

ACORN EDUCATION AND CARE

Admissions Policy

Legal Status:

- Complies with Part 6, Paragraph 24 (3) (a) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

Applies to:

- the whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours.
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Other relevant documents:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
- Attendance Policy
- Inclusion Policy

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, guardians, carers, staff and pupils from the school office and website.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head teacher.
- The Regional Director Ed Hall undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Introduction

The policy supports the school statement of intent that every pupil will be equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence that they need to be successful in their future.

Rationale

The school admits pupils who have a range of complex needs that may include a diagnosis of social, emotional and mental health needs and also pupils with autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism. All pupils will have an EHC Plan which notes the nature of these difficulties. Such difficulties are often the cause or the result of other special educational needs. They may arrive out of difficult life experiences or be the result of a medical condition. Some of the pupils have a long history of difficult or challenging behaviour of a serious kind that may include violence towards peers and/or adults. Therefore, the school acknowledges that our pupils may, from time to time, exhibit challenging behaviours that vary both in intensity and duration.

The range and nature of both the difficulties and needs our pupils' exhibit, have and continue to become more complex as does the assessment of these. Thus, it is important that the school seeks to ensure that the admission process accurately identifies the needs of pupils and whether it is possible for the school to meet these both effectively and efficiently.

Smallbrook School is an Independent School for pupils from ages 7 – 18 with special educational

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needs. All pupils admitted to Smallbrook School will have been initially referred by their Local Authority. The school accepts referrals from across Shropshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire and Denbighshire and welcomes enquiries from parents. A significant aspect of the referral process is to ascertain that the school can address the Outcomes as described in Section E of the EHCP. This may relate to all four areas of need:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health;
- Communication and Interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Sensory and/or Physical.

Criteria for admission

- Compatibility with peer group
- Compatibility with curriculum and learning environment
- Suitability of environment:

Admission will not be detrimental to the needs of other children – no pupil/student should compromise the opportunities of others within the school. It is essential that admissions are properly planned and allow for smooth transition.

The school must also be satisfied that the parents / carers of the child are supportive of the placement.

Admission Protocol

We are able to give parents information regarding our assessment and admission process on enquiry. We encourage parents/carers to engage in a dialogue with their local authority and to make a joint application. Note: the school will take referrals and organise admissions assessments at any point in an academic year. Intake is not restricted to September only.

If during the referral stage the school assesses (based on reading the child's papers and any pre admissions information sought) that the school may be able to meet the child's needs and the school has a suitable vacancy the school admissions panel will in most cases be able to make a decision over the following few days. The decision will be made in line with the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs:

- Can the school meet the child's needs?
- Resources – would the placement be an inefficient use of resources?
- Current pupils – would the placement be incompatible with the pupil cohort?

If the school believes they can meet the needs of the pupil they will contact the local authority and parent to offer a place. Then the LA and/or parent/carer will be notified in writing of the outcome of the assessment within 10 working days of completion of the assessment process. NB: The process is deemed to be complete when all information has been gathered.

If the school is able to meet the child's special educational needs, an offer of a place, a start date and the proposed fee will be suggested to the Local Authority, (LA). When the LA confirms that the offer of a place is going to be taken up, the school will send contracts to the LA.

After this the school will send out an admissions pack which will include information about the school for both parents and pupil and detailed pre admission questionnaires. The admission pack will include procedures for introducing children to school, staff and other pupils/students, daily routines and expectations. This will all be in a suitable format for the child and personal guidance and support will be provided as appropriate. The parents / carers and if appropriate the pupil will be invited to an admission interview.

Referral is received from the Local Authority

In line with the Special Education Needs Code of Practice a multi-disciplinary decision is reached whereby the child with parents and/or guardians and/or carers visits the school. If it is agreed that the school is, in principle, the most appropriate educational setting for the child then a transition plan is implemented. Parents or guardians/carers will also be asked to provide the school with any further information which they feel will enable us to provide their child with the best possible education. If agreed a place will be offered based on availability and in accordance with the Code of Practice for Schools, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 4 and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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Special Educational Needs

We will always consult with parents/guardians/carers and, where appropriate, the Local Authority to ensure that the required curriculum is provided for as set out in the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) including the full National Curriculum if this is specified. We will also co-operate with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant reviews, including the annual review, are carried out as required by regulation and best practice. The school will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children with a statement of special educational needs. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the Statement or additional services such as dyslexic tuition will be subject to charge. This will be either directly to the parents/guardians/carers, or the Local Authority if they are responsible for the fees and our school is named in Part 4 of The Statement or the relevant section of the EHCP. Our school has a policy and procedures for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in line with the SEN Code of Practice (July 2014)

English as an Additional Language

Our school will make provision for children who have English as an additional language, (EAL) in the assessment procedure. We do not regard children as having a 'learning difficulty' solely because the 'language or medium of communication of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught' (Education Act 1996, Section 312(1), (2) and (3)). However, pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) will be provided with appropriate support provided they meet our School Academic criteria. They will be assessed to gauge the support that may be needed in order to ensure equal access to the curriculum along with all other aspects of life at our school. Our school has a policy and procedures for students requiring English as an Additional Language (EAL).
Admissions Policy

APPENDIX A

Admissions Policy – Smallbrook School

Stage 1

Referrals made to the school will normally be made by LA's. A range of detailed information regarding that pupil should accompany these referrals. Where this is not the case, the school will seek access to such information where possible. Senior staff will analyse all available information on the pupil to assess whether the pupil meets the admission criteria for the school. The Headteacher will assess whether or not the school can meet the pupils needs and if so, arrange for a visit to the school.

Stage 2

The visit will include:

- A tour of the school;
- An introduction to key staff;
- A discussion with senior staff concerning such issues as:
 - o Context to the EHCP;
 - o Current educational information;
 - o The school curriculum;
 - o The content of key school policies, including the school expectations for good behaviour and discipline and the physical management of pupils;
 - o An opportunity for each visitor to ask any questions they may have.

Visitors will also be introduced to (if they have not already) a copy of the pupil's handbook and/or other relevant information.

Stage 3

Observation/Taster Days:

- Following this, an observation in the current setting may take place or/and in addition to the pupil will be invited to attend taster sessions at the school, to follow the school timetable for

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a morning, day or number of days. This will enable the pupil to experience the school environment at Smallbrook School.

Stage 4

If, following these visits and taster sessions, all concerned are agreed that the pupil's needs can be met at the school and that the young person can be adequately managed with the planned resources available and that the pupil and parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school will write to the LA offering a place and arrangements will be made for admission.

Admission Criteria

- The pupil will admit students aged between 07 and 18 years of age;
- The pupil will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- The pupil will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning (In some cases, pupil's levels of ability as measured using psychometric tests may prove difficult. In these cases, the school will base its judgements on its ability to meet needs);
- The pupil may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their primary and secondary area of needs;
- The pupil may have one or more specific learning difficulty;
- The pupil will express a commitment to the placement;
- The pupil's parents/carers will express a commitment to the placement;
- For all "Looked After Children", there must be permanently named carers and a permanent home base for the pupil, available at any time throughout the year. The school cannot be the main residence for any child.

The LA will:

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the pupil;
- Nominate The School in Section IV of the EHCP;
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school;
- Make any arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school.