



Parents'
Handbook

The St Michael
Steiner School

2019 - 2020

The St Michael Steiner School
Park Road
Hanworth Park
London
TW13 6PN

Website: www.stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

For general enquiries and information: Tel: 020 8893 1299

Email: info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

For communications regarding children's wellbeing and education, please contact your child's Class Teacher, Kindergarten Teacher or Tutor directly.

Alternatively, you may contact the College Chair:

college@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

NB: PLEASE DO NOT USE THE SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER OR INFO EMAIL ADDRESS TO COMMUNICATE CONFIDENTIAL OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN, FAMILIES OR STAFF.

For enquiries about fees and fee assistance, contact Birgit Möller at:

bursar@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

For invoice and payment queries, contact Henry Lau at:

finance@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Information for BACS payments:

Account name: THE ST MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL LTD.

Account number: 65098413

Bank: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK

Sort code: 08-92-99

Please quote your child's name as a reference so that we can identify your payment.

NB: THE FINANCE DEPT. DEALS WITH FINANCES ONLY AND CANNOT RESPOND TO PEDAGOGICAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

Contents

<u>About the School</u>	5
Educational principles	5
The Early Years	6
Lower School	6
Main Lesson	6
Subject Lessons	7
High School	7
Learning Support	7
School Doctor	9
Equipment and Materials	9
School Trips	9
Festivals	9
Homework	10
<u>How the school is run</u>	
The College	10
The Faculty	11
Staff Meetings	11
Trustees	11
The School Association	11
Financial Management	11
Official registration and Inspections	11
Equal Opportunities Statement	12
Parent Education	12
School Hours and Term Dates	12
What does the school ask of parents?	13
Communication	13
Reports	14
Home visits	14
Photography and Filming	14
Recommended reading list	14
What are the children allowed to wear and bring to school?	15
Electronic Media	16
Attendance, Punctuality & Registration	18
Arrival and Collection of children	18
<u>Policies and procedures</u>	
School Fee Structure	19
School Fees Policy	21
Fee Assistance	22
Withdrawal of a child	22
Code of Conduct & Behaviour	22
Detention	23
Illness and Infectious Diseases	24
First Aid	24
Parents' use of school premises	24
Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons	24
Dogs	24
Scooters and Bicycles	24
Child Protection & Safeguarding	24
Bullying	25
Terms of Acceptance and Probation	25
Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils	26
Parents' Grievance Procedure	26

This Handbook forms part of parents' contract with the school. It contains summaries and information about some of the school's policies and procedures and provides answers to many questions parents may have.

About the School

In the chaos of Europe after the first World War, many people hoped for and believed in a better future, based on new social forms. One of these was the industrialist, Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart. Molt was a friend of philosopher and scientist, Rudolf Steiner. Steiner had written books and given lectures on education and now Molt asked him to found a school for the children of the workers in his factory. Steiner agreed, trained twelve teachers in his method, based on a study of child development, and 'The Waldorf School' opened in September 1919.

The first Waldorf school in the English speaking world opened in south London in 1925. There are now more than 1000 schools worldwide. Each of these schools, whilst being independent and part of its local community, shares an approach to education behind which stands a deep understanding of the human being in body, soul and spirit, which Rudolf Steiner wrote and spoke about in several hundred books and lectures during his life. He called this knowledge 'Anthroposophy' – literally 'wisdom of the human being' – and in it he described and characterised the different stages of development which can be observed in the journey through childhood (and also through adulthood). In his lectures on education, he gave many indications for suitable subject matter and approaches to teaching for different ages but always stressed that teachers must be free to interpret these indications in their own way. Indeed, he said, if they did not do so, Steiner Waldorf education would become a method as good as, but no better than, many other methods.

"The Waldorf School is not an 'alternative school' like so many others, founded on the belief that it will correct all errors in education. It is founded on the idea that the best principles and the best will in this field can come into effect only if the teacher understands human nature. However, this understanding is not possible without developing an active interest in all of human social life. Through a teacher who understands the soul, who understands people, the totality of social life affects the new generation struggling into life. People will emerge from this school fully prepared for life." Rudolf Steiner

The St Michael Steiner School was founded in 2001 by teachers with many years' experience of working in London. Our vision has always been to establish a school that addresses the needs of city children in the 21st Century. For children growing up in London now, the diversity of human culture is a living experience; we treasure this and build on it by nurturing in them a deep respect for all human beings and an enthusiastic and active interest in the world around them, so that they can orientate themselves towards whatever comes to meet them in life, now, and in the future.

"Those people who do not allow the current crisis of civilisation to pass by in a kind of soul sleep, but fully experience it, will see that it did not originate in institutions that simply missed their goals and that simply need improvement. Those people will look for the cause deep in human thinking, feeling and will. They will also acknowledge that the education of the coming generation is one of the ways leading to a revitalisation of our social life." Rudolf Steiner

Educational Principles

Behind Waldorf Education stands a deep understanding of the human being in body, soul and spirit, which Rudolf Steiner wrote and spoke about in several hundred books and lectures during his life. He called this knowledge 'Anthroposophy' – literally 'wisdom of the human being' – and in it he described and characterised the stages of development which can be observed in the journey through childhood (and also adulthood). To understand this unique view of child development better, see Rudolf Steiner's essay [The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy](#).

There is, of course, a large body of work created by Waldorf teachers over the last century, and many teachers draw on this, as well as on the indications given by Rudolf Steiner, so that a canon of manifestly suitable themes and traditions for each age has become established in most Waldorf schools worldwide. However, this is by no means prescribed. In his lectures on education, Steiner gave many indications for suitable subject matter and approaches to teaching for different ages but always stressed that teachers must be free to interpret these indications in their own way. Indeed, he said, if they did not do so, Waldorf education would become a method as good as, but no better than, many other methods.

However, there are some practices which, because they have proved so successful in providing the best possible education for the children, have become established in most schools. This does not mean that they are never questioned, only that they are used because they continue to work. The two aspects of Waldorf Education most prevalent in this category are the Class Teacher and the Main Lesson, detailed below.

The Early Years

In Steiner Waldorf schools, like many educational systems in Europe, formal learning does not begin until the children are in their seventh year. The time when they naturally become ready for school is usually marked by the change of teeth. Before that, all of their life forces are needed to develop a strong, healthy body; to draw on these forces for intellectual work during the first seven years would be to compromise that development.

'The Early Years' in our school means provision for children in the first seven years. This includes Parent and Child Groups and Kindergarten. Parents can bring their children to Parent and Child Groups from birth; these are as much an opportunity for parents to meet and talk to each other as for their children to play. They can also provide an introduction to Steiner Waldorf Education as they are organised and run by trained teachers out of an anthroposophical understanding of the young child.

Between the ages of three and seven, the real work of children is their creative free play, through which their will forces are strengthened while, at the same time, they learn to become social beings and integrate into a group. The Kindergarten provides an environment for this play and one in which the children can learn about the world through healthy imitation, which is the natural impulse of children at this age. Toys are of natural materials and as unfinished as possible - simple dolls, plain wooden trucks, stones and sticks for building, as well as planks, tables, chairs and play stands for larger structures, pieces of cloth in beautiful colours for dressing up, wrapping dolls and making walls - so that the child can 'finish' them with his or her own imagination. There are also more structured activities during the morning such as painting, drawing, sewing, beeswax modelling, baking and simple woodwork as well as more formal, adult-led social ones like puppet shows, story telling, Eurythmy, circle games, singing and small meals prepared and eaten together.

