

Admissions Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

- Ensure that the school's admissions processes are clearly outlined so that only students whose special educational needs can be met safely and effectively, are admitted, ensuring that they are able to make progress academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Ensure that all stakeholders concerned have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the suitability of the school setting for potential students and a clear understanding of the processes used to make this decision.
- Ensure that parents/carers, students and representatives of LA's, social service departments and other relevant stakeholders have a clear understanding of the core offer key aspects of the core offer at the school and understand their part in ensuring the success of any placement

Document Control

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1. Rationale

- 1.1.1 The school aims to provide a safe place of nurture and education for students who may be experiencing social, emotional, mental health difficulties, have a diagnosis of autism, ADHD, and/or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and/or developmental disorders associated with attachment disorder and trauma.
- 1.1.2 At the school we aim to provide a caring learning environment where students can experience positive learning opportunities that will enable them to develop their full potential socially, emotionally, academically, and physically. We aim for our students to develop their sense of self -worth, grow intellectually, build positive relationships, and develop their life and social skills, in order that they will become happy, confident, and valued members of society.

2. Who Do We Support

- 2.1.1 The school admits children and young people who have a range of special educational needs. Many will have difficulties with their emotional, social, and mental health, as well as other complex needs often associated with autistic spectrum conditions, trauma, and attachment disorders.
- 2.1.2 Students will usually have an Education and Health Care Plan that details the nature of these difficulties.
- 2.1.3 Some needs may be an outcome of difficult life experiences or be the result of a diagnosed medical condition.
- 2.1.4 Due to the complexity of student needs, the school ensures that the admissions process is detailed and thorough and correctly identifies the needs of each student and identified if the school can meet those needs effectively and safely.
- 2.1.5 When a new student is referred to the school, we will carry out a thorough assessment to ensure that we are able to meet their individual needs. Our admissions criteria take into consideration a range of aspects when looking at a new placement, including prior history and disaffection with education and specific student needs to ensure that we can achieve the best possible outcomes for each child.
- 2.1.6 They may have complex needs associated with:
- Delayed receptive or expressive language skills
 - Sensory processing difficulties
 - Communication and social interactive difficulties
 - Anxiety and low self esteem
 - Difficulty in coping with change
 - Delayed fine or gross motor skills
 - Mild or moderate learning difficulties
 - Emotional and behavioural regulation
 - Attention and Concentration

3. Admissions Process

3.1 Stage 1: The Consultation Process

3.1.1 Referrals and consultations with the school will usually be received by Local Authorities. At this stage, some detailed information is shared with the Head Teacher such as the child's EHCP, previous setting history and relevant contacts. The school aims to work closely with local authorities and requires that all necessary documentation is provided, in order to ensure that an accurate and informed decision can be made about meeting the needs of the individual child.

3.1.2 At this stage, the Head Teacher will assess whether they can meet the needs highlighted in the EHCP effectively, safely, and efficiently, considering the needs of the current cohort, the environment, the skills of the team and the location of the school.

3.1.3 If at this stage, it is felt the school may be able to meet needs based on this initial information, the Head Teacher or SENDCo will contact parents/ carers and previous settings in order to complete a full assessment.

3.2 Stage 2: The Referral & Assessment Process

3.2.1 As part of the assessment process the Head Teacher will hold an initial telephone discussion with parents/ carers and current school setting, regarding the child's strengths and needs, including any recent concerns.

3.2.2 Additional assessment information may be requested from the child's previous educational setting such as:

- Education, Health, and Care Plans
- Current care, health, educational plans, or relevant personal needs if available
- Details of any on-going safeguarding or behavioural concerns which makes the child particularly vulnerable or may potentially impact on the safety of other students
- Attendance certificates
- Details of any fixed term exclusions
- Progress data and end of Key Stage Teacher Assessments
- Most recent annual review/key educational progress data
- A chronology of the child's life to date, to include information on suspensions, exclusions, and periods out of education
- Current/most recent behaviour management plan(s) and risk assessment(s)
- Any additional assessments
- Any additional professional reports (e.g., psychology, speech and language, psychiatry, paediatrics, occupational therapy, YOT, CAMHS etc.)
- Parental/ guardian submissions

- Information on any previous Student Premium spends

3.2.3 The school may organise a home or school visit in order to meet the child and parents/carers.

3.2.4 Visits will usually include:

- A discussion with parents and carers regarding their hopes and expected outcomes from the proposed school placement.
- A discussion with the child regarding their experiences of school and what they hope their new school might be able to offer them.
- A tour of the school and a discussion with a member of the senior management team, regarding the curriculum, therapeutic approaches, and typical school day.

