



Thank you for getting in touch with Beechtree Steiner Initiative. We hope you will find the following information useful, which tells you more about Beechtree and some ideas behind the Steiner approach to the early years. Please also find enclosed an application form if you wish to register your child for the Parent & Child groups or for the Kindergartens.*

Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information on 0113 345 5858 or email enquiries@leeds-steiner.org.uk

Who are we?

Since 1999, a group of parents and teachers have worked together to develop Steiner Waldorf education in Leeds. We started as a Parent & Child group and then became a small playgroup, which was based in Headingley. In September 2001, we opened our first kindergarten at Stainbeck Community Hall, LS7. In September 2009, our numbers had grown enough for us to open a second kindergarten in LS6 and we increased our Parent & Child groups across both sites. In September 2010 we moved our LS6 groups to our new sole-use premises on Moor Road, Headingley, as well as continuing our provision at Stainbeck. From September 2012, we moved all our kindergartens and Parent & Child groups onto our premises at Moor Road and now from September 2017 all of Beechtree is moving to new premises to 192a Chapeltown Road, right next to the Sikh Centre.

We are an ever-growing community, who feel committed to creating an unpressured, unhurried learning environment for our children.

Check Beechtree's website www.leeds-steiner.org.uk where you can keep in touch with developments and activities.

About the Parent and Child Groups

The Parent & Child (P&C) groups run every day of the week and the groups meet each week at our new premises on Chapeltown Road (LS7), term-time only. Children from birth to 3 are welcome with their parents or carers. We also have specific Outdoor P&C groups, as well as one for just babies (birth-one). See below for the timetable.

We follow a structure similar to a kindergarten session, which enables the children to become familiar with the rhythm of the morning and to feel secure within it. We begin with a craft or baking activity and allow the children time to play, explore and be with each other. We then tidy up, eat snack together, sing songs and finish by listening to a story. It is a chance for parents and children to meet in a gentle, welcoming atmosphere. We ask each family to bring a piece of fruit to share.

To register your interest to visit a P&C group, please fill in the enclosed Application form. Once we have received your Application form, you will be offered a time to visit a session. If you enjoy the session you will be added to the Waiting list. You will be contacted when a place on the Register becomes available. Once on the Register, we will ask for the full termly fees at the start of each term.

Fees are £6 per session (or £7 for siblings) per week if you pay within the first two weeks of term. The fee enables us to train and pay an experienced and professional leader, provide quality equipment, materials and drinks. If this fee or payment arrangement is difficult for your family, please speak with the Parent & Child leader at your visit to discuss a concessionary rate or different payment arrangement.

Parent & Child Sessions:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time of session	10am-12pm Indoor group	10am-12pm Indoor & Outdoor group	10am-12pm Indoor group	10am-12pm Indoor & Outdoor group	10am-12pm Indoor & Outdoor group

Beechtree Open mornings and evenings:
 Please see our online calendar at www.leeds-steiner.org.uk
Please contact the office on 0113 345 5858 to book a place.

We hold open evenings twice each term. We welcome any parents, parents-to-be, teachers, child-minders and anyone interested to an open talk and discussion.

The sessions are particularly helpful for parents who are interested in the kindergartens for their child, and will hopefully answer many of the questions parents have about our setting.

One of the kindergarten teachers and/or the Early Years Coordinator will talk about the Steiner educational approach for the early years. Some parents of children in the kindergarten will also be there to discuss and answer questions about their child's, and their own experiences of a Steiner setting.

We ask that you find childcare for these sessions.

About the Kindergartens

Children are admitted at 3 and may stay in the kindergarten until Class 1 entrance (6½ -7) or until primary school age. In our kindergartens the children grow in a secure caring homely environment, surrounded by quality natural toys and materials which allows the children to develop physical and social skills and creative impulses, together with imagination and fantasy which all help to form a foundation for a healthy adult life.

Our two kindergartens share our indoor and outdoor space, taking advantage of our beautiful indoor room and our outdoor space. The groups are mixed-age, with 3-6 year olds.

