



Admissions Policy

Procedure Owner:	Polaris Education
Approved by:	Managing Director - Kicha Mitchell
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This school is a mixed Independent Special school which provides places for pupils aged 5 to 18 years who would find it difficult to access the curriculum in a mainstream school due to difficulties with Special Educational Needs.

Pupils who attend this school may have a range of barriers to education relating to Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health needs. They may also have diagnosis or presentation which suggest Autism, Learning Difficulties, OCD, ODD, Conduct Disorder, ADHD, or a complex combination of diagnosis.

This policy is relevant to all staff, parents/carers, pupils and local authority representatives who are involved in the admission of a pupil.

The school will work in partnership with local authorities and parents / carers to assess the suitability of pupils for a place at the school. The admissions policy will promote equally the rights of all pupils regardless of disability, ethnic background, language, culture, faith and gender.

We accept referrals from Local Authorities (LA). Whilst parents are welcome to visit the school and can be provided with information about the school, the school cannot proceed to the admissions stage without local authority support.

All pupils are likely to have an EHCP, require assessment of their needs or be deemed as having SEN and/or disability. The school strongly believes in finding the right school for the individual and in all communications will be honest with parents and the local authority in relation to this.

We are able to give parents information regarding our assessment and admission process on enquiry. We encourage parents 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.

Once a referral has been received from an LA, the paperwork will be read by the senior leadership team. If from the paperwork it is clear that the pupil would be suitable for the school then the school will invite parents/carers/ interested parties in for an admissions interview. If it is not clear from the paperwork whether the school would be suitable then a designated member of staff will arrange to observe the pupil in either their current school or in the home setting.

The parents / carers and the child will then be invited in for a tour of the school and presentation about the provision. Following this meeting in most cases the senior leadership team will be able to make a decision over the following few days. The school acknowledges that there has often been a lengthy processes in the past and in recognition of this, the school will aim to advise of the outcome as quickly as possible. However, in a small number of cases, if the decision is uncertain then rather than make the wrong decision it may be more appropriate to delay a decision whilst more information can be obtained and school / home visits are carried out.

If school leaders believe this school is able to meet the child's special educational needs, an offer of a place will be sent to the LA. The proposed fee will be suggested

to the LA. When the LA confirms that the offer of a place is going to be taken up, the school and LA will arrange contracts and Individual Pupil Account and propose a start date for the pupil to be added onto the school register.

The placement fee could reflect our core offer and the pupil would not need any support above this. However, there are pupils who require even higher levels of support than our core offer and those additional fees will be discussed with the LA prior to the pupil being offered a place.

The pre-placement process will typically consist of: A member of the senior leadership team meeting to obtain up to date information, including but not exclusive to the following areas: Previous placement; primary and additional SEN; Behaviour presentation; Academic ability; Religious and cultural needs; Parents / Local Authority aspirations for the future/what they want the school to do; current multi-agency involvement; and Family organisation.

Once a place is agreed, an individual transition plan will be arranged. If appropriate, the pupil will attend the first part of the admissions interview and, where applicable, having the chance to talk about themselves and their schooling. The pupil will then be accompanied by an experienced member of the staff team and will be able to, for example, join a class, tour the school or play in the playground. This enables the school to begin to assess how the pupil responds to their environment and peers.

Whilst this is a recommended format it may be adjusted according to individuals. So, for example, if it is advocated that it would be too stressful for the pupil to visit the school then the pupil could be observed in their own current setting on another occasion. It is important for pupils that this first point of contact with the school is positive and successful and therefore the school will be flexible and respond to differing needs where required.

If possible a member of the senior leadership team meeting with the child's previous school/ setting to gather information including: Whether the child is looked after and if so the name of the contact person and key personnel in the placing authority; Statement of Educational Needs/Record of Need; Current care, health, educational plans or relevant personal needs if available; Details of any matter which makes the child particularly vulnerable or a danger to others; Attendance certificates; Details of any fixed term exclusions; Lead person details if a CAF is in place; NC levels - End of Key Stage Teacher Assessments; and Evidence of all NC levels.

The school should agree to being named in a pupil's final EHCP, except where leaders feel the following conditions may apply:

- The school cannot meet the child's SEN;
- The placement would be an inefficient use of resources;
- The placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child will be educated.

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

school accordingly.

The Senior Leadership Team will work with the Team around the Child to determine which school class is the most appropriate for the pupil but ultimately the Head teacher will decide on the best-suited class. This decision will be made considering the needs of the individual and the needs of other pupils in the classes

Transition plans will be made with the LA, the current school placement and the parent / carer. It will be essential to consider mechanisms/strategies that may make the process easier for the child and those already in the class group. Pupils may be invited in for one or more transition visits. These should be planned with parents / carers and should be bespoke to individual needs. Prior to admission the Head teacher will ensure that all relevant information has been collected. A baseline assessment will commence as soon as a pupil starts school. The length of time required to complete this assessment will vary, but it is usually completed within two months. Parental information, teacher observation and assessments carried out by appropriate professionals will contribute to this process. Individual Learning Plans will then be drawn up and discussed with parent/ carers prior to implementation.

All children undergo Annual reviews as laid down by the SEN Code of Practice. Although parents can indicate to their local authority the school of preference, the authority may not agree with the placement identified. In such circumstances parents have the right of appeal. All decisions relating to the proposed placement of any individual are confidential. There will be open and regular communication with relatives, carers and advocates, which acknowledge and respect the needs of each user. The school will liaise with the local authority to ensure they are kept up to date.

