

# Parents' Handbook



**Michael Hall**  
a Steiner Waldorf School

# Contents

Welcome	4
Our School	5
Management Structure	5
Who Does What at Michael Hall?	5
Financial Information and Fees	5
Support and Administration	5
What Happens in Reception?	6
Parent Portal	6
Lost Property	6
School Rules, Guidelines and Policies	6
How is Steiner Waldorf Education Different?	7
Social Ethic	7
Student Council	7
Looking Ahead	7
Careers Advice	7
Special Educational Needs	8
Gifted and Talented	8
Parental Involvement	8
Class Parents' Evenings	8
Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Pupil Support	9
Plays and Concerts	9
Festivals	9
School Theatre Festivals	13
Birthdays	13
Parent & Child Group	13
Times of the School Day	13

School Minibuses	13
After School Clubs	13
School Orchestra	14
Parking and Driving	14
Gym Kit	15
First Aid	16
The School Doctor	16
Attendance	16
Class Contacts	17
Stationery	17
Mini-Markets	17
Mansion Markets	17
Fundraising	17
Advent Fair	17
Charities	17
Old Scholars	17
Michael Hall Parents	17
Friday Flier	17
Heart of Teaching	17
The Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship	18
Forest Row Community	18
FAQ's	18
Map of the School	20

# Welcome

Many different paths lead children and their parents to Michael Hall. We are delighted you have chosen to become part of our School community.

This handbook contains important information about how the School works. We hope it will help you feel informed and more at home at Michael Hall as well as encourage you to become involved in the many areas of School life where parents make such an important contribution. Our Handbook is a living document and we

continue to welcome any suggestions that might help us with future versions.

We also publish a weekly School Newsletter (Friday Flier) which contains all kinds of important and useful information about the School and School Events. This will be sent to you as a parent but you can also subscribe to it through our website:

[michaelhall.co.uk/friday-flier](http://michaelhall.co.uk/friday-flier).

Please do try and keep yourself informed and up to date with all manner of things ranging from class play invitations, chicken pox doing the rounds and a weekly update from the Principal.



## Our School

Michael Hall, the largest UK Steiner Waldorf School, is set in approximately 60 acres of parkland adjoining the Ashdown Forest, in Forest Row, East Sussex. The School offers education from birth to 19 years old.

The School was founded in 1925 as the first Steiner Waldorf School in the English-speaking world.

We celebrated our 95th birthday in January 2020 and Steiner Waldorf Education celebrated its 100 years anniversary in 2019. Now, Michael Hall is one of over nine hundred Schools in more than sixty countries.

Each Steiner Waldorf School is part of its local cultural community, yet has something in common — a profound respect for the individuality of every child.

Each School also shares a curriculum and a teaching method that fosters the pupil's healthy development and stimulates enthusiasm for learning.

Michael Hall was established in 1925 and is a charity governed by the Board of Trustees.

## Management Structure

The Council of Trustees has delegated its powers of management of the School to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

## Who Does What at Michael Hall?

Please follow the link to our website:

<https://michaelhall.co.uk/the-school/staff-and-trustees/>.

## Financial Information and Fees

The Finance Controller is responsible for all questions relating to school fees, fee assistance, payments and other financial matters. Contact Reception where an appointment can be arranged.

Queries regarding pupils' accounts should be directed to the Accounts Department at: [accounts@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:accounts@michaelhall.co.uk) or an appointment can be made through Reception.

Please see our website for full financial information: <https://michaelhall.co.uk/admissions/fees/>.

## Support and Administration

The following offices can all be found in the Mansion: Principal's Office, Accounts, Admissions, Examinations, Estate Manager, Lettings, PR & Marketing, Human Resources, School Business Manager and SLT. Reception is located in the middle school by the Theatre.



## What Happens in Reception?

Reception is open in term time every weekday (08:00 – 16:45). Reception can be contacted by telephone on 01342 822275 or emailed at: [reception@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:reception@michaelhall.co.uk).

During School holidays Reception is closed. Meetings with staff can be arranged through Reception and they will endeavour to pass on any urgent telephone messages to pupils and staff. The best time to ring in with a message is before 10:00 for the 10:25 break. After office hours, messages can be left on the answering machine and will be dealt with the following morning.

Reception is a good place to find Gym Kit and general information. Although we direct parents to complete Interactive Forms on the Parent Portal or download forms from the website for Gym, Clubs, and Buses etc, we also hold paper copies of these in Reception.

## Parent Portal

Before your child starts you will be sent login details from Admissions for the Parent Portal. Please see below what you can access from the parent portal.

### Home Page

On the right you will be able to select your child to view and manage their school profile. The home page will also show you an overview of what you can access.

### Interactive

The interactive tab allows you access to complete forms, view pending forms and the history of forms completed. The interactive forms include:

- After School Gym Clubs and Matches
- Parental Medical Update Form
- Homework Club 15:15-16:15 (Classes 1 to 8)
- Report my Child's Absence
- Afternoon Club 12:15-15:15 (Classes 1&2)
- School Bus Request Forms

### Communication

- View and amend your contact information
- See emails sent to you by the School
- Enable the facility to receive email alerts regarding your child's detention

### School Profile

- View your child's school attendance and discipline records
- View school reports

### School information

- The School directory allows you to find the email address of all teaching and non-teaching staff
- Find links to the School's Facebook page, School Website and Calendar

### My Account

- Change your password and security question

### Keeping Your Information Up to Date

Details of each pupil, contact addresses and telephone numbers are held on our database. This is only as accurate as the information given to us.

Please advise Reception in writing of any changes of address, phone number or other details.

