



EDINBURGH  
**STEINER**  
SCHOOL

# **Standards and Quality Report 2017**

## **Vision statement**

Edinburgh Steiner School aspires to develop responsible, creative and freethinking young people, who will contribute to society and a sustainable environment with vision and purpose.

## **Mission statement**

Inspired by the pedagogical insights of Rudolf Steiner, we commit daily to awakening the mind, will and spirit of each individual pupil.

### **1. School aims**

- To provide a high quality pedagogical service and a welcoming, secure, happy and caring environment for all.
- To recognise and support each stage of child development and to deliver an age appropriate curriculum that underpins this.
- To recognise that rhythm, kinaesthetic learning and movement are integral parts of the curriculum.
- To address the learning needs of all pupils.
- To acknowledge the importance of non-formal and informal learning.
- To encourage personal, social and moral development for the children and staff in the school.
- To provide a child-friendly, aesthetically beautiful environment, where learners are encouraged to know and love the world and where each child's innate abilities are allowed to blossom.
- To enable children to take responsibility for their own learning in an environment of peace and mutual respect.
- To embrace all people regardless of race, religion or gender.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to foster a sense of community.
- To support and encourage staff development and CPD and demonstrate a commitment to improvement in all areas.
- To continue to foster links with outside agencies, mainstream schools and the wider community.

## **2. The school in context**

Edinburgh Steiner School is located in the Southwest area of Edinburgh and was opened in 1939.

The School's client group mainly comprises people from multicultural, professional backgrounds from a broad catchment area.

The School is situated in four different buildings, plus a purpose-built hall and Kindergarten.

The Kindergarten is registered to accommodate 60 children from 3 to 7 years old. The current roll is 54 (December 2017). There are 11 children with ASPs for EAL, and 9 children with ASPs for social/emotional/behavioural issues.

The main school has 12 classes (year groups) varying in size from 12 to 26 pupils, which provide education for young people aged 6-18 years. The current school role is 270 (November 2017) pupils. Being a small school, teachers, pupils and parents know and appreciate one another. There is mutual support and recognition of both strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers and other staff work autonomously within a framework of guidance and support. Key decisions are made by consensus at a weekly meeting of the College of Teachers—a committee that performs the traditional function of a principal teacher. Decisions are then acted upon by a rotating Management Group, supported by a Management Team. Colleagues feel free to help and challenge one another, and frequently do so. The effect of this is a sense of greater participation and ownership of issues and decisions.

The School has a broad-based curriculum where head, heart and hand are addressed in equal measure. Pupils are not judged solely on academic achievements, but are equally valued for their social, moral, spiritual and practical abilities.

Parents are encouraged to be committed to the School and be pro-active: by being Class Convenors, serving on the Board of Trustees, taking part in workweeks, Christmas Market, concerts, clubs and wider school issues such as cycling proficiency.

## **3. Factors affecting the development of the school**

- The ethos of the school is based on the premise that people are as important as policies, if not more so.
- Formal literacy and numeracy programmes do not begin until the child is six and a half-years-old (Class 1). The School does not select pupils on the basis of academic ability.
- ICT does not feature in the School's curriculum until the late Middle School and Upper School.

## 4. Attendance, attainment and progress

**Attendance statistics for 2016-2017** (\* Old attendance categories; absence/lateness is now recorded as authorised or unauthorised)