A clear daily, weekly and seasonal rhythm brings a sense of belonging and security, allowing each child to develop at his or her own pace. Then, about half way through their seventh year, the children are usually ready to enter the Lower School.

"In the beginning the child just plays, but he plays in earnest. There is only one difference between the play of the child and the work of the adult. It is that the adult adapts himself to the outer utility that the world demands; his work is determined from without. Play is determined from within, through the being of the child which wants to unfold. Up to now very little has been done to introduce the child in the right way to the complicated life of today. It is the task of the school gradually to lead him over from play into work. If we once find the answer to the question how can we metamorphose play into work, we shall have solved the fundamental problem of all early years education. Our basis ought to be the fact that the small child's most ardent wish is to imitate the work of grown up people, whether it is done with a spade or a knitting needle."

Rudolf Steiner

The Lower School

Teachers in Steiner Waldorf schools work out of Anthroposophy and, through their own continuing observation of the children, try to meet their changing needs in a creative and living way, bringing them challenges as well as encouragement and joy in their work. In order to be able to work in this way, a good relationship must grow between teacher and child and between teacher and parent; ideally the children have the same Class Teacher from Class 1 to Class 8 - age 7 to 14 - so that this three-way relationship can develop.

"If you notice in the right way, with sensitivity, what wants to develop in people at six or seven years of age, and if you have not become a teacher but are a teacher, then an awareness for this most wonderful riddle awakens through the innermost living forces ... the developing person continuously offers himself to your soul's eye."

Rudolf Steiner

The Main Lesson

The Class Teacher takes the 'Main Lesson', a two-hour lesson first thing every morning in which subjects such as writing and reading, maths, mythology and, later, geography, history and sciences are taught individually in three or four week blocks. In this way, each topic can be entered into deeply and thoroughly for that time and, through continuity, the children can form a strong connection with their work. The Main Lesson is carefully and rhythmically structured so that the children have to listen, work independently, participate and think at different times and also so that their artistic and imaginative nature is developed; Main Lessons often involve singing, music, recitation, movement, painting and stories as well as writing and drawing.

Subject Lessons

Subject lessons in eurythmy, games, music, knitting, painting, modelling, form drawing, foreign languages and religion are taught from Class 1 onwards, sometimes by the Class Teacher and sometimes by specialist teachers. The more intellectual subject lessons are in the morning after the Main Lesson wherever possible, with artistic and practical ones in the afternoon. Other subjects, such as crochet, sewing, woodwork, gardening and gym, are introduced later, each at an appropriate age to meet the developmental needs of the children.

“It will always be a question of finding out what the development of the child demands at each age of life. For this we need real observation and knowledge of Man. The child up to the 9th or 10th year is really demanding that the whole world shall be made alive, because he does not yet see himself as separate from it. In the form of stories, descriptions and pictorial representations of all kinds, we give the child in an artistic form what he himself finds in his own soul.”

Rudolf Steiner

The High School

When the students are in their fifteenth year, they go into the High School. Classes 9 to 12 no longer have a Class Teacher; lessons are taught by subject specialists and the students have personal tutors who advise and counsel them. In September 2012, The St Michael Steiner School opened Class 9 and our first Class 12 graduated in 2016. In 2019/2020 the High School classes are 9, 10 and 12.

The High School programme is designed to give the students a foundation in a broad range of subjects, to develop practical and study skills and to encourage initiative and independence in learning. In Classes 9 and 10, there is a course of compulsory Main Lessons and Art/Craft blocks for all students throughout the year, supported by regular weekly lessons in Global Issues and P.E.

Students are consulted and advised about their hopes and plans for the future. There is an increasing number of optional Main Lessons and elective arts, crafts and supplementary lessons in Classes 11 and 12, so that students can begin to focus on their areas of particular interest. In Class 12, the students undertake a major personal project.

In Classes 10, 11 and 12, we offer assessment and certification through the Certificate of Steiner Education (CSE) at levels 1, 2 and 3. The CSE at Level 3 with University Entrance Levels in Maths and English has been deemed equivalent to A Level by NARIC UK. In 2016 and in 2017, Class 12 students from The St Michael Steiner School applied to universities in the UK through UCAS in the usual way, with their predicted grades in CSE Level 3, and have been offered places at the universities of their choice on that basis.

Policy for Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

1. The School's values, vision and aims around SEND

In keeping with the educational philosophy and pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner, the St Michael Steiner school recognises that all children have individual strengths, challenges and learning styles. We also recognise that any child may have special needs permanently or at certain stages of their development. We value diversity, inclusion, equality and we cultivate respect for themselves each other and the environment. Teacher observation is at the core of the Rudolf Steiner pedagogy. We teach in whole class mixed ability peer groups and our aim is to offer high quality teaching to all the pupils with differentiation and or strategies in place for children with SEND.

Individual success/progress is not based solely upon academic achievement.

The term SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) is used for a variety of conditions that can prevent a child from learning in a straightforward, age-appropriate manner.

A child has a learning difficulty if he/she:

- Has significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of children of the same age or group.
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities generally provided at The St Michael Steiner School for children of the same age group.

Areas of learning that may be affected are:

- Cognitive/Learning
- Communication/Interaction
- Emotional/Social/Behavioural
- Sensory/Physical

A child has a disability if he/she:

- Has a physical, cognitive or mental impairment with an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. The effect must be substantial (more than minor or trivial) and long term (more than 1 year in duration).

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language in their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Children in the Kindergarten or Classes 1 & 2 who are assessed externally may be diagnosed with a learning difficulty because their reading is not at a standard level for their age. As we start formal learning later than in mainstream schools, these diagnoses may not be appropriate.

Not every medical condition will mean that a child has a learning difference/difficulty.

What we offer for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability

Special educational provision means education that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for children and young people of the same age.

The general educational provision in our school differs from a mainstream general educational provision in that we do not follow the National Curriculum; our curriculum is based on the view of child development described by Rudolf Steiner; it is rich, diverse, and developmentally appropriate for every age. It integrates intellectual, practical, physical and artistic development, thus providing what any child needs to flourish and is also indispensable for children with SEND.

Elements in our curriculum which support all children with learning difficulties include:

- Daily speech work, learning poems by heart and developing clear enunciation, which helps with writing, spelling and verbal expression.
- Regular movement in the classroom: skipping, body geography and co ordination games, catching and throwing.
- Bothmer Gymnastics, which develops spatial awareness
- Form drawing, which develops the senses of movement and balance.
- Craft work including woodwork, clay modelling, sewing and knitting, which all develop manual skills, dexterity, confidence and aesthetic sense.
- Eurythmy, a specialist form of movement that expresses music and speech.
- Strong emphasis on using drawing and colour in bookwork, which enables children to learn, and demonstrate what they are learning, without always having to produce complex writing.
- Teachers deliver the lessons orally which means that children with literacy difficulties can participate fully in the work of the class.
- Outdoor Curriculum - gardening and grounds maintenance - which cultivates physical skills and an awareness of nature.

Children who may have required special educational provision in an alternative setting, in fact, could receive this provision in our normal day-to-day practice and find that their learning difficulty is significantly diminished or alleviated. Sometimes this curriculum is all they need, and sometimes they will need more support (one to one lessons or various therapies).

SEND Training for Staff

Staff lead sessions at INSET days, focusing on various aspects of SEND

We take advice from the school's anthroposophical doctors, Dr. Jenny Josephson and Dr. Francisco Barcello

All staff are required to take the online training provided by the school through Educare.

