



## Admissions Policy

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Human connection in all we do

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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Michael Hall is a Steiner Waldorf School, specialising in meeting the developing child at their own pace. We accept children with a wide range of abilities and skills. The School believes that all children deserve to have their individual needs met. We will work carefully with you to ensure we can meet these needs as best as possible, whilst also taking into account the available resources and expertise within the School.

### 2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The aim of our admissions procedure is to identify and admit children who will benefit from and positively engage with our education, ethos and activities. It is our responsibility as professionals to ensure that any decision we come to about entry into the School will be in the best interest of the child and the class they enter.

Michael Hall is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of sex/gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or any protected characteristic. We do not discriminate regarding entry to the School in any of these ways.

#### a) Meeting the needs of the individual child

Michael Hall does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided that our Inclusion Department can offer the child the support they need and/or our site can reasonably accommodate them. The School will discuss thoroughly with parents (and, if appropriate, their medical advisors) the adjustments that can reasonably be made to support the child should they become a pupil at the School. *If at any stage it is necessary for a pupil to be privately assessed by an outside agency such as an Educational Psychologist, this would be charged to the parents.*

We require parents of children with special educational needs or a disability to discuss their child's requirements with the School before the interview so that we can make adequate provision for them. As part of the admissions process, parents must include a copy of any educational psychologist or medical reports that have been conducted for their child, pertaining to our ability to cater for them.

This policy provides guidelines about the admissions process at Michael Hall.

### 3. THE SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Michael Hall School is structured in the following sections:

- *Early Childhood*, comprising Parent and Child Group (aged 0-3), Saplings (aged 2-4) and Kindergarten (aged 4-6)
- *Lower School*, comprising Classes 1 to 8 (ages 6 to 14)
- *Upper School*, comprising Classes 9 to 12 (ages 15 to 18)

Although Michael Hall aims to provide a complete education for every child admitted, admission to one part of the School does not guarantee admission to another. There are entry points between Saplings and Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Class 1 and Class 8 and Class 9. An admissions process will take place at these stages to ensure the School can continue to meet educational needs into the next developmental stage.

Where the Lower School operates two parallel classes for children in the same age group, the School will decide which class to assign a particular applicant to. This will be based on our objective of creating broadly balanced, socially cohesive, mixed ability classes. In the event that a new class is opened in the same age group, students of the existing class who have joined within that year, may be asked to move to the new class.

See Appendix A for comparison chart of Michael Hall's classes and their equivalents in the Maintained Sector.

### 4. THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

#### a) Parent & Child

Admission to Parent and Child groups usually follows a free taster session and the completion of an application form. Children can be any age between birth and three. There is no application fee for Parent and Child.

## b) Saplings & Kindergarten

A formal application should be submitted with the application fee\* via the website. Supporting documentation will then be requested by the Admissions registrar. Once all documentation has been received by the School, a meeting will be arranged with the child, parents and the Early Childhood Practitioner.

The final decision regarding admission to Early Childhood at Michael Hall rests with the Early Childhood Assistant Principal who reserves the right to decline to offer a place on grounds of the School not having the resources to meet the child's needs. You will be notified of this decision within two working weeks of the interview.

Once a child has been approved for admission, an official offer letter and contract will be sent to both parents and must be signed and returned within five working days of receipt, to secure the child's place. A £500 advance payment of fees will be required before the child can join the School, which will be deducted from the first terms' fees. This will only be refunded should notice of withdrawal be received at least 3 months in advance of the child's proposed start date.

Children wishing to join Kindergarten from Saplings will be given priority over other applications and must apply two full terms before they are due to start. A deposit of £500 will be required to hold the Kindergarten place.

The point at which a Saplings child will join Kindergarten is the September after the child has turned 4 and at the discretion of the Assistant Principal of Early Childhood.

For a 4-year-old child to start Kindergarten in September, they must have turned three by August 31<sup>st</sup>. For a child to start Kindergarten in January, they must have turned 4 by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Entry into Kindergarten is at the start of a term or half term only and there is no entry to Kindergarten in the Summer term.

