

Class Six | Learning Journey & Curriculum Map

Class Six | Child Development

The twelfth year of a child's life is a kind of limbo; he is no longer really a child, but he is not yet a teenager, and adulthood is still a long way off. After the challenge of the tenth year, comes the struggle to establish some balance and order, which is more or less achieved during Class 5. Then comes puberty, bringing another onslaught of emotions and physical changes that are difficult to deal with, both for the children themselves and the adults around them. What they have learned from their earlier experience is that the situation needs to be controlled, so, in Class 6, this is their response. But, as with everything at this age, it is somewhat heavy-handed and naïve. As always, this finds its reflection in the curriculum. Think of the Romans marching in uniform stride across the known world, everywhere encountering rebellious tribes with their varied and colourful histories, cultures and traditions, not engaging with them, but offering only two choices: surrender or be crushed. There you have a picture of the situation in the child's soul life at this time. Each one is a Roman emperor trying to maintain control of the realm of his own feelings by laying down the law. The world, other people, himself, everything is categorised and labeled: 'Things I like', 'Things I don't like', 'Things that are cool', 'Things that are rubbish', 'Things I will never do', 'Things I must do', 'Things I am good at', 'Things I am bad at', etc. In true Roman style, once the categories are fixed (and at this point he sees no reason why they would ever change) he compares his list with those of his peers, for reassurance, and adjusts it as necessary. Belonging to the group matters, and there is no room for variation in the group; its judgements are absolute. In this way, he finds a safe place for himself in the world. His question, for the moment, is 'Who are we?', not 'Who am I?' Although this is uncomfortable for us, (from our adult perspective, our children are submitting to peer pressure) it is just as it should be and we have to understand that they will come through it. Once the twelve-year-old has found where he fits, he believes that he has grown up - that he understands how the adult world works and that he will get older, but otherwise life will go on just as it is now. For some, and at times for all, this brings reassuring stability. Confidence comes from knowing what the rules are and abiding by them. But for everyone there is an underlying feeling of disappointment - a feeling of 'Is this really all there is?' At this moment, we take a file of something boring and familiar off the shelf (of course they groan as we do it), blow off the dust and open it up. They get ready to add some dull facts to their collection, resigned to the prospect of spending their remaining school days in this way. But instead we take them into a completely dark room, turn on a torch and they can't see it; how is that possible? They find that they can hear the difference between cold water and hot water; but temperature is something you feel, not

hear! That a small piece of wire can ring like a church bell, as long as the sound doesn't have to travel through the air; so everything we hear is muffled?? We show them that everything they thought they knew is just a signpost to something greater and more fascinating than they could ever have imagined. We start to open up the familiar world so that it fills again with the wonder it held for them when they were very small and everything was new; to plant the seed of a thought in their minds: 'There is no end to what I can discover. I could go on being surprised and delighted by the world for the rest of my life!' All of this is a background to the curriculum in the Middle School - Classes 6, 7 and 8 - but it is this bringing, at every stage, of things to which the children can relate directly out of the experience of their own inner lives that makes Steiner Waldorf education unique and powerful. After the twelfth year, the faculties of judgement and objectivity develop as a counterbalance to the emotional turmoil of adolescence, and we can look with clarity at the physical world. In Class 6, we do this through Physics, Geometry and drawing from observation. We also consider the different ways in which people have dealt with the world, worked with it, changed it and thought about it through History, Geography, Art, Literature, Maths. These examples and experiences model for the children how the world can be interpreted and the many ways in which it is possible to enter into life.

Class Six | Sports & Movement

Active Learning Intention	Active Teaching Implementation	Active Environments Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Throws a basketball in a hoop ● Runs whilst bouncing basketballs ● Completes the big ball tricks programme ● Throws a volleyball over a volleyball net ● Throws a dodgeball at a stationary target 		

Class Six | Sports & Movement | Curriculum Narrative

Handcraft: Having become familiar with the physical structure of the human being and animals in lessons in natural science; the children can now bring to their and work doll and animal projects a new and much deeper interest and understanding than would have been possible before. The child is now able to construct an animal in a much more conscious and living way. Children can now broaden their knowledge of materials and

record their findings. They can use their developing creative problem solving skills to amend and adapt their handwritten patterns, design ideas, colour palettes and material choices, all of which aid and embed their developing identities and perspectives.

Eurythmy: Children work towards being able to work semi-independently with the basic Eurythmical elements in both speech and music Eurythmy. They contribute to a group form and work towards a short performance, with age appropriate geometrical transition forms as indicated by Rudolf Steiner being mastered and performed. Spacial and social awareness are raised.

Sports: The children have reached a stage when physical processes of puberty cause rapid growth to their limbs, leading to clumsiness and a greater diversity of physique than at any other age. Uprightness is important and that requires an inner balance of forces. The play element of earlier years now gives way to the need for specific exercises which require the need to strive for exactness, form, order and structure. When teaching, it is now important to use the element of objectivity, through measurement, keeping scores in games as well as gaining their acknowledgement as referee/umpire.