



Best Futures School

Where Children Come First

Independent School Admissions Policy

Date updated – September 2019

Lead – Dawn Best

Status - Current

Prepared by – Dawn Best

Review date – September 2021 or
sooner if legislation is updated

1. Purpose

Best Futures Independent School is a special school which provides placements for primary aged children (5-11years) in an environment where pupils with Educational and Health Care Plan, Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties can access a specialised and holistic education that aims to develop children in a healthy and balanced manner.

2. Scope

This policy is relevant to all CIC, staff, parents, pupils and local authority representatives who are involved in the admission of a pupil to Best Futures Independent School.

3. Introduction

The school will work in partnership with local authorities and parents / carers to assess the suitability of pupils for a place at the school.

4. Equal Opportunities

The admissions policy will promote equally the rights of all pupils regardless of disability, ethnic background, language, culture, faith and gender.

5. Our Admissions Criteria

We accept referrals from Local Authorities, Schools and Academies. Parents are welcome to visit the school and will be provided with information about the school, and are able to fund their own placements.

6. Information on the types of Provision

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.

The school will have two types of provision:

Provision for pupils with a SEN, EHCP or pupils who have identified SEMH.

Provision for pupils who require an assessment of their difficulties: for pupils referred by a local authority, with agreement from Best Futures school, pupil's parents/carer and any person whose advice is to be sought in accordance with regulation 7 of the Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001

7. Admissions Process

7.1 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.

7.2 Once a referral has been received from an LA, the paperwork will be read by the senior leadership team.

7.3 If from the paperwork it is clear that the pupil would be suitable for the school then the school will invite parents 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.

7.4 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 parents have often been through lengthy processes in the past and in recognition of this, the school will aim to advise parents 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.

7.5 If Best Futures Independent School is able to meet the child's special educational needs, an offer of a place and a start date will be sent to the LA and parent/carer. 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 will send contracts to the LA.

7.6 The pre-placement process will typically consist of:

7.6.1. A member of the senior leadership team meeting with parents / carers to obtain up to date information, including but not exclusive to the following areas:

Previous placement

Behaviour

Academic ability

Religious and cultural needs

Parents' aspirations for the future / what they want the school to do

Current multi agency involvement

Family organisation.

7.6.2. The pupil attending the first part of the admissions interview and, where applicable, having the chance to talk about themselves and their schooling. The pupil then being accompanied by an experienced member of the staff team and being able to, for example, join a class, tour the school or play in the playground. Thus enabling the school to begin to assess how they respond to their environment and peers.

7.7. Whilst this is a recommended format it may be adjusted according to individuals. So, for example, if a parent advocates 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 essential for parents and pupils that this first point of contact with the school is positive and successful and therefore Best Futures Independent School will be flexible and respond to differing needs where required.

7.8. A member of the senior leadership team meeting with the child's mainstream school to gather information to include-

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 Children services are in place;

NC levels - End of Key Stage Teacher Assessments; and

Evidence of all NC levels.

7.9. Best Futures Independent School must agree to being named in a pupil's final statement of EHCP, except where they 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

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

7.11. The parent or LA is responsible for making transport arrangements and will inform the school accordingly.

7.12. Transition plans will be made with the LA, the current school placement and the parent/carer. Transitions are often difficult for children who have SEMH. It will be essential to consider mechanisms/strategies that may make the process easier for the child. 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.

7.13. The school will send out an admissions pack which will include information about the school for both parents and pupil.

7.14. Prior to admission the Principal will ensure that all relevant information has been collected.

7.15. 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 Educational Plans will then be drawn up and discussed with parents prior to implementation.

7.16. All children undergo annual reviews as laid down by the SEN Code of Practice.

8. Tribunals

Although parents can indicate to their local authority the school of preference to be named at part 4 of their child's statement of SEN, the authority may not agree with the placement identified. In such circumstances parents have the right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (SEN & Disability).

9. Private Funding of Places

Best Futures Independent School is able to offer places to families who wish to independently fund the placement.

10. Communication and Confidentiality

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.

11. References

Department for Education (2001) Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

Principal		Signature		Date:	Sept 2019
Chair of C.I.C		Signature		Date:	Sept 2019