Outcomes First Group

Avonside School

Admissions Policy

Introduction

Starting school, or moving from one school to another, can be a worrying time for both parents/carers and children. We aim to make the school admissions process as painless and trouble-free as we can. The guiding principles of Avonside School's admissions policy are, the school admits students irrespective of their gender, race, disability, learning difficulty, or special educational needs, provided that there are good prospects of meeting each student's individual needs without unduly prejudicing the education and the welfare of other students. In a situation where Avonside School felt unable to provide or make available any specialist help required, either due to lack of resources or local availability, then a student's special needs might inform the decision of whether or not to offer a place to a student.

Our focus is on creating an environment that enables the young people in our care to achieve their personal best. During referrals, we will explain to each prospective student, family, and carer everything they need to know about our school and what to expect. For the authorities and families we work with, our commitment to a high quality of learning and care is guaranteed. We pride ourselves on providing transparency to all parties, including a clear plan for progression so that the value and outcomes of our service are measurable at every stage of the journey.

Rationale

The school will be admitting students with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, frequently but not always, accompanied by a diagnosis of autism and/or ADHD and with an education and health care plan, which notes the nature of these difficulties, or an education health and care plan, may be in the process of being written. 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. Therefore, the school acknowledges that our students 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 students 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 students and whether it is possible for the school to meet these needs both effectively and efficiently.

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 students at the school.

All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement.

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Parents/carers, each student, and representatives of Local Authorities, Social Service departments, and other interested professionals have a clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at the school.

Procedure for Admissions:-

1. Applications for admission to Avonside School are normally made by a SEN Officer of the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the student currently resides. The officer will contact the school directly or via their Admissions manager and send over the relevant documents relating to the student. Parents can contact the school directly and organise to visit independently.

2. Regulations under the Education Act 2011 and all subsequent legislation state that parents have the right to express a preference for a school which is not a LA school, but which is an Independent special school approved by the DFE. If the LA agrees, it will fund the placement at that school.

3. All of the students referred to Avonside School will have a history of SEMH and or associated learning difficulties. Students will be aged between 13 and 19.

4. The initial visit will take place at a convenient time agreed by parents/carers and the school. This allows all students, parents, carers, social workers, etc., or anybody else who has accompanied the student to have:

- a tour of the school, an introduction to key staff, a discussion with senior staff concerning such issues as: the school curriculum, the prospective student's likes and dislikes.
- The content of key school policies, including the school expectations for good behaviour and discipline, and the physical management of students.
- A discussion about the school's physical intervention strategy. And an opportunity for each visitor to ask any questions they may have

5. Following the visit, if all concerned are agreed that the student's needs as outlined in the EHCP or other documentation can be met at the school, and that the young person can be adequately managed with the planned resources available, and that the student and parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school will formally offer a place in writing through our admissions manager

Referrals Procedure

Students are referred to Avonside School from a number of local authorities. The referral will be sent to the school's admission manager at OFG. The referral will be logged on to our management system, and the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, and SENCo will review papers and decide whether the need can be met. The student and parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting during this process.

6. Admission Criteria

- The student will be aged between 13-19 years.
- The student will have an Education, Health and Care Plan, or be in the process of having one written
- The plan will specify that the student has social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) or social communication difficulties as a primary need or a combination of SEMH, ASD, and ADHD.

• The student will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning. In some cases, students' levels of ability as measured using psychometric tests may prove difficult. In these cases, the school will base its judgments on its ability to meet needs. The student may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their emotional and behavioural difficulties, but these can be supported within the normal education offer
. • The student may have one or more specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia
• The student will express a commitment to the placement
• The student'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 students, available at any time throughout the year. This placement should be stable and secure.
• The admission of the student will not be detrimental to other students already on the school roll. There is a space available in the student's academic year group, so their curriculum needs can be met

8. Students are admitted at any time in the school year, although it is easier for students to start at the beginning of a term or half term. We endeavour to start all students on a Monday.

9. Once a decision has been reached and funding has been agreed by the Local Authority, a start date will be agreed, and transport will also be arranged through the local authority, where appropriate.

10. **Transitional Start:-**

• Unless it is not convenient with a parent or carer who may be working or have other commitments, all students will start Avonside School on a transition basis.
• In the first week, the student will typically remain in school until 1pm.
• In the second week, the student will remain in school until 2pm.
• In the third week, the student will have transitioned into full days at school, remaining in school until 3.00 pm.
• All cases are considered on an individual basis, and it may require a longer transition period for students who have been out of school for long periods or who are suffering from high anxiety; this will be arranged
. • A risk assessment and educational assessment will be completed first half term.

11. If students are admitted from other educational establishments within the school year, careful individual transition arrangements will be made with their previous school. Similarly, if a student Contact transfers from Avonside School to elsewhere.

All parents will be given an Admissions pack, which contains the following information to be read or completed by parents before their child's start date.

Meet the Team
1 Admission New Student Form
2 Emergency details form
3 Previous School Details
4 Professional Involved Contact Details
5 Food/ Medical Allergies
6 Consent to Dispense Prescribed Medication

7 Therapy Consent
8 EFL Consent
9 Mobile Device Policy/ Consent form
10 Student Acceptable Use Agreement
11 Swimming Consent
12 Home/School Agreement
13 RSHE Consent
14 Work Experience Consent
15 EHCP Consent
16 Off-site Permission Form
17 Anti Bullying Guide for Students
18 How to Share a Worry or Complaint

12. Discharge

Process In the unfortunate situation that the school is unable to continue to meet the needs of a student, and all avenues have been explored, including Alternative Provision and Acorn Digital Learning, the school will work with the Local Authority and serve a 6-week notice letter for that student.