Michael Hall accepts entry to Saplings all year round.

Admission to Kindergarten is for a minimum of four consecutive morning sessions per week on entry, increasing to five sessions a week when the child's Key Person or Assistant Principal advises in collaboration with parents. Attendance for five sessions a week is mandatory for all students starting the term after their fifth birthday. Michael Hall Kindergarten and Saplings do not accept multiple setting registrations, however children attending Saplings may also attend Parent and Child sessions at Michael Hall with family.

Admission to Saplings is for a minimum of three session blocks a week (morning or afternoon). Moving to 4 morning sessions a week the term after the child turns 4 years old.

## c) Lower, Middle and Upper School

After visiting the School or attending an Open Day, a formal application should be submitted with the application fee\* via the website. Supporting documentation will then be requested by the Admissions Registrar. Once all documentation has been received by the School, an initial meeting will be arranged. This initial meeting will be with a teacher/guardian and member of the SEN/wellbeing teams, as deemed appropriate having reviewed a child's documentation. Without full reports [attainment, behaviour and SEN information] from the previous setting, we cannot proceed with the Admissions process.

\*The application fee is non-refundable, however we will refund the application fee for children whose application is not accepted by the School.

Applicants to the School are assessed for entry to the School by the following methods:

1. Review of reports from previous Schools and attendance records.
2. Formal assessments by our Inclusion Team. These professionals will review information gathered about a child's Special Educational Needs.
3. Meetings with and/or observation of the child by the prospective Class Teacher or Class Guardian.
4. If an applicant is asked to return for further assessments, these assessments will be carried out by the Inclusion Team.
5. In cases of doubt or where more information is required the School may contact the applicant's current School, and/or require a report from an educational psychologist and/or hold discussions with the child's medical advisors in order to assess the child's needs before reaching a decision on a particular application.

The acceptance of an application is determined by the School being able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and have their needs met by the School. The final decision regarding admissions rests with the School Principal, who reserves the right to decline to offer a place on grounds of the School not having the resources to meet the child's needs. You will be notified of this decision within two working weeks of the interview.

Once a child has been approved for admission, an official offer letter and contract will be sent to both parents and must be signed and returned within five working days of receipt, to secure the child's place. A £500 advance payment of fees will be required before the child can join the School, which will be deducted from the first terms' fees. This will only be refunded should notice of withdrawal be received at least 3 months in advance of the child's proposed start date.

We also require that prospective parents read and agree to our Parent Code of Conduct and by the acceptance of a place, agree to the terms set out within the policy.

New students will be placed in the class which matches their current age group except in exceptional circumstances, which will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Many siblings join us at Michael Hall. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different environment or setting.

We ask that parents aim to start school at the start of the school year, but will consider entry throughout the year. The cut off birth date for children entering classes 1-12 is normally 31st August.

#### d) Application Deadline

For places in the next academic year, applications must be made by 31<sup>st</sup> March. Applications received after this date may incur an additional fee.

## 5. FUNDING

#### a) Saplings & Kindergarten

Michael Hall is registered as an Early Years Education provider with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and aims to provide parents with access to the Universal 15 hours Early Years Education Entitlement for all children from the term after they turn 2 to the end of the term that they turn 5. The 15 hours is available to all parents and is allocated on a 4 hours per day basis as in agreement with ESCC. We do not accept the 30 hours free childcare funding.

#### b) Fee assistance

Michael Hall has a Fee Assistance programme to help families who need financial support as detailed in the fee assistance policy.

Fee assistance is not available to pupils in their first year at Michael Hall. This includes pupils who already have siblings at the School (who may or may not receive fee assistance). There is no fee assistance for Parent and Child, Saplings or Kindergarten.

#### c) Students applying from overseas areas of conflict

Michael Hall offers several funded school places to families affected by conflict in their country. The allocation of these places is at the discretion of the Trustees and subject to regular review.