We have access to training provided by Hounslow Borough Council

We have access to advice/consultation from Ann Swain - Special Education Teacher and convener of the Steiner Waldorf Association for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SWASEND)

The full SEND policy is available on our website and in the file in the office. Please note that the cost of therapies and one-to-one sessions is not included in the school fees.

The School Doctor

The school has an anthroposophical doctor, Dr. Jenny Josephson, who visits the school once a term.

Once a year she is accompanied by Dr. Francisco Barcello, who has a great deal of experience and insight in working with children with behavioural and learning difficulties. She can see five children, chosen by the teachers, on each visit and nine when she comes with Dr. Barcello. They advise teachers from an educational point of view and may prescribe remedies, anthroposophical medicines, pedagogical exercises and therapies to help with many different problems.

Parents will be notified in writing at least a week before the visit if the teachers would like a child to see the doctor, and whether or not they will be expected to meet with the doctor themselves. This is usual, except for Class 1 readiness visits in May and when Dr. Barcello comes.

Consent for children to see the doctor is given on the general consent form which parents sign when they join the school.

All children who turn six during the current academic year will be asked to see the doctor in the summer term as part of the procedure to determine whether or not they are ready to go into Class 1 in September.

Equipment and Materials

The school provides paper, crayons and pencils, exercise books, paint, brushes, eurythmy shoes etc. but there will be some things that parents are expected to provide, for example, indoor shoes, wet weather gear, protective clothing for lab work in the High School etc. These things vary from class to class and, during the summer, Class Teachers will send parents a list of what children will need at the beginning of the year.

Other things may be needed during the year and you will be advised of this by your child's teacher. Some things will be supplied by the school and then you will be billed for them; these include wooden flutes, recorders, geometry equipment and fountain pens. For information about what expenses you are likely to incur during the year, please contact your Class Teacher.

School Trips

Experiencing different environments, especially for city children, is a vital part of their education; it helps them to connect deeply with the world and enriches their understanding of what they learn at school.

The children may go on day trips from Kindergarten - for the Martinmas Lantern Walk in November, for example - and then, from about Class 3, they may camp or stay in youth hostels overnight on trips related to the curriculum. They may visit a farm in Class 3; there is a three-night camp for the 'Olympics' in Class 5 and they often visit the site of a Roman settlement in Class 6. In Class 8 the class often goes abroad as a 'finale' to their time with their Class Teacher; there is a Survival Skills camp in Class 9, a Surveying field trip in Class 10 and cultural trips both in London, elsewhere in the UK and overseas in Classes 11 and 12.

Parents are expected to pay for school trips in addition to their school fees and will be advised of costs in good time.

Festivals

Festivals form an important part of the children's education. The main ones celebrated at the school are Michaelmas, Advent, Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, and St. John's Day, but we also celebrate Martinmas (in November), St. Nicholas' Day, Candlemas (in February) and Ascension. We have children in our school from many different cultures and so we try to bring their festivals - such as Chanukah, Diwali and Eid - into the school as well, often with the help of their families. Some festival celebrations are just for the children, others are for parents as well.

Festivals of work, such as our eurythmy festivals at Rudolf Steiner House, sometimes take place off site and parents are expected to accompany their children. Others are planned to take place in the morning so that the school day ends earlier than usual. Parents are informed of these in the Newsletter, on the website and by email.

Homework

The school does not have a universal policy regarding homework. Each teacher is free to decide whether it will be of benefit to the children in each case and so some will give homework, others won't and this should be considered normal. Generally, children will not have homework before Class 3, although they may get small assignments, such as trying to answer a riddle or bringing something from home, from Class 1. In the Middle and High School, children and students are expected to complete a growing number of assignments independently - essays, preparation for oral presentations, research, projects - and this will inevitably involve working at home.

How the School is Run

The College

The school is run by the teachers and administrative staff, working together as the College. The College is made up of staff members who have been at the school for a year or more and/or who are able to make a deeper commitment to overseeing and taking responsibility for the wellbeing of the school. New members of staff who have been College members in another school may be invited to join College earlier. Membership is by invitation from the current College members.

The College is the main decision-making body of the school. Decisions are made by consensus, rather than democratically, which means, in practice, that the group works towards collective agreement, based on a sincere openness to what colleagues bring and a willingness to let go of personal wishes for the good of the school. This is a high ideal that is not always achieved, but we also bear in mind that we can be guided by the spirit of the school itself and it is this that should prevail.

The College currently meets on Wednesdays from 4pm to approximately 6pm. College members are expected to attend meetings weekly. Faculty members, Trustees, advisors and visitors attend College meetings from time to time by invitation. If staff or parents have questions, comments or requests for 'the school', this is where they should be directed. Agenda items for the College must be submitted by email to college@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk by Tuesday of each week for inclusion in that week's meeting.

Minutes of each meeting are kept electronically and are emailed to all College members following each meeting. It is not possible for the College to carry out all of its management duties at a 2-hour meeting once a week; College members are expected to read the minutes of meetings, including those at which they were not present, to engage with questions and discussions that arise from them, and sometimes to meet for a specific purpose between College meetings.

Minutes from Kindergarten, Lower and Middle School and High School and Admin meetings are emailed to all College members so that they are aware of any questions and issues that have arisen.

The decisions of the College are final and may not be disregarded by any member of staff including College members who are absent when decisions are made (see disciplinary policy and procedure below). A challenge to any College decision may be brought to the College meeting as an agenda point in the usual way (see deadline above).

The College is responsible to the Trustees, who have ultimate legal responsibility for the school. College decisions are subject to ratification by the Trustees and this will be actively sought in the case of significant decisions such as hiring and dismissal of staff, complaints from parents or suspension or expulsion of students.

College members at September 2019 are:

Amanda Bell
Peter Brewin (Chair) college@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk
Maria Costa
Julian Coxon
Vicky Dunn
Leigha Hipkin
Sarah Houghton
Michèle Hunter
Eleni Karakonstanti
Stella Ottewill
Marta Pietrzyk
Dorothea van Breda
Julia Wallace
Birgit Möller (ex officio)

The Faculty

All members of staff belong to the Faculty. Faculty meetings provide a space for full and part time staff from all areas of the school to meet for statutory training (e.g. Child Protection, First Aid etc.), to share information, discuss concerns and ideas and generally keep in touch with each other. The Faculty meets at the beginning of each term, during the INSET day, and at other times as needed.

Staff Meetings

Kindergarten, Lower & Middle School and High School staff have their own, separate weekly meetings. Each meeting is chaired by a member of the group; a new Chair is chosen periodically by the group. The purpose of these meetings is the ongoing development of our work with the children. All members of staff are welcome to attend any of the meetings, but if the meeting is not one that you usually attend, you should advise the chair of the meeting as a matter of courtesy.

Faculty Chairs at September 2019 are:

Early Years: Leigha Hipkin

Lower & Middle School: Julian Coxon

High School: Amanda Bell

Trustees

The school is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity and, as such, must have a majority of trustees who are not employees of the school. The trustees are responsible for seeing that the school is run legally, however in our case, they are also chosen because they can contribute to the school in some way out of their knowledge and experience.

Trustees at September 2019 are:

Roy Allen

Peter van Breda

Brian Hipkin (Chair) brianhipkin@stmichaelsteiner.com

Stuart Purdy

Margot Saar

Katie Sharrock

The School Association

The Association is a body that represents the whole school community. All parents and staff automatically become Association members when they join the school. The AGM takes place in the Spring and other meetings may be scheduled during the year. All members are notified of the AGM and other meetings at least 14 days beforehand.

Financial Management

The school employs a Financial Manager, Henry Lau, and a Bursar, Birgit Möller.