Pupil Name	Present		Lateness					Kindy Rest Day	Authorised Absence Codes					Unauthorised Absence Codes	
	P	V	NL*	AL	UL*	L	U	R	NA*	AA	S	LOA	E	A	UA
	Present	School Trip / Educated Offsite	Notified Late	Authorised Late	Unnotified Late	Unauthorised Late	Unauthorised Late after 10.05am	Rest Day	Notified Absence	Authorised Absence	Suspended	Leave of Absence	Exam/ Study Leave	Absent without reason	Unauthorised Absence
<b>CW Kindergarten</b>	1667	8	3	0	3	2	0	294	123	47	0	20	0	3	1
<b>DM Kindergarten</b>	1547	0	0	0	0	0	0	184	111	89	0	22	0	6	0
<b>HK Kindergarten</b>	1949	0	1	0	0	0	0	21	158	155	0	10	0	9	0
<b>HZ Kindergarten</b>	1526	0	2	0	0	0	0	209	88	59	0	33	0	7	2
<b>Class 1</b>	2365	1	3	2	66	33	0	0	51	48	0	37	0	1	3
<b>Class 2</b>	1883	1	3	5	40	9	0	0	42	19	0	13	0	2	4
<b>Class 3</b>	3758	0	11	6	79	27	0	0	124	70	0	23	0	5	8
<b>Class 4</b>	2858	18	10	4	38	7	0	0	56	41	0	19	0	5	1
<b>Class 5</b>	1514	25	2	11	29	10	0	0	93	50	0	24	0	3	6
<b>Class 6</b>	2824	96	7	6	103	29	0	0	166	67	0	27	0	5	27
<b>Class 7</b>	3156	114	15	5	101	10	1	0	121	107	1	37	0	5	0
<b>Class 8</b>	2211	352	13	6	137	11	1	0	145	41	0	27	0	2	7
<b>Class 9</b>	2175	40	7	16	54	13	0	0	55	24	0	9	1	2	0
<b>Class 10</b>	3187	236	40	12	99	29	1	0	193	67	0	13	67	22	0
<b>Class 11</b>	3616	115	112	17	155	28	3	0	252	151	0	5	100	7	5
<b>Class 12</b>	1577	0	41	26	106	16	2	0	126	29	0	0	329	8	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>37813</b>	<b>1006</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>1904</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>65</b>

## Exam results 2017

The Edinburgh Steiner School													
Year Group	Total Pupils in Year	Examination	Number of Candidates	Total Present'ns	A	B	C	D	U				
S6 (Year 13)	12	Adv Highers	5	5	5	0	0	0	0				
		Highers	12	44	23	13	8	0	0				
		GCSE	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
					A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
S5 (Year 12)	24	National 5	17	25	12	4	7	0	2				
		GCSE	20	41	11	12	3	9	6	0	0	0	0
						Pass	Fail						
S4 (Year 11)	18	National 4	9	9	9	0							
					A	B	C	D	U				
		National 5	18	40	29	3	7	1	0				

The Higher exam results in 2017 were outstanding. There were a total of 44 presentations, compared to 51 in 2016. The headline A-C pass rate for Highers was 100%, compared to 88% in 2016, and well above the national pass rate of 77%. This was the best set of Higher results in the School's history. The vast majority of all the grades awarded were As and Bs (82%). An analysis of the results published by SCIS indicated that Edinburgh Steiner School achieved the 10<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of As and Bs among all Scottish independent schools. These results may have been exceptional—and may therefore be hard to repeat—but they are in line with a continuing trend of improvement in Higher results over the last decade (Figure 2). A slight dip in performance indicated by a fall in the mean around 2016 tracks a similar dip in national results a year or so earlier. This might be explained by the advent of the new Higher exams, and the fact that Edinburgh Steiner School introduced them slightly later than most other schools. Our GCSE results (A\*-C) were an improvement on last year, rising to 86%, well above the national average (66%) and continuing a similar trend of improvement. The pass rate (A-C) for National 5 exams was very good at 95%, mostly As and Bs. This was also a slight improvement on the previous year. In November 2017 *The Sunday Times* ranked the school 9<sup>th</sup> overall in their 'top Scottish independent schools' league table. Edinburgh Steiner School was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest ranked school in Edinburgh.

