

# Statement of Ethos and Aims

Policy Owner	Senior Leadership Team
Formally endorsed by	Council of Trustees
Endorsement Date	October 2020
Next Review Date	October 2021

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Michael Hall aims to offer an education to children from KG to age 18 that addresses the whole human being, body, soul and spirit at every stage of the child's development. In working on developing this education as an art, the teachers are inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner and share this work with the Steiner Waldorf school movement worldwide. Our aspiration was summarised by Marie Steiner in these words "Our highest aim must be to develop young people who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives". Our holistic approach attaches equal importance to the crafts, the arts and intellectual attainment.

With reverence for each child, the work of the Early Years builds a foundation for life-long learning through imitation, rhythm, repetition and play. The class teacher guides children into society for the first 8 years of formal learning with loving authority, with a sense of the wholeness of life; a sense of care and support for themselves and those around them and nurtures a desire to investigate, learn and understand. In the Upper School years the students encounter the expertise that can inspire them to find their own path in life, identify and achieve their own goals and to identify and acquire the skills that will allow these to be brought to fruition.

The bond between parent, teacher and child is one that is process-based, not outcome-based.

Our daily work can be experienced as creating culture, like a living stream. In doing so, it preserves an awareness and connection with environmental/cosmic rhythms. Newness comes into our work through service of the ideal. We care for each child and aim to allow children to enjoy their childhood and thus develop into healthy adults.

### **The Individual**

- We cultivate an awareness that the thriving of any individual is based on the support of the community and that, conversely, the thriving community will depend on the awareness of the community in each individual. Mutual respect, tolerance and openness are key to our work.
- Teaching is a path of learning for the teacher. Parents also find learning opportunities in our community.
- Our teaching gesture is to remove obstacles, so that the child can realise his/her own potential.
- We aim to support the inner resilience of each child to face the obstacles life may place in their path.
- In every detail of school life, we encourage initiative.

### **The Community**

- As the longest-running Steiner Waldorf school in the English speaking world we feel a sense of responsibility to the wider movement as well as to our local community and the school community of pupils, parents, teachers and support staff. We are committed to continuing professional development and to training new teachers.
- Our setting invites us to celebrate the fact that we are in international community, with a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and fraternity.
- The grounds of Kidbrooke Park daily call for us to care for the land in every gesture of our education.
- Whilst we are privately funded, largely by fee-income, we aspire to be inclusive to families from a range of incomes, cultures and backgrounds and welcome the opportunities brought to our community by cultural diversity.
- We rejoice in a strong and diverse team of specialists (languages, gardening, music, drama, movement, art, learning support ... many centres of excellence).

### **The Environment**

- Care for the environment informs every classroom and every lesson, most obviously in the striving towards the ideal of beauty. In this too, we are a community. We strive towards a harmonious interplay of culture, cultivation and conservation.