

ISKA News

An Update for Members and Friends

Autumn 2010

Síolta

Síolta is the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education.

This framework is intended to provide guidance and support for all those concerned with the well-being, learning and development of our youngest children, in order to improve the quality of early childhood experiences for all children aged birth to six years.

Participation in the Free Pre-School Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme requires services to provide an appropriate educational programme for children in their pre-school year, which adheres to the principles of Síolta.

ISKA is delighted to take this opportunity to formally welcome Ulrike Farnleitner, who was appointed early in the year as the ISKA National Development Officer and Síolta Co-ordinator. Ulrike provides pedagogical and quality assurance support and mentoring for kindergartens and members nationally and can be contacted on advisory@steinerireland.org. As the existing ISKA Quality Assurance process, Sensing Quality, was based on the Síolta process, we are happy that the replacement of it by Síolta will further support and enhance the significant commitment to quality already evident in Steiner kindergartens and early years centres Nationally.

For more information, see www.siolta.ie.

CHILDMINDING IRELAND & ISKA

By Deirdre Grimes, Steiner-based childminder from Killaloe, Co. Clare (www.anfeirmbeag.com) and board member of Childminding Ireland

In May I attended my first board meeting with Childminding Ireland. I spoke to the board about how Steiner's teachings inspire my work as a childminder and how myself and my husband feel that Raheen Wood Steiner National School has proven to be a great option for children with special needs like our son.

In turn, Patricia, the CEO, had wonderful things to say about the Irish Steiner

Kindergarten Association, about how child centred they are and about their invaluable input into the development of Síolta, which I am now being trained in by Patricia.

In the course of my research for Síolta I have read a lot on Resources for Infant Educators (see www.rie.org) and the work of Magda Gerber and Emmi Pikler. I am therefore very pleased that ISKA and CI may be collaborating on the workshop in November with Dot Male. (See elsewhere in the Newsletter for further information on this workshop.)

Childminding Ireland (www.childminding.ie), the national association for childminders, is the only organisation in Ireland dedicated to working for childminding, providing support information and advice to childminders and parents. A childminder registered with the organisation:

- + is committed to providing a quality childcare service
- + is self-employed, working in their own home
- + has clearance from their GP
- + is adequately insured to provide a child-minding service
- + minds up to five pre school children.

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Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme

The ECCE Scheme is a work in progress and feedback to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) via your local City or County Childcare Committee (CCC) on your experience of it, as a parent or as a service provider, is very welcome and useful. The following is a précis, extracted from information provided on the website of the OMCYA (www.omc.gov.ie).

The ECCE Scheme is implemented by the Childcare Directorate of the OMCYA. Under the scheme, parents can avail of a free pre-school year for their children aged between 3 years 3 months and 4 years 6 months in September of the relevant year. At the start of the next pre-school year (September 2010), children born on or between 2 February 2006 and 30 June 2007 will be eligible for the scheme. Each child can avail of the free pre-school year within one academic year only.

Exceptions to the upper age limit for eligibility will be considered where it is proposed that a child will commence primary school at a later age than 5 years 6 months on the grounds that he or she is developmentally delayed, or due to the enrolment policies of local schools. There are no grounds under the scheme for exceptions to the lower age limit.

Children cannot participate in the scheme in more than one period of provision, running from September to August of each year. Where a child has been assessed as having a significant disability or it is confirmed that the child would benefit significantly from a second free pre-school year, that child may, at the discretion of the OMCYA, be allowed to participate in the scheme for an additional year. This discretion will not be applied where the free pre-school year is being provided in a specialised service for children with disabilities.

Participating service providers need to have a minimum enrolment of eight children in their pre-school year. Exceptions will be considered.

Participating service providers must agree to provide an appropriate educational programme for children in their pre-school year that adheres to the principles of Síolta, the national

framework for early years childhood education, and they will be supported in meeting this requirement through the assistance of Síolta Co-ordinators and their local CCC.

