they participate in preparing and eating cool foods such as salads, drinks and muesli-yoghurt cups.

Cooking activities can be included in main lesson units. In class 2 the children could make Irish Soda Bread while in class 5 they could make many dishes from India, Persia, Egypt and Greece.

The children are shown how to carefully use proper cooking equipment such as sharp knives and peelers. They learn to do so very quickly and are very sensible.

**Extra Lesson**

Extra Lesson is an educational program based on an understanding of sensory processing and the natural stages of childhood development. It has become internationally known as a successful intervention for students, who have learning and behavioural difficulties. An excellent web reference is:

http://www.extralesson.com/index.html

**Festivals**

Seasonal festivals serve to connect humanity with the rhythms of nature and the cosmos. The festivals originated in ancient cultures but have been adapted over time. To join the seasonal moods of the year in a festival way, benefits the inner life of the soul.

Celebrating is an art. There is joy in the anticipation, preparation, the celebration itself and the ceremonies. The four seasonal festivals are Michaelmas (spring), Christmas (summer), Easter (autumn) and St John (winter). The celebration of the seasonal Festivals is an enriching part of the school’s cultural and community life through art, music, story and poetry, the
children are helped to identify and recognise the changing rhythms of the earth.

The celebration of seasonal festivals is an integral part of our school culture and teaching program. Events involve the whole school community and provide a focus on the rhythms within nature, within us and within the outside world. Children perform in front of an audience through drama, speech, song or movement. Families, friends, past students and teachers gather together to celebrate their place in our strong and vibrant community. As with everything that we do, the festivals have a specific role within our education. Whilst each season has a specific purpose in nature, it also holds special meaning for us as human beings. The celebration of new seasons allows us to reflect on a yearly rhythm and reconnect with the earth.

The year is marked by special occasions where we all gather and share with reverence and performance the changing of seasons and significant occasions. The first in the year, not long after school begins, is Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day as the children love to call with glee. This marks the weeks leading into Easter, a traditional day of using up the luxuries of eggs, milk and flour before 'doing without' during Lent. Our school community gathers in games and pancake eating hence setting the year in motion. At the end of first term, as close to the Equinox as possible, we acknowledge our good fortune with a Harvest Festival where everyone contributes a seasonal gift from nature to form a bountiful Harvest Table, which is then given to a charitable organization close by. Each class with their teachers take turns in singing and dancing hence setting the year in motion.

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Mid-Winter celebrations acknowledge the inner life of each individual in the school by venturing the Spiral Walk as close to the Solstice as possible. Parents sing as the children walk into a spiral to light a candle from a central flame, and so the spiral is gradually comes alive with light as the day progresses through all the classes. As the day ends families gather for the Lantern Festival to mark the shortest night and the beginning of days growing longer to Mid-Summer in December. We walk in classes on a journey through the dark with our hand-made lanterns glowing and voices singing old favourites that mark the night. (The Lantern walk is often held on the Friday evening of the week marked with the shortest day)

The Spring Equinox is marked by Maypole Dancing. Every class and parents learn specific dances around the Maypole while all gather and watch as the ribbons dance in the wind.

At the end of the year, usually mid-December, most classes have a class event for families, sharing songs and festivities together in classrooms. The teachers, however, bring a wonderful event to the community, ‘The Shepherds Play’. This is a humourous and yet reverend expression of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem as told through the experience of Three Shepherds. This marks the end of our school year and is never to be missed as it draws together all the threads of our work with families and our community.

Performances of plays, music and Eurythmy have a central part in the year for many if not all classes in Sophia Mundi. We aim in this experience for the children to immerse themselves in the art form so that they are moved and shaped by the spirit of what they are performing. To this end we take special care that the children are not disturbed from this sacred space into becoming 'self-conscious'.

Thus we seek that each class elect one person only to record the performance. The children at this age are still so intimately connected to their parents and family, and it is such a gift for them to have these significant people watching as an appreciative and loving audience.

So that all families can have a recording we ask that the nominated adult who has filmed or taped the event make a copy available, for instance by leaving a copy with the Library so that other families may borrow it and make their own copy.

The Seasonal Nature Table

The nature table is always alive and reflects the activity within the natural world. The children are attracted to changes that take place on the nature table and are encouraged to contribute things that they discover. They develop an awareness of the changes in the environment and live into the mood of the season becoming more observant through their experiences.
Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Day

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Families in the primary school are asked to contribute in a way that is possible for them, perhaps a pancake mixture or help set up and cook for the morning. The class carers indicate what is required from all classes and individuals select how they can contribute.

Harvest Festival – celebrating bountiful produce
St. Michael Festival – acknowledging the battle of good over evil
Easter – the dates for our festivals are determined by the moon and calendar dates and influenced by the number of weeks in a term.

