



The Waldorf Curriculum for Classes 11 and 12



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Waldorf Curriculum in Classes 11

The Class 11 student is increasingly aware of their own sense of social responsibility having, over the year, gained greater objectivity in their feelings and thus the capacity to form judgements based on greater balance and insight along with a more holistic understanding of the world around them. Their increased social perception, will develop greater tolerance of themselves and others, but also greater understanding and acceptance of their own limitations as well as the limitations of others. One might call this the acquisition of emotional judgement.

They will have greater insight into inter-disciplinary understanding and become more self-directed in the questioning of their own role, their own questions about themselves and their future path.

The intellect is no longer at the mercy of the inner feelings; students are able to employ a far greater objectivity with regard to themselves and the world. They are able to comprehend the laws of the outer world in minute detail.

In language studies, the analytical and manipulative power now matches the creative power, and they are able to argue the finer points of any point of view with scholastic delight. It is precisely at this point that students may experience inner loneliness and questions as regards their worth as human beings within the general scheme of things; it is at this point that they have questions concerning their own destinies.

For this reason, the “Parzival” Main Lesson is of great importance, for here students can explore those life questions which cannot simply be answered by the intellect.

The teachers’ pedagogical aims for Class 11 are:

- To develop and guide capacities for critical thinking
- To develop a reflective questioning attitude to the world of phenomena and opinions
- To develop an understanding of the individual in relation to the community
- To craft personal opinion with awareness, reasoning and reflection
- To retain an attitude of reverence for life in all its manifestations
- To be given time to reflect on philosophical issues as they arise in relation to their studies
- To develop a personal sense of aesthetics and style
- To develop an awareness of the internal processes of phenomena
- To encourage free and healthy individualization
- To explore the meaning of destiny: what have I got to offer the world?

Waldorf Curriculum in Classes 12

The Class 12 student has climbed the first mountain of their early education and has a certain overview that enables them to develop individualised judgement and to have confidence to explore their own individual aspirations for their future. Such questions might include what picture they have of community, their role as citizens, the ethical values that underpin their ideals and how they might engage with and develop these. Also, how they as resilient individuals, can make an impact on social, economic, political and technical matters and what responsibility they will take in order to contribute towards shaping the future.

It is in this last year that one hears all the “tones” of the preceding years sounding in harmony, where the young adults of this age are themselves as members of a greater world where the moral and the scientific, the inner and the outer, form a single whole. The lessons in this year form the grand synthesis of the whole education, with material which gives a broad overview and understanding of the whole curriculum.

The students stand firmly in the contemporary age, taking the best of the past into a future which is yet to unfold. It is here that one sees the fruits of a Waldorf education in young adults who stand courageously and with integrity as free individuals, secure within values which give meaning to life.

The teachers’ pedagogical aims for Class 12 are:

- To perceive the inter-dependence of phenomena, processes and human endeavours
- To be able to acknowledge one’s own strengths, weaknesses, capacities, learning needs, learning style
- To be aware of themselves as members of a world community
- To feel in command of their future direction/destiny
- To have well-developed moral, ethical and personal standards
- To make visible and refine their areas of strengths
- To find appropriate ways of dealing with their areas of weaknesses
- To be able to stand by the fruits of their creation/productivity
- To foster a sense of one’s potential to make a difference

Main Lessons Class 11

This section includes examples of Main Lessons taught in Classes 11. These lessons are studied in 3-4 week blocks.

ART AND ROMANTICISM

Students are introduced to the artistic feelings/responses of the Romantics on individual freedom, ideas about slavery and equality, concerns about the effects of the industrial revolution, the taste for the remote and the exotic, and the return to nature and exhortation of the ideas of the beautiful, the picturesque and the sublime. Throughout the lessons students experience these different ideas through artistic media such as drawing and painting, via dialogues with works of Art. Initially they are guided by those era artists like Blake, Turner, Constable, Delacroix and Gericault, Fuseli, Goya, Caspar David Friedrich and others. When focusing on landscape, Kidbrooke Park will become a valuable and unique resource of a standing example of those epoch echoes. The closure of the main lesson addresses a contemporary approach to the theme, introducing contemporary neo-romantic artistic expressions, including short clips of contemporary films and music.

