

# Michael Hall

a Steiner Waldorf School

## Admissions Policy

Policy Owner	Senior Leadership Team
Formally endorsed by	Council of Trustees
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# Admissions Policy

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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.

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.

### 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.

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) and Kindergarten (aged 3-6)
- *Lower School*, comprising Classes 1 to 8 (ages 6 to 14)
- *Upper School*, comprising Classes 9 to 12 (ages 15 to 18)

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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, so progression from Kindergarten to Class 1 or Class 8 to Class 9 is not automatic. An admissions process will take place at these stages to ensure the school can continue to meet educational needs into the next developmental stage. For children moving from Kindergarten to Class 1, a £250 deposit is required, which will be deducted from the fees for their first term of Class 1.

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

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.

### 4. 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 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.

### 5. The Admissions Process

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.

\* This 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, Early Years Practitioner or Class Guardian.
4. If an applicant is asked to return for further assessments, these assessments will be carried out by the Inclusion Team. These further assessments do not normally apply in

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Kindergarten with the exception of applicants who are expected to transfer to Class 1 within 12 months of entry.

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.
6. 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

\*NB These assessments don't normally apply in Kindergarten and there is no formal assessment of applicants to Parent and Child Groups, though the school does reserve the right to refuse admission at its discretion.

Once the school has approved a child for admissions, all applicants must sign and return the school contract before their child will be permitted to join. A £500 advance payment of fees will be required with the contract to secure the child's place in their class. This will be deducted from the first terms' bill. This will only be refunded should notice of withdrawal be received at least 3 months in advance of the child's proposed start date.

Most 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 dates for entry are as follows:

- For children entering classes 1-12 the birthdate cut off for a class is normally 31st August
- For a 3-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 three by December 30<sup>th</sup>. There is no entry to Kindergarten in the Summer term.

Admission to Kindergarten is for a minimum of three consecutive morning sessions per week on entry, increasing to five sessions a week when the child's Key Worker or Assistant Principal advises. Michael Hall Kindergartens do not accept multiple setting registrations. Attendance for five sessions a week is mandatory for all students starting the term after their fifth birthday.

### 7. Class Sizes and Priority for Places

- For the Parent and Child Group, a maximum of 7 children from birth to 3 years' old
- 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.

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- 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.
- The school operates a waiting list when a class is closed for new admissions and the in the case of oversubscription the order of priority is:
  - Siblings
  - Children of staff
  - Children transferring from other Waldorf Steiner schools
  - Length of time on waiting list

### 8. Taster Days

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.

### 9. Separated Parents

We ask that all adults with parental responsibility for a child are in agreement that the child should attend Michael Hall before an application is made. We generally ask that both parents/carers sign the school contract, although we may make an exception if a parent has agreed that they will take on sole financial responsibility for fees. In this case, we will allow the paying parent only to sign the contract but must have written confirmation that both parents/carers are not in objection to the child securing a place at the school.