## Lost Property

Lost Property can be found under the main staircase in the Mansion, in the Gym or out-side First Aid in the Lower School building.

At the end of each term, unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Please mark your child's name clearly on all items of clothing.

## School Rules, Guidelines and Policies

At Michael Hall, we strive to ensure every member of the School Community feels valued and respected.

We are committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. Adults aim to recognise positive behaviours amongst students rather than just focusing on the negative. This echoes our core values with a heavy emphasis on recognising positivity, a partnership approach to managing negative behaviours and dynamic interventions that support staff and learners. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure. There are 3 core values for all staff, parents and students 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'.



Please see the following policies for full information:

- [Promoting Early Years Positive Behaviour](#)
- [Lower School Behaviour](#) and School Rules
- [Upper School Behaviour](#) and Sanctions Policy

## How is Steiner Waldorf Education Different?

Here is a simple guide to some of the fundamental differences between the approach to education within a mainstream School and that of a Steiner Waldorf School.

### The Curriculum

All pupils experience the whole curriculum regardless of gender or ability.

As the School teaches the International Waldorf Curriculum rather than the UK National Curriculum, pupils do not take SATs tests. Instead they receive age-appropriate continuous qualitative assessments. Parents/Carers will receive a notice that their Child's School Report is published on the Parent Portal.

Regular screenings by the Learning Support Department are also undertaken, any ensuing feedback will be shared with Parents. This ongoing assessment takes into consideration all aspects of the child's development.

Most importantly, the use of Formative Assessment ensures that pupils are encouraged to take age-appropriate responsibility for their

learning, to be self-motivated and to develop awareness of their own individual progress and achievements.

### Social Ethic

Developing the social ethic in the class is very important as each class mirrors the community outside the School. Helping them learn to deal with difficulties and concerns in the microcosm is very valuable for their lifelong learning.

To develop and extend this work in the Upper School, we begin Class 9 with an Earth Stewardship week where students come together and learn survival and other skills.

In Class 11 they work at The Camphill Village in Botton, developing their skills and learning from the special needs community for a week, and in Class 12 students complete their education with a Renaissance Art trip to Italy spanning nearly 3 weeks.

### Student Council

Our Student Council is strong and makes significant contributions to the running of our School.

### Looking Ahead

On leaving School, our students follow a variety of routes into University, apprenticeships, art courses and voluntary work with travel. Students regularly take places at Cambridge, Oxford and other Universities.

When our students complete Class 12 they are accomplished young men and women who walk and talk the quality of the educational journey they have participated in. They are ready to meet a changing world with flexibility, independence, confidence, creativity, initiative and a true sense of social responsibility.

### Careers Advice

Careers Advice is given throughout the Upper School and we have a dedicated careers space in our Learning Resource Centre. Our students are supported in making appropriate choices by our Head of Careers, their Tutors, and Class Guardians. We have a subscription to Morrisby Careers hub where students are provided with all the research tools needed to help them discover the world of work and pathways forward. These include subjects of further study, detailed career information and a comprehensive directory of higher courses, institutions and apprenticeships. In addition, it enables students to input their likes, dislikes and integral skills to find a good career match. The package also helps with, and tracks their UCAS applications.

Once a year we run work experience programmes for Class 10 and a Careers Evening for the Upper School. Any experience or expertise from our local community that can be offered is beneficial to our students. Whether it's work shadowing for a week placement or providing a careers chat to a group of interested students at our Careers Evening, we would love to hear from you. We are pleased to work with so many local businesses, families of students and our own old scholars to create a futures programme that prepares our students for the workplace.

## Special Educational Needs

In line with the SEND Code of Conduct 2014, a child with SEND will fall under one or more of the following categories:

- Cognition and Learning
- Speech Language and Communication Needs
- Social Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/or Physical

The responsibility of Special Educational Needs is held by two SENCo's; one for the Kindergarten and one for the Lower School (LS) and Upper School (US).

The LS/US SENCo has responsibility for the Learning Support Department (LSD).

Working within the LSD are three Specialist Teachers and four Teaching Assistants, each allocated to support a section of the School. Each SENCo is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and regular updating of the SEND policy
- Ensuring appropriate assessment of new applicants and liaising with and advising all members of Staff on new admissions
- Liaising with Teaching Staff to ensure early identification of children with SEND
- Coordinating appropriate provision for children with SEND
- Maintaining the SEND register and overseeing the records for all children with SEND
- Liaising with parents and ensuring good communication between Class Teachers

and Parents on matters relating to children with SEND

- Contributing to training and ensuring that Class Teachers have appropriate knowledge of the children with SEND within their class

- Liaising with external agencies with matters relating to children with SEND and ensuring that information is shared with relevant Teaching Staff.
- Hold responsibility for the screening assessments of children with SEND and ensure that appropriate and relevant progress is made
- The LS/US SENCo is responsible for the timetables of the Learning Support Staff and ensuring that support is proportionately matched to the needs of children with SEND
- In addition to the above the LS/US SENCo would oversee examination access arrangements for children with SEND, ensuring that additional provision is in place in order to issue extra time allowance and special exam arrangements
- The LSD is responsible for supporting all pupils in their medical, pastoral needs, including pupils with SEND

## Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented (G&T) pupils also benefit from Learning Support input.

