



History and Purpose

***Steps to Membership
For
Waldorf Schools***

Formulated April 2003

Guiding Principle of the Movement*

From the outset it should be understood by any school or institution seeking membership, association or affiliation with the Federation that Waldorf education is based on Anthroposophy, the name given to the science of the spirit initiated by Rudolf Steiner. Dr. Steiner expressed his intention for a new art of education in these words to the founding teachers of the original Waldorf School in Stuttgart on August 20, 1919:

“We wish to transform that which can be gained out of Anthroposophy into concrete educational practice.”

The Federation seeks to support and encourage the work of any school whose teachers are in conscious and heartfelt agreement with Rudolf Steiner’s original intention and who are committed to work out of the spiritual impulse of Anthroposophy.

* With acknowledgement to the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America"

History and Purpose of the Federation

Federation History

In the 1970’s several people came together out of an inspiration to work together with Ernst Wegerif when he was in the country, teaching at Michael Mount School. This initial group formed but it was when Hans Georg Krauch was in South Africa and his stay coincided with a visit by Francis Edmunds that the Federation Council was formally started.

Under the direction of these two people the council was instated in 1976. It was Hans Georg Krauch who took the responsibility of appointing the first council members who met just before the third National Teachers Conference held at Bloublommetjieskloof Farm in August 1976. Together they clarified their role as a council and Francis Edmunds wrote the federation verse which is still in use. He had the impulse to invigorate the Federation with new strength and delivered the verse with a depth of intent to strengthen their resolve. Hans Georg Krauch established the principle that members were not to represent their schools but the movement as a whole.

The practice of meeting before, during or after the annual conference began with the formation of council in 1976 and continues to this day

The Federation at Present

The Southern African Federation of Waldorf Schools is an association of independent schools and teacher training institutions, which work out of the pedagogical indications of Rudolf Steiner.

It is a non-profit organisation whose purpose is to further education as expounded by Rudolf Steiner and to encourage, assist and guide both new and existing Waldorf schools.

In 2000 the Federation was incorporated under the Companies Act of 1973. This enables it to ensure that the names 'Waldorf' and 'Rudolf Steiner' are only used by schools and institutions which are based on Rudolf Steiner education as recognised by the Federation. Only schools, which have been recognised as Established or Developing Schools may use the words 'Waldorf' or 'Rudolf Steiner' in their names.

The Federation does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex or religion in employment or in the selection of its council. All member schools and institutes have written non-discrimination policies.

The Federation supports the work of the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science, which provides guidance and enrichment work to member schools and institutions.

In the movement at present there are 19 Waldorf schools in the country of which five include a high school component and one, which is a kindergarten only. In addition one school in Cape Town offers specialised education. These schools reflect a wide range of cultural groups. Four of them are situated in the township areas of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Hermanus and one is in a remote rural village in the Limpopo region.

There are also a number of pre-school educare initiatives which are not Waldorf schools but which actively seek guidance and enrichment from teachers and trainers in the Waldorf movement.

The movement includes a state-accredited teacher-training centre in Cape Town and two informal training initiatives. These are attached to the Michael Mount School in Johannesburg and Roseway School in Durban.

Federation Administration

The Federation Council meets in conference two to three times a year to share reports on the schools, discuss crucial issues, work through policies, conduct the business of the Federation and to manage financial matters. The federation employs two co-ordinators who carry out the work of the council as well as an administrative co-ordinator. It is assisted further by a northern and southern regional council. These bodies meet once a term to share reports on all the schools, to consider matters of regional importance and to carry out directives of the council when required. Both teachers and administrators represent each school in the region.

The Role of the Federation Council

- To promote and assist Waldorf Schools
- To serve the vision of the whole Federation
- To offer guidance, interest and encouragement to organizations which are members of the Federation and also to individuals who are active in Waldorf pedagogy.
- To be the voice for Waldorf education in the country.
- To support the annual National Teachers Conference which is hosted in rotation by the member schools

Financial Policies and Procedures

Every school in the movement pays dues, which are based on a graded pupil levy. Assistance from the Federation's travel fund which is funded by a teacher travel levy is provided to teachers wishing to travel to the National Teachers Conference on request submitted to the administrative co-ordinator.

The Accreditation Process

In 2002 the Federation responded to requests from the younger schools for formal registration by setting out the steps to accreditation as members of the Federation, which are outlined in this document. The intention is to support schools in a process of evaluation that is based on achieving the Minimum Criteria for Waldorf Schools as adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the

Federation in April 2000. The tasks involved in achieving the minimum criteria have proved to be daunting, particularly for the younger schools. The steps to membership are intended as a guide that provides the benchmarks.