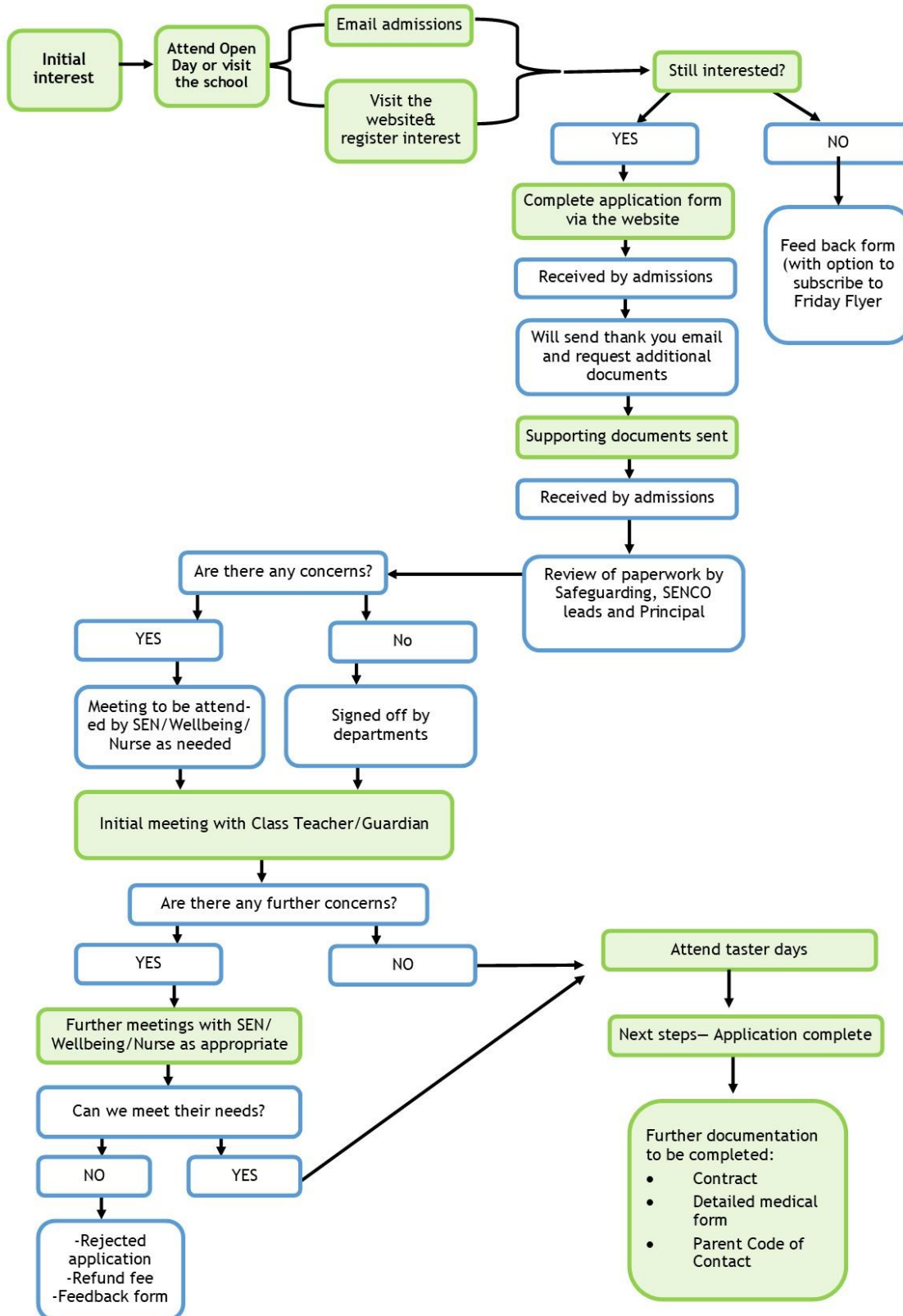
Whilst we will work with individual families who differ in their opinion of whether Michael Hall School is right for them as a separated family, we find that in the best interest of the child, having a parent opposed to their enrolment is not conducive to a settled education. We therefore will tend not to admit children who have a parent against the idea. We will, however, take this on a case-by-case basis and commit to working with the concerned parent/carer on helping them understand the benefits of Waldorf education. We will always adhere to instructions given by any court order obtained by a parent/carer on the matter.

### 10. 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). Please note that Michael Hall has a zero-tolerance policy for anti-social behaviour from parents or carers, starting from the admissions process. This form of behaviour will result in a complete review of the application with a relevant member of SLT and may result in the end of the application process.

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## Appendix A- The Admissions process



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### Appendix B

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

<b>Michael Hall</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Mainstream</b>
Parent & Child Groups	Early Years	0 - 3.5	Playgroup, Nursery, Pre-School
Kindergarten Year 1 & 2	Early Years	3 - 5	Primary (Reception)
Kindergarten Year 3	Early Years	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)