- SENCo's are tasked with ensuring that appropriate challenges and high expectations are set within the Steiner curriculum, in line with the Michael Hall Inclusion Policy
- All Teachers are responsible for identifying, planning and reviewing the progress of all their pupils, including their G&T pupils
- The SENCO will liaise with Teaching Staff to ensure early identification of G&T pupils
- The SENCo will ensure that a whole school G&T register is kept, updated regularly and shared with relevant Staff.
- The SENCo is responsible for providing training to Staff to ensure that educational provision provides appropriate challenge for all, including G&T pupils
- The LSD is responsible for supporting all pupils in their medical, pastoral needs, including G&T pupils

## Parental Involvement

We recognise the importance of a healthy relationship between our parents and teachers. This is fundamental to the wellbeing of the Whole School. The positive attitude of parents helps to foster mutual respect between children and teachers. Parents occasionally help in the classroom and on School Trips.

## Class Parents' Evenings

These are held once a term and provide an opportunity for the Class Teacher or Guardian



and all of the parents to discuss the work and social aspects of the class as a whole. Teachers also discuss the curriculum and the children's stage of development. In contrast to mainstream schools, these meetings are not a time when individual parents discuss their child's progress. The evenings are also an opportunity to meet other parents socially.

The meetings serve to deepen parents' understanding of their child's education and how it can best be supported at home. For this reason, parents are urged to make every effort to attend regularly and are asked to send apologies if they cannot attend or if they expect to be late. For any personal issues regarding your child or the class, please arrange a separate meeting with your Teacher/Guardian.

You will be notified of the date of the Parents' Evening in good time: this information is also available on the School Calendar. You may well be asked to suggest items for the Agenda. You can do this via email or in writing to the Class Teacher, Guardian or Class Contact.

It is really important that these meetings start on time so that all agenda items can be covered. Minutes may be taken and sent out by the Class Contact.

Each evening may have a different focus, but a typical agenda could include:

- Some information about practical aspects of the timetable, curriculum, exams, plays, or trips, depending on the children's age
- A presentation by the Class Teacher or a subject teacher about the content and values of the education, again geared to the developmental stage of the children

If there are questions or concerns, please email the Class Teacher in advance, and they will do everything they can to include these in the agenda if they regard the whole class.

If you feel any of your questions have not been answered, please tell the teacher concerned and request a further meeting .

There may be some activity or discussion groups. There will be time for the Class Contact to bring information and discuss fundraising.

In the Lower School classes, each Class Teacher will wish to visit their pupil's home at some point. This helps to give a more complete picture of each child and fosters a mutual connection between parent, teacher and child.

## Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Pupil Support

The Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Team is led by our two Wellbeing Leads who are based in the

Student Wellbeing Office located in the Mansion. They work closely with a group of staff members from within the School who aim to support the varying needs of individual pupils at times when they may be needing extra support and care. For example it may be that a pupil is experiencing a bereavement, an unhappy relationship with others in the class, a personal challenge or trouble navigating one of the many issues that young people can face. It is during these times that the Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Team are there to offer support. The Wellbeing Leads and Pastoral Care Team are available for parents to contact should they wish to share issues of concern that they may be carrying in connection with their child.

We encourage students to share their concerns through different forums and in addition to Teacher/Tutor meetings, Wellbeing classes and support from the Wellbeing Team, there are 4 'What's on my mind' boxes located around the School for student suggestions and concerns, as well as a dedicated email address: [studentconcerns@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:studentconcerns@michaelhall.co.uk).

## Plays and Concerts

During the year, many of the classes are involved in class plays – these can be from the Main Lesson or language subject lessons and are directly related to the educational experience of the children. Concerts are often held at the end of the academic year where individuals and classes perform to their peers, parents and friends.



## Festivals

Seasonal Festivals are an important element in the life of the School and bring an awareness of the seasons and a sense of continuity from year to year.

There are several books that give ideas on bringing festivals into the home.



The Calendar at Michael Hall, like all Steiner Waldorf Schools, marks many festive occasions throughout the School year. At the cardinal points of the year are the main Christian Festivals. Other religious festivals are observed too, of course, which help to deepen the children's experience of other peoples and cultures as they progress through the School. In this handbook, however, we shall concentrate on the festivals that are celebrated either by the Whole School or by a large part of it.

Why are festivals so important? This is a question often asked by parents and visitors to the School. First of all, the festivals address the basic human need for rhythm and repetition. They form the heartbeat of School life. Each festival has its place in the cycle of the year and can be looked forward to and looked back on as well as being experienced at the time. They give children an orientation in time, in a society where many of the natural rhythms of life have virtually disappeared. Secondly, we aim to cultivate feelings of reverence and wonder in our children and celebrating the festivals especially encourages these feelings. Moreover, it helps the children to develop essential human qualities such as patience. Learning to wait, and the ability to look after things are developed by using the same objects and beautiful decorations year in, year out, as well as giving children sense impressions that nurture the soul.

### Which Festivals do we Celebrate?

The Festivals appear in our School calendar in the following chronological order:

#### Michaelmas, the Festival of St. Michael – Around 29th September

Archangel Michael is traditionally depicted controlling a dragon at his feet, or holding a pair of scales. We are called upon to wake up to the negative forces within us, to work on them and to control them in order to achieve the right balance within ourselves.

Here we mark the time of year when nature loses

its vitality and goes to sleep; human beings, by contrast, need to wake up.

It is a time for initiative and directed impulses for the future.

In the morning the Lower and Upper Schools assemble for some recitation, a presentation and Michaelmas songs. Each class then goes out into the grounds with a specific clearing up task to do, while Class 1 plant out bulbs that Class 12 gave them at the first assembly of the year. In the Early Years Michaelmas has more of the quality of a harvest festival.



#### Martinmas – 11th November

St. Martin of Tours was a Roman soldier who famously tore his cloak in half to give it to a beggar.

This story is remembered in the younger classes but the festival is chiefly celebrated in the Early Years and Classes 1 and 2 by making lanterns and going on a lantern procession after dark. The children and adults together sing songs to all that nature has brought us.