A pre-school year catering for 16 to 20 children must be delivered by a pre-school year leader assisted by a childcare worker. Where a pre-school year caters for not more than eight or ten children, it must be delivered by a pre-school leader. In both cases, the pre-school leader must hold certificate for a major award in childcare/early education at a minimum of level 5 on Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or its equivalent. From September 2010 to August 2012 the qualification requirement will be considered to be met where a person has at least two years' experience and can demonstrate that he or she has achieved certification for an award in ECCE that includes significant content covering the core knowledge areas.

Participating service providers will be paid in a capitation grant for eligible children enrolled and attending its service, at the start of each term or period of payment, as applicable. A higher capitation fee will be payable to playschool sessional service providers where all pre-school leaders hold a bachelor's degree in childhood/early education (min. Level 7 on the NFQ or equivalent) and have three years' experience working in the sector, and where all pre-school assistants hold a relevant major award in childcare/early education at level 5 on the NFQ or its equivalent.

Service providers can participate in the scheme on the basis of a number of options, including as a playschool sessional service provider, or as a full or part-time daycare service provider

In all cases, they must operate the pre-school provision free to parents in return for the capitation grant and parents should be given access to the pre-school service where their child attends only the pre-school element of the service. However, parents may be charged for optional additions as follows:

- + hours in addition to the free pre-school year requirement
- + optional services not including activities that would be regarded as a normal part of a pre-school service, e.g. general arts and crafts activities.

Cork Steiner Kindergarten

Inspired by the Raheen Wood Steiner National School Kindergarten routine of starting the day with a good walk, the Cork Steiner Kindergarten has also been enjoying a daily walk in the Glen natural park. The children have a huge space in which to walk, run, climb, watch the ducks in the pond, the streams, the waterfalls, etc. We take a blanket, have our snack outside and find the children are gaining in strength and independence and the rest of the day also seems to flow more easily than before.



Internet Links

These online links are for general information purposes only. The content, opinions and views expressed are solely those of the authors/site creators and are not necessarily the views of the Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association. Similarly ISKA has no responsibility if there are any errors in such content.

Information on Outdoor Kindergartens

Part I:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0YjoWCRVgU

Part II:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M7KqS0Txws&feature=related

Forest kindergartens developed with the Forestry Commission in Scotland

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7sqjg5

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secret_Garden_%28outdoor_nursery%29

www.forestschools.com/funding-for-your-forest-schools-training.php

Celebrating Michaelmas at home

<http://uncommongrace.typepad.com/uncommongrace/2009/10/celebrating-michaelmas.html>

Thank You ...

... to **Marijka McCartney** for the following inspirational verse and also for her wonderful work here in Ireland, both as kindergarten teacher in Cork and as a member of the ISKA Council. We wish her all the very best in her return to the UK.

Desiderata Parentis

Empower yourself **to know** what is best for your children. Give clear and consistent boundaries.

Allow your children **to dream**, secure in the knowledge that you will do the thinking and decision making for them.

Protect your children. Know where they are and what they are doing.

Nourish them by keeping them **warm** and close to nature.

Surround them with **beauty**.

Feed them with **love**.

Develop your own sense of **gratitude**, for the essence of this will filter into the hearts of your children.

Give them guidance and accompany them in **simple meaningful tasks**.

Avoid burdening your children with adult issues, thus allowing them to retain a sense of **wonder**.

Feed their **imagination** and protect their **senses**.

Nourish yourself and maintain a sense of **humour**.

For every child has the right to childhood and every adult has the power to bestow this precious gift.

Dormant Accounts Funding for Preschool Children from Minority Groups

City/County Childcare Committees have been invited to apply for funding to support clusters of pre-school services to undertake equality and diversity training. The closing date is 8th October 2010. For more information contact your local CCC or see www.omcya.ie.