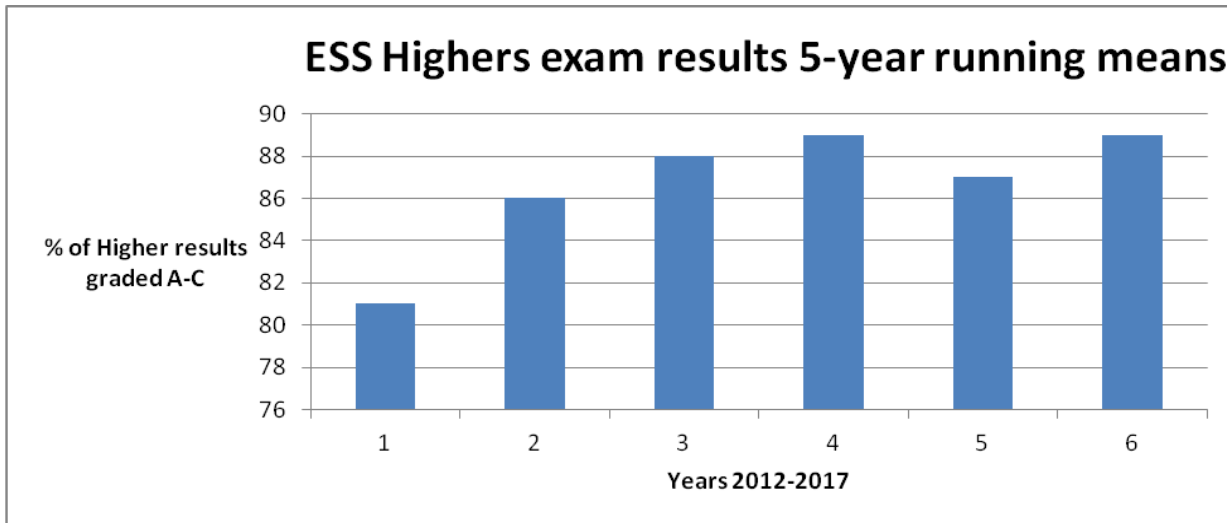


Figure 1 Higher exam results 5-year running means (i.e year 6, 2017, is compiled by averaging the results from 2013-2017 inclusive)

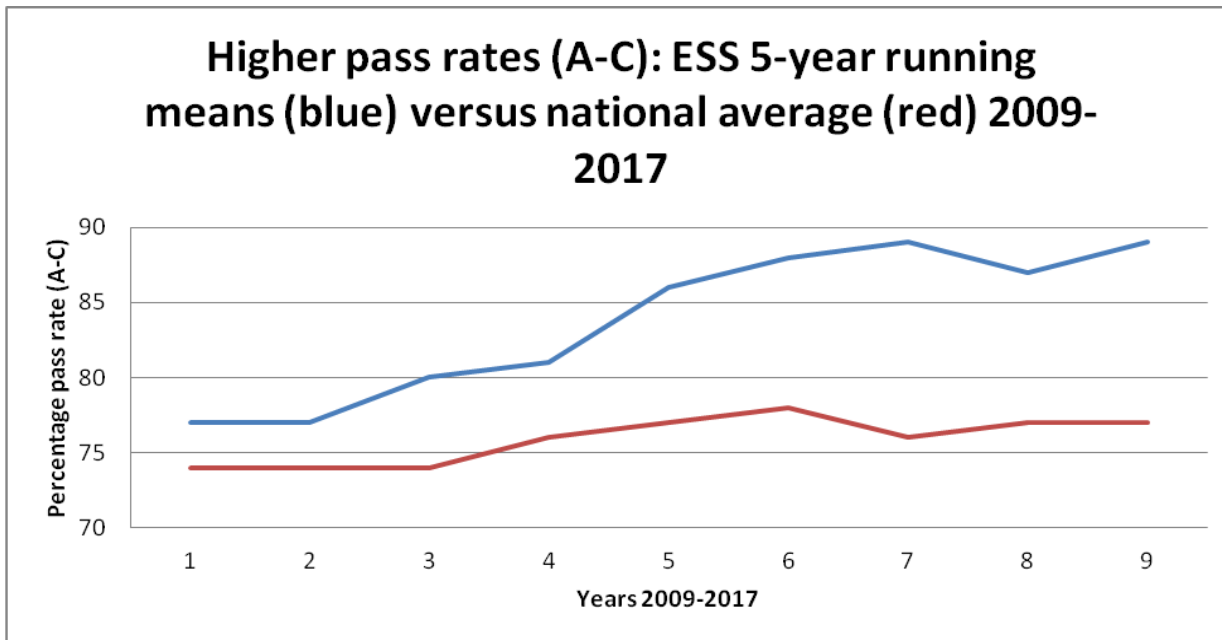


Figure 2: improving trend against national pass rate

## Exam results (EAL) 2016-2017

**FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH:** 1 ENTERED: 100% pass

100% pass at C1 level, Grade A (highest attainable level)

**CAMBRIDGE ADVANCED ENGLISH EXAM:** 1 ENTERED: 100% pass

100% pass at C2 level, Grade A (highest attainable level)