BOTANY

The Botany Main Lesson offers another opportunity for students to delve in to the plant world once more but in a more holistic way. The Class 11 Botany Main Lesson focuses on evolution of the plant kingdom from early plant life into simple non-vascular, spore-producing plants to larger, vascular, seed-producing, flowering/non flowering plants. Students look at the characteristics and classification of the plant kingdom. The essence of the Main Lesson is to discover the interconnectedness of the plant world with all other life. This is achieved through individual and group projects, researched and presented to the rest of the Class on a specific area related to plants; its history and use in a given context, the effects on society / country and the economic impact. Students also have an opportunity to explore Goethean observation of a plant of their choice over a period of a week, which culminates in writing a short piece of poetry and producing an artistic piece using light sensitive chemicals and watercolour, paint or chalk pastels. Opportunity to develop practical skills is also possible by trying to extract lavender oil through distillation.

COSMOLOGY

From the Big Bang to Civilisations, and everything in between, the Cosmology main lesson explores the birth of stars, elements, planets and the evolution of life including human beings. Through conversation and discussion, we will learn the scientific thoughts and Ideas about our evolving Universe.

DESIGN AND INVENTION

A hands-on approach to introduce the basic concepts of robotics, focusing on the construction and programming of controlled and autonomous mobile robots. The students will work in groups, through an engineering design process, to build and test increasingly more complex mobile robots. This work culminates in an end of Main Lesson 'Planet Rover Robot Challenge'.

Through this Main Lesson, students are encouraged to combine practical and technological skills with creative thinking to design and make products and systems that meet human needs. They learn to use current technologies and consider the impact of future technological developments. They learn to analyse, think creatively and solve problems as individuals and members of a team taking on different roles and responsibilities.

LITERATURE AND ROMANTICISM

Class 11 is a time when students may move from the more polarised binaries of Class 9 and 10 to become more interested in the subtlety of psychological processes. As puberty ends they develop a more nuanced perspective, increasingly able to explore their individuality; and how they might be able to contribute to the world.

We move from the origin stories of the Class 10 English Main Lesson to the Romantic period, which is

characterised by sudden surge of interest in individual freedom and subjective perspective of the world. Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition become the most important creative forces. The students experience this through reading many of the best-known Romantic poets and developing a good understanding of their work and biography, then recreating their styles, ways of working, and ways of seeing the world. This will culminate in a morning of exhibiting work and presenting talks and poems on the period.

MEDIEVAL WORLD

The course will explore the varied and long period of History in between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the rediscovering of the Classical Age during the Renaissance; that millennium which the learnt people of the Renaissance labelled the Middle Age (Medium Aevum). The themes of the course will cover the lives of medieval people and their secular and spiritual overlords; it will also debate the basis of Medieval worldviews. The course will branch beyond Europe to see how the Roman Empire lived on in the East next to the Persian and, later, the Islamic worlds; and further into the far east to the Khanates that emerged during and after the Mongolian expansion. This historical cycle will end with a global event that affected most of the areas and nations explored: The Black Death of the mid-XIV century. Students will have the opportunity to develop their own personal research and contribute to a group work too.

MUSICAL

Classes 9 & 11 combine forces to stage a musical in the summer term. Following the heart-warming success of Mary Poppins, Les Misérables, Oliver! and Guys & Dolls this has become a much-anticipated production in the Upper School. Whether a student wishes to be on or off stage, everyone contributes to the success of the production and each staging inspires miracles and transformations. What will be next?



MUSIC AND ROMANTICISM

Having traversed the Baroque and the Classical periods through Class 9 and 10, the focus in Class 11 is on the Romantic era. The artistic impulse and the highly individualised approach of the Romantic creative imagination often appeals.

Before exploring the music of the time we look to tease out the ideals, perspectives and themes of the Romantic in art, literature and society through group activities and discussion. Having established the context we return to the music. From Beethoven's funeral to Wagner's Parsifal we sing and listen to the music of a wide selection of Romantic composers; imagine how to enhance a poem by setting it to music and consider how music affects us individually. We also consider the expansion of musical possibilities alongside the phenomena of the hero-musician.

