



SEN and Disability

Local Offer: Early Years Settings

Name of Setting: **Lancaster Steiner School**

Setting Name and Address	Lancaster Steiner School Cherry Trees Kindergarten Lune Road Lancaster LA1 5QU		Telephone Number	01524 381876
			Website Address	www.lancastersteinerschool.org
Does the settings specialise in meeting the needs of children with a particular type of SEN?	No	Yes	If yes, please give details:	
	X			
What age range of pupils does the setting cater for?	Cherry Trees Kindergarten 3 – 6			
	Lancaster Steiner School 3 - 11			
Name and contact details of your setting SENCO	Elsbeth Mukerji (SENDCo)			
	www.lancastersteinerschool.org			

Name of Person/Job Title	Rachel Theobald (Early Years Co-ordinator)		
Contact telephone number	01524 381876	Email	www.lancastersteinerschool.org

The Setting

What the setting provides

The early years setting offers provision from 9.00am – 3.15pm Monday to Friday. Three days a week extended provision is offered from 8.30-9.00am and 3.15-4.30pm

The setting is registered for a mixed aged group from 3 to 6 years. There is approximately 14 children in a group/class.

The kindergarten teacher leads the morning session. There is 1 room for the children.. In addition there is daily use of a large garden/outdoor area. The afternoon co-ordinator leads the afternoon session.

There is a named Early Years Coordinator who leads and supports all Early Years practitioners so that there is consistency throughout the early years provision. The Early Years Coordinator has responsibility for the overall quality of the provision.

Accessibility and Inclusion

What the setting provides

The building

The setting is housed in a single storey wooden building set in a large garden area. There is wheelchair access from one of the main entrances. On street parking is usually available nearby.

There is a disabled toilet in the building.

In the tarmacked area at the front of the building there is a small storage area for buggies and racks for bikes.

The corridors are illuminated with strip lighting. The walls are painted in muted colours such as creams/greens/pinks. The floor is wooden.

With the exception of the accessible disabled toilet all internal doors around the building are standard door size. The front door and door to the kindergarten cloakroom are double doors.

There are parent information boards in the front entrance areas. There is also a board in the kindergarten cloakroom area. The boards contain information about the setting. A folder of school policies is kept in school office.

Copies of some policies are available on the school website and, for families who require it, we are able to make copies of policies available electronically.

Needs of parents and children are identified at entry. This would include the need for letters/documents in larger print size.

The rooms

The rooms are illuminated by natural light and by pendant lights. Most windows have curtains.

The Kindergarten room colouring is pastel pink. The floor is wooden with wool rugs. The room is created to be cosy and like home.

The majority of resources are open-ended in that they can be used imaginatively to be lots of different things. Most resources are made from natural materials that stimulate the senses in a gentle way. They are arranged to be accessible to children and include wooden planks, chairs, racks, tables, wooden shapes, blankets, pegs, shells, fir cones, logs and so on, as well as more formed resources such as dolls house, farm, boats and railway tracks. Resources are chosen to meet the needs of the 3 – 6 year age group.

There are no electronic devices available to children. Technology used is related to daily activities and includes corn grinding wheel, children's knives, apple peelers and corers etc. Resources are chosen to meet the needs of the 3 – 6 age group to develop coordination and physical control.

The outdoors

The outdoor environment is a garden bordered by a tarmacked path. The garden is at a slightly lower level in places and can be accessed by a ramp. There is a climbing frame, trees, and raised vegetable and plant beds for growing vegetables and plants. The surface is mainly wood chip. The sand pit is sunken – when needed a step is provided. There is a play house that is slightly raised. A step can also be provided. There is an outdoor play kitchen with a variety of utensils available.

There is a concrete channel for flowing water and an outdoor tap. There is outdoor storage for outdoor equipment.

Resources are taken outside on a daily basis and are chosen and adapted to suit the needs of the children attending the setting.

Identification and Early Intervention

What the setting provides

Every child is seen as an individual who has already learned much about the world through their early family life. Before your child begins Kindergarten a meeting is set up with the teacher and key worker, parents or carers and the child. This is a relaxed context in which the family and teacher begin their relationship and the teacher and key worker have the opportunity of gaining a fuller understanding of the child. If at this stage parents or staff have already identified a Special Educational Need or Disability the SENDCo would also meet with the family.

