

# School Council Newsletter

## Winter edition

*King winter is now in the land  
He reigns with cold and freezing hands  
He makes Jack Frost touch noses and toes  
And brings us bright and shiny snow*



## The magic of winter

As the frost sets in and the days become shorter, one of our most awaited events and is organised by Class 6 families along with School Council. Winter Festival is a celebration of solstice by our entire school at Edendale Farm each year. Class 6 students look forward to their firestick performance and this year like every year they put on an amazing show! Thankyou to all of Class 6 families for organising the soup and spiral. Thankyou to everyone who baked for this event, every little treat you bring can make a child happy when they come looking for something!

Here are some moments from the winter festival:





## Prep Play Area

We have some very talented and crafty parent members in our Prep classes this year! If you haven't had a chance to go past these classes, then please do so as they have created a lovely space for our Preppies to be nurtured and settle into the first year of their school life. Thankyou to our lovely Prep community for showering so much love to our beautiful school! We are so blessed to have you join our community.



## Building and Grounds

At BHPS we have always prided at the contribution our parent community makes in making our grounds beautiful. We have recently had to cancel few Working Bees due to bad weather and we are hoping to have at least two next Term! Our Buildings and grounds sub committee is formed by Pete Coles, Claudia Cimino and Nick Black. If you can contribute your time and labour to assist with many projects that we are thinking of starting or have started already, including the Prep play area, then please contact either of those mentioned above or Tayla Grant. We look forward to your help and support with this.



## Chai Friday

Chai Fridays have become such a special event each term for our children to look forward to! They are getting bigger every time we host it. Thankyou to all you wonderful bakers who contribute to chai Friday treats. We would love for you to bring your friends and family to our Chai Friday and spread the joy to all. Class 5 organised the chai Friday this term and thanks to all of you we have raised an upwards of \$1100! Thankyou once again.

Want to know when your turn is to host Chai Friday? Keep an eye out on our weekly newsletter, all important dates as well as when your class will be hosting this event is mentioned in there! Please support your class carer in organising class events as it's a community effort and your kindness that creates the magic!



## Spring Fair

Our Spring Fair is on Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Save the Date! Class Stalls have been allocated by School Council and you must have received an email from your class carer with regards to this! Please let them know if you can help organise the Class stall this year. It's a great opportunity to work with other parents. We have observed that class stalls create very special bonds and friendship each year amongst parents who have worked closely over several months to bring their stall to fruition! If you require any support or help, feel free to contact [Manjarisin@gmail.com](mailto:Manjarisin@gmail.com)

## Class 5 Performance

Our Class 5 students put up a stellar performance of a Greek play “The Trojan Horse” on Thursday. Class 5 students are studying Ancient Greece as part of their main lesson which aligns beautifully with their class play based on Ancient Greece, this term.

We are very lucky to have Rin who writes, directs, and choreographs all our drama performances. Michelle Collins, an ex-parent of our school, composes all the music for our plays. The children look forward to their class plays each year and put in a lot of effort in their roles. Special thanks to Matt and Mikaela for organising a very special evening, complete with popcorns and flowers for the children! The Trojan Horse was screened for the first time and was very well received by children and parents alike!



[A beautiful article on knitting by Chrysalis Steiner School:](#)

## Why Steiner Students Knit

October 30, 2018



Knitting has been gathering a lot of attention lately by crafters and scientists alike. It turns out knitting and handwork provides a host of brain and wellbeing benefits to people of all ages. For students, in particular, knitting provides an essential learning medium.

A child who is knitting a hat or a toy kitten sees their will transformed into art. They see their focused, detailed work turn into something beautiful and purpose filled. They experience how the conceptual becomes concrete.

This is why Waldorf education founder, Rudolf Steiner, lectured on the importance of handwork for students just under 100 years ago.





“From Play, through Beauty, to Work: This is a golden path for education. In later life the most abstract tasks, the most difficult techniques, do not arouse antipathy if this path has been followed during childhood.”

But knitting teaches and offers more than abstract concept mastery like creating art from will or tangibles from follow through. It also teaches simple and complex mathematics; hand, eye and brain coordination; sensory integration; and resiliency of habit... all while promoting peace of mind.

## **Mathematics**

Counting is required in knitting. Students must count stitching and rows often in complicated ways. There are different colors and different row lengths based on what’s being created, which force children to think flexibly about patterns that emerge and transform.

Those patterns and pattern thinking impressed electrical engineering professor, Dr. Karen Shoop, of Queen Mary University in London. When she took her first knitting class, she immediately saw a connection between computer coding and knitting.