PARZIVAL

Parzival, the classic by Wolfram von Eschenbach, is studied in Class 11 as a psychological landscape and as an early example of a spiritual quest. Close examination of the text gives rise to the consideration of medieval life and chivalry as well as to the enduring appeal of the key elements of the epic. The rich images of knighthood and the search for the grail are freely interpreted by the teacher and students in terms of the historical quest for what lies deeper in human nature. A series of workshops and discussions enables active exploration of themes in the context of individual experience.

PSYCHOLOGY

The Psychology Main Lesson will start with understanding what psychology is, its history and the Greek myth of Psyche. Following this, the overarching theme of the Psychology Main Lesson will be to look at consciousness and the latest developments in the neuropsychology of meditation. We will begin each morning with ten minutes of meditation, each one taken from a different meditative school of thought. Hemispheric lateralisation (the “split brain phenomenon”) and dream psychology will also be investigated in the context of the conscious and unconscious.

Interlaced with this main theme will be sessions on various aspects of psychology that impact on teenagers lives. In this regard, we will look at the psychology of stress, addiction, gender and eating behaviour.

POLITICS

The course will explore the political ideologies and governmental structures of our and other societies. It will cover political ideologies such as Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and Anarchism among others; both in their original historical context and in the way they are understood today. Students will look at the way the UK and few other European countries function and also consider the international order and organisations that emerged after WW2: the EU, the WTO and IMF to name few. The course will be based on discussions and debates, and it addresses fundamental question which have puzzled and inspired civilisations and their intellectual and political leaders since antiquity: how should we be governed? Who should be in charge and why? What is a fair society? Who should own what and why? In small groups, students will organise their own ideal community based on what discussed in class.

TALENT SHOW

The Michael Hall Talent Show is held in the Autumn Term each year and has become firmly established in the school calendar as a feature of the year. Students from Class 6 and up are able to attend and participate and show off their talents in entertaining an audience. It is a showcase for the variety of interests and achievements of the pupils of the School. The entire event is organised by the students of Class 11 who undertake all aspects of the process from negotiating the date and use of the Theatre, advertising and publicising the event, holding auditions and choosing acts, managing rehearsals and running the evening. For those students it is excellent training in event organisation and management.

UCAS and CAREERS

Michael Hall School is committed to developing the life chances of all students and aims to encourage and inspire pupils. We take our role and responsibilities in equipping our students for their future careers and the world of work very seriously. In Classes 11 and 12, students are supported with their UCAS application or given support on researching other opportunities, such as apprenticeships and work experience. Individual guidance on personal statements using personal profile forms followed by frequent application review meetings leads our students through this highly personal and self-reflective process. Students also work on writing a CV and covering letter in Class 11 with mock interviews for jobs to help them to increase their confidence and interview skills.

UCAS and FINANCE

Through a combination of presentation and role play, students will look at core themes, such as:

- How to manage transition to increasingly independent living;
- How to make informed choices and be enterprising and ambitious in life, education and work;
- How to develop employability, team working and leadership skills and develop flexibility and resilience; the economic and business environment;

Main Lessons Class 12

This section includes examples of Main Lessons taught in Class 12. These lessons are studied in 3-4 week blocks.

HISTORY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE

This course explores the evolution of architectural ideas, closely connected to developments in art, culture, and society. It examines how these ideas take shape in the built environment, embedding the values of their respective eras, from ancient structures to modernism. Students are encouraged to develop a critical perspective on the built environment by analyzing it through cultural, aesthetic, and ethical lenses. The course highlights architecture's role in expressing the relationship between life and form—interpreting and giving meaning to the spaces we inhabit. Through the study of architectural texts, contexts, and drawings, students gain insight into the connections between architecture, human development, and the broader threads that link the arts, sciences, and society.