Accreditation is viewed as a commitment to on-going school improvement in a structured, systematic manner. The structure and validation would be supplied by the Federation, which would work co-operatively with each school in a spirit of positive support to identify the achievements of the school in terms of the minimum criteria and to determine the classification for that school accordingly. Once the school is registered as either a New Initiative, a Developing or an Established school the Federation Council will continue to assist and guide the school to continue the next steps, or to initiate a re-evaluation.

There are six main criteria which are reflected in the steps to membership. Each criterion develops in complexity as the school moves from one category of membership to another. They are as follows:

1. Commitment to Waldorf Education
2. Standards of Waldorf Education
3. Administration
4. Legal Requirements
5. Financial Planning
6. Future Planning

Steps to Membership

Once a core group establishes the intention to become a Waldorf school it should apply to the Federation for membership as a new initiative school. Thereafter, a school passes through the stages of membership as it matures and culminates in the possibility of being recognised as a full member.

There are four categories of membership with the Federation. These are:

1. New Initiative Schools
2. Developing Schools
3. Established Schools
4. A Registered Kindergarten or Playgroup which elects to remain as such without developing into a primary school.

1. A New Initiative School

Step One: The Letter of Intention

The core group of parents initiates classification by writing a letter of intention to the Federation Council. This letter should identify the feeder group for the school and the type of school seeking classification, i.e.

Playgroup only

Kindergarten only

Kindergarten intending to grow into a primary school immediately

Kindergarten intending to grow into a primary school in the near / far future.

Further requirements for this letter are included in the Guidelines, pp 5 and 6.

Step Two: Requirements to Open a School

The Federation responds to this letter by providing the list of requirements to open a school and by making available a copy of the Federation Guidelines, which deal in greater detail with the requirements below.

The Requirements

- The teachers and the founding body should be able to show a commitment to the ideals and practices of Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy and a wish to support and contribute to Waldorf Education in South Africa and the worldwide movement. This should include a written statement of intent
- A School mentor or experienced Waldorf teacher on the staff, who is approved by the Federation Council.
- Trained teacher/s who are registered with SACE. Teachers untrained in Waldorf must be engaged in a Federation-approved training.
- Adequate salaries for the teacher/s and staff, including the mentor.
- The costs of the school mentor.
- Federation levies.
- A letter sent to the Federation requesting classification as a New Initiative School, with evidence of all of the above.

- The school should have knowledge of the Department of Education requirements for opening a school and should comply with their requirement for a minimum number of 20 pupils.

Step Three: Application for New Initiative School Status

Within the first or second year the school is expected to apply for classification as a New Initiative School. In the interim the school will not use the names Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner in its name but will use “**Provisional** Waldorf School” or the words, “using Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner principles”. The requirements for classification are as follows:

Requirements for Classification

The requirements listed below are described in greater detail in the Federation Guidelines

- A demonstrated commitment to the ideals and practices of Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy and a wish to support and contribute to Waldorf Education in South Africa and the worldwide movement.
- A School mentor or experienced Waldorf teacher on the staff.
- Trained teacher/s, who are registered with SACE. Teachers untrained in Waldorf must be engaged in a Federation-approved training.
- A Development Plan for the next five years
- A Financial Plan including adequate budgeting for all staff and for Federation levies.
- A Publicity Plan.
- Incorporation as a non-profit organisation with a board of trustees and a constitution.
- A Vision and Mission Statement.
- The school should have informed the Department of Education that they are in existence and are working towards compliance with their requirements.

Step Four: Federation Council Visit

On receipt of the above letter the Federation Council members will be delegated to will pay the school a visit, interview the teachers, the mentor and other staff and will discuss the above documents. Once they are satisfied that the necessary steps have been taken they will recommend to the full council that the school is eligible to be a New Initiative School.

The Federation Council will then grant a “New Initiative School” status which the school can hold for a minimum of five years. Such a school will not use Waldorf in its name but will use “**Provisional** Waldorf School” or the words, “using Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner principles”. Correspondence may state, “Registered with the Federation as a New Initiative School”

- Kindergartens and playgroups, not wishing to grow into a primary school may request classification as a Registered Kindergarten / Playgroup. The steps for this are also included at the end of this document.

2. Changing Status to a Developing School

Step One: Preparatory Work

In at least five years the new initiative school works to achieve the following:

- Compliance with requirements for registration with the Department of Education.
- Preparation towards forming a College of Teachers.
- Revisit of the vision and plan for the future. If this plan includes moving from a primary school to a high school the same procedures apply for starting a new school. See the Federation Guidelines.
- Continued financial planning.
- Compliance with the Minimum Criteria of the Federation, see Guidelines pp 13 to 16.