3.2.5 We understand that there may be situations where need to adjust this process on an individual basis. For example, if, a parent or carer, feels that it a visit to the school would cause too much anxiety, then the child could be observed in their own current setting on another occasion, where they would feel more at ease. It is essential for parents and children, that this first experience at the school is positive and successful and therefore the school will be flexible and respond to differing needs where required.

3.3 Stage 3: Responding to the Consultation/Referral

3.3.1 If, once the assessment process is complete, the senior management team, agree that the child's needs can be met at the school, that placement matching is appropriate and that the students and parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school will write to the LA offering a place, costings, and arrangements for admission. In the event that additional resources may be required, the school will ensure that these can be provided within a suitable timeframe before a place is offered.

3.4 Stage 4: Transition

3.4.1 A clear transition plan will be made with the Local Authority, the current school placement, and the parent/carer. It will be essential to consider mechanisms/strategies that may make the process easier for the students. New students may be invited in for one or more transition visits. The school will send out an admissions pack which will include detailed information about the school for parents, carers, and new students.

3.4.2 The school maintains a systematic approach for maintaining admission records and we will ensure that all relevant documentation (contracts, permissions, medical information, and consent etc.) have been signed by the appropriate parent/carer/local authority representative prior to admission of the child. It is expected that contractual arrangements between the setting and the placing authority are approved before the admission of any child.

3.4.3 An individual risk assessment and behaviour support plan will be created prior to admission. All these documents would be reviewed regularly once the child arrives. Initial baseline assessments start as soon as a student starts school. The length of time required to complete this assessment will vary, but it is usually completed within 6 weeks. Parental information, teacher observation and assessments carried out by appropriate professionals will contribute to this process.

- 3.4.4 The student's pathway plan will then be created, Individual Educational Plans will be developed, and next steps discussed with parents prior to implementation.
- 3.4.5 All children undergo annual reviews as laid down by the SEN Code of Practice.
- 3.4.6 The parent or LA is responsible for making transport arrangements and will inform the school accordingly.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

- 4.1.1 The school will aim to work closely with the Local Authorities to manage referrals. Where the school has vacancies and is able to meet need, a placement will be offered. Where there are more applicants than vacancies places will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria and students may be placed on a waiting list when no places are available.

5. Appeals

- 5.1.1 When a decision is made that the school cannot meet the needs of a child, feedback will be provided to parents/ carers by the Local Authority and an explanation given.
- 5.1.2 If the Local Authority decides not to name, the school in the Students' EHCP the parents/ carers may wish to appeal the decision and should refer directly to their Local Authority to inform them of their intent to appeal the decision.
- 5.1.3 This process also applies to children whose referral is subject to the SEN tribunal process. The school, if requested to do so by an advocate or solicitor, will endeavour to provide all assessments and reports prior to the tribunal hearing.

6. Communication & Confidentiality

- 6.1.1 All decisions regarding the placement at the school are confidential. The Local Authority will be kept up to date and there will be regular communication with parents, carers, and advocates on order to ensure that the needs of the child are respected.

7. Legislative Framework

7.1.1 This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance, namely:

- Equality Act, 2010
- Children Act, 2004
- The Disability Equality Duty, 2006
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools' Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies, and local authorities, DfE, May 2014
- Advice on standards for school premises for local authorities, proprietors, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies, DfE, March 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2024
- SEND Code of Practice, DfE, January 2015
- Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked- after children, DfE, Feb 2018
- Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers July 2018
- Working together to safeguard children 2023