Henry deals with invoicing, payments, bookkeeping, budgeting, financial forecasting, and preparation of the accounts. If you need to spend money on equipment of materials for your work, you should fill in an expenses claim form and give it to Henry, who will reimburse you by the following Wednesday. For claims over £100, you must get the approval of a College member (or, if you are a College member, another College member) beforehand. Henry's email address is finance@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Birgit deals with financial issues that arise for parents, including bursaries and payment difficulties, and for staff, including salaries. Birgit's email address is bursar@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Official Registration and Inspections

The school is registered with the DfE (registration no. 313/6002) and is a member of the Independent Schools Association (ISA). We intend to move our inspections from Ofsted to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) during the year.

The school was last inspected (by Ofsted) in March 2019. The report is available via the school website, at <https://stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/138771-The-St-Michael-Steiner-Sch-10094400-final-pdf.pdf>, or from reception on request.

The next inspection is due in March 2022, but inspectors may turn up unannounced at any time; staff must ensure their practices are compliant with Independent Schools Standards, that all required training and paperwork is up to date at all times.

Equal Opportunities Statement

We recognise and value the fact that our school is part of a multicultural society and believe that the atmosphere of respect for others which our ethos seeks to foster actively discourages prejudice. We will strive to ensure that our teaching continues to meet the needs of people from diverse backgrounds. We will, at the same time, take steps to deal with any overtly racist, sexist or otherwise unacceptable discriminatory attitudes we encounter in the school and its community. The school wishes to offer an educational environment that is open to all.

Parent Education

Because the way we work with the children is very different from what most parents have experienced, it is vital that parents understand the principles out of which we work so that they, in turn, can support their children. The school provides a weekly study group for parents on Tuesday mornings (email for information: amandabell@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk) as well as talks by experienced educationalists from time to time. We also have a substantial collection of books about Anthroposophy, Waldorf education, parenting and other related subjects, which parents may borrow. Staff sometimes open their classrooms to parents (Please consult your mentor or another College member if you would like to do this), and parents are always welcome at Open Days.

Term dates 2019 - 2020

Michaelmas Term 2019

2 September (Monday) – INSET DAY (no school)
3 September (Tuesday) – INSET DAY (no school)
4 September (Wednesday) – First Day of Term
17 October (Thursday) – School Ends for Half-Term
18 October (Friday) – INSET DAY (no school)
28 October (Monday) – Back to School
13 December (Friday) – End of Term

Spring Term 2020

6 January (Monday) – INSET DAY (no school)
7 January (Tuesday) – First Day of Term
13 February (Thursday) – School Ends for Half-Term
14 February (Friday) – INSET DAY (no school)
24 February (Monday) – Back to School
3 April (Friday) – End of Term

Summer Term 2020

27 April (Monday) – First Day of Term
4 May - (Monday) Bank Holiday
25th May - (Monday) Bank Holiday
28 May (Thursday) – School Ends for Half-Term
29 May (Friday) – INSET DAY (no school)
8 June (Monday) – Back to School
8 July (Wednesday) – End of School Year

School Hours 2019 - 2020

Children should arrive at school by 8:25am but not before 8.00am.

Kindergartens:

8:25am - 12:30pm Monday to Friday (See Early Years Handbook for details of Lunch and Afternoon Clubs)

Classes 1, 2, 3 & 4:

8:25am - 3:00pm Monday to Thursday;

8:25am to 12:30pm Friday

Classes 5, 6, 7 & 8:

8:25am - 3:00pm Monday to Friday

Classes 9, 10, 11 and 12:

8:25am - 4:00pm Monday to Friday

Saturday Open Days

Parents are welcome at Open Days to look at children's work, speak to staff and meet prospective parents. This year's Saturday Open Days are:

2nd November, 25th January, 7th March, 23rd May

What does the school ask of parents?

- That they meet their financial commitments to the school in full and communicate any difficulties in this area to the bursar immediately.
- That they familiarise themselves with the school's rules, policies and procedures and, by respecting and following them and encouraging their children to do so, help with the smooth running of the school.
- That they work towards understanding the principles that lie behind Steiner Waldorf Education so that they know what they have chosen for their children and can give the teachers wholehearted support in their work.
- That they ensure that their children come to school regularly and arrive punctually every day.
- That they arrive in good time to meet their children when they have finished school for the day and leave the premises promptly unless they have a legitimate reason for being at school and their children are properly supervised.
- That their children come to school prepared: that they are dressed in suitable clothes for the weather and for the activities of the school day, that they bring enough to eat during the day and have had enough sleep.
- That they ensure that their children's after-school and weekend activities are appropriate and do not compromise their school work.
- That they are open and honest in their communication with the teachers about their children's health, family circumstances and anything else that may affect their behaviour.
- That they acknowledge the effects on children of computers, tablets, smartphones, DVDs, electronic games, television, cinema and recorded music and regulate exposure according to their children's age. It would be of great benefit to children in the lower school, and especially Kindergarten children, if they were kept away from them entirely.

Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is very important, and all Class Teachers have surgery times, which can be booked at reception or with teachers directly. Teachers' email addresses are on the school contact list. Parents who wish, for whatever reason, to speak to a subject teacher, another Class Teacher or a College member can also book appointments in this way.

If you wish to communicate something briefly to your child's teacher before school, the best way is to send a text, or phone the school and leave a message, at least 30 minutes before school starts. Teachers will not look at

their messages between 8:30 and 10:30. Please also be aware that, at pick-up time teachers are supervising children who have not yet been collected and cannot engage in long conversations with parents.

If you have met with a teacher to speak about a problem, but are still not satisfied with the outcome, please refer to the Parents' Grievance procedure at the end of this handbook for guidance.

Reports

Parents of children in the Lower, Middle and High school will receive an annual report at the end of the summer term, or sometimes during the summer holiday. Please be aware that it is not appropriate for children in the Lower School to read their reports. High School reports are usually addressed to the students themselves. Parents of pupils in Classes 6, 7 & 8 should follow their teachers' advice. If you have any questions about reports, please contact your child's teacher or tutor.

Home Visits

It is essential that a strong relationship can develop between teachers, children and their parents, so that the child feels that his parents and his teachers are united in support of his education. It is very helpful, especially for younger children, if parents invite their child's Class Teacher to their home occasionally.

Photography and filming at school

As part of our Safeguarding policy, and to protect the privacy of individuals, parents and pupils must not film or or take photographs at school, or at off-site school events such as plays and trips, unless specifically asked to do so, and must not post images taken at school or on school trips on social media without permission from the school.

