



St Elizabeth's School and Children's Home

ADMISSIONS POLICY

January 2018

Policy Lead: Diane O'Connor and Sam Steinke-Sanderson

Updated January 2018
Ratified January 2018
Review May 2019

St Elizabeth's School Admission Policy

The aim of this policy is to set out the values, principles and procedures to which an application for admission to St Elizabeth's school is considered and to:

- Ensure that all the procedures stated in this policy are carried out effectively.
- To ensure that the school is aware of the expectations of both the funding authority and parents so the school can assess if these expectations can be reasonably met.
- To ensure that the school has up-to-date and full knowledge of any prospective pupil to enable an effective assessment into their needs to be carried out.
- To ensure opportunities for 'information gathering' to enable staff to be prepared for a pupil / student's admission to the school.
- To ensure a smooth and successful transition to the school.

POLICY STATEMENT

St. Elizabeth's is an independent, charitable Catholic School. The core values are those of compassion, respect, trust and justice. The school welcomes young people of any or no denomination according to their statement of special needs/Education Health Care Plan. We work closely with families, young people and local communities to ensure that we meet individual religious, cultural and spiritual needs. It caters for pupils who present with a profile of complex learning and medical needs including epilepsy, autism and associated social and communication difficulties, moderate and severe learning difficulties. The leadership team works to ensure the core values are known by all and permeate through education and care delivery. All policies and procedures are person centred in approach. The admission process is non-discriminatory; all applications are viewed in line with the admission criteria.

In keeping with the mission, ethos and core values of St Elizabeth's School, the Admission Policy reflects the principle of meeting individual needs whenever possible. To do this, careful assessment, good planning and communication are essential in order to ensure individuals obtain services identified as appropriate for their needs and that any decisions about moving into the service are based on informed choice.

The School has clear procedures for applications and assessment which involve relevant professionals, prospective pupils and those who support them. All placements are subject to written confirmation of funding and agreed terms of contract.

1. Procedures for visits

- Visits to the School may take place throughout the school academic year.
- Informal visits to the school enable parent/guardians and funding authorities to view what the school can offer and how it could potentially meet the needs of a prospective pupil/student. It is at the discretion of the parent/carers and Admissions Officer as to whether it would be suitable for their child/young person to attend the initial visit. These visits are organised with the Admissions Officer at a mutually convenient date and time.
- The visit is lead by the Admissions Officer.
- Referrals can be made with and without an initial visit, although a visit is recommended.
- If parents/guardians and /or the Local Authority wish for their/a child to be considered for a placement, they will be requested to send copies of the proposed/final Education Health Care Plan or Statement of Educational Needs. Plus, any other relevant documentation specific to the needs of the young person. This documentation will then be sent to the School Leadership Team for consideration prior to the Admissions Panel meeting.

2. Admissions Panel

- The Admissions Panel consists of the Director of Education, Head of School, Registered Care Manager, Clinical Services Manager and the Admissions Officer. The panel meet on a weekly basis and additional meetings maybe convened at the discretion of panel members.
- If documentation is received from a funding authority, it will be sent to all members of the Admissions Panel for their initial consideration. St Elizabeth's will notify the funding authority of the preliminary opinion within 48 hours of receipt of the consultation papers.
- The Admissions Officer will notify the parent/guardian and/or funding authority of the panel's decision within 48 hours of the meeting date.

3. Assessments

- If the Admissions Panel believes that potentially we can meet the child/young person's needs we will arrange to conduct an assessment within their current placement. If a child/young person is not in attendance at school, a home visit assessment can be arranged. This arrangement will be made with parent/carers; the funding authority and

any other professionals involved and are subject to the necessary safe guarding checks.

- A member of the Admissions Panel will conduct the assessment, which can last up to four hours dependent upon the circumstances of the hosting school and the needs of the young person. These assessments are an opportunity for us to learn more about the individual needs and how these are supported within their current placement. If it is felt that there is a need for more specific information to be gathered, then a member of the multi-disciplinary team maybe involved.
- Following the school/home assessment the Admissions Panel will reconvene. If the panel continue to believe that we potentially can meet the identified needs, the child/young person will be invited to spend some time at St Elizabeth's. The duration of time spent at St Elizabeth's will be dependent on the needs of the individual and the type of placement being sought. Typically, for a day placement the child/young person will attend our school for one day. For those requesting a residential placement, it will include an overnight stay in one of the residential bungalows. During this visit the child/young person and their parent/guardians will be given the opportunity to meet with the wider multi-disciplinary team e.g. physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist etc.
- Following this visit and onsite assessment the Admissions Panel will gather evidence from all those involved, in order to obtain their views on the suitability of a placement.
- The Admissions Panel will then make a decision based on the reports from the multi-disciplinary team as to whether a placement at St Elizabeth's is in the best interest of the child/young person and others within the school. At this point the appropriate fee level will be estimated based on the needs and level of support required. Copies of these reports and a letter outlining the Admission Panel's conclusion will be sent to parent/guardians, and the funding authority. The funding matrix is only sent to the funding authority.
- The school reserves the right to refuse a placement if it considers that in meeting the needs of the child/young person, the physical or emotional well-being of pupils/students or others could be exposed to unreasonable risk.
- The Admissions Panel may agree to admit a young person on a time constrained temporary placement. This will enable us to assess in more detail the viability of a long term placement. For example, if a young person has been unable to access an education provision for an extended period of time or where circumstances for the young person have lead to the school being unable to access relevant information.
- Once the Local Authority has confirmed in writing the funding, then the placement will be confirmed and a start date agreed, with all parties involved.

4. Transitions

- Any transition process which takes place must be agreed with all parties involved and with the best interests of the child/young person at the centre of any process which takes place.
- An Admissions Meeting will be held prior to Admission. At this meeting the Initial Risk Assessment and Care plan will be started. All consent forms must be completed prior to this meeting. If the child/young person is in the care of the Local Authority all LAC paperwork must be received by the Registered Care Manager prior to the meeting. The Admission Meeting may be postponed if the relevant documentation is not available.
- The school will hold an Initial review meeting six weeks after the commencement of placement with the family and outside agencies to discuss how the placement is going. This will enable all to discuss how the child/young person is settling into St Elizabeth's and highlight any issues that may have arisen during this period. The funding matrix and level of support will also be reviewed at this stage if necessary.
- Within the first six weeks, the school and children's home will develop documents to support the successful care and educational provision for the young person. This may include behaviour support plans, risk assessments, care plans and individual learning plans.

5. Exclusion

- In exceptional circumstances it maybe necessary to bring a placement to an end. This maybe for example, due to the changing needs of the young person and a different type of provision is required or to a serious escalation in behaviours which deplete the school's ability to safely and effectively support the young person.
- Further information can be found in the Exclusion Policy.

This policy and the admission criteria will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be updated in line with legislation and regulatory guidelines. Staff will be kept apprised of significant changes in these criteria.

In all admission decisions, St Elizabeth's School will pay due regard to equal opportunities and diversity. St Elizabeth's School will remain prepared to make reasonable adjustments to stated entry criteria to enable admission where it is felt appropriate to do so.

This policy is agreed with the School Governing Body and will be implemented by St Elizabeth's School.

Signed:
Sister Annette Clemence
Chair of Governors

Date:

Date of next review: May 2019.