



# ADMISSIONS POLICY

Policy Review Date: September 2024

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Updated By</b>
1.0	April 2023	G. Mann
1.1	September 2023	K Marshall

## **The School Admissions Policy**

### **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. These 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.

### **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the school admits, as far as is possible, those pupils whose special educational needs can meet effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of their development.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the policy are that:

- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of a placement for individual pupils at The School.
- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement.
- Parents/carers, each pupil and representatives of LA's, social service departments and other interested professionals have clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at The School.
- Parents/Carers, each pupil and representatives of LA's, social services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at The School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement.

### **Admissions process**

#### *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 a morning, day or number of days. This will enable the pupil to experience the school environment at Willow Park 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 09 and 16 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 statement;
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school;
- Make any arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school.

## Admissions Process

Willow Park School is an Independent School for pupils from ages 9 – 16 with special educational needs. All pupils admitted to Willow Park School will have been initially referred by their Local Authority.

Willow Park School welcomes enquiries and visits 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.

In doing so, this should be without negatively impacting upon the efficient education for others.

The school has a dedicated member of staff who is responsible for overseeing the referral process. It is through this staff member that visits are coordinated, information is gathered and arrangements for admission are undertaken.

An admission will only be undertaken when the approval for funding is granted by the appropriate person who holds this authority, within the funding LA.

Willow Park School applies the statutory reviewing process (for EHCPs, as set out within the SEND Code of Practice) and will use this to inform the funding authority of any changes to provision. These changes can relate to the provision provided by Willow Park School and/or identify the type of provision that would better meet need. The reviewing process will also be used to identify the next phase of education placement (this could be, but not exclusively, a transfer to a maintained mainstream school, a different special needs settings, college of further education or employment).

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school only admits pupils who's Special Educational Needs can be met. To summarise, in all cases, pupils will only be considered for admission if:

- They have a current EHCP;
- Funding has been formally agreed with the respective Local Authority and an Individual Placement Agreement has been completed and signed by relevant parties;
- The special needs of the pupil, can be met by the school;

- The provision, described in Section F of the EHCP, is such as can be met by the school;
- All up to date information concerning the pupil, including the most recent reviews, reports and the EHCP will be provided by the funding authority;
- There is a place available in the appropriate class / year group;
- It is compatible with the provision of efficient education for others;
- The child / young person's attendance does not jeopardise the safety of others.