



School of Spiritual Science

Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum

Annual Report 2023

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Section leadership

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Co-workers

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Financial matters, office and planning of lecture tours, Collegial Support project, conferences, Hague Circle, project management.

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PR, homepage, social media

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Conference preparation assistance, database updating, visits from seminars

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research project: Education and Resilience

CONTACT

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We welcome phone calls during office hours. The office is open on weekdays from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 6 pm

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The year 2023

The most important event for the Pedagogical Section in 2023 was the World Teachers' Conference which had been planned since 2019 but repeatedly postponed due to the pandemic. In April, around 1000 colleagues from 53 countries finally arrived at the Goetheanum and worked together on

Affirming – Nurturing – Trusting.

A celebration of encounters, of shared professional development and of the awareness that Waldorf schools and kindergartens are a global movement. Strengthening trust and world affirmation through education – how can this be achieved? Conversation groups, lectures and workshops offered opportunities for sharing experiences and ideas.

The big questions will inspire our further work, for instance the various projects we currently focus on.

The world has changed since the Covid pandemic: tensions and divisions are ubiquitous and with so much information around, people are quick to form emotional judgements. One basic question in today's pedagogical landscape is therefore, 'What does education need to be like today in order to convey insights into world history to this day, to inspire an understanding of other people, to enable the development of individual standpoints and finally to facilitate responsible ways of living in a rapidly changing world?'

Many innovative approaches came to light in numerous encounters.

Thank you all for such a rich time together!

From our work

Various topics are being worked on in events, conferences, on journeys, in projects and committees. See below for short reports from the various groups.

Events and travel

In the past year the section leaders offered lectures and work groups on topics such as diversity, faculty work and anthroposophy at pedagogical events in Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and the United States.

In 2023 the section leaders also actively supported the leaderships of organizations within the international Waldorf School and Kindergarten movement, including the board of directors of Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education, the board and faculty of the Hague Circle – International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education, the board and faculty of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), the international work group on the right to use the designations 'Waldorf' and 'Rudolf Steiner' and the interdisciplinary work group on pregnancy, birth and early childhood (Care 1). A broad field of activities!

A variety of events shall be briefly outlined:

Days for professional development (Weiterbildungstage)

These professional development days for Swiss colleagues focus on the topic

The Steiner School Curriculum: the question about 'Why'?

Short introductory presentations, followed by intensive work groups provided opportunities for working together on content. The evening was devoted to an impressive eurythmy performance on the message of environmental activist Julia Butterfly Hill.

Religion Teachers Group

In January, the international Religion Teachers Group met. In addition to working together on deepening selected topics, at times together with representatives of the Goetheanum Leadership, preparations started for the annual Trinity Conference for Religion Teachers which focused on 'Cultic practice as future strength – a hundred years' children's service'. More than 110 participants travelled to the Goetheanum in early June.

Meeting of the International Council

The members of the Hague Circle – the International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education – meet twice a year to discuss pedagogical questions, challenges and today's tasks in kindergartens, schools and teacher education. The group had its Ascension meeting in Barcelona; the November meeting was in Dornach as usual. The topic was 'Human – Earth – Cosmos' in connection with the current world situation and how this is brought to children and young people as part of their education.

Projects

Learning support teachers' conference

This year the learning support teachers' conference took place as a colloquium. We spent one weekend working with an international group of class teachers, therapists, educators and special needs teachers who all have different focal points in their work (extra lesson, learning support, artistic therapy, both in and outside of school) and who work with groups or one-to-one.

The meeting aimed, on the one hand, to share experiences of children who have special educational needs or developmental differences and to consider on the other hand how such sharing of experiences can happen in a wider context in the future within the profession or together with other education professionals. In conversations, the diversity of the profession and of the training situation became apparent. Between 'tutoring' at one end of the spectrum and therapeutic support at the other end, with learning support in between, there is a wide range of activities that aim for awareness of the sensorimotor development of each child, to support individual developmental processes and create conditions that enable unhindered learning for all children.

The group is planning to continue its work with a series of video lectures on learning support, a colloquium on learning support at the Goetheanum in October 2024 and a conference in 2025 for teachers, learning support teachers and therapists.

Digitality

Robin Schmidt continues the Digitality research project in collaboration with Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz. In the Pedagogical Section we also addressed the following questions in lectures and work groups: what do we need to focus on in education so that children and young people learn to deal autonomously with digital media and their environment? What are the conditions for incarnation today in a highly technologized world and how can we offer support in kindergartens and schools?

Interculturality

In the context of interculturality and curriculum, we devoted a colloquium to the teaching of history. There is hardly any other subject whose content and orientation are as strongly influenced by the place where it is taught as history. Many publications on the topic are already available.