Please see "The Rhythm of the Day" sheet for more information about a kindergarten session.

We are fully registered with Ofsted and are registered as a Steiner Early Years Centre with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.

Opening times for both Beechtree Kindergartens:-

Min 3 morning sessions required!

	Breakfast Club	MORNING	AFTERNOON*
Monday	8.00 – 8.45	Kindergarten (8.45 - 1.45pm)	Afternoon Care (1.45 - 5pm)
Tuesday	8.00 – 8.45	Kindergarten (8.45 - 1.45pm)	Afternoon Care (1.45 - 5pm)
Wednesday	8.00 – 8.45	Kindergarten (8.45 - 1.45pm)	Afternoon Care (1.45 - 5pm)
Thursday	8.00 – 8.45	Kindergarten (8.45 - 1.45pm)	Afternoon Care (1.45 - 5pm)
Friday		Kindergarten (8.45 - 1.45pm)	

Reservation and Enrolment procedures:

1. Return your completed Application form to us – its receipt will be acknowledged by letter/ email
2. Arrange attendance at a kindergarten open morning/ evening
3. We will keep you informed of your child's place on the waiting list
4. We will contact you at least 12 weeks before your child would be due to start, to offer kg place
5. If you would like to take up the place, you will be sent a Reservation Form, incl. request for £100 deposit to secure a place for your child in kindergarten
6. The kindergarten teacher will contact you regarding 2 settling-in visits to KG & arrange a home visit
7. Once your place is confirmed we will invite you to a New Parents Induction session – we will tell you more about the practical side of the kindergarten, including introducing you to our policies, how the Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) works, how Beechtree runs as an organisation and how families can be involved. It is also an opportunity to ask us any questions you may have.

8. Our finance administrator will discuss details of the kindergarten fees and FEEE payment etc
9. SENCO will make arrangements for additional support for you or your child if appropriate.

Kindergarten Admissions:

We receive kindergarten applications up to a year in advance of your child starting kindergarten. At the start of the term prior to your child starting, we will send a Reservation form to ask for a deposit to secure your child's place. *We advise a minimum of 3 morning sessions of attendance for each child.*

Admission to the kindergarten is by Application form and visit to the Kindergarten with parent/ carer and child a term before the child is due to start. This enables the parent and teacher to assess whether the child is ready to attend kindergarten. A discussion will take place at this occasion/ at a date as soon after as possible, to determine this decision.

We admit children into the kindergarten the term after their third birthday, if both the parents and teachers are satisfied that the child is ready. Readiness for kindergarten includes showing increasing independence e.g. in potty training, in dressing themselves, in eating and at play. It also includes the beginnings of the ability to socialize with other children, as well as an increasing level of concentration i.e. for stories and songs. *It is requested that children are potty-trained when they start at kindergarten.*

These procedures will be used alongside our Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy, which recognizes all children are special and have individual needs.

Further requirements:

We also recommend that a parent or carer attends a Working Group or Parent Meeting before their child is assigned a place. A Parent Representative will contact applicants regarding this.

Kindergarten Fees:

All 3 and 4 years olds are eligible for the **Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)** which can be offset against kindergarten fees. Beechtree will claim this grant on your behalf and deduct it from your fees at the beginning of each term. A child is eligible for FEEE from the term after their 3rd birthday until the end of the term in which the child turns 5.

Current Kindergarten fees are £24.00 for the morning session (5 hours) and £15.60 for Afternoon Care (3.25 hours). We provide Breakfast Club from 8am Monday to Thursday for £5.00 / session if you book for the whole term. A little bit of extra is added if you book as a one-off.

We also have a small charge for the lunches and snacks which we provide. The lunches are made in the kindergartens each day with locally sourced and organic ingredients, providing a wholesome and nutritious meal for the children. The cost for the lunch is £2.20 per day and for the snacks is 50p in Breakfast Club and in Afternoon care. If you are in receipt of benefits which would entitle you to free school meals, the charge is waived.