### **Advent – the four weeks (including four Sundays) that lead up to Christmas.**

Christmas is, of course, celebrated during the holidays, but the time leading up to it is magical for children. It is a time full of anticipation and excitement, not just about receiving but also about giving.

All classrooms turn into hives of activity filled with craft work, the making of cards and decorations and sometimes with the smell of baking. Classes 1 and 2 share a special advent celebration on the first or second Sunday in Advent, to which parents and friends are invited. It includes the children walking into an advent spiral to light a candle.

There is an assembly for the Lower and Upper School every Monday morning during this time, to bring and share a different aspect of Advent, through a story, poetry, carol singing and wreath lighting, all anticipating the imminent birth of the Christ child.

In the Early Years, too, similar celebrations take place December and January place.

### **The Christmas Plays - December and January**

Just before the end of term the teachers and staff traditionally present the Shepherds Play, sometimes preceded by the Paradise Play, to the pupils. This happens during School time and in the evening they give another performance for parents and friends.

These medieval mystery plays from the island of Oberufer in the Danube were discovered by Rudolf Steiner to be virtually unaltered since they were first performed in the Middle Ages and were subsequently translated into English and other languages. They are performed in Steiner Schools throughout the world.

We tend to perform these plays because of the beautiful simplicity of both the language and the images, ideal for presenting to young children.

### **Epiphany – 6th January**

We usually begin the Spring Term on or very near this day, which marks the arrival of the three wise men (or kings) in the presence of the Christ child. This date also marks the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan by John the Baptist.

The Lower and Upper Schools assemble in the theatre to celebrate this festival. Sometimes, the Kings Play, the third in the Oberufer cycle (see earlier) is performed, to Class 6 and above, during School time, and parents and friends are again warmly invited to attend the second performance in the evening.

### **Candlemas – 2nd February**

This is a festival that is exclusively celebrated by the younger classes, including the Early Years.

Originally a Celtic festival to mark the midway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, the church later chose this time to renew and bless all its candles, hence the name. At Michael Hall children often make an 'earth' candle, made up from collected and melted candle stubs and poured into a hole dug in a special spot in the School grounds.

As we did with the lanterns at Martinmas, with the earth candle we recognise the elemental world hard at work behind the scenes in nature. It also marks the very first inklings of spring.

**Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day** – the date varies according to when Easter is. Over the years this festival has become one of the highlights of the calendar for many children of all ages in the School. Teachers and pupils dress up; there are pancake races and pancake eating; there is a parade in the theatre and classes often perform silly skits and songs to one another.

### **Lent – this period begins immediately after Shrove Tuesday (on the day known as Ash Wednesday)**

This is the time of year when we remember Christ's sojourn of forty days in the wilderness and His temptation by the devil. The mood is now sober and serious, very much a contrast to the day before.

It is a time when older pupils and adults may wish to give up a favourite food or a bad habit. It is time to test one's resilience in dealing with temptation.

### **Easter**

Like Christmas, Easter takes place during the School holidays. The time leading up to Easter is, nevertheless, a time of preparation, making decorations, painting eggs etc.



Spring is in the air as nature around us begins to reawaken. It is a time of death, resurrection and trans-formation, which the Early Years and each class celebrate in age-appropriate ways. The Upper School has a special Easter Festival towards the end of the Spring Term, where these qualities are addressed. Parents and friends are very much encouraged to attend this festival.

### **Ascension**

Forty days after the resurrection of Christ, the church celebrates His ascension to heaven. Some teachers may take their classes out to make a point of observing the clouds.

### **May Festival**

In May Classes 1-5 herald in the Spring by dancing round the maypole. The dances are practised for some weeks beforehand. On the chosen morning of the festival a May King and Queen (from Class 5) are crowned for the day. They lead the procession down to the maypole, together with a merry band of musicians. Children are dressed in green and white, adorned with flower garlands. Parents are invited to come and watch.



### **Whitsun - This takes place fifty days after Easter and is also known as Pentecost**

The Holy Spirit descended to Christ's disciples on this day in the form of tongues of fire. Filled with this inner fire, they were enabled to go out and preach the message of Christ in any number of tongues and be understood.

The Lower and Upper Schools assemble in the Theatre and often there is a reading from the relevant passage in the Bible (Acts 2, v. 1-12), in as many different languages as the School can muster. A story is told, the theme of which is communication and the sharing of understanding.

For many years now the School has sung a beautiful song in eight parts, specially written for Whitsun.

In the Early Years and the lower classes the children make white doves, which also represent the Holy Spirit.

### **Midsummer Festival – around St. John's tide, 24th June**

This festival very much involves parents, friends and old scholars, as well as the entire School. In many countries there is a tradition of jumping over fire at St. John's. The fire represents the height of the summer sun and jumping over it or through it a ritual of purification of the soul. Although health and safety regulations make jumping through fires a thing of the past, the highlight of our Midsummer Festival remains the lighting of the huge fire by Class 12 at the bottom of the Valley Field late at night, after the student performance – an event not to be missed (for adults and young people of Class 8 age and over).



Other events at this festival include a Lower School pageant, side shows, exhibitions of work, strawberries and cream, teas and music on the Mansion Terrace and, of course, the Midsummer Musical. In recent years we have celebrated with a Cricket Match with Staff vs Alumni on the Sunday. Additionally, there is often a concert in the morning. It is a time for class reunions, and get-togethers; the prevailing mood is an outward one, looking forward to the breathing out of the summer ahead.

We are lucky in this country that our seasons are so varied. As you can see from the above, the celebrations almost always contain a seasonal element, which may reflect sacred festivals that pre-date the Christian ones.