**IELTS EXAMS: 3 ENTERED**

pass at 8.5 of 9 bands (7.5 needed for university)

pass at 6 of 9 bands (5.5 needed for college)

pass at 5.5

## 5. Progress and achievement

### Kindergarten and Early Years

- A Baby Group with a dedicated, salaried member of staff has been established and fully integrated into the School for the first time. Running on one morning a week the group has spaces for up to eight babies and their carers. The Baby Group Leader has worked to create a quiet and homely environment where participants follow gentle rhythms, starting with a simple craft or other seasonal activity before sharing a wholesome homemade snack. When the babies have reached walking age they can move on to one of the Toddler Groups. This ensures that parents/carers and their children can continue their journey in familiar surroundings.
- The Kindergarten hosted a week long advisory visit from the UK Steiner Waldorf Early Years advisor. This was followed by another week's visit in September 2017. The first advisor's report highlighted that there is very good kindergarten practice at the School. Practitioners were encouraged to reflect on the rhythm of their day with the children; to allow more time for play to develop; to offer opportunities for participation in led activities and/or imaginative play; as well as to visit other Steiner Waldorf settings to observe other Steiner kindergartens in action, so as to broaden ideas and reflect on best practice.

- Together, the Kindergarten teachers and the Kindergarten Co-ordinator have produced a list of options for expanding and extending early years provision, so as to bring more families to the School; to better meet the needs of all families; and to meet the government requirement for increased child care provision. A document setting out various challenges and opportunities was presented to the College of Teachers and a working group—the Early Years Development Group—was established in October 2017. The EYDG meets at least monthly and brings together practitioners from across the Early Years to consider all the ways in which provision can be strengthened.
- The Kindergarten teachers have renewed their focus on differentiation between the age groups in each kindergarten, to achieve an appropriate balance between ages and to ensure that the numbers transitioning to Class 1 are less variable year on year. There are now a greater number of older children in each group, and the teachers have been able to create appropriate challenges and responsibilities for them, particularly as role models for the little children.
- Kindergarten resources are reviewed annually, in response to observation of children and records of progress, and augmented or altered as required. Development work is still required in the outdoor space—plans for next year include a new climbing frame to replace one that was removed, a shed, and improvements to the water feature. The Kindergarten would like to create a working group with parents, which will look at the overall development of the outdoor space, and bring to it a new level of awareness and care.
- In terms of ‘wellbeing’, the Kindergarten Co-ordinator and practitioners are aware of statutory requirements and codes of practice. All members of staff have up to date child protection training. The lead Child Protection Practitioner has given all staff an understanding of the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators, and their implications for practice. This information is included in induction of new staff. The School CP lead has created a pilot ‘Support for Wellbeing’ document, with the aim of clarifying the level of intervention in place for each pupil in the wellbeing areas.

## **Lower School**

- The appointment of a new, full-time eurythmy teacher has allowed this subject to be reintroduced throughout the Lower School. Improved classroom management has reduced the presence of Class Teachers in lessons, reducing their load.
- A timetabled ‘teaching and learning committee’ (TLC) for Class Teachers now allows them to meet at a dedicated time and share practice.
- The changes made to the organisation of the school orchestras in the last year have benefited a wide range of pupils. The full school orchestra has already benefitted from the junior orchestra as some of last year’s pupils have moved up and now contribute meaningfully with the experience that they have gained. Termly mini concerts for Classes 1-4 have been put in place, which have two



benefits. It gives pupils a goal to work towards and it enables the younger children in the audience to see what is possible if one takes up an instrument.

- The College of Teachers and the English as an Additional Language department have identified a need for the consistent assessment of the language skills of new applicants whose first language is not English. New procedures have been developed to ensure that pupils with EAL in the Lower School are able to receive appropriate support to raise their level of English to a point where they can access the curriculum.
- Class 8 performed a full production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Every member of the Class participated by acting, singing and dancing—including aerial acrobatics.
- A dedicated classroom assistant has been employed to work with Classes 6, 7 and 8. The assistant supports pupils with additional needs during Main Lessons and class lessons (Maths and English) in particular. This has reduced some of the pressure on Class teachers and enables particular pupils to better access the curriculum.