Graces and Blessings

From the book The Winding Road by Matthew Barton, published by Hawthorn Press, www.hawthornpress.com:

“The way we do even the simplest, most ordinary, everyday things – such as sitting down to a meal together – can help children connect with the world as a good, generous and sustaining place, and give them a sense of wholeness and belonging. I remember garbling through a grace at my primary school – “For what we are about to receive may the lord make us truly thankful men” – which certainly didn't give me anything except a sense of something imposed on me by adults who had little reverence themselves. If, as parents (and carers), we can engender in ourselves real thankfulness towards the earth – often rare nowadays – our children feel this and are nourished by it.”

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

Thank you for the earth so sweet,
Thank you for the things we eat,
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you, God, for everything.
Anon

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

Blessings on the blossom,
Blessings on the root,
Blessings on the leaf and stem
Blessings on the fruit
and Blessings on the meal.

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

Thanks to **Anne O'Reilly** for this Irish blessing, which she wrote during her time as Irish teacher in Cooleenbridge School (now Raheen Wood in Co Clare):

Tagann beannachtaí ó na flathis chun na síolta a athrú.

Tagann muid le chéile chun an bia a altú.

Beannachtaí ar an mbéile agus síocháin ar an domhan.

Blessings come from heaven to transform the seeds

We come together to say grace

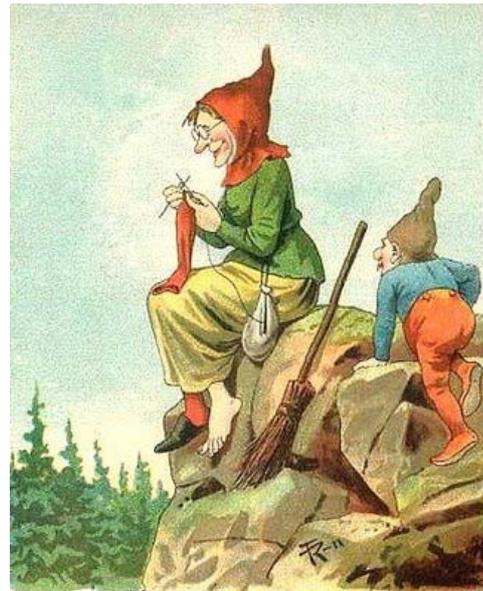
Blessings on the meal and peace on the earth.

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

And thanks to **Roisín Ní Ghairbhith**, former ISKA National Co-ordinator, for this one:

*Beannachtaí ar na lámha a rinne an bia
Beannachtaí ar an talamh a thug an bia dúinn
Beannachtaí ar na daoine a itheann an bia.
Amen!*

Blessings on the hands that made the food
Blessings on the land that gave us the food and
Blessings on the people who eat the food.
Amen!



Recipe

Millet Dumplings

Add almost 2 cups of water to one cup of millet (rinsed).

Cook as you would rice, but it takes less time!

Add a pinch of salt and a bit of thyme.

Let the mixture cool, then mix in a handful of oat flakes to make a sort of porridge. Add mustard, herbs, a bit of stock, garlic, oregano and grated cheese.

With wet hands, form little round balls. Press them flat and place them on a tray with baking paper on it. Grate cheese on top, if you wish.

Cook for 25 minutes at 180°.

Eat warm or cold. Serve with yoghurt sauce, fresh carrots and salad, They are ideal for picnics and kindergarten lunch. You can shape them into any form you want ..., mummy and daddy dumplings and baby dumplings.

Enjoy your tasty, healthy life style!

Ulrike Farnleitner, ISKA NDO

The Alliance for Childhood

The Alliance for Childhood serves as a network that facilitates reflection and action by people with concerns about the care and education of children. It is not a conventional organisation, but an expression of a willingness to work together for the betterment of the experience of childhood. It exists in the shared work and spirit of co-operation whereby all partners can find mutual support. It is a collaborative approach that is created by commitment and by the activity itself.

Aims and Objectives

Support for family life The activities of the alliance promote and support family life, in all its forms, so that children grow up and develop in a secure and stable home environment.

Promote a developmentally appropriate Early Years curriculum Creative play and self-directed activities give children a sound basis for life-long learning and promote healthy emotional and social growth.

