



ADMISSIONS POLICY

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Introduction

Ashcroft School is an independent special school providing educational day places for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH.) The school works in partnership with local authorities and parents/carers to assess the suitability of pupils for a place at a school. All pupils must have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP, formerly a Statement of Special Educational Needs) that has SEMH as the primary need. The school provides an education for pupils who require specific provision tailored to meet their social, emotional and mental health needs, as well as providing support to enable them to manage levels of anxiety and remove barriers to learning.

Aims

To ensure there are robust and transparent systems in place to support a fair and consistent approach to admissions.

Scope

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

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor this policy's implementation in school.
- Ensure local procedures are in place to implement this policy effectively within the school.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy

The Head Teacher will:

- Ensure all relevant staff are aware of this policy and that procedures are followed.
- Ensure appropriate information is available for parents throughout the process.
- Allocate a member of the leadership team to process each referral and ensure both the school and the family receive all relevant information prior to the pupil starting at the school.
- The leadership team will consult with other relevant professionals regarding specific referrals, where appropriate.

Typical Profile of Admissions

The school is designated for pupils with a primary need of SEMH and its provision is designed accordingly as follows:

1. The school accepts local authority referrals on behalf of students who have an EHCP where the primary need is SEMH, in accordance with the admissions procedure set out below.
2. It is necessary for pupils to have an existing or proposed Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) which makes clear reference to SEMH as their primary need. In addition to SEMH the EHC plan may include a secondary need such as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASD)

Students may also have additional needs, for example: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD.)

Where possible, an identified and agreed number of pupil placements will be available within each specialist area of the school. This is to facilitate age-appropriate peer groups, progression and organisation of timetable. The key areas of Ashcroft School are:

- Ashcroft Cheadle: Secondary Model
- Ashcroft Shine: Primary Model
- Ashcroft College: Vocational centre:
- Ashcroft Access to Education (1:1 intensive support)

The school will consider carefully (through the referral process) the vulnerability that is likely to be felt by any pupil within the school. If a pupil admission is deemed to have a potentially negative impact, for reasons of safety and wellbeing, a placement may not be suitable.

Admissions Code

All applications for places will be in accordance with The Together Trust's funding agreement, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015 and the School Admissions Code 2015.

Admissions Procedure

Places will be allocated to pupils in accordance with the procedure set out below. On some occasions, Local Authority professionals who are involved in a pupil's placement or who have a significant professional interest in their wellbeing, may recommend that the school may meet their needs and inform parents. The school can proceed through the referral stage with Local Authority support only. We therefore encourage parents to engage in a dialogue with their Local Authority to express their wish for a formal consultation with the school.

Formal Consultation

Where it is deemed a placement at the school may be suitable, the school will ask to meet the pupil and their parents/carers so that a final decision can be made.

A local authority will formally consult with the school by sending us the ECHP and other associated documentation for the pupil. The school will consider the consultation and will respond to the authority within 15 days.

Where it is deemed a placement at the school will not be suitable the school will indicate whether: *'The attendance of the pupil would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other pupils, and where no reasonable steps can be made to secure compatibility'* OR *'The setting is unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational need of the child and where no reasonable adjustment can be made.'*

In deciding whether a pupil's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of existing pupils, OR the setting is unsuitable, the school will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015.

Where the school considers that it should not have been named in the EHC Plan, the School may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the Local Authority has acted unreasonably in naming it and to make an order directing the Local Authority to amend the pupil's EHC Plan by removing the name of the school.

In-year admissions

Ashcroft accepts consultations and admits pupils throughout the academic year.

Appeals

Should a placement be considered unsuitable for a pupil (following the admissions procedure) feedback to parents/carers will be provided by the Local Authority as to the grounds for the decision. If the Local Authority decides not to name the school in a pupil's EHC Plan the parents have the right to appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and should refer directly to the Local Authority for contact details and their intention to appeal a decision.

Communication and Confidentiality

All decisions relating to the proposed placement of any individual are confidential. There will be open and regular communication with parents/carers and advocates, which acknowledges and respects the needs of each young person. The school will liaise with the Local Authority to ensure they are kept up to date.

Success Criteria for Admitted Pupils

- All pupils are appropriately placed.
- All pupils experience a smooth transition to our school.
- Parents are clear and happy on the process and no decisions are regarded as unfair.

Decisions on continued placement of pupils within the school:

The suitability of a young person's long-term placement is considered at an Initial Placement Review, usually held towards the end of the first term of attendance at the school and at subsequent Annual Reviews. In some instances, additional case conferences or Interim Reviews may also consider this matter. Where it is felt that there are concerns about the child's placement it is discussed by the Head Teacher, members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Head of Educational Services, prior to contact with the family and/or the local authority. Factors to be taken into consideration in transferring students to other educational provision include not only the ability of Ashcroft School to continue to meet the student's needs but also the probability of another provision meeting the young person's needs more adequately. It should be clear to all concerned that responsibility for decisions regarding placement outside the school ultimately rests with the local authority and the child's family.

References

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2014) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board on an annual basis. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024