Birthdays

Class teachers enjoy birthdays as much as the children because they present the opportunity to focus on the individual child and give thanks for the changes that have evolved over the passing of a year.

In class one the teacher brings a poem and drawing to celebrate each child’s birthday. These poems speak directly to the child and are cherished throughout time. The teacher celebrates the child’s special characteristics through verse whilst guiding them into the future with suggestions through nurturing love and care.

The class is drawn together in circle, parents and significant others are welcomed to bring a photo and story of their child at each year of their life to this seventh year. These stories and photos are shared with the class by a parent. The birthday child wears a special cape and crown and songs and stories are shared together by teacher and peers in class. Sometimes older and younger siblings also attend.

After which a plate of food/cake may be shared with the class. It is imperative that the teacher guides the parents as to what is appropriate for the class to share, as allergies can be fatal.

These occasions are best held at the end of the day, depending on the timetable and the availability of parents to attend.

Nourishment – Food

The class eats together with the teacher inside the classroom. Grace is said before every meal in appreciation for the food we eat.

Morning tea and lunch ingredients – Wholesome food is always encouraged with consideration for any allergies within the classroom.

Allergies – Class teachers will inform parents of any specific needs within each class.

Water bottle in Term 1 & 4 - Depending on walks in the class.

Water filter in the classroom – Most class have a water filter. Each child is to bring their own cup to drink from at school.

Canteen – Canteen is usually on a Wednesday.

Morning tea and lunch is available. The menu is sent as an email to the parent community prior to canteen days. Orders are to be given at the canteen on the morning, with payment.

Organic produce is used wherever possible and the food is of a very high standard.

Clothing

What we wear is usually seen as a means of expressing our personality but it is also a part of our environment and influences us in a similar way as do the colours and shapes that surround us in the furniture and the rooms in which we live and work.

For young children, the influence of colour, pattern and texture is particularly relevant, as the effect on their developing senses is quite direct. We want to be able to see the child and not be distracted by what they
are wearing. Sophia Mundi does not have a school uniform, but we do require minimum dress standards and common sense should be the over-riding rule. For example, to be able to move freely between indoors and out, students need to wear appropriate clothing, which covers them adequately. Layers allow for the changes in temperature.

Clothing should be relatively plain and free from advertising and promotion so that the student’s identity can shine through. We recommend clothing made from natural fibres. Footwear must be worn at all times. Singlets, crop-tops and rubber thongs are not acceptable school wear. For our younger students we promote colour as a form of outward expression and therefore black is not encouraged. Makeup, including nail polish is not acceptable. Excessive jewellery is not allowed e.g. long earrings.

Hair is to be neat and clean at all times. Hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back and out of the student’s face for visibility and to reduce the chance of the spread of head lice.

**Footwear**

Children are in constant motion and require footwear appropriate for many active and physical activities. The correct shoe needs to support young developing and growing feet. Children’s shoes are simple in appearance and support the parts of the feet below the calf muscle. They require well made shoes with good soles.

Fashionable boots that hug the calf muscle are not appropriate footwear for children. They rarely support feet appropriately and are more efficient as walking shoes on weekends and after school.

Children must be able to do them up at anytime, quickly by themselves.

**Summer: (Term 1 and 4) – hat, sunscreen policy**

**Winter: (Term 2 and 3) – cold, wet weather – rainboots, raincoat, rainpants**

Walk Day Policy: all children must wear wet weather clothing if rain is possible. This can be left at school on children’s hooks on a permanent basis or can be included in your child’s backpack when rain is possible.

**Television, Media and Mobile Phones**

All screen viewing and participation is discouraged across the primary school.

Parents please be aware to be present when collecting children from school, limit your use of mobile phones at this time please.

In later years, if it is absolutely necessary for your child to carry a mobile phone when travelling to and from school, these are to be given to the office for safe keeping through the day. For further information please read the school Mobile Phone Policy.

**Home Visits**

Home visits are usually arranged and organised by the class teacher early in class one. Please welcome your teacher into your home for a cup of tea and a chat. The purpose is for your child to share aspects of their home life with their teacher. This may entail a tour of your home, meeting the pets or other siblings. These visits assist with familiarising and developing a relationship between home and school.

**Aftercare**

Aftercare is available each day from 3.15 until 6pm. Bookings are essential through the office. Afternoon tea is provided.

**Outdoor Play**

During the times before and during school hours, children in Class 1 play solely in the courtyard, unless they are accompanied by their teacher into other areas of the school.

There are a number of age-appropriate activities the children can enjoy in their space. We have a lovely sand-pit where much imaginative play can be explored. The children can play running, hiding,
chasing and skipping games and can delve into and create their own original games with the use of various ‘props’ that appear from time to time. It is quite inspiring to see what children of this age can do with simple pieces of wood! Ball games are reserved for children from class 3 and up.