Are parents allowed to take part in Festivals? In the Early Years parents are often invited in to take part. Higher up in the School this changes somewhat.

The large School assemblies make the inclusion of parents difficult (unless specially invited) due to lack of space but often, especially in the lower classes, parents are warmly invited to celebrations in the classroom.

## School Theatre Festivals

About twice a year parents and friends are invited to attend a School festival in the Theatre. Rather different to the seasonal festivals described so far, these are a sharing of current work that is being done in the classroom. Not all classes take part in these every time but usually there is a demonstration of work from a wide age range – recitation, singing, music-making, drama, eurythmy, Gymnastics and foreign language plays. They present a wonderful opportunity for pupils and parents to see what lies ahead in the curriculum and also to look back and remember work from previous years.

## Expected attendance at Festivals

School festivals are compulsory for pupils when their class is taking part.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated in the classroom in an age-appropriate way. In the Early Years the teacher often tells a story gently relating to the biography of the child; later there might be a crown, a candle and a special chair for the birthday child.

In classes 1-12 often the pupil brings a cake for the whole class to share (this can go on right into the Upper School).

Many Class Teachers give the child a special birthday verse, which they learn off by heart and recite on a weekly basis. Reciting birthday verses forms a very important part of the Main Lesson.

## Parent & Child Group

Parent and Child Group is held on Monday 0 -1.5yrs, Tuesday to Friday 1.5 - 3.5yrs from 10am to 12pm. For more information on this group please contact [emily.gearing-grief@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:emily.gearing-grief@michaelhall.co.uk).

## Times of the School Day

All classes start at 08:10 but finish at different times as shown in the chart below:

There is a mid-morning break and a staggered lunch break.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Kindergarten	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35
Class 1	08:10-15:15	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35 until Summer term when it finishes at 15:15	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35
Class 2	08:10-15:15	08:10-12:35	08:10-12:35	08:10-15:15	08:10-12:35
Class 3	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-12:35
Classes 4-8	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15	08:10-15:15
Classes 9-12	08:10-16:15	08:10-16:15	08:10-16:15	08:10-16:15	08:10-16:15

## School Minibuses

There is a School minibus service which runs to Brighton via Lewes, East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells. For more information on costs and stops, please visit our website: <https://michaelhall.co.uk/school-buses/>. Please complete the Interactive Bus Request Form on the Parent Portal, this then gets sent automatically to the correct department. Alternatively download a form from the website at <https://michaelhall.co.uk/school-buses/> or pick up a paper copy from Reception.

## After School Clubs

### Kindergarten Club

This club starts at 12:30 and finishes at 15:15/15:30.

Afternoon Care for children in Kindergarten typically consists of a cooked meal followed by games and activities appropriate to the children's age, and may include a short nap. The minimum booking is for half a term at a time. Please book the Kindergarten Afternoon Club with Rachel Ford-Blanchard [rachel.ford-blanchard@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:rachel.ford-blanchard@michaelhall.co.uk)

### Afternoon Club for Classes 1 - 2.

This club starts at 12:35 and finishes at 15:15. Afternoon Club is organised for children in Classes 1 - 2 who would like to come on their short days. They are able to enjoy playing in small groups often in outside and may also partake in seasonal art and craft projects.

NB: If you would like your child to attend this Afternoon Club please complete the Interactive Afternoon Club Booking Form on the Parent Portal this then gets sent automatically to the correct department. Alternatively download a form from the website at: [michaelhall.co.uk/afternoon-club](https://michaelhall.co.uk/afternoon-club) or pick up a paper copy from Reception.

## Homework Club

Homework Club is for siblings of Upper School pupils, staff children and those using the School Bus Service. Runs from 15:15 - 16:15

Lower School children can do their homework in a quiet environment. Younger children are able to play. (All children are supervised by a teacher during this period).

Please complete the Interactive Homework Club Booking Form on the Parent Portal this then gets sent automatically to the correct department. Alternatively download a form from the website at: [michaelhall.co.uk/homework-club](https://michaelhall.co.uk/homework-club) or pick up a paper copy from Reception.

## Gym Clubs

Gym Clubs run from Class 5 right up to Class 12. Clubs include Volleyball, Netball, Basketball, Badminton, Gymnastics, Circus Skills and Tennis according to the season.

Please see the website to download the Consent Forms and the current programme at: [michaelhall.co.uk/gym](http://michaelhall.co.uk/gym) or forms can be collected from Reception.

## Cancelling Clubs

Because there is a register held for all children attending Afternoon Club, Homework Club and Gym & Games Clubs, it is vital to let Reception know if your child is unable to attend any of these clubs.

If your child is unable to attend the Gym & Games Club for any reason, but needs to stay until 16:15 for pick-up purposes, please also let Reception know so that your child can be booked into Homework Club until 16:15.

## School Orchestras

We have two Orchestras in the Lower School and Middle School:

- Pupils from Classes 4 and 5 form an Orchestra once a week in which every child who is learning an instrument that can be accommodated in an ensemble contributes whatever they can according to their ability.
- In Classes 6, 7 and 8, those children who continue to have lessons on orchestral instruments form the Middle School Orchestra once a week. The Orchestra learns repertoire drawn from many different styles that can be performed in festival and concert.
- 

In the Upper School, students are encouraged to create an ensemble that can contribute to any event at School including our annual Advent Festival of Music. Rehearsals happen after School and during lunch breaks.

Where possible, we combine our ensembles and choirs for specific musical projects.

### Instrumental Lessons

If your child is in Class 3 and above and is interested in learning an instrument, this is possible on a one-to-one basis with a specialist instrumental teacher during the School day.