For further info on the FEEE and kindergarten costs, please call Andrea Kerridge, our Finance Administrator on 0113 345 5858 or email her at finance@leeds-steiner.org.uk

Working parents can also receive Working Tax Credit to help towards the costs of the kindergarten. Parents apply for this themselves.

Fees for the kindergarten are set when they start in Kindergarten and are set for the whole year payable in monthly or termly installments. Fees are to be paid by direct debit or by monthly standing order to Beechtree. Fees are based on the agreed number of days attended and are payable even if the child does not attend (e.g. because of illness or holiday taken during term time). We require one

half-term's notice in writing to terminate a child's place or to change days, otherwise the fees will be charged for that half of term.

We rely on fundraising and additional parental contributions to allow us to pay for the cost of the premises, the teachers' wages and equipment. We have a scheme whereby we ask our supporters to set up a monthly standing order into our account, even £1 a month helps us! As we are a registered charity we also use the "Gift Aid scheme". If you would like more details of this, please contact Andrea Kerridge.

Visitors: Parents, teachers and other interested people are welcome to visit our kindergarten by appointment. If you would like to bring your child to experience the kindergarten space and meet the teachers, we would be happy to welcome you. Please contact the office on **0113 345 5858** to arrange this.

Beechtree Parents: We feel it is essential for the teachers and parents to work together in order to provide the best care for their children. It is vital for us all to make links, so we can have a greater understanding and whole picture of each child and build a healthy school community together. Parents are encouraged to take part and are welcome.

We include parents in our celebrations of festivals, birthdays and other occasions. We may ask them to come in to the group to tell a story about themselves or perhaps share a skill with the children. They are also involved with and contribute to the general daily maintenance of the kindergarten, such as washing up or tidying away after a session. We invite each parent to be part of a working group, where they help with "Groundforce" days, with our internal and external "Communications", or partake in our essential fundraising activities.

The energy and skills of the parents are among our most precious resources. Parents and friends of Beechtree contribute to the present running and future vision of the Initiative. Parents are involved in "Working Groups" which include Vision & Development, Marketing/ Communications, Fundraising and Buildings & Grounds. These groups feed into the Steering Group, who work closely with Beechtree Trustees and staff. As a registered charity, the Trustees hold overall responsibility and decision making for the organisation.

Please see minutes of meetings and other notices on our group noticeboards to see how you can help out.

Beechtree Steiner Initiative is a non-profit making organisation, which is a registered Charity (no 1119694) and company limited by guarantee.

Current plans for a school: Our long term aim has always to been to have a Steiner school here in Leeds. This year we have been successful to get approved as an independent school and are starting one from September 2017. At present the nearest Steiner Schools are in York or Hebden Bridge and we encourage parents to visit the schools during their regular open days, as this gives a good indication of a thriving Steiner school!

Beechtree Steiner Initiative
192a Chapeltown Road, Leeds LS7 4HZ

The main entrance to the Beechtree Kindergartens and Parent & Child groups is at 192a Chapeltown Road. Right next to the Sikh temple and in the same building as the Sikh Centre. The Sikh temple, Beechtree and the Sikh centre share a large large car park, right in front of the building. Our visitor's entrance is on your left hand side of the building right in front of you as you face the Sikh Centre sign. Please ring the doorbell for access to report to reception.

For further information on Steiner education, please see:

<http://www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk/> The SWSF is the membership organisation for all the Steiner schools and independent Steiner Early Years settings in the UK and Ireland. This website provides information for parents, teachers (incl teaching vacancies and info on training), as well as a comprehensive list of UK schools, details of the Steiner curriculum, newsletters, testimonials, resources etc.

<http://www.ecswe.org/wren/> WREN is intended to be a way of communication between all those interested in research into Steiner Waldorf education and also into educational topics that have a bearing on Steiner education.

<http://www.waldorfanswers.org> This is a private site, intending to provide answers about Waldorf education, in depth, that parents and prospective parents may have, and to clear up some of the misconceptions that may exist about Waldorf education. The intention is to provide a straightforward presentation of the facts about Waldorf education.

Information last updated June 2017