Constanza Kaliks took part in a pedagogical conference on this question in Argentina where participants with various experiential backgrounds discussed the question together.

Anthropological foundations of education

Events commemorating courses on education given by Rudolf Steiner a hundred years ago (The Child's Changing Consciousness and Waldorf Education, GA 306, and A Modern Art of Education, GA 307), which will be continued, and a colloquium with experts from all over the world on questions of learning support focused on the anthropological foundations of education.

Education and Resilience

In 2023, Belle Leung from Alanus University took on a study on Education and Resilience. Ioana Viscrianu initially started this quantitative and qualitative study but left the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum in April 2023 to pursue a new career. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her active contribution.

Teacher Education

In the field of teacher education and professional development, the global ITEP network, which was established some years ago, continues to grow. Online meetings take place monthly. In September we worked with 25 colleagues at the Goetheanum on preparing an international teacher education conference in Dornach, which took place in April 2024. The aim is to improve the quality of teacher education by working together internationally and to raise awareness for today's tasks and challenges.

Collegial Support

As well as a trip to Russia to provide teacher education in the field of foreign language teaching, we were able to support a mentoring training in France this year.

Visits of seminars and faculties

Many graduates from kindergarten and teacher education courses and school faculties came to Dornach to get to know the Goetheanum in all its diversity. This year we enjoyed conversations with seventeen different visiting groups. We mostly provide guided tours in and around the Goetheanum, artistic activities and meetings with Section co-workers.

Organisation

The Pedagogical Section has two section leaders, Constanza Kaliks and Philipp Reubke, who are supported by a team of co-workers.

Carmen Gloria Godoy, who is in charge of Communications, maintains, develops and updates our homepage and sends out the Newsletter.

Roxane Fabry has joined the team as an assistant for conference organization, visits from seminars and database maintenance.

As office manager, Dorothee Prange continues to be responsible for secretarial tasks and for fostering connections with institutes and teachers around the world; she looks after the Section's finances and coordinates various tasks, meetings and important appointments.

Financial Matters

We are grateful for the donations we receive from foundations, schools and private donors.

We would like to mention in particular the funds received from the German and Swiss school movement that reach us via associations or work groups. The Austrian schools also support the Section with funding through their Waldorf schools' association. Other countries, organizations and individuals also send donations.

For projects the Section applies to various foundations for funding. We thank in particular the Evidenz Foundation in Switzerland which specializes in education and often supports our applications.

Funds donated by individual schools or persons which arrived in the Pedagogical Section's project account with the Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education in Berlin were very helpful indeed and contributed to funding the Education and Resilience project. A big thank you to all!

We gratefully received bigger and smaller financial contributions from various foundations for the big World Teachers' Conference. This enabled us to help many participants from soft-currency countries to travel to Switzerland and extend invitations for the big evening events. A contribution also arrived in the office for the additional organizational expenses which meant that the conference broke even!

Statement of costs 2023 in CHF

	expenditure (rounded figures)	income (rounded figures)
Pedagogical Section		
salaries	361'000	
administration	2'500	
grants for institutions	9'500	
travel expenses of section leaders and (freelance) co-workers		
travel costs	31'000	
reimbursement of travel expenses		- 25'000
fees/donations		- 42'000
Conferences/colloquia		
Interculturality colloquium/Argentina conference C. Kaliks	6'500	- 6'500
Learning support colloquium	5'000	- 20'000
Reserves	15'000	
World Teachers' Conference	297'000	- 297'000 (- 107'000 project-related and private donations)
Teacher education colloquium	4'000	- 21'000
reserves	17'000	
(infrastructural costs Goetheanum	4'900	
Visits from seminars to the Goetheanum		
donations to the Section	14'500	- 18'000
Collegial support		
travel expenses	1'600	
project-related donations from 2022		- 1'500
International Forum (Hague Circle)		
meeting Barcelona/Dornach	25'000	
project-related donations		- 20'000
other donations		- 14'000
reserves	9'000	

	expenditure (rounded figures)	income (rounded figures)
Projects		
project-related donations		- 95'000
research project Resilience and Education	58'000	- 30'000
Digitality project	no expenses in 2023	
Donations and foundation funds		
private donations		- 3'000
institutional donations from schools, associations, etc.		- 37'000
Donations German Association of Waldorf Schools (Bund)		- 132'000
Donation Rudolf Steiner schools' association Switzerland (ARGE)		- 28'000
forwarded donations	17'500	
Religion Teachers Conference	19'000	- 22'000
Total	898'000	- 812'000