After school the same guidelines for play apply, unless the children are accompanied by an adult who is responsible for them. Under these circumstances they can join older children on the courts or in the community playground.

Class 1 Materials
A list of what is supplied and what is needed will be given to parents by their Class Teacher.

Sickness or Accidents
The Sick Bay is located in the school office. All office staff and teachers have First Aid and Anaphylaxis Awareness training, which is regularly updated.

In the event of illness or accident the school will attempt to contact the parents/guardians. In the event of an emergency an ambulance will be called. Any medical costs arising will become the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

In the event of absence from school, parents must contact the school office with a reason for the absence by 10am.

Some medical conditions are infectious and highly communicable. If a parent is aware their child has such a condition they are asked to confirm this with their doctor and immediately notify the school. If any children at school are found to be infected, we will contact parents immediately and request that the children be kept out of school until the condition has cleared.

Conditions include:

- Head lice
- Herpes – cold sores
- Conjunctivitis
- Ring worm
- Scarlet fever
- Measles
- Poliomyelitis
- Hepatitis
- Chicken Pox
- Whooping Cough
- Mumps
- German Measles

Communication
The class teacher is the primary contact. We ask that communication is brief before school as the teacher is preparing for class at this time. If there is an emergency please do not hesitate to talk or contact your teacher. Class teachers sometimes give out their personal home contact information however parents can always reach their teacher by email at: firstname.surname@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au or through the school reception on 9419 9229.

Teachers are often available after school, at parent teacher meetings and interviews or as arranged. Parent teacher meetings are vitally important, as it is the time where the teacher brings the developmental picture and curriculum. If you are unable to attend please inform your teacher.

The Head of Primary School is available to support, help, guide parents if they feel their questions are not being listened to. The Principal is available to facilitate communication where appropriate. Sophia Mundi works with the restorative justice model.

Class Carers
Class Carers play a very important role within our school community.

They assist, organise, liaise, support, communicate and inform the members of our respective class communities, as well as the broader school community. These voluntary positions offer parents a wonderful opportunity to provide a link between the Class Teacher/Guardians and the class and the school community as a whole. It is hoped that all parents will participate as a Class Carer for at least one year during their children’s journey through school.

Newsletters
A discussion on Main Lesson will be sent directly from the class teacher every 3 to 4 weeks unless teacher feels more are necessary.

The school publishes a newsletter for parents every fortnight which communicates school events, special features and relevant information and articles that may be of interest to the school community. This is distributed by email and hard copies are available in the foyer.

There are community pages that give the wider community an opportunity to share information with readers.
Parent Involvement

Building Community

Sophia Mundi is a small school with a robust community. The staff are all well qualified in their positions and dedicated to their work. The students are strong in their class communities. The parents are a wonderful, diverse group who put in time and effort for the school in many ways. When the parents feel part of both their class community and the general school community, the children feel safe and well cared for. Participating in parent and general school meetings, social events and helping the class teachers, build this for parents. We understand that all families are different and not all parents have the same possibility of being involved in everything. It is important that parents feel able to do what they do and know that there is no expectation to do more than that. There is plenty of time to contribute over the course of the years and different skills are appreciated at different times.

PFA - All parents of children at Sophia Mundi are members of the Sophia Mundi Parent and Friends Association (PFA).

Our main objective for the PFA is to be a ‘Friends - Raising’ group providing opportunities for parents and friends of Sophia Mundi to socialise and get to know one another, participate in the life of the school, and provide support and information for parents through education forums or group discussions.

The PFA also provides support to the many active parents who help the school in so many ways, such as schools gardens, canteen, school fairs, crafts and class helpers. We also seek to support the school administration and management in communicating on key initiatives with the school’s parent body.

Class 1 cake stall: This raises funds that are used over the years to buy special things for class use or fund extra activities that don’t come within the normal range for a class.

If you would like to be involved or have a question about the PFA, email pfa@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au

Steiner Education Reading List

The following books offer an introduction to Steiner (Waldorf) Education.

CARLGREN, Frans Education Towards Freedom

CHILDS, Gilbert Steiner Education in Theory and Practice

EDMUNDS, Francis Rudolf Steiner Education

GLAS, Herbert Conception, Birth and Early Childhood

HARWOOD, A. The Recovery of Man in Childhood: (a study of child development and the educational work of Rudolf Steiner)

HARWOOD, A.C The Way of a Child

NOBEL, Agnes Educating Through Art: The Steiner School Approach

STEINER, Rudolf The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy
To wonder at beauty,
Stand guard over truth
Look up to the noble
Decide for the good
Leads the child on their journey
To goals for their life,
To right in their duties,
To peace in their feeling.
To light in their thought,
And teaches them trust
In the guidance of God
In all that there is;
In the world-wide all,
In the soul’s deep soil.

Rudolf Steiner