The School currently offers lessons on the following instruments on a rotation system:

- Violin (Class 3 or above)
- Viola (Class 3 or above)
- Cello (Class 3 or above)

Double Bass (Class 4 or above)

Flute (Class 4 or above)

Clarinet (Class 4 or above)

Saxophone (Class 5/6 or above)

Piano (Class 4 or above)

If your child is below Class 3/4 and is interested in learning an instrument, please contact the Music Department.

For full details regarding instrumental tuition at Michael Hall, please refer to the information on our Music page ([michaelhall.co.uk/music](http://michaelhall.co.uk/music)) which includes the relevant Terms and Conditions. If you would like to apply for lessons, please complete an Application Form which can be downloaded from the same page or can be requested at Reception.

All instrumental lessons at Michael Hall are administered by the school's Instrumental Tuition Coordinator, Rachel Masters ([rachel.masters@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:rachel.masters@michaelhall.co.uk)). Lessons are offered once a week on rotation during term time by a team of dedicated, specialist instrumental teachers. All lessons are 40 minutes long.

Please note that lessons are offered subject to demand. If demand is too great for a particular instrument, then pupils will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis following receipt of the Application Form. Further applicants will be put on a waiting list. Please see the website for application deadlines: [michaelhall.co.uk/music](http://michaelhall.co.uk/music).

## Instrument Hire

Some instruments are also available for hire for the use of Michael Hall pupils.

After the teacher has advised on the size of instrument the pupil needs, please contact our Music Teacher, Julian Rolton at:

[Julian.Rolton@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:Julian.Rolton@michaelhall.co.uk)

An application for hiring an instrument is included on the Music page.

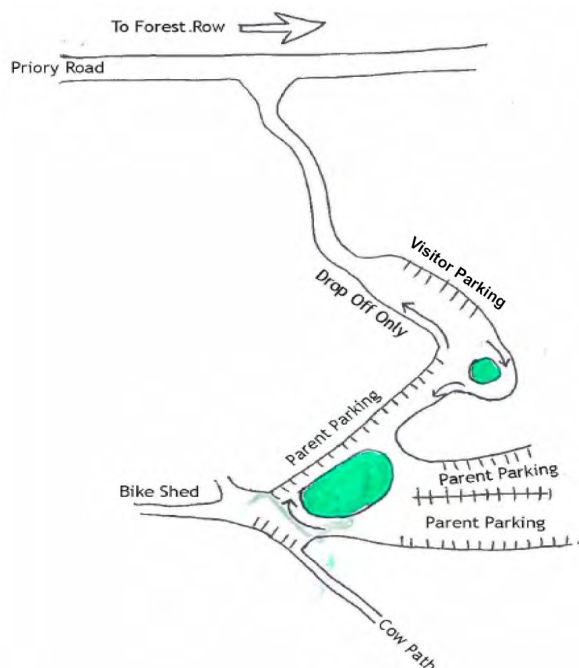
## Parking & Driving

If you are entering the School by car please be vigilant and drive slowly (limit 5mph) and considerately. Remember that during the School day there are many children around who will not be conscious of the dangers of moving vehicles. Please note that parking is strictly limited to the areas shown on the map.

Please do not park:

- In the Staff Car Park
- In front of the Mansion
- At the Kindergarten

It is imperative for the safety of our children that we all abide by the parking restrictions as outlined below:



We encourage walking, cycling and lift sharing. There is a covered bike area beside the Gym for those that wish to cycle. Bikes are left at their own risk and the School is not liable for any damage or theft.

## Gym Kit

There is a compulsory Gym and Games kit for Lower and Upper School pupils. The School Gym kit (except shoes) can be purchased from Reception. Prices are available from Reception or on our website at: [michaelhall.co.uk/gym-kits](http://michaelhall.co.uk/gym-kits).

### Classes 3 & 4

Each Gym kit should contain:

- 1 x bag, embroidered by child and sewn together by parents (this will be given to you at the end of the Summer Term in Class 2)
- 1 x t-shirt with School logo (available from Reception)
- 1 x red sweatshirt with School logo (available from Reception)
- 1 x navy tracksuit bottoms
- 1 x navy shorts (optional)

### Footwear:

We encourage children to be barefoot in the Gym in Classes 3 and 4. However, if they have injuries or foot issues, they may wear a pair of clean indoor 'non-marking' shoes. (We recommend plimsolls or minimalist trainers. High heel trainers with lots of cushioning limit the ability of the foot to move).

- 1 x outdoor trainers, to remain with kit (separate to classroom indoor shoes)

### Classes 5 – 8

- 1 x Gym bag of choice
- 1 x t-shirt with School logo (available from Reception)
- 1 x red sweatshirt with School logo (available from Reception)
- 1 x navy tracksuit bottoms
- 1 x navy shorts (optional)

Class 7 upwards: 1 x gum shield. Students from Class 7 up will need a gum shield as part of their kit. They will be given sufficient warning that a Hockey block is approaching. If they do not have a gum shield for Hockey lessons, the Gym Department will supply them with one and we will add this to the School bill at a cost of approx. £4.50.

For some blocks (and weather dependent) students in class 7 and upwards will need waterproofs, hats and gloves. At times they may wish to bring a spare change of underwear and towel to be able to shower after the lesson.

### Footwear:

- 1 x outdoor trainers, to remain with kit
- 1 x pair of clean indoor 'non-marking' trainers (we need all children to wear indoor trainers/plimsolls for games at this age as the children are getting bigger and there is a greater risk of foot injuries when some are wearing footwear and others are barefoot)

- Class 7 upwards 1 x studded boots for football, rugby and they can also be used for orienteering and cross country running. The students will be given sufficient warning that a Hockey or football block is approaching.