Children's progress is closely monitored in our setting. Each child has their own learning journey which includes written observations of them in Kindergarten, observations and comments from parents/family, tracking information about their progress across the areas of learning and development within the EYFS, photographs of them at play and examples of work they have done. More detailed information about learning journeys and what is in them is shared with parents when their child begins attending our setting. This is to ensure parents understand what they are, how they are used in kindergarten, content and how parents can contribute to them.

Children's learning journeys are available for parents to look at any time they would like. Although a child's key person is available to chat to parents at drop off and pick up times, we make arrangements for the key person and teacher to meet with parents each term to look at the learning journey and discuss progress and any concerns. Additional appointments can be made outside of these times to discuss any issues in more depth and more confidentially than is often possible at pick up and drop off times. If a parent would like to arrange to meet with their child's key person they can ask and a convenient time will be arranged. Overall responsibility for your child's development and communication with parents is held by the teacher.

All Early Years practitioners in our setting work closely together and all make contributions to the child's learning journey: children's development, wellbeing and progress are discussed at weekly staff meetings. If a child is experiencing some difficulties or delay in their development this is shared with parents and options/appropriate next steps are discussed. Staff may also undertake a child study to gain a fuller picture of the child.

For some children the next steps may involve the key person targeting a specific area of development and planning additional opportunities for the child to have experiences designed to support the area of learning and development identified. This enhancement and targeting links to the wave two interventions identified within our setting's provision mapping. This would then be reviewed to see how the child has progressed and whether or not additional steps need to be taken to support the child's progress and development.

For other children the next step may also include developing a targeted learning plan where specific aims are developed with parents to support the child's development. Staff would involve the school SENDCo who could advise on strategies or next steps. We may also discuss with parents whether it would be appropriate to refer their child to other services such as speech and language therapy. This would require parental consent.

Another next step may be to ask the local authority Inclusion Teacher to visit the child in the setting to provide some additional advice and guidance to practitioners to support them in meeting the needs of the child. This visit is called a 'Request for Guidance' and can only be undertaken with parental consent.

Our Special Educational Needs policy provides the context for supporting children through these 'next steps', this is referred to as the graduated response. Our SEN Policy is available in the setting or you can see it by following this link ...

www.lancastersteinerschool.org/#!school-policies/ckeg

In our setting we use provision mapping to identify ways in which we support all children in the setting. Provision mapping identifies what we provide for all children (wave one), for children who require a little bit of extra input in a specific area (wave two) and children who require more specialised or intensive intervention (wave three). You can see our provision mapping in our setting.

What the setting provides

Our setting is a Steiner Kindergarten with extended provision. We follow the principles of Steiner Early Years education. We work with the principle that children learn through doing and by copying or imitating what they see adults do. A mixed age group from 3 to 6 years is also used so that children play with, and learn from, children of different ages as they would in a family. Activities are chosen because they are meaningful – e.g. preparing apple crumble and soup for snack – and offer lots of learning experiences.

Children's play and learning through active play is also given central importance. Using writing and practical maths, such as counting plates for snack, are things that children may choose to do. However, formal learning, including reading and writing, is not introduced until children leave kindergarten.

The setting works within the framework of the EYFS but has an exemption from reading and writing and some modification of other Early Learning Goals. The setting is also exempt from all EYFSP Assessment Regulations.

The rooms are resourced to meet the needs of the 3 – 6 year old age group. Practitioners use Steiner principles, Development Matters and the Statutory Guidance for the EYFS to plan provision and activities for the children in their care.

The EYFS identifies 3 prime areas of learning and development (Communication and Language, Physical, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development) and the four specific areas (Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design, Literacy [exemption]). These areas are provided for within a range of activities.

The activities and provision are adapted to suit the needs of all children at each stage of development. For some children a greater level of differentiation is required because they have additional or special educational needs. Practitioners are sensitive to the developmental needs of the children in their care and when, they are differentiating activities and provision, have this in mind so that all children are able to access the setting in a way that is appropriate to their needs.

Children's progress and development is maintained through observations of children by the teacher and other practitioners and parents.

Each term trackers are used to record children's development against the EYFS.

Twice yearly a Steiner Early Years Profile which references the Early Learning Goals is used.

There are termly parent and teacher meetings.

It is also the role of the teacher/key person to help parents to develop ways in which they can support their child's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to attend the first kindergarten session with their child so that they experience the work of the kindergarten first hand. Parents are able to speak to their child's key person at any time if they would like further information or advice about supporting learning at home.