ART ITALY TRIP MAIN LESSON

This main lesson is developed as a preparation for the Italy Class 12 trip. Students get familiar with the context and some key concepts that led to significant changes in reflecting about the nature of reality, and its manifestation in the artistic processes of the late Gothic and Renaissance. Some focus is given to the Humanist Educational program and how the study of “pure ancient texts” permeated the minds of the artists of the time, and how a newborn consciousness gives rise to new ways of producing Art. Students review the work of the great masters of the Renaissance, in painting, sculpture and architecture, and are encouraged to explore them in a deeper level. Dialoguing with the works of Art is a fundamental learning strategy. Experiencing the works via emulation of living sculptures, drawing and clay sculpture supports the analyses of a set of aspects and opens the ground for students to raise questions on the relevance and the meaning of the works in discussion (picture plane to linear perspective, stylization of the figure to full embodied expression of the human form, from the pointed arch to full arch, etc.). Each student is given a particular artist, figures and/or biographies, and a set of works to research. Each student will take the responsibility to present their research in locus to their peers.

CLASS 12 PLAY

As a culmination of twelve years of artistic training, Class 12 undertakes a major drama production. Every member of the class takes an acting part and is also involved in backstage operations and make-up. Individual students can take on additional responsibilities for music, lighting, set design, costumes and publicity. It is always most impressive to witness some amazing transformations and to acknowledge how each member of the team reveals unexpected strength and talent whilst being thoroughly supported by their peers. A true lesson of life! The play is performed here in Michael Hall over 3 days.

EURYTHMY

In this Main Lesson we begin our intensive rehearsal period leading up to the performances of a Fairy Tale for both school and general public often happening around the time of the Advent Fair.

This is the project which marks the culmination of the students' Eurythmy work in the School. It is a major undertaking and great co-operation is needed to bring the visual storytelling to an artistic peak.

The students will have been involved in all aspects of the production, choosing the story and helping to cast it, and have been working on it in subject lessons since the summer term of Class 11 if not earlier.

They contribute to the production in all manner of ways, helping with costumes, music, speech, posters and publicity and of course taking on individual parts and learning the choreography.

Class 12 are usually aided in the staging of the tale by the children from the Lower School which can help to add a charming and magical element to the spectacle.

HEAD SCULPTING

The students experience this Main Lesson as the culmination of their modelling lessons. We will be focused on modelling an adult human head. We will look at proportions and modelling techniques but after that the students are left to work freely. This gives space for them to explore and express themselves.

Creating a head aims to strengthen the independent centre of the Class 12 students.

MODERN & CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

At the turn of the Twentieth Century, Music, along with Art, Science and Literature (and our understanding of what it is to be human) went through seismic changes that led away from the tonality and forms of the previous 200 years. Initially, it was 'Anything Goes', but out of this explosion of style and idea arose some of the most astounding musical movements of our turbulent times. Through the presentation of musically iconic moments; the devising of group compositions; listening to various examples of significant musical genres and hearing about music chosen by the students, we endeavour to open our ears to the wealth of possibility and musical invention that continues to be explored. Where possible, this theme reverberates throughout the year.

REFLECTIONS

The Reflections Main Lesson is the last of the academic year, set just before the students immerse themselves in their A-level examinations after Easter.

Teachers, who have taught the class, present an overview of the themes and subjects they have been taught from Class 1 through to Class 12.

From these sessions, the students are able to form a clear picture of how the threads of the Waldorf education support them through their stages of development. They develop an understanding of the pedagogy behind their learning and are then able to formulate their own questions. These questions are discussed with the class and the teacher to deepen their knowledge.

It is usual for the class to invite teachers across the subject areas. Class Teachers, Main Lesson Teachers and Teachers from Handwork, Craft, Music, Gym, Art and Eurythmy. These teachers present a comprehensive journey of Waldorf education so that the students can see the whole picture.



Arts & Crafts

As a continuation of a balanced Waldorf education enhancing the academic subjects, Class 11 Arts and Crafts students build on the foundation given in their former years, by expanding and deepening their skills and techniques. A material or discipline that challenges them is provided and a greater precision is expected overall. Imagination and individual tastes are encouraged through the development of their practice and students are made more aware of industry and trade, and acknowledge their practical skills as a useful tool. These lessons are rotated in 9 week blocks.