Work for better physical and emotional health for children Parents, educators and health-care professionals can optimise their support for children by collaborating with each other and sharing their experiences.

Fight poverty and neglect in all forms Many children suffer poverty, neglect, abuse and discrimination, undermining the basic human right to a nurtured childhood.

Question the role of electronic media in child development Over-exposure to television, computers and video games adversely affects children's physical, emotional, social and mental development. By sharing experiences, parents and educators can work together to offer children a creative and healthy balance.

Highlight the dangers of commercialism aimed at children Children need to be protected from the manipulation of hard selling and advertising until they are mature enough to make informed choices.

Improve childcare facilities If parents need childcare, it should be affordable and appropriate, providing a quality, caring environment with activities tailored to each child's developmental needs.

www.allianceforchildhood.eu
www.allianceforchildhood.org.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 9th Second in a series of 6 lectures being given in **Dublin** to support the network of kindergartens there and the work towards opening a Steiner Primary School in Dublin in 2011. Speaker: **Pearse O'Shiel**. Topic: **Freedom, Equality, Solidarity**. See back page of the newsletter for further details.

September 18th ISKA Annual Conference. Theme: **Play, a Remedial Tool**. Keynote Speaker: **Ulrike Farnleitner**. Venue: **Camphill Community Dunshane, Co Kildare**. See enclosed brochure or www.steinerireland.org for further details.

October 2nd Conference on School Ethos hosted by **Lifeways Ireland Ltd**, patron body for Steiner National Schools in Ireland. Venue: **Cois na hAbhna in Ennis, Co. Clare**. Parents, kindergarten teachers, and all ISKA members and friends are warmly invited, in particular to address issues of relevance to kindergartens, such as growing from a kindergarten to a school and the effects of state recognition on the kindergarten. For further details contact lifewaysireland@gmail.com.

October 21st Third in a series of 6 lectures in **Dublin** supporting the network of kindergartens there and the work towards opening a Steiner primary school in Dublin in 2011. Speaker: **Pearse O'Shiel**. Topic: **Re-imagining the Future**. See back page for further details.

November 6th Workshop with **Dot Male**, on **Steiner Parent and Child Groups**, at Raheen Wood Steiner National School, **Co. Clare**.

November 7th Workshop in **Dublin** with **Dot Male**, on **Care of the Younger Child**. Details to be confirmed and circulated.

Dot Male is a Steiner kindergarten teacher with many years' experience, also as a Steiner parent and child group leader. Dot is based in the UK and she runs courses for teachers, parents, carers and group leaders. She is author of The Parent and Child Group Handbook (Hawthorn Press). Dot has trained at the Pikler Institute, Hungary and completed the RIE (Resources for Infant Educators) training in the USA.

November 13th Notice is hereby given that the **ISKA AGM** will be held on Saturday November 13th 2010 at 10 a.m. in Raheen Wood Steiner National School, Raheen, Tuamgraney, **Co. Clare**

Song

Máirín Bhán

Bhí Máirín Bhán 'na cailín deas, 'na cailín deas, 'na cailín deas. Bhí
Máirín Bhán 'na cailín deas, 'na cailín deas.

I

Bhí Máirín Bhán ina cailín deas,
ina cailín deas ina cailín deas,
Bhí Máirín Bhán ina cailín deas,
ina cailín deas.

II

I gcaisleán ard a chónaigh sí,
a chónaigh sí, a chónaigh sí
I gcaisleán ard a chónaigh sí,
a chónaigh sí .

III

Chuir sióg olc a chodladh í,
a chodladh í, a chodladh í,
Chuir sióg olc a chodladh í,
a chodladh í.

IV

Ar feadh céad bliain a chodail sí,
a chodail sí, a chodail sí,
Ar feadh céad bliain a chodail sí,
a chodail sí.

V

Tháinig prionsa ar a chapall lá
ar a chapall lá, ar a chapall lá
Tháinig prionsa ar a chapall lá
ar a chapall lá.