To qualify for admission under this scheme, students must meet the following criteria:

- Possession of a British Passport or Residence Permit

OR

- Hold a valid visa for studying in the UK. (Please note that the School is unable to provide a visa)

*If you would like more information, please contact [admissions@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:admissions@michaelhall.co.uk)*

## 6. CLASS SIZES AND PRIORITY FOR PLACES

- For the Parent and Child Group, a maximum of 7 children from birth to 3 years' old
- In Saplings, we have a maximum of 8-10 children per session
- For the Kindergarten, we regard a class as complete at 16.
- For Classes 1 to 8, although there is no fixed size for a Lower School class, we typically consider a class complete at around 26 students.

- For Classes 9 to 12, there is no set class size, although exam subjects tend to be comparably small. We will consider classes 9-12 “full”, only if we cannot sustain the logistics/health and safety needs.

When a class or year group is deemed to be complete, the School reserves the right to close the class or year group to new admissions. The decision to close a class is taken by the Senior Leadership Team after appropriate consultation.

In the event that a new class is opened in the same age group, students of the existing class which have joined within that year, may be asked to move to the new class.

The School operates a waiting list when a class or group is closed for new admissions and the in the case of oversubscription the order of priority is:

- Children progressing from Saplings into Kindergarten and Kindergarten to Class 1
  - Children of staff
  - Siblings
  - Children transferring from other Waldorf Steiner Schools
  - Length of time on waiting list
- The waiting list will continue for a year group until the end of the academic year.
  - Applicants on the waiting list who fail to provide the required application documents or respond to requests from the Admissions Registrar in a timely manner, may be removed from the waiting list.

Places are offered for a specific start date and if declined, the child’s application will be withdrawn. In the event that we receive a request to defer a place and a waiting list is in place for the next entry point, the child will join the end of the waiting list.

## 7. TASTER DAYS (Lower, Middle and Upper School only)

After the initial meeting we may ask a child to spend a few Taster Days at the School in the relevant class before any decision is made. This provides the wider teaching team with an opportunity to meet the child and see how they respond in the school environment. Taster days are not available for Kindergarten or Saplings.

## 8. SEPARATED PARENTS

Many of the students in our care are members of families where parents have separated or are going through changes in family circumstances.

- We aim to support families wherever we can with the issues that a separation may bring, and fully involve all those with parental responsibility in the life of the School.
- We will remain neutral in difficult family circumstances with the welfare and wellbeing of the child at the heart of what we do.

- We will always adhere to our legal responsibilities and aim to follow all good practice set out in the government guidance "[Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility.](#)"

## 9. COMPLAINTS

You are unable to formally complain about a decision not to accept a child to Michael Hall School, as this decision will have been taken in the best interests of the child. However, if you believe the process in which your child's application to the School was flawed, you should put your complaint in writing to the Principal within five days of the date of the admissions decision. The complaint will then be dealt with in accordance with the Concerns and Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available on our website. In the event of the complaint not being resolved you are entitled to contact the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information).



## Appendix A

This chart shows the ages and classes children would be in at Michael Hall compared with School in the State Sector

Michael Hall	Department	Age	Mainstream
Parent & Child Groups	Early Childhood	0 - 3.5	Playgroup, Nursery, Pre-School
Saplings	Early Childhood	2 - 4	Playgroup, Nursery, Pre-School
Kindergarten 1	Early Childhood	4 - 5	Primary (Reception)
Kindergarten 2	Early Childhood	5 - 6	Year 1
Class 1	Lower School	6 - 7	Year 2
Class 2	Lower School	7 - 8	Year 3
Class 3	Lower School	8 - 9	Year 4
Class 4	Lower School	9 - 10	Year 5
Class 5	Lower School	10 - 11	Year 6
Class 6	Middle School	11 - 12	Year 7 (Secondary)
Class 7	Middle School	12 - 13	Year 8
Class 8	Middle School	13 - 14	Year 9
Class 9	Upper School	14 - 15	Year 10
Class 10	Upper School	15 - 16	Year 11
Class 11	Upper School	16 - 17	Year 12 (College, Sixth Form)
Class 12	Upper School	17 - 18	Year 13 (College, Sixth Form)