Recommended Reading List

Books by Rudolf Steiner

Anthroposophy in Everyday Life; Rudolf Steiner Press
Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy; Anthroposophic Press
The Spirit of the Waldorf School; Anthroposophic Press
Understanding the Human Being; Rudolf Steiner Press
The Renewal of Education, Rudolf Steiner; Robinswood Press
The Kingdom of Childhood, Rudolf Steiner; Anthroposophic Press
Education for Adolescents, Rudolf Steiner; Anthroposophic Press
Eurythmy: An Introductory Reader, Rudolf Steiner; Sophia Books

Steiner Waldorf Education

Waldorf Education, C. Clouder and Martyn Rawson; Floris Books
Education Towards Freedom, F. Carlgren; Lanthorn Press
School as a Journey, Torin Finser; Hawthorn Press
Ready to Learn, M. Rawson, M. Rose; Hawthorn Press

Early Childhood

You are your Child's First Teacher, Rahima Baldwin; Celestial Arts, California
The Incarnating Child, J. Salter; Hawthorn Press
A Guide to Child Health, M. Glöckler and W. Goebel; Floris Books
The Genius of Play, Sally Jenkinson; Hawthorn Press
Well, I Wonder-Childhood in the Modern World, Sally Schweizer; Sophia Books
Free to Learn, Lynne Oldfield; Hawthorn Press

Practical Activities, Arts and Festivals

All Year Round, A. Druitt, C. Fynes-Clinton, M. Rowling; Hawthorn Press
The Children's Year, C. Fynes-Clinton, M. Rowling, S. Cooper; Hawthorn Press
Eurythmy, Essays and Anecdotes, Schaumberg Publications
The Wow Factor: global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education, Ann Bamford; Waxmann

Lifestyle and Child Development

Simplicity Parenting, Kim John Payne; Ballantine Books
Phases of Child Development, B. Lievegoed; Floris Books
Who's Bringing them Up?, M. Large; Hawthorn Press
Fool's Gold, E. Miller; Alliance for Childhood
Between Form and Freedom, Betty Staley; Hawthorn Press
Millennial Child, Eugene Schwartz; SteinerBooks Inc
Encountering the Self, Hermann Koepke; Anthroposophic Press
On the Threshold of Adolescence, Hermann Koepke; Anthroposophic Press
Free your Child's True Potential, M. Rawson; Hodder & Stoughton

These and many other books about Steiner education are available from the library and bookshop at Rudolf Steiner House, 35 Park Road, London NW1 6XT Tel: 020 7723 4400 The school has a small collection of books about Anthroposophy, Steiner Waldorf Education, parenting and other related subjects. These are available on request for parents to borrow.

What are the children allowed to wear and bring to school?

In order to learn, children and students need an environment that allows them to concentrate in their lessons without unnecessary distractions. We have kept this basic principle in mind in preparing the classrooms and the timetable and we ask for parents' and students' participation in maintaining this learning environment by ensuring that the children come to school appropriately prepared.

In addition to the list below, individual teachers may impose other restrictions on the children in their classes if they feel it is necessary and appropriate. Parents will be informed separately. **Disregard for any of these rules may result in suspension or exclusion from school.**

Clothing

Children's clothing should be simple, neat and appropriate for the weather. Trousers or skirts should not trail on the ground and clothes should fit well so that the children do not have to hold them up or worry about them in any way. Generally, clothing should allow movement, should it be required in any lesson. Outdoor shoes will be worn for games lessons and so it may be necessary for the children to wear or bring trainers on the days when they have games. Long hair must be kept out of the face and must be tied back for PE, woodwork, chemistry etc. We ask parents to support these guidelines.

In the Lower School (Classes 1 – 5):

Children should not wear:

- Clothing with slogans, cartoons or large logos
- Jewellery (except watches and stud earrings for pierced ears)
- Nail varnish, dyed hair or make-up
- Bare midriffs, backless shoes or high heels.

In the Middle School, (Classes 6 – 8):

We expect pupils to come to school in appropriate, modest, practical clothing that does not inhibit their full participation in their lessons and is not offensive to anyone.

- Pupils should not wear: clothes with slogans or cartoons on them, torn clothes, bare midriffs, backless shoes or high heels
- Jewellery must be removed for PE lessons or other activities where it could be hazardous (e.g. some science and craft lessons).
- Dyed hair is not allowed.
- Make-up should not be obvious.
- Tattoos, including temporary ones, and body piercings, other than in the ears, must not be visible.
- Staff will speak to pupils who push the boundaries, and to their parents if necessary

In the High School, (Classes 9 - 12):

Students are expected to come to school appropriately dressed for the activities of the day. Clothing should be practical, inoffensive and modest. While High School students are free to choose what they wear, this is allowed because we think they are old enough to judge for themselves what is and is not appropriate in an environment where there are very young children, impressionable younger pupils and parents. If staff feel that a student is wearing something inappropriate, he/she will be expected to change on request.

Food

Food also affects the children's ability to participate fully in their lessons. We ask that they have a good breakfast before they come to school and that they bring healthy food for their break and lunch.

In the Lower School (Classes 1 – 5):

We ask that parents do not send children to school with sweets, chocolate bars, fizzy drinks or flavoured crisps.

In the Middle School and High School (Classes 6 - 12):

Energy drinks and chewing gum are not allowed. Otherwise, there are no restrictions on what older students eat at school, but they should be aware that other children in the school do not have this freedom and that food can affect their health and their ability to participate fully in lessons. Staff will advise and restrict what students eat if necessary.

Electronic Media Usage and E-Safety Education Policy

Older children and students

While it is important to be aware that exposure to and use of electronic media always has an effect on the capacities mentioned above, even in adults, we recognise and value the fact that information technology, for entertainment, research and communication, is available to everyone, and that older children will use it. However, the internet is an unmanaged, open communications channel, most of the content is published for an adult audience and much is unsuitable for children. This is an area of life that changes rapidly and many parents do not keep up with the changes, do not monitor their older children's online activity or the effect it has on them, and are only vaguely aware of what they are exposed to.

Staff and older students may use digital media at school to record their work, for example, processes in craft or other projects, presentations and oral assessments. (See the High School Students' Handbook for information about how this is monitored and regulated.)

Examples of e-safety issues include:

- Exposure to inappropriate material, such as pornography, violence, 'hate' and lifestyle websites (e.g. sites which promote self harm)
- Bullying via texts and social networks
- Vulnerability to identity theft
- Copyright issues (e.g. through illegally downloading music, images or films)
- The danger of unknowingly making contact with predatory people via chat rooms and social networking sites and becoming vulnerable to sexting or grooming.
- Social networking simulates true human connection and builds a false social context that can replace real social interaction and leave children isolated.

- Many teenagers use online gaming excessively and this leads to exhaustion, inability to sleep and to think clearly, lack of concentration and, as a result, frequent absence from school and illness.¹

It is strongly recommended that parental guidance and careful vigilance be exercised in monitoring older children's activity on the Internet and these issues will be discussed regularly at parents' meetings. We also advise parents to discuss them with their children's teachers and with other parents.

Parent and Pupil Education

1. While we offer guidance to parents about use of electronic media outside school, we cannot enforce this.
2. We provide information to parents, so that they are aware of the dangers and to equip them with tools to guard their children against exposure to the damaging effects of these media. This e-Safety Policy is available on the school website and parents' attention is drawn to it from time to time via the school newsletter.
3. Articles² on our FaceBook page and website address the issues that arise from children's use of electronic media.
4. From Kindergarten onwards, the use of electronic media is a regular topic in Parents' evenings.
5. From Age 5, teachers will initiate regular conversations with parents and with the children, about the safe use of media and such things as privacy and bullying via electronic media. (see 'E-safety curriculum policy')
6. From Class 7 onwards, students have a programme of weekly lessons throughout the year to address 'Global Issues' including media, the internet and e-safety.
7. Students in the High School use their own laptops for research and writing in lessons and have access to the internet via the school wifi in some parts of the school. They are advised about e-safety and internet use is monitored by staff.

Guidelines and Rules for Pupils

1. Kindergarten, Lower and Middle school children are not allowed to bring smartphones or other media with internet access to school at any time. We give guidance to parents about simple phones.³
2. Children in the Lower and Middle School who travel to school by themselves are allowed to bring mobile phones without internet access to school with their parents' permission and must hand them in at reception or to their Class Teacher on arrival at school.
3. Children in the Middle School (Classes 6, 7 & 8) sometimes use school computers under supervision but are not allowed to bring their own laptops, tablets or smartphones to school.
4. Students in the High School are expected to bring and use their own laptops or tablets for research and writing in lessons and have access to the internet via the school wifi in some parts of the school.
5. Students in Classes 11 and 12 may use smartphones in their classrooms (and not in any other part of the school) if a teacher deems it necessary in any lesson, e.g. for research or for recording processes or finished work.
6. Students in Classes 9 and 10 must hand in their smartphones at reception or during registration before school starts. They can be retrieved at the end of the day.

