

The St Michael Steiner School

Admissions Policy & Procedure

Policy statement

The school is mainstream, non-selective and provides education for children between the ages of 3 and 18. We aim to meet the needs of any child who may apply; we consider it our responsibility to ensure that we can support all of the children who are accepted into the school. Because of limitations of space, staff, facilities or the individual needs already being accommodated in a particular class, it is not always possible to support everyone. This is made clear to potential applicants in our literature.

Enquiries

Initial enquiries usually come by email or phone. Questions about admissions should be answered with the general policy above in mind. Sometimes enquirers are under the impression that Steiner Waldorf education is an easy option for children who struggle in mainstream schools. It is important for the health of the school community that it includes children of all abilities, so it should be made clear to enquirers that ours is a mainstream school and not a Special Needs school, and that our curriculum is rigorous and challenging.

Applications

There are separate application forms for:

- Kindergarten - for children aged between 3 and 6 during the academic year for which they are applying.
- Class 1 (external) - for children from other schools/Kindergartens whose 7th birthday falls during the academic year for which they are applying. Children from our own Kindergartens do not need to apply.
- Classes 2 - 8 - for pupils whose 8th to 14th birthdays fall during the academic year for which they are applying. NB: We only accept students into Class 8 in exceptional circumstances
- High School (Classes 9 - 12) - for students whose 15th to 18th birthdays fall during the academic year for which they are applying. Class 8 students from our school need to apply to transition into the High School but do not need to pay the application fee or have trial days. NB: We do not accept students into Class 12 unless they have come from other Steiner Waldorf schools and have previously been working with the Certificate of Steiner Education.

Application form processing

See Application Form Procedure

Returning Pupils

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- Where the Local Authority has already been informed that the child has left the school, a new application form must be completed.
- When an application is received - regardless of who receives it - it must first be passed to the Admissions co-ordinator who will then follow the usual admissions procedure.

Trial days and Interview

Trial days and interviews should not be arranged until the Admissions co-ordinator confirms that all required documentation has been received and completed, and the application fee has been paid.

The trial days, interview process and probationary period are designed to enable staff to assess whether or not the school is able to meet a particular child/student's needs.

- The Admissions co-ordinator must be kept informed of any decisions made or steps taken.
- The relevant teacher is responsible for contacting the applicant to arrange trial days (usually 3 consecutive days¹) and a time for interview (usually during the trial days). If a family has applied for places for more than one child, the relevant teachers should co-ordinate trial days and interviews.
- For information about conducting interviews, see Interview Procedure.
- Teachers must read through the application and reports and, depending on the child and circumstances, follow up with the relevant interview procedure (alerting the Admissions co-ordinator to any and all actions taken)
- Under no circumstances should teachers tell parents or children/students at the interview that they have been accepted or tell them when they can start. They should be told that the Admissions co-ordinator will be in touch with them in the next few days.
- If the interviewing teachers feel the school cannot accommodate a particular child, they must compose an email to the family telling them the reasons for the decision, with clear reference to the reasons given in the document Terms of Acceptance and Probation, and give/send it to the Admissions co-ordinator to send to the family and to file with the application form.
- If the interviewing teachers cannot come to a decision themselves, they should inform the Admissions co-ordinator and let the College know that they need advice.

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Parents should be informed that three trial days are part of the interview process and are free of charge. Should either the teachers or the parents feel that further trial days are required before a decision can be made the parents will be invoiced for any extra days at the usual rate applied to that age group.

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The Admissions co-ordinator will then inform the family that there will be a delay in coming to a decision.

- If a decision is made to offer the applicant a place, the interviewing teachers should inform the Admissions co-ordinator, who will then complete the process using the offer letter template, and send all relevant documentation² to the family.
- It is important that all documentation is completed and forms, fees and deposits are returned, so the teachers should not take any further action until asked to do so by the Admissions co-ordinator.
- The Admissions co-ordinator will inform the College of the decision.

Probationary term

All places are offered subject to the conditions laid down in the Parents' Handbook. These are referred to in the offer letter sent to parents.

Teachers should be aware when a probationary term is coming to an end and refer to the Terms of Acceptance and Probation for details of the procedure.

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