BOOKBINDING

As a continuation from the Introduction to Cartonnage in the previous year, the students in Class 11 build on their basic skills learnt, allowing them to develop the art of Bookbinding. These skills are refined and developed further as they deepen their interest in the craft, which enables the students to explore larger more difficult projects and become more independent in their own work. The students will create books and related articles out of paper, cardboard, cloth and other materials.

Our main project is to create a multi-section book, for which the students must learn a new method of sewing. This could be covered in a half, or full binding and the students usually choose which material they would like to use, continuously expanding their ability to work with a wide range of covering materials. We explore the method of marbling papers and they are encouraged to use their own design for their work. The students choose between boxes, frames or other smaller objects, depending on their ability, to work alongside the main project. In addition or in place of this, they are given the opportunity to re-cover or re-bind old and broken books at this stage.

The aim of this subject is to develop accurate and neat working habits whilst embracing the creative side and marrying the two together.



METALWORK

In Class 11 students work with the 'lost wax process' to cast in silver and bronze. Through a series of projects, students explore the processes of design, modelling, mould-making, casting molten metals and finishing – learning traditional jewellery and artists' sculpting skills. Whilst engaged in small scale industrial processes (precision measuring/vacuum gas removal etc) students have time to make several items which can include a simple sterling silver ring, a more elaborate ring or other piece of jewellery and a small scale bronze 'holdable sculpture'. Moral questions around illegal mining and conflict diamonds are also touched upon.



POTTERY

In Class 11, pottery is a particular help to pupils suffering from the intellectual pressures of the Upper School. When working on the wheel they must first be able to achieve a state of complete inner peace and concentration in order to control the clay. Only when this has been accomplished can the next step of opening the clay and raising the walls be taken. Creative energy is not important initially, instead emphasis is given to learning and developing manual dexterity and body coordination, (they must also use their legs), practising again and again until the clay becomes a vessel.

Their first project is to make a simple bowl on the potter's wheel. They need to learn to be conscious and able to control each step when throwing clay on the wheel.

They will also develop a set of tableware (minimum 2-3 pieces) working on the concept of a family of objects that relate to each other, using hand building techniques or the potter's wheel.

When these two projects are completed, they are allowed to choose their own final project. This is a very personal choice and is discussed with the Teacher. It can be far reaching from an abstract sculpture to a teapot. This aims to give the students not only an introduction to the planning/design process but also many of the production techniques related to the craft of pottery and basic sculpture. This is an excellent project not only for developing a sense of social responsibility within the Class 11 students, but also learning to be conscious and able to control each step when throwing clay on the wheel.



Eurythmy

In Class 11 and 12 the students gain a deeper understanding of how Eurythmy movements work to reveal forces or intentions hidden in our language as they make speech visible. How the consonants are more connected to the physical, outer world, and the vowels more to our feelings, our inner world. In this regard they will look at the gestures which express the Zodiac, the fixed stars and their connection to the consonants and the gestures which express the Planets, the moving stars and their connection to the vowels. The students also look at how we can express colours and they continue to work on harmonious group choreography to speech and music. Accompanying this work, during Class 11, the students start to prepare for the fairy tale or legend which will be performed in Class 12 as the pinnacle of the students' Eurythmy work in the School.



Gym and Games

In Classes 11 and 12 there is an opportunity for a greater emphasis on the acquisition of skills in a variety of activities. Equal attention is given to constructive and social interaction through sport and traditional games. Appropriate posture in movement and principles of Bothmer Gym are also introduced. Increasingly, students are given a choice of activities and encouraged to form their own programme. The sporting activities may include Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Football, Gymnastics, Self-Defence, Fitness, Netball, Orienteering, Tennis, Table Tennis, Softball, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, yoga and Children's Games. We also organise visits to local leisure centres for the students to play Squash or go Swimming. We encourage the students to foster a healthy relationship to movement allowing them to have more influence in creating the form and content of the sessions, in the hope that when they leave the structured school setting, they have the confidence to seek out healthy movement opportunities.

Music

In Class 11 we begin the process of re-establishing the class choir, its social ethic and sound as we look towards the conclusion of the students' school years at the end of Class 12.