¹ http://www.helpguide.org/mental/internet_cybersex_addiction.htm, and <https://www.netaddictionrecovery.com/the-problem/signs-and-symptoms.html> These internet sites describe some of the symptoms of internet addiction: feeling more comfortable with your online friends than your real ones, inability to control behaviour, losing track of time, restlessness, depression, feeling a sense of euphoria when engaged in internet activities, isolation from family and friends, difficulty sleeping.

² For example, those from the 'Wait until 8th' campaign. <https://www.waituntil8th.org>

³ <https://turbofuture.com/cell-phones/flip-phones>

7. Students must not post any photographs or recordings made at school on social media or public websites.

Electronically-held personal data

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, we ensure that personal information held electronically is:

- held and used with the subject's knowledge and permission
- held and used for specifically stated purposes only
- kept for no longer than is necessary (See Data Retention Policy)
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure
- shared with or transferred to other bodies in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Sanctions for Rule-breakers

If possible, teachers will confiscate anything that contravenes these rules and give it back to the child at the end of the day, making it clear that it must not be brought to school again. If it is not possible to confiscate it (if it's an item of clothing or some food which has been eaten), the child will be asked not to bring/wear it again.

If a child brings or wears something that he/she has been warned about already, if possible, it will be confiscated and given to the child's parent, who will be asked to ensure that it is not worn/brought to school again.

Teachers will confiscate any hand-held electronic device being used on school premises by any pupil and give it to the relevant Class Teacher or member of the High School staff.

If the problem persists, the teacher will consult the College about the next step.

For more information, see the full Electronic Media Usage and E-safety Education Policy. Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance, Punctuality and Registration

Steiner Waldorf Education depends on continuity. Children should come to school every day unless they are ill. We cannot sanction absence for any reason other than illness, accident, bereavement or similar events.

We are required to inform the Education Welfare Dept. when we are concerned about any child's unauthorised absences and we may do this without warning.

Please ensure that your child arrives on time in the morning so that he/she is able to take part in the welcoming and the morning verse and generally to begin the day well. It is very disruptive for the class when a child arrives late and unsettling for the child him/herself, especially if it happens repeatedly, and can have a seriously detrimental effect on his/her education; if it is persistent in any case, the teacher may ask that the child be kept at home until the problem is resolved.

It is expected that children will arrive at school by 8:25am every day. Traffic and public transport are not always reliable, but this is not a legitimate reason for repeated lateness.

If parents have not already contacted the school, the Receptionist will phone to find out the reason for absence or extreme lateness and let the Class Teacher know at break time.

Latecomers must report to reception before going to their classes. All late arrivals should be recorded in the register. Lateness and absence is recorded in the child's End of Year Report.

Procedure for Arriving and Collecting Children

In the morning:

Children should not arrive at school before 8:00am but should be in their classrooms by 8:25am.

Parents arriving by car should park in the public car park near the entrance to Hanworth Park (on the right just before the school entrance) or on the street, and use the pedestrian gate on the park side of the grounds. Please

do not walk up the drive. THE DRIVE IS A SINGLE TRACK ROAD AND THERE IS NO OTHER ENTRANCE OR EXIT. TO AVOID SERIOUS CONGESTION AND ACCIDENTS, ONLY STAFF CARS ARE ALLOWED ON SCHOOL PREMISES.

Individual teachers may decide whether or not to allow their children to come into the classroom before 8:25am and should inform parents and children accordingly. Children should be advised by their teachers how to come into the building as this will vary from class to class. *PLEASE NOTE THAT CHILDREN WILL BE ALLOWED ON SITE FROM 8:00 AM AND TEACHERS SHOULD ALSO ARRIVE BY THAT TIME TO SUPERVISE THEM.*

Kindergarten parents may come inside with their children to settle them; WE ASK THAT PARENTS OF CHILDREN FROM CLASS 1 UP DO NOT COME INTO THE BUILDING WITH THEIR CHILDREN.

If parents need to come inside for some reason, there is a separate entrance to the reception area. Parents should not use the children's entrance through the boot room.

If children arrive after 8:25, they should register at reception before going to their classrooms. This is important so that we know who is on the premises, and who is not, at any time.

Class Teachers may have different rules and procedures for latecomers, appropriate to their particular children, and should let parents know separately about these.

At the end of the school day:

Younger children will be brought, and older ones will come by themselves, to the Reception entrance at the side of the main building and should be collected from there: Children on half days at 12:30pm and those on full days at 3pm. Kindergarten children should be collected from the Kindertartens at 12:30pm.

Please make sure the teacher on duty knows that you have taken your child and anyone else's. If your child is going home with someone other than you, please let his/her teacher know in the morning.

If your child is going home by him/herself, please inform your class teacher.

If children have not been collected within 15 minutes of pick-up time, they will be taken back inside and parents must then come into the building to collect them.

Other Policies and Procedures

Below are some statements of some of the school's policies and procedure that parents may find useful. All full detailed policies are available in the office and most are on the school website.

School Fee Structure

The school's fee structure may look complicated, but the fee each family pays can easily be calculated using a simple formula.

The thinking behind this structure addresses several issues. We try to develop in the children a feeling of responsibility and care for the whole community - the whole world in fact - and a wish to help others who are less fortunate. We believe we should also model that in the way we run and fund the school. Our ethos is not exclusive, and a school community made up of people with a wide range of backgrounds creates a healthier environment for the children. It is in everyone's interests that we make it possible for people who don't have so much money to come to the school.

We believe that fees should be charged per family, because having more children does not mean that parents are able to contribute more, but having more children in the school benefits everyone, and we want to make it possible for larger families to send all of their children to the school. We have found that children who have siblings in other schools often think they have been sent to our school because there is something wrong with them, and this affects their self-esteem and their attitude to the school, and also perpetuates the idea some people have that ours is a special school for children with difficulties.

We also recognise that parents with small children have less 'earning power' than those with older children, and this has to be taken into account. Apart from this, there are no sound reasons for charging different fees in each class; it does not cost more to educate a child in Class 4 than it does a child in Class 2, for example.

Perhaps the most important concern for us is to dispel the idea that we are selling education. Our aim is to offer the best possible education, based on a particular understanding of child development. To that end, we are

committed to putting in the necessary work to make this vision a reality; we are not paid according to the number of hours or lessons we teach or the number of years' experience we have. In order that we can offer this to you, we need enough money to live while we devote ourselves to this task.

In order to offer the best possible education, we must continue to attract the best teachers, and we will not be able to do that unless we can pay them a proper salary. Living costs in London are higher than in other parts of the country, and staffing costs represent more than half of our annual budget. We also need to be able to develop and maintain the school building, grounds and facilities.

With all of these things in mind, we hope eventually to reach the point where we can charge a flat fee per family, regardless of the number of children they have. In order to get there, we will need to have more families in the school, and we hope this transitional structure will help to attract them.

Fee Assistance is available on application in the usual way, according to the school's policy (see below).