## Upper School

- Over the last year, teachers throughout the School have increasingly become aware—through CPD sessions—of the ACTS project (Acknowledging Creative Thinking Skills), a research initiative with hopes to develop innovative non-examination assessment tools and qualifications which would recognise creative thinking, interdisciplinarity and independent enquiry, as well as non-formal and informal learning. The School is considering whether to pilot one of the new qualifications.
- For the first time in recent years, the Careers Department invited a representative from SAAS (Student Awards Agency Scotland) to give an evening talk to Upper School parents and pupils (particularly in Classes 11 and 12). There was a very healthy turnout and those who attended reported that it was very useful. This will be repeated in future years.
- Visiting pupil numbers have increased over the last few years. A high number of our visitors come due to recommendations from pupils who have been here already. There is an on-going problem of not having enough boarding places for all interested applicants. On average, 3-4 Visitors per term sit a Cambridge exam while here and all have passed. Most of these pupils have passed at the highest level achievable. Exam results in EAL overall continue to be extremely strong (see above).
- The 2017 exam results were outstanding, with 100% of Higher results graded 'C' or better and with 82% of all Higher results graded 'A' or 'B'. See Figures 1 & 2 above for more details.
- Pupil numbers in the Upper School are high and stable (approximately 80; the exact number fluctuates with the arrival and departure of overseas students). Retention is good, with large Classes in 11 and 12. In autumn 2017 numbers in Class 12 were over 20 for the first time in several years.
- Behaviour in the Upper School has been very good. Anecdotally, teachers report the Upper School pupils are generally very pleasant, cooperative, conscientious and well-behaved—although lateness is an issue. Numbers in the weekly 'detention' during session 2016-2017 were unusually low. In the last few years the number of detention sessions has been cut to one a week due to lack of demand.

## Whole school

- The Management Team, working with colleagues who have the appropriate experience and expertise in other mandated groups, have facilitated the revision, redrafting and reformatting of all the school's main policies. Colleagues have been responsible for policies in three different categories: employment; safeguarding; educational. In the coming months, colleagues, Trustees and parents will be familiarised with the policies and encouraged to work actively with them. The completion of this project will be a significant achievement.
- A new website was launched in 2017. This is the first website to have been constructed based on comprehensive research involving current and prospective parents. It is significantly more adaptable and interactive than the old website and users have been very positive about their experience and 'journey'.
- Good relationships have been maintained between the School and *Education Scotland* through regular informal visits and meetings with Alan Urquhart; our new Link Inspector was introduced to us in November and we are looking forward to working with her over the coming years.
- The needs of new non-visiting pupils with EAL are being addressed throughout the school. This is done via Class Teachers in the Lower School (with methodology supplied by the EAL teacher) or in arranged EAL lessons. This provision is meeting the requirements of GIRFEC, the Equality Act and other requirements and should ensure more effective integration of EAL pupils, whose strengthened language skills will allow them a higher success rate in their learning.
- The Teacher Training Course was renamed Edinburgh Steiner Teacher Education Course (ESTEC). The course leaders continue to work with the GTC to construct a new course by 2020 which will be eligible for accreditation at Masters Level.
- The School role has increased significantly. The School Trustees attribute the rise to better teaching, better exam results and better marketing (including the website).
- Members of the Marketing Group are in the early stages of making contact with former pupils with a view to eventually establishing an Alumni Association. It is hoped that this will enrich pupil learning experiences and support the careers programme, through events and activities, acting as mentors/role models and providing work experience. It could also provide 'ambassadors', 'case studies' and news to support the marketing of the School. In future this holds the possibility of stimulating donations to fund, for example, capital development projects.
- The Staff Development Group has implemented a greater number of professional reviews for teaching staff, with reviews undertaken both internally and by external reviewers. This should ensure a higher quality of teaching and strengthen staff commitment to CPD.
- The Estates Group has completed a number of medium-sized projects, including a new disabled toilet, and also improved facilities in the handwork department.

- A project to centralise pupils' records (and store them securely) has been completed and is working work. This will meet the school's GIRFEC requirements and improve accessibility to information.

## 6. Summary of key priorities

- Establish an Early Years Development Group to provide a new vision for the Early Years, consistently high numbers in Kindergarten (60) and sustainably large numbers (20+) transitioning to Class 1.
- The Growing Spaces Project: the implementation of a series of development initiatives across the campus. Working within the constraints of the existing site, proposals include the renovation and extension of existing buildings and the rationalisation of available spaces. An initial priority will be the provision of 12 large classrooms, permitting pupil numbers to rise to about 300, and improved provision for the Kindergarten, Parent & Child, Playgroup and Baby Group.
- The School will undertake a pilot of the Certificate of Integrated Education, arising from the ACTS (Acquiring Creative Thinking Skills) project undertaken in partnership with schools from across Scandinavia during the last three years.
- The Teaching and Learning Community (TLC)—a group of teachers who work to deepen colleagues' understanding of the curriculum and raise pedagogical standards—will develop a checklist for whole class achievement (an agreed median) for Classes 5-8 based on the agreed UK Waldorf curriculum guide (the 'Yellow Book'). This will include a focus on literacy, numeracy and learning skills.

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