As she says in this [MindShift article — Can Learning to Knit Help Learning to Code](#):

“We ‘code’ in our outside world. ...Computers ultimately started off partially inspired by weaving and the Jacquard loom, or earlier Bouchon’s loom. ...Knitting instructions are largely binary [and] read just like regular expressions [of code], used for string matching and manipulation.”

It’s not just coding, according to mathematics professor, Sarah Jensen at Carthage College. It’s geometry at its most complex. As she reports in her article in [Smithsonian Magazine, What Knitting can Teach You About Math](#), the abstract, spatial oriented, concept of rubber sheet geometry is perfectly illustrated through knitting.

“One way of knitting objects that are round – like hats or gloves – is with special knitting needles called double pointed needles. While being made, the hat is shaped by three needles, making it look triangular. Then, once it comes off the needles, the stretchy yarn relaxes into a circle, making a much more typical hat. This is the concept that rubber sheet geometry is trying to capture. All polygons become circles in this field of study.”



She says knitting also teaches “abstract algebra and topology – typically reserved for math majors in their junior and senior years of college. Yet the philosophies of these subjects are very accessible, given the right mediums.”

Last, but not least, the simple act of working with hands in math results in better learning outcomes. Studies show that using physical materials, or manipulatives as they call them, improve math skills and learning.

### **Eye, Hand and Brain Coordination**

Many essential developmental skills are required of children as they knit and do other handwork. These include engaging in small motor skills, eye tracking, eye hand coordination, crossing the midline, bilateral hand movement and spatial oriented thinking.

Playing a stringed musical instrument, also a standard curriculum component in Waldorf schools, is often the task studied for brain benefits from these types of brain building activities. But knitting is also a multisensory experience that requires much of the same coordination, motor skills and left and right hemisphere activity as playing an instrument, and so arguably, could offer similar benefits.

Much is also written and studied about sensory engagement in brain development and knitting offers students an array of textures and colors that are pleasingly tactile and visual and offer perceptual feedback.



## **Resiliency Through Habit**

There is a place in education for abstract concepts, but engaging students in hands-on relevant work that requires patience, persistence and follow through allows learning to really take hold.

Students who knit must concentrate on the task at hand and must stay with it day after day. Then they are rewarded with a tangible, beautiful item. They learn to create something from nothing, they learn the value of hardwork and the value of the handmade all around us.

Rudolf Steiner put it this way, “The value of such an occupation consists in the fact that on the one hand it introduces the world of mechanism and brings movement, while on the other it trains in the power of attention.”

## **Wellbeing and Self Esteem**

Last, but hardly least, knitting is good for the soul and good for the esteem.

As our own, Nicole Nicola, Handwork and Fine Arts Teacher, says: “Mathematics are there. We know working with the hands develop specific parts of the brain that help with other kinds of learning. All of that is absolutely true and scientifically proven and it is so important to have that academic basis, but there is another level. The self esteem building. And that is what’s missing in a lot of young people today and a lot of education.”



The New York Times Article, The Health Benefits of Knitting, focused on qualities like these, with one study looking specifically at enhanced confidence and the sense of accomplishment that comes with knitting. The article cited many other studies as well that looked at cognition and memory benefits, but also other emotional benefits including reduction in anxiety and stress, alleviation of chronic pain and the self reported happiness and confidence.

Knitting, like recess, play, social emotional learning, music and art can seem like a softer skill to pursue during a busy academic day, and yet, it is clearly an amazing tool and medium for teaching these and other essential skills to school children, especially in our STEM focused world.

But, for Steiner and for Waldorf teachers like Ms. Nicola, it goes far beyond the practical. Handwork is a way to deepen learning, not to do well on tests or get a good job, but to educate the whole child.

As Steiner said, “Headwork alone, which only occupies the intellect, does not reach the spirit.”

*Republished from Waldorf Today, originally on the Loving Learning [website](#)*

## Spiced Apple Juice



### Ingredients

- 4 cups apple juice
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 lemon, thinly sliced, seeds removed
- 1/2 orange, thinly sliced, seeds removed
- 1 stick cinnamon, plus more for serving, if desired
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Lemon slices, for garnish

### Steps to Make It

1. Gather the ingredients.



2. Combine everything in a large saucepan and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat to a simmer; continue cooking for 10 minutes.
4. Strain and serve in warm mugs.
5. Garnish with lemon slices and individual cinnamon sticks, if you desire.

Full instructions on <https://www.thespruceeats.com/fall-spiced-apple-juice-3051541>



## I Wonder

I wonder as I wander  
Along a wooden path  
Why a bird  
Should pick a puddle  
full of mud  
to take a bath!

I wonder as I wander  
Along a garden lane  
Why snails should make  
such long long trips  
and just go back again.

Barbara Dawson Betteridge  
*Whittle Your Ears*

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