Each week we sing together, building a repertoire of songs that the Class can sing alongside the many festival contributions that punctuate the two years. These lessons also provide an opportunity for preparing and developing the threads that form the Main Lesson topics: in Class 11, Romanticism; in Class 12 Modern and Contemporary Music. Class 11 and 12 also form the core of the Upper School Choir where the students' more mature voices support the endeavours of the younger students in the context of an inclusive chorus.

In Class 12 we prepare Christmas carols in 4-parts for singing around the School and in the village. Where required we might also prepare music for the Class 12 Play. In the final term, we meet a few times each week to put together an extensive programme of songs that are presented at the Midsummer fire, the Class 12 Graduation and the final assembly. These songs also accompany each class on their Italy Trip where the students will sing inside numerous sacred and public spaces. Singing together affirms the strength in unity that each class has nurtured over the years. It also provides much needed balance during the many weeks of exams. The songs and their associated memories will accompany the students out into the world long after leaving Michael Hall.

Trips

INDUSTRIAL TOUR (Class 11)

The Industrial Tour in Class 11 is designed to help the students to have an understanding of how UK industry works. Pupils have visited a number of industrial and media companies around the UK, including: banks; newspapers; potteries; oil refineries; nuclear power stations; biodiesel refineries; breweries; fish smoking factories etc. These visits are then the subject of discussions and inform the Class 12 Economics Main Lesson.

SOCIAL PRACTICAL (Class 11)

The social practical is an opportunity for our students to contribute to community projects and to work with individuals whose needs are greater than their own. (Students are encouraged to engage with people from all walks of life, different backgrounds and needs.) This could, for example, take the form of working or volunteering in hospitals, old peoples' homes, Camphill communities or schools.

For the students this is a chance to gain valuable and fulfilling experience, broaden their own horizons and show them how they, as individuals, can bring a ray of light to another person's life.

THE ITALY TRIP (Class 12)

At the end of Class 12, following the St John's Fire, the final examinations and the Graduation Ceremony, students embark on their trip to Italy and the fruition of their Waldorf education.

The Italy Trip involves a tour of the wonders given to us by the Renaissance artists who broke through barriers in Art and Architecture and reflected so expertly the development in human consciousness. Students learn about the art they are to see both within the curriculum and on the trip itself and, through this process, experience a personal reflection on their own journey as they step out from their formal education, with its structure and rhythm, into a new world of their own direction. As students visit art and absorb the culture in Ravenna, Orvieto, Rome, Cortona, Assisi, Florence, Milan and Venice, they return some of the gifts given by these works of art by singing songs they have worked on over the year, in chapels, cathedrals, monasteries and piazzas.

The Italy Trip is both a wonderful end and beginning, and enables the class to come together in an atmosphere of support, love and artistic reverence combined with a great deal of fun!



Other activities and workshops which may be undertaken by students in Classes 11 and 12 are:

Further Education and Career Support

At Michael Hall we are working extensively on improving and further developing our Career Programme in alignment with the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks. This includes widening the resources and opportunities available to the students in order to inspire them and give them a glimpse of what might be possible for them in the future. During Class 11 and 12, as students begin to make important decisions for themselves, they will have the opportunity to discuss these and be supported by a dedicated person. There will be a number of planned trips and events held including: a Question and Answer session with recent ex-scholars who are in further education; a tour around a local University; a Careers evening where students can speak to and hear about different careers choices from current parents, ex-scholars and invited guests.

Students are assisted in the University and College process during the class Guardian lessons, Main Lesson blocks and with individual, impartial sessions with the Careers Advisor. These opportunities help to support each individual, as they navigate not only learning about themselves, but also about what possibilities are open to them in order to support them in achieving their ambitions.

Pastoral Care

At Michael Hall, our continued observation and awareness of students' needs allows early intervention in the resolution of concerns. To facilitate this we have a clear structure of support. The Class Guardian cares for the social well being of the class. Within this, each student will select their own Personal Tutor with whom they will meet weekly. In some circumstances, the Guardian, Tutor or Student may also call upon the services of Pastoral Care Team or our Student Wellbeing Lead to provide more in depth support and guidance.