### Upper School (Classes 9 – 12)

- 1 x Gym bag of choice
- 1 x white t-shirt
- 1 x navy sweatshirt
- 1 x navy tracksuit bottoms
- 1 x navy shorts (optional)
- 1 x gum shield. Students will be given sufficient warning that a Hockey block is approaching. If they do not have a gum shield for Hockey lessons, the Gym Department will supply them with one and we will add this to the School bill at a cost of approx. £4.50.

For some blocks (and weather dependent) students will need waterproofs, hats and gloves. At times they may wish to bring a spare change of underwear and towel to be able to shower after the lesson.

Footwear:

- 1 x pair of clean indoor 'non-marking' trainers
- 1 x pair of outdoor trainers
- 1 x studded boots for football, rugby and they can be used for orienteering and cross country running. The students will be given sufficient warning that a Hockey or football block is approaching.

Please note that jewellery and watches will need to be removed for lessons. Small earrings can be taped over safely with micro-pore tape supplied by you and can be purchased from most chemists.

NB: EVERY ITEM MUST BE MARKED WITH THE STUDENT'S NAME

## First Aid

All medical health care plans are held by our School Nurse. Minor cuts, scrapes and illness during the school day are attended to via one of our First Aiders. For any queries please call 01342 828295 or email [first.aid@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:first.aid@michaelhall.co.uk)

## Attendance

### Leave of Absence

All requests for leave of absence during term time should be made by email to: [attendance@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:attendance@michaelhall.co.uk). We require two weeks notice for requests please and will ensure that you get a timely reply.

In line with our Attendance Policy and the Guidance from the Department of Education, unfortunately term-time absences cannot be granted for holidays or family celebrations. We cannot grant approval retrospectively so if it is not requested within the two weeks, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In instances where there is joint custody both parents will need to be consulted before leave of absence is granted.

### Illness

To report a child as absent due to illness, please either email [attendance@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:attendance@michaelhall.co.uk) or call 01342 822275 and choose option 1 by 08:30. Alternatively, you can leave a message in Reception.

The registration period closes at 08:45. Any pupil not in school by this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence as per the latest Government Guidelines which we are under a legal obligation to comply with. If your child arrives after this time, they need to sign in at Reception. Should your child need to be collected during the School day, they must sign out at and be collected from, Reception.

No parents should be within the School grounds outside the permissible collection times unless they have first signed in at Reception and are either DBS checked, or accompanied by a member of staff.

### Lateness

If your child is late into School, please ensure that they sign in at Reception. This is to ensure that we have correct records of who is at school for our registers and in case of fire, for example.

### Medical Appointments

If you need to take your child out during the School day (eg. for a medical appointment) please arrange with their Class Teacher for the child to come to Reception to meet you there. Younger pupils, can be escorted there by First Aid staff. Please email us: [attendance@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:attendance@michaelhall.co.uk).

### Emergency After-School Care

Children who are not collected after School at the appropriate time should either go to the First Aid room or to Reception. Please inform Reception if you know you are going to be late (01342 822275).

### School Closure

If in the event of an emergency or unforeseen occurrence the School needs to be closed, information will be posted on the School website and an email will also be sent to all parents. If the weather is severe and you have not received a telephone tree message or email, please check the School Website to see if the School will be open.

### Trips and Outings

Trips and Outings Consent Forms will either be handed out annually at the first Parents Evening of the academic year or issued through the Parent Portal to be completed digitally. This will cover all activities outside of school hours or beyond the School premises, for that academic year.

Regular class trips are included in the School fees; however, additional class trips organised by the Class Teacher will be charged as an extra. Should a class wish to fundraise for additional trips, this can be arranged between the Class Teacher and the class parents.



## Class Contacts

These are parents who help to promote and maintain an open relationship between their Class Teachers and the other parents in the class. The Class Contact is a parent in the class and this role varies according to the needs of the class and the teacher. Each Class Contact is given a handbook that outlines their role at different stages of the School. All Class Contacts meet once a term together with a school representative to share information, concerns, needs and practical matters.

Class Contacts keep their parents and teachers informed either at parents' evenings, through a telephone tree, by email or by letter.

Class Contacts are encouraged to foster social support amongst the parents in the class and especially towards new parents joining the class. It is a pre-requisite of taking on the role of the Class Contact to have a DBS check in place and to have been a school parent for at least a year.

## Stationery

A small selection of stationery appropriate to the various stages of the curriculum is offered at wholesale prices in Reception.

## Mini-Markets

Normally termly, parents run a Mini-Market in the Canteen between 08:00 and 09:30. Come and sell your wares or have a look at the lovely creative gifts you can purchase. All profits from table fees go to the School.

## Mansion Markets

This is held on the second Saturday of that month normally 2 times a year. It is a pleasant social occasion to browse, eat tasty food, buy unusual presents, enjoy music or a puppet show or just relish the ambience of Kidbrooke Mansion. All profits from table fees go to the School.

For further details find a leaflet in Reception or visit the Michael Hall website [www.michaelhall.co.uk/mansion-market](http://www.michaelhall.co.uk/mansion-market) or their facebook page.

To book a stall, email: [mansion.market@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:mansion.market@michaelhall.co.uk)

## Fundraising

There are many opportunities to get involved in fundraising at Michael Hall either for specific class trips or for School projects. These are enjoyable and rewarding social opportunities.

## Advent Fair

This fair is a significant celebratory and fundraising event to herald the season of Advent before Christmas. It is put on by the parents for the School and wider community, usually held on the last Saturday in November.