VI

Dhúisigh an prionsa Máirín Bhán,
Máirín Bhán, Máirín Bhán
Dhúisigh an prionsa Máirín Bhán,
Máirín Bhán.

VII

Thosaigh sé ag rince léi,
ag rince léi, ag rince léi,
Thosaigh sé ag rince léi,
ag rince léi.

VIII

Bhí gach duine ansin ag rince leo,
ag rince leo, ag rince leo.
Bhí gach duine ansin ag rince leo,
ag rince leo.

Advertisement

PUDDLEDUCKS

Making Fun of the Weather!

Steiner teachers and parents understand the value of outdoor play for children, but in our damp climate getting outside on a daily basis can be problematic if the children aren't kitted out properly for the weather. But help is at hand with the PuddleDucks range of 100% waterproof clothing for children. The PuddleDucks' Swedish designed clothes are specially suited for children's needs – being soft and lightweight they are comfy to wear, while the durable material is rip resistant and machine washable.

Available in a wide choice of colours and sizes the PuddleDucks range includes all-in-one suits, dungarees, trousers, jackets, mittens and hats, as well as waterproofs for teachers and parents too! The clothes meet the Oko-Tex Environmental Standard 100 and are free from hazardous substances such as PVC, phthalates and Teflon.

PuddleDucks provides fast delivery from their secure website, along with a helpful phone service for queries or orders.



PuddleDucks is pleased to offer parents of children attending Steiner kindergartens a 10% discount, valid on the children's waterproof range. If ordering on-line use the code STEINER10, or if ordering over the phone please advise the discount code. PuddleDucks also offers special rates to kindergartens for bulk purchases.

Tel: 021 437 2917 (Say which Steiner school your child attends to receive the discount.)
Website: www.puddleducks.ie

An Síopa Beag

Environmentally friendly and ethically sourced products for the discerning shopper



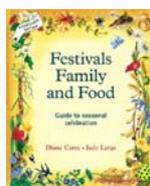
All our toys are high quality, and are designed to encourage meaningful play.

Our eco-clothing range includes organic cotton, wool/silk combinations:

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Vests, Pyjamas, Bonnets,
Blankets, Sheepskins, Eco nappies

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We also stock a wide range of books and art & craft-materials.



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For Information contact

Maria Castles, The Italian Warehouse, Main Street, Killaloe, Co. Clare

Tel/Fax: 00 353 61 375770

Website: www.ansiopabeag.com

Opening hours: Mon-Fri: 9.30 a.m. – 5.30 p.m., Sat: 10.00 a.m. – 5.30 p.m.

Steiner / Waldorf education: public lecture series

Working towards the opening of a Steiner / Waldorf primary school in Dublin in 2011 and supporting the existing network of kindergartens.

Speaker – Pearse O'Shiel

"Freedom, Equality, Solidarity"

Thursday, 9 September, 7.30 pm

What does it mean to be free and equal at the same time?

How can I experience myself as a brother / sister to others?

How can we begin to re-balance relationships in our communities and in society?

"Re-imagining the Future"

Thursday, 21st October, 7.30 pm

Can we begin to discern elements of the emerging future?

How can Contemplative Enquiry be a tool for this?

Pearse O'Shiel (MA in Education) is a gifted and inspiring speaker who has dedicated his life to nurturing the spirit of creativity and wholeness in each child. He is one of the most experienced Waldorf teachers in Ireland and a leading light in the movement for real alternatives to mainstream education. Over the past quarter-century he has been a driving force behind the development of Steiner / Waldorf education in Ireland at all levels, from early childhood to active learning for adolescents. Pearse's talks combine down-to-earth practicality with the vision of a better childhood for all.



All are welcome

€10 entry / ISKA members €5 (you can join on the night)

Organised by Saoirse Waldorf kindergarten (www.saoirsewaldorf.com) and the Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association (ISKA) (www.steinerireland.org). Contact: mailto:orfhlait@saoursewaldorf.com or 087 614 8979

Transforming Ireland

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