Step Two: Application for Developing School Status

After a minimum of five years a new initiative school may apply for registration as a Developing Waldorf School. The school is required to send the Federation a letter of intention stating this. The Federation will respond by informing the school of the requirements.

Requirements for Classification

- The following structures in place that operate in accordance with the Federation Guidelines:
A College of Teachers

- A Board of Trustees
- Effective administration and procedures. These as outlined in the Federation Guidelines.
- Financial planning which includes:
 - A record of financial stability in the preceding five years.
 - A plan for the future
 - Federation levies
 - Mentoring costs
- Registration with the Department of Education
- A vision and plan for the future.
- A school mentor and a mentoring plan for new teachers.
- Demonstrated application of Waldorf teaching standards under the guidance of the school mentor.
- Experienced Waldorf teachers on the staff.
- A record of stability in all the above areas.

Step Three: Federation Council Visit

On receipt of the above letter the Federation Council members will be delegated to will pay the school a visit, interview the teachers, the mentor and other staff and will discuss the above documents. Once they are satisfied that the necessary steps have been taken they will recommend to the full council that the school is eligible for a Developing School status which the school can hold for a minimum of five years. Such a school may use the words, "Waldorf" or "Rudolf Steiner" in its name. Correspondence may state, registered with the Federation as a Developing Waldorf School.

4. Changing Status to an Established School

Step One: Preparatory Work

In the following five years the Developing School works to achieve the following:

- The acquisition, or long lease on land.
- Regular vision planning.

- Regular financial planning with budgeting for mentorship costs and levies.
- Transition from support and evaluation by the school mentor to establishment of the school's own evaluation procedure.
- Provision of regular teacher enrichment programs.

Step Two: Application for Established School Status

After no less than five years a Developing Waldorf School can apply for registration as a Full Member School. The school is required to send the Federation a letter of intention stating this and the Federation will respond by informing the school of the requirements.

Requirements for Classification

- Security of tenure on land.
- A record of sound financial management for the duration as a developing Waldorf school.
- A vision and plan for the future and regular vision planning.
- Ability to pay Federation levies.
- Experienced Waldorf teachers on the staff.
- A process of evaluation in place for all staff.
- Effective and regular teacher enrichment.
- A mentoring program in place for new teachers
- Regular research and curriculum review
- A school that is funded by an outside funder must eventually become self funded.

It is intended that eventually a full member school will have the willingness and the capacity to become a mentor school to another school by assisting and supporting them to change status.

Step Three: Federation Council Visit

On receipt of the above letter the Federation Council members will be delegated to will pay the school a visit, interview the teachers, the mentor and other staff and will discuss the above documents. Once they are satisfied that the necessary steps have been taken they will recommend to the full council that the school is eligible for a Full Member School status which the school can hold for a minimum of five years. Such a school may use the words, "Waldorf" or "Rudolf Steiner" in its name. Correspondence may state, registered with the Federation as a Full Member Waldorf School.

3. Changing Status to a Registered Kindergarten / Playschool

Step One: Preparatory Work

A kindergarten or playschool that has been registered as a New Initiative School will, in the next five years, work to achieve the following:

- Compliance with requirements for registration with the Department of Education
- A whole school mentor or experienced Waldorf teacher on the staff, who is prepared to act as mentor and will evaluate teaching standards.
- Revisit of the vision and plan for the future.
- Compliance with the conditions of employment and financial control, as stated in the Minimum Criteria of the Federation, see Guidelines pp 13 to 16.
- Continued financial planning.

Step Two: Application as Registered Kindergarten/Playgroup

After a minimum of five years a new initiative school may apply for registration as a Registered Kindergarten / Playschool. The school is required to send the Federation a letter of intention stating this. The Federation will respond by informing the school of the requirements.

Requirements for Classification

- A Board of Trustees.
- Effective administration and procedures.
- Financial planning which includes:
 - A record of financial stability in the preceding five years.
 - A plan for the future
 - Federation levies
 - Mentoring costs
- Registration with the Department of Education.
- A vision and plan for the future.
- Evidence to show that teacher/s are sufficiently experienced to teach without support from a school mentor and an evaluation procedure in place
- A record of stability in all the above areas.

Step Three: Federation Council Visit

On receipt of the above letter the Federation Council members will be delegated to will pay the school a visit, interview the teacher/s, the mentor and other staff and discuss the above documents. If all is satisfactory they will grant a “Registered Kindergarten / Playgroup” status. Such a school may use the words, “Waldorf” or “Rudolf Steiner” in its name. Correspondence may state, Registered with the Federation as a Registered Kindergarten / Playgroup.