The fee per family is composed of 3 parts:

1. A flat fee, payable by each family (pro rata for families who only have part-time Kindergarten children in the school)
2. A fee per child for first two children in the family (pro rata for part-time Kindergarten children)
3. A fee for operational costs and materials per child, according to class (pro rata in Kindergarten)

These 3 parts added together comes to what is payable for each family.

There are two 'Family Fee' rates. We hope very much that people who can afford to, especially those whose fee bill is lower this year than last, will choose to pay the full rate. This is not means tested, and its payment is entirely at each family's discretion.

If parents would like to contribute more than the lower rate, but can't quite afford the full rate, extra contributions of any amount will be gratefully received and can be treated as donations and gift-aided.

Reduced rates will usually apply only when all of the family's school age children are in the school.

Totals	Per term	Per year
Family Fee (payable per family):		
Full Rate	£3,425	£10,275
Additional costs payable per child:		
Class 9 - 12 oldest/only child	£2,740	£8,220
Class 9 - 12 1 st younger sibling	£2,740	£8,220
Class 9 - 12 3 rd /4 th etc. sibling	£1,622	£4,865
Class 5 – 8 oldest/only child	£2,379	£7,138
Class 5 – 8 1 st younger sibling	£2,379	£7,138
Class 5 – 8 3 rd /4 th etc. sibling	£1,262	£3,786
Class 1 – 4 oldest/only child	£2,019	£6,057
Class 1 – 4 1 st younger sibling	£2,019	£6,057
Class 1 – 4 3 rd /4 th etc. sibling	£902	£2,705
Full Time Kindergarten oldest/only child*	£1,347	£4,042
Full Time Kindergarten 1 st younger sibling*	£1,347	£4,042
Full Time Kindergarten 3 rd /4 th etc. sibling*	£262	£787
Afternoon Care for Kindergarten children £17 per session.		
Parent & Child/Baby groups £6 per family per session (drop in)/£30 per half term (booked)		
Discounts Available		
Family Fee Reduced Rate (payable per family)	£1,118	£3,354
*Part Time Kindergarten fees are calculated individually on a pro rata basis		
Fee Assistance is available. Please contact the Bursar for more information.		

If you are struggling to calculate what your fees will be, please contact Birgit at bursar@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

School Fees Policy

Upon acceptance of a place at the school, the financial agreement in the *acceptance* form must be signed and the required deposit paid. Invoicing of school fees is routinely done *at the beginning of the school year*. Fees are reviewed annually and parents are notified of any changes during March or April. Any queries about your invoice should be addressed to the Bursar at bursar@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk.

Parents are expected to honour their financial commitments as communicated on the bottom of any invoice they receive from the school, without the need for the school to issue a reminder for payment. Fee invoices may be paid either:

1. In full at the beginning of the year (by September 10th)
2. For each term, at the beginning of the relevant term (by the 10th day of each term)
3. By monthly standing order (payable by the 10th of each month)

Preferred payment method is via internet banking directly to the school account, as this minimises administration:

Information for BACS payments:
Account name: THE ST MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL LTD.
Account number: 65098413
Bank: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK
Sort code: 08-92-99

Please quote your child's name as a reference so that we can identify your payment.

Cheques, if used, should be made payable to The St Michael Steiner School Ltd.

Payment for extra items as listed on the school fee schedule is expected to be made within 14 days of the invoice being issued by the school.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure that the bursar is notified of any changes in family circumstances which might affect their ability to pay fees by the agreed due dates. The school reserves the right to add a charge of 5% of the outstanding amount of the fee to any bills which are not paid by the due date.

In the case of cheques returned unpaid (not cleared by the bank), bank charges incurred by the school will be added to the bill.

Fee Assistance

Anyone may apply for Fee Assistance. Fee Assistance will be awarded in April for the start of the following academic year. Fee Assistance is awarded for one year at a time. Parents will be advised when applications are being received. All applicants must demonstrate financial hardship, and provide documentation in support of their application.

The percentage of the school's income given as Fee Assistance is reviewed annually.

If parents who have been awarded Fee Assistance do not keep to their agreed payments and do not contact the school, the assistance will be withdrawn and the child may be asked to leave the school. (Please refer to the section 'Exclusion and Suspension of pupils in the handbook')

The full policy and procedure is available on our website.

Withdrawal of a child

Withdrawal of a student requires a term's notice or a term's payment in lieu. Notice of withdrawal of a child must be made in writing to the College as well as to the child's Class Teacher. The school will issue a final invoice which states the date of receipt of notice to withdraw the child(ren) from school. If more than one term's notice is given, then the invoice will reflect this. If the date of leaving is uncertain, and as a result, the leaving date exceeds one term's notice, an additional invoice will be raised for the extra time that the child attends school, to be settled by return.

Refund of any deposit is deducted from the final invoice as calculated above. If the deduction results in a credit balance remaining, this will be refunded within two weeks of the child(ren) leaving the school.

The child's first term at the school is a trial period for both the child and the school. If the child leaves during this period, or at the end of the trial period, there is no requirement for a term's notice to be given, and any deposit will be refunded subject to any outstanding balance on the student's account.

Persistent non-payment may result in a child being asked to leave the school. In any case, any outstanding fees will remain payable to the school, and the school will take court action to recover this money if necessary.

The full policy and procedure is available on our website and in the school office.

Code of Conduct & Behaviour Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based on the principle that there should be as few rules as possible and that those we have exist for good reasons and must be respected by everyone.

Children need to be given the opportunity to regulate their own behaviour; too many rules and too much adult intervention can encourage children to rely on them and can inhibit the development of independent judgement.

Young children need strong boundaries that guide them towards good habits in the way they behave and treat each other. These boundaries need to be held by the adults around them and, generally, as they get older, become first wider and then looser as they are given more responsibility for their own behaviour. This is a

process that takes many years; it is clear that young children cannot be expected to take responsibility for, or understand the consequences of their actions in the same way as teenagers or adults can.

With these principles in mind, we have devised a Code of Conduct that outlines our expectations and gives guidance to teachers and parents, as well as the pupils themselves, about what is ideal, what is expected, what is acceptable and what is not.

1 Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, so:

- Be considerate towards everyone you meet
- Do not use language that may offend, insult or harm anyone who may hear it
- Do not hurt other people; either physically or emotionally
- Respect other people's right to personal space
- Do not interfere with, take or use other people's belongings without their permission

2 School is a place where young people come to work and learn, so:

- Come to school on time every day
- Come to school properly equipped for the lessons you have each day
- Come to school ready to work
- Do not disrupt lessons in your own or other classes
- Do not prevent others from working
- Do not bring anything to school that might distract you or others
- Parents should not be on the premises during school time without a legitimate reason.

Discipline

Discipline is discussed regularly in the faculty and College meetings, so that a general standard of acceptable behaviour, based on the Code of Conduct, can be commonly applied throughout the school in lessons and at break times. This helps the children to feel secure and helps everyone to know where the boundaries lie.

It is vital that parents also respect school rules; all children are strongly influenced by the actions and attitude of their parents and look to them for guidance.

Sanctions

If children are bullying or hurting others or frequently disrupting lessons, it is the teachers' first responsibility to ensure that the other children's wellbeing is not compromised. (See Anti-bullying policy) The primary purpose of sanctions is to protect the other children by helping to improve the behaviour in the longer term and by managing it and, if necessary, separating the children concerned from the others, in the short term.

Detention

From Class 5 onwards, a child may be required to stay after school in order to:

- Complete work that was not finished in class because of chatting or other time wasting
- Make up for rudeness, disregard for school rules or disruptive behaviour.
- Complete homework that was not done on time

Parents will be informed at least 24 hours in advance of the reason, date, time and duration of the detention. Children will be properly supervised during detentions. A single weekday detention will not exceed one hour. Saturday detentions may be longer.