Children's ideas and opinions about their own learning and experiences are listened to and valued and much is learnt about how children experience their world through close observation of play. Practitioners record these observations for the child's learning journey.

Where children have additional needs the teacher will meet with parents to agree suitable provision for the child. The teacher also works closely with the school SENCO who supports the teacher in making decisions about how best to support the child. The school SEND policy can be viewed at www.lancastersteinerschool.org/#!/school-policies/ckeg

Teaching and Learning Part 2 - Provision & Resources

What the setting provides

The Kindergarten provides resources that are developmentally appropriate for the 3-6 age group. We ensure there are resources available that overlap with the age phase below and above so that children who are developing more slowly or more quickly can access resources appropriate to their stage of learning and development.

There are two parent and toddler group with whom we share common resources. As many of the children in Kindergarten have attended one of these groups, they are already confident with the resources and style of provision that they will meet in Kindergarten. We also share resources with the Lower School for those for whom it is appropriate.

Where children require access to resources that are significantly different to the resources available within their age phase we make arrangements to share resources with younger or older groups. Where children need resources that are not usually available in our setting we endeavour to access these from loan facilities, support services or buy purchasing. We liaise with parents and outside professionals to ensure resources are appropriate for the needs of the child.

All practitioners are encouraged to work with external professionals who visit children in the setting, some will have more experience of this than others but they are supported by the SENCO and the Early Years coordinator. For some children it may be the case that at specific times of the Kindergarten day they require additional support. As a setting we endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to provide this. We look to provide additional support flexibly using existing staff from within the wider school if this is appropriate.

We undertake risk assessments of the places we intend to visit and consider the needs of the children who will be visiting. We make reasonable adjustments when planning trips and outings to ensure the places we visit are accessible and meet the needs of the children attending our setting. In the case of a child who has specific needs during an outing, we may do an individual risk assessment for that child.

Reviews

What the setting provides Children's progress is recorded on an ongoing basis and there are daily opportunities for informal verbal feedback to parents. Feedback is also provided via emails and phone calls. In some instances a home-school book is used.

There is a termly meeting for parents. In the autumn and summer term the teacher shares your child's development with reference to the Early Years tracker and the Steiner Early Years Profile.

Each child has a journal containing observations, photographs and pictures. These can be viewed by parents at any time. At the end of the summer term these are sent home for parents to enjoy. Five and six year old children also have a full written school report.

Parents are invited to contribute to all discussions about their child and this is particularly so when a child has special needs.

Transitions

Before families join Kindergarten they are asked to visit a morning session for an hour and a half with their child. This gives families the opportunity of making an informed choice. The next step is an informal meeting with the teacher. Parents and child attend. The child also has this time to get to know the teacher better. The teacher will talk to parents about their and their child's preferences for a settling period and endeavour to meet these needs as best we can. Where possible the Kindergarten teacher will undertake a home visit so the child can meet the teacher in a comfortable and familiar environment. If required the SENDCo may also be involved at this stage.

We have a comprehensive transition procedure when children enter or leave the kindergarten. The parent and child/toddler group leaders help to facilitate the process of transition into Kindergarten and many of the children who have attended the parent and child/toddler group will already have experienced the Steiner approach, including some of the same songs, rhymes and resources that are used in Kindergarten.

Many children chose to continue into Lower School and transition is managed between the Kindergarten teacher and the Class T1 teacher. Families who chose to transfer out to other provision are offered an exit discussion and where possible we invite the new teacher to visit our setting as part of the transition.

We have an open door policy and parents are able to drop in to the setting at any time. They are also able to contact us by phone if they would like to check in on their child!

Staff Training

What the setting provides

The Early Years team are all qualified at NVQ level 3 and above. The Early Years Coordinator, who has QTS, holds a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education with Honours.

All staff members are experienced practitioners.

The school has an experienced SENCO who has a working knowledge of CAFs, the EHCP process and leading TAF meetings, working with intervention support programmes and external professionals such as speech and occupational therapists.

The whole school SENCO provides additional training and advice.

Further Information

What the setting provides

This is a school with good relationships between parents and staff. Parents are involved in many aspects of the running of the school. There is a strong community and parents are very supportive of each other.

Parents/carers contributions are welcomed and parent/carer views are seen as important. Opportunities are always made to answer questions or resolve concerns. Feedback can be through discussion or in writing.

The school has a complaints procedure, details are on school notice boards and the school website.