

Guidance for Appointing and Employing Eurythmy Teachers in Steiner Waldorf Schools

March 2017

These guidelines have been drawn up by the Initiative Group for Eurythmy Teachers in Education¹ to address issues surrounding Eurythmy teaching in Steiner Waldorf Schools today. The group comprises professional eurythmists from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland. These guidelines are based on practical studies (Peters Study², Jeuken Study³) of the situation on the ground in these countries and aim to give clear indications to promote the successful and sustainable future of Eurythmy teaching. This document is drawn up in conjunction with the Eurythmy Associations in Germany (Berufsverband der Eurythmisten Deutschland)⁴ and Holland (NVvE – De Nederlands Vereniging van Euritmisten), the Swiss Working Group for Eurythmy Teachers in Schools (AKEP – Arbeitskreis für Eurythmiepädagogik in der Schweiz), Eurythmy Association of Great Britain and Ireland, Eurythmy Association in Italy (AIE Associazione Italiana Euritmisti), the Section for the Performing Arts and the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum and the Association of Waldorf Schools in Germany (Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen).

Introduction

As a large generation of eurythmists are coming to the end of their teaching careers young colleagues with greatly altered training requirements, qualifications and new impulses are wanting to establish themselves as Eurythmy teachers in Steiner Waldorf schools.

Even if the number of Eurythmy students should gradually stabilise, the demand for able Eurythmy teachers is not nearly covered for the foreseeable future.

At the same time the Eurythmy situation in many schools has changed dramatically. The understanding of the role of Eurythmy teaching within Waldorf Pedagogy, the conditions of employment, the orientation period and especially the (often too short) length of employment of younger colleagues at our schools are combining to create a serious existential issue.

Because of these issues desperate calls for help from far and wide are regularly received by the professional Eurythmy associations, as well as by the Section for the Performing Arts.

The Initiative Group for Eurythmy Teachers in Education has therefore taken on the task of formulating, as clearly and well defined as possible, the necessary conditions and requirements for the teaching of Eurythmy. We are not undertaking an analysis of the status quo, but would like to present information on the basic requirements for keeping Eurythmy teaching healthy and alive. We are aware that in many places different conditions, for instance with regard to work load, or working with a speaker or musician, can be encountered.

We want to give the schools effective guidelines, so that they may gain a clear understanding of where their present practice sits with regards to these recommendations, how they can establish best practice and what the likely outcomes will be of following certain courses of action.

¹ IGEuTEd (Initiativkreis Pädagogische Eurythmie – IPEu); <http://www.ipeu.eurythmie.net>

² Peters, J. (2015) *Bericht zur Belastungssituation von Lehrkräften der Eurythmie* http://www.eurythmie-info.de/PDF/Eurythmiepaedagogik_Berufsbelastung_feb2015%20.pdf; basierend auf den Daten der WaldorflehrerInnenstudie: Randoll, D. (2013) *Ich bin Waldorflehrer* Wiesbaden, Springer VS, Springer Fachmedien

³ Jeuken, M. (2013) *Die Eurythmieabschlüsse in den Abschlussklassen der deutschen Waldorfschulen:*

Modelle, Veränderungen und Konsequenzen. Untersuchung unter Berücksichtigung der Erfahrungen von Eurythmielehrern im kollegialen und pädagogischen Umfeld Masterarbeit, vorgelegt an der Plymouth University, Bezug über den Autor: jeuken@freie-hochschule-stuttgart.de

⁴ <http://www.eurythmie-info.de/>

It will be seen that the footnotes support these recommendations. (The publications are in German.) They document basic principles of the Anthroposophical understanding of man, latest research results and common educational practice.

Some of the statements made about the profession of Eurythmy teacher are also valid for other professions. They are, however, mentioned here for the sake of completeness.

We hope that these recommendations will be a stimulus for other subject areas to formulate their specific needs and requirements as clearly as possible. In this way one can create dialogue on the social structures and conditions of employment in a Steiner Waldorf school.

Steiner Waldorf Education is soon to celebrate its centenary, which will also be the centenary of Pedagogical Eurythmy. At this auspicious time the Initiative Group for Eurythmy Teachers in Education wish to contribute these guidelines on behalf of Eurythmy, out of a sense of responsibility for the task of our profession. We have a duty of care to ensure that young Eurythmy colleagues will be enabled to carry out their teaching with enthusiasm, creative imagination and a sense of its vital importance in serving the development of children and young people.