Christmas craft workshops, activities, gifts, delicious food, gingerbread, and music fill the day with wonder and delight.

A volunteer group of parents sit on an organising committee, and all other parents have the opportunity of being involved in a variety of helpful tasks and creative contributions which is based around their child's year group's stall responsibility.

## Charities

Various outside causes are supported by the School, including WOW (Waldorf One World). Class activities and the Student Council raise monies for these specific charities throughout the year.

## Old Scholars

This is a thriving network. It is a great way for ex-students to remain in contact with their contemporaries and keep abreast of all that is happening at Michael Hall through newsletters and reunions. For information contact: [reception@michaelhall.co.uk](mailto:reception@michaelhall.co.uk)

## Michael Hall Parents

"Support and dialogue with parents for enriching their journey with Waldorf Education at Michael Hall School"

"Michael Hall Parents" is an open group that supports and engages in dialogue with all parents on how to participate with Waldorf education for their children and themselves at Michael Hall. In order to achieve this, parents work to support each other, are in study of Waldorf Education, and are in dialogue with teachers and the Senior Leadership Team. With parents working together we can foster the best conditions for learning in a Waldorf community. The MHP core group arrange talks, lectures and sharing spaces in order to deepen our understanding of Waldorf education and parenting. You will hear about these events through emails and in the weekly Friday Flier.

## Friday Flier

The Friday Flier is a weekly publication that you will automatically receive as a parent of the School.

The Friday Flier is a weekly newsletter that publishes important and useful information about the School and School Events. You will automatically receive it via email weekly during term time. Please be sure to read it to keep yourself informed and up to date with all manner of things ranging from class play invitations to chicken pox doing the rounds!

## Heart of Teaching

In-House Steiner Waldorf Teacher Training Programme at the very heart of the School. For further information please visit: [theheartofteaching.co.uk](http://theheartofteaching.co.uk)

## The Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (SWSF)

The SWSF represents Schools in the UK and Ireland and the teacher training courses. Please visit their website for more information: [steinerwaldorf.org](http://steinerwaldorf.org)

## Forest Row Community

We are lucky to be part of the busy community of Forest Row with its remarkable variety of shops, restaurants, local farms (Tablehurst and Plawhatch) and services. The Parish Council offer a 'Local Information Pack' to help newcomers to the area find all they need.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What books do you recommend to learn more about the festivals?

Many books have been written to help people deepen their understanding of the festivals. Here are just a few to start you off:

Festivals, Family and Food by Diana Carey and Judy Large

The Children's Year by Christine Fynes-Clinton and Ann Druitt

Spring/Summer/Autumn/Winter Activities for Children by Irmgard Kutch and Brigitte Walden

### What is a nature table?

In the Early Years and throughout most of the Lower School, the teacher has a table in the room which reflects the season of the year and the festival that is being celebrated at any particular time. The table is usually decorated with appropriately coloured cloths, a vase with flowers or other seasonal treasures, a seasonal picture, a candle and small puppets such as figures for the crib scene, flower children, gnomes etc.

Children sometimes bring 'treasures' to School which they have found on walks, which are then given a place on the nature table for a little while. The nature table is much loved, especially by the younger children and is treated with a certain reverence.



### **How can the festivals be celebrated at home?**

This question is frequently asked by parents. The more that what we do at School is reinforced in the child's home, the better it is for the child. Receiving the same messages from home and from School is very strengthening and brings an enormous sense of security.

Workshops on celebrating the festivals are sometimes arranged (look in the School Newsletter - Friday Flier for these) and the Early Years teachers especially are always willing to share ideas and thoughts with parents. If you are interested in bringing any aspect of the festivals into the home please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

### **My child loves competitive sports. What sports does Michael Hall do?**

The Gym and Games curriculum in Steiner Waldorf Schools, as with all subjects, is derived from our understanding of child development. As the pupils move towards adolescence competitive sports take greater prominence. For example there is a strong focus on athletics in Class 5 (age 11), which coincides with the study of Greece, culminating with the Greek Olympics. There is little benefit to the children in introducing them to a sport requiring a high degree of strategic thinking when that faculty has yet to reach maturity.



There are opportunities for playing many other games and using the School's facilities within the School day and during breaks. We are fortunate to have a huge Gym with extensive sporting and ancillary facilities. We also have tennis courts and grounds for team games such as softball. Michael Hall also compete with other Schools in Basketball, Volleyball, , Athletics and Cross-Country. For Gym Clubs please our website at: [michaelhall.co.uk/Gym](http://michaelhall.co.uk/Gym).

### **What is the Main Lesson?**

Throughout the School, each class has a Main Lesson every day. This focuses on a topic which is studied age-appropriately and comprehensively for one and a half to two hours daily for a period of 3-4 weeks.

This gives the students the opportunity to explore a subject from many aspects (historical, geographical, cultural, economic, political) and develop a deeper, more profound understanding.

In the Lower School the Class Teacher presents the Main Lesson; in the Upper School Main Lesson is taught by specialist subject teachers.

### **What is Eurythmy?**

Eurythmy is an artistic form of movement where different movements and gestures correspond to different sounds or notes. The rhythms and exercises develop concentration, physical co-ordination and social and spatial awareness. It can also be used developmentally and therapeutically to help with learning and behaviour problems. Eurythmy lessons are given through-out the School, from Kindergarten to Upper School. Eurythmy teachers undergo an extensive specialist training.





www.michaelhall.co.uk - email: contact@michaelhall.co.uk  
 Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, East Sussex, RH18 5JA - 01342 822275  
 Registered charity number 307006

**Michael Hall**  
 a Steiner Waldorf School