Detentions should only be given for repeated transgressions and the child concerned should have been warned and given the opportunity to redeem him/herself. If a detention is given, it should be because you believe it will help the child to improve his/her work habits or behaviour. If it is impossible for a child to stay after school on a particular day, teachers should be willing to arrange an alternative.

The full policy and procedure is available on our website.

Illness and Infectious Diseases

Parents are asked to keep children with infectious diseases at home. If your child is too ill to come to school, please phone and leave a message on the school phone before lessons start in the morning, call the Receptionist or text your child's teacher as soon as possible so that s/he knows at the beginning of the day. Please keep the school informed each day your child is away and on his/her return to school, please send a note or email regarding the absence for our records. *It is a statutory requirement that we have some record of the reasons given for any absence.*

Please inform the school if any member of your family has an infectious illness as soon as possible in order that the wider school community can be alerted.

First Aid

All staff regularly undergo First Aid training and there is always at least one trained First-Aider on site and on all outings. Minor injuries are treated with water only. We will not give Homoeopathic remedies or applications, or any other medicines to children, except those provided by parents (for example for allergies or those prescribed by a doctor). Any treatment given is recorded in the Accident Book.

The full policy and procedure is available on our website.

Parents' Use of School Premises

The purpose of the school is for the education of children. This must always be the paramount consideration when the premises are used for other things. As the school grows, the use of space has to be carefully planned and considerations of noise levels, security and classroom management, etc. have to be weighed against the benefits of things like parent workshops and meetings. However, it is possible for these to take place at school on request.

If parents wish to hold meetings or organise events to take place in the building, they should apply in writing to the Chair of College for permission, stating a date and time as well as the length of the meeting and approximately how many people are expected to attend. Applications need to be submitted in good time to allow them to be considered properly, otherwise events will not be able to go ahead.

Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons

It is against the law for anyone to smoke anywhere on school premises. The use or possession of alcohol, illegal substances or weapons will not be tolerated and will result in suspension or permanent exclusion from the school.

Dogs

Dogs must not be brought onto school premises.

Scooters, Skateboards, Bicycles, Buggies etc.

Children are not allowed to ride scooters or bicycles anywhere in the school grounds; they may be left in the bicycle rack and must not be brought into any of the school buildings.

Child Protection & Safeguarding

The St Michael Steiner School strives to create an environment where learning, truth, justice, respect, spirituality and community are promoted. The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care, regardless of age, class, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. In situations where child abuse is suspected, our paramount responsibility is to the child. We recognise that everyone who comes into contact with the children in our school in their everyday work has a duty to safeguard and protect them and should demonstrate commitment and priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including staff, trustees, parents and volunteers.

This policy is guided by the following four principles as outlined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children':

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;

- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

If we are worried about the safety or welfare concern about a child within our school we have a legal duty and responsibility to act on our concerns. We will discuss our concerns with parents and carers, in the first instance, and if necessary, make a referral to Hounslow Children's Specialist Services or the local authority where the child lives. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to children's social care immediately.

Designated Safeguarding Lead persons:

We have two Designated Safeguarding Lead teachers, plus a safeguarding-trained trustee:

- Maria Da Costa (Early Years)
- Julian Coxon (Lower School)
- Dorothea van Breda (Middle and High School)
- Roy Allen (Trustee)

Reporting concerns about children

The Safeguarding Lead will decide on an appropriate course of action. Advice in the first instance will be taken from:

- Hounslow Family Information Services: 020 8583 3470 or 0800 783 1696
- Hounslow Child Protection Hotline: 020 8583 6600 opt 1 (9-5 Mon-Fri)
- Out of hours Emergency Duty Team for Social Care: 020 8583 2222 (after 5pm and weekends)

The full policy is available in the school office and on the website.

Bullying

Some schools take the approach of banning all physical contact between pupils. We believe that a certain amount of physical interaction and banter between children is a normal and healthy part of the process of learning what is and is not acceptable social behaviour. It is our experience that children do not learn by being told things, but by experiencing them; it is to be expected that they will test themselves against each other in different ways and sometimes they will get hurt or hurt others in the process. This, in itself, is not bullying.

Bullying has been defined as the systematic abuse of power by more powerful individuals or groups. In schools it manifests as deliberate and persistent hurtful behaviour, where those towards whom this behaviour is directed find it difficult or impossible to defend themselves. It is the use of superior strength, age or social status deliberately and repeatedly to subjugate, hurt or humiliate someone younger, smaller or, in some way, weaker. It is anti-social behaviour that can destroy the social fabric of the school. It affects everyone and it cannot be ignored or tolerated.

We try to provide an environment in which everyone feels supported, safe and valued and where they can learn, work and mix socially with their peers without fear. However, in spite of our best endeavours, occasional incidents of bullying are inevitable, so children and staff need to experience that bullying is not acceptable or tolerated, and that incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively.

The full policy is available on the school's website and in the office.

Terms of Acceptance and Probation

All children are accepted into the school subject to interview, the agreement of financial terms and payment of the required deposit.

The first term is probationary for the school and for parents; if it is not working out for any reason the child can leave or be asked to leave without giving notice. Thereafter, a term's notice is required or a term's fees in lieu of notice. During the probationary term, parents should be in regular contact with the Class Teacher to find out if there are any problems and if the child is settling well.

After a few weeks, the Class Teacher will discuss the child's progress with the other teachers and make a decision, which will be one of the following:

The child is accepted.

The child is not accepted.

The child is accepted with conditions – e.g. extra lessons, visit to doctor.

The child is given a further term's probation.

Probation can be extended up to three times after which a final decision must be made.

Possible reasons for not accepting a child after the probationary period are the same as those given in the section under *'Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils'*.

If a child is not accepted, the parents will be given the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the decision and an agreement should be reached about when and how to tell the child.

The full policy and procedure is available on our website and in the school office.

Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils

Under circumstances where the school no longer feels able to support a child, for example in cases of serious or repeated acts of vandalism, violence, disruptive, defiant, dangerous or abusive behaviour, or for any of the reasons given under the 'Exclusion' section below, a pupil may be suspended or permanently excluded from school, even when the probationary period has ended and the child has been accepted into the school.

Possible reasons for excluding a child may include:

- The child is found to have educational needs which the school is unable to meet at the present time.
- The child's parents do not fulfil their financial commitment to the school.
- The child presents unacceptable behaviour which teachers feel unable to meet in the context of the school or class, given the limitations of available resources.
- The child is very unhappy in the school or class.
- The child's parents are not willing to support their child's education, e.g. in the ways indicated in this handbook under *'What does the school ask of parents?'*
- The child's parents are not willing to co-operate with the school in trying to overcome the child's difficulties.
- The school discovers that important, relevant information about the child was not disclosed by the parents at the time of interview, e.g. that the child has been expelled from another school.
- The school feels that, in some other way, the best interests of the child are not being served, e.g. the journey to school is too long or attendance or punctuality are very poor.

The full policy and procedure is available on our website and in the school office.

Parents' Grievance Procedure

The St. Michael Steiner School aims to provide quality teaching and pastoral care to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be treated by the school in accordance with the Parents' Grievance Procedure, which is available on the Policies page of our website or from the school office.

This handbook will be updated annually;
if there is anything you think we have overlooked, please let us know.

Tel: 020 8893 1299

email: info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

website: www.stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

A registered charity no 1094960 and a company limited by guarantee no 043643