Recommendations

1. Professional qualifications

A Eurythmy teacher should have a Eurythmy diploma from the basic training as well as a diploma in Pedagogical Eurythmy⁵. latter can also be attained part-time during the initial phase of work. The employing school should support the attainment of the latter qualification.

2. Contractual basis of teaching hours

1. In recognition of the differing work load situations at Steiner Waldorf schools, we recommend a full-time job to be considered as 18 Eurythmy teaching lessons.
2. When allocating classes bear in mind that teaching across a wide age range constitutes a heavier load.⁶
3. It is recommended that female Eurythmy teachers take extended maternity leave.⁷

3. Orientation for first time teachers

1. We recommend a reduced number of hours during orientation and, in any case, for first time teachers in their first year. This should not be reflected in the salary.
2. For orientation to the school life and internal structures, an internal mentor must be available.
3. The subject-related orientation through visiting classes, supervision and peer mentoring can be carried out by either an internal or an external mentor.⁸

⁵ Beschluss vom Januar 2016 des Verbundes der Eurythmieausbildungen innerhalb der Sektion für Redende und Musizierende Künste

⁶ siehe: Daniel, H. (2009), S.57f und S.224ff; Daniel, H. (2015), S.104ff (Nachweise siehe Endnote 5); Zur signifikanten Mehrbelastung im Eurythmieunterricht siehe: Peters, J. (2015), S. 12f (Nachweis siehe Endnote 1), Leonhardt, W. (2016) *Was es heißt, heute Eurythmie zu unterrichten* Abdruck in *Erziehungskunst / Waldorfpädagogik heute*, Heft 3 März 2016

⁷ Vgl.: *Eurythmie unterrichten in der Schwangerschaft* Empfehlung des Berufsverbandes der Eurythmisten in Deutschland e.V. / www.eurythmie-info.de und <http://www.eurythmie-info.de/PDF/Informationsblatt%20Schwangerschaft.pdf>

⁸ Mentorierungsangebote durch erfahrene EurythmiepädagogInnen gibt es unter anderem durch IPEU: mentor@eurythmie.net

4. In the orientation period (minimum 1 year) extracurricular activities such as administrative and leadership tasks in the school, that would normally be part of the job requirements, should be withheld.⁹

4. Teaching requirements

1. A co-operative working together of a musician and a eurythmist is part of the eurythmical concept in education – eurythmist and musician constitute a working team.
2. Joint lesson preparation and playing for performances of class Eurythmy work are part of the musician's job description.¹⁰
3. For final dress rehearsals and presentations with a spoken content, a speaker (speech formation artist) should be engaged where possible.
4. Eurythmy rooms (just like other spaces for movement and sport) have specifications. For groups of up to 20 pupils the following is recommended: 10m x 12m, x 3.5m high, with a sprung floor and changing rooms.¹¹
5. Basic teaching materials for Eurythmy include a piano, copper rods, copper or wooden balls and Eurythmy shoes for the children.

5. Educational framework

1. As a basic principle Eurythmy is taught throughout all grades from Kindergarden to Class 12 or 13, integrated in the timetable.
2. Gym and Games should not follow directly after Eurythmy in the timetable, neither should Music.¹²

6. Elements which will support eurythmy in the school

1. Working with the parents e.g. parent evenings, open lessons, Eurythmy courses for parents, talks and performances.¹³
2. After school Eurythmy club for children and young people.
3. Inviting external Eurythmy performances to the school for pupils, parents, colleagues and the local community.
4. Integration of Eurythmy into the college meetings.
5. Making Eurythmy performances of own colleagues possible as school events.
6. Eurythmy projects involving more than one class, subject or the whole school.
7. Creating an individual school Eurythmy profile.

⁹ Vgl.: Daniel, H. (2009), *Übung macht den Meister* Stuttgart, edition waldorf, S. 50 und 56 sowie Daniel, H. (2015) *Sein oder Nichtsein* Stuttgart, edition waldorf, S. 107ff

¹⁰ Vgl.: Daniel, H. (2009), S.40 und Daniel, H. (2015), S.89ff, Nachweise, siehe Endnote 5

¹¹ Vgl.: Rudolph, S. (2011) *Zur Geschichte der Eurythmie und Architektur der frühen Unterrichtsräume Marburg*, Tectum Verlag; hier: S. 113ff

¹² Vgl.: Steiner, R. (1986) *Menschenkenntnis und Unterrichtsgestaltung* (Acht Vorträge, 12.-19.06.1921), Dornach, Schweiz, R. Steiner Verlag, (GA 302, S. 45)

¹³ Vgl.: Daniel, H. (2009), S. 53, Nachweis siehe Endnote 5