

Admissions Procedure

This procedure implements the Admissions Policy and outlines the criteria and procedures to secure day and residential placements at St Piers School and College.

1. BACKGROUND

The procedure is designed to ensure that the organisation has a clear and transparent approach to the assessment of children and young people for school and college for day and residential placements

The approach ensures that any assessment of whether the needs of a child or young person can be met at St Piers School or College, takes into consideration whether a placement would be in their best interests. Key to this judgement will be the consideration of whether their needs can be met in a mainstream setting or through a maintained special school or college closer to their home, while having regard to the preference of the child/young adult and their parents/carers, for where they want to be educated. These considerations reflect the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (2015) and the commissioning priorities of local authorities.

This means that St Piers College and School will only accept placements, where:

- It is in the best interests of children or young adults
- They have chosen St. Piers College or School
- It can be demonstrated that we can meet or exceed the requirements of an Education, Health & Care Plan, in terms of progression and achievement in relation to age and capacity appropriate outcomes associated with:
 - Communication and interaction
 - Cognition and learning
 - Social emotional and mental health
 - Sensory and physical well being
 - Independent living
 - Employability
 - Community inclusion

2. Guidelines

2.1 Marketing and Communications

A key element of the admissions procedure is an approach to marketing and communication, which ensures that commissioners, parent/carers and existing students

are clear about what St Piers can offer and its track record in delivering outcomes for students.

The approach to marketing and communications will have regard to the existing capacity and capability of the school and college to meet the needs of children and young adults with special education needs. In addition, the approach will market the school and college's potential to develop capacity and capability.

The objective of the approach is to ensure that the number of referrals, that are declined are minimised through the clarity of our offer, in advance of any engagement through open mornings and assessments

2.2 Assessment Timescales

To minimise uncertainty and manage the expectations for children, young adults and their parents/carer, it our aim is to ensure there are no delays in the process of assessment. The following guidelines are designed to ensure that all parties including commissioners are clear about our approach.

2.2.1 Assessment Deadlines: All assessment should be completed by the end of the February, prior the start of the subsequent academic year. This is to ensure that fee and equipment cost submissions can be made to Local Authorities in sufficient time for them to meet their statutory duty to have concluded all placement by 31st March.

2.2.2 Assessment Timings: Assessments will be timetabled for completion between September and February in the preceding academic year. Assessments will only be complete outside of this timeframe by exception. The key drive for this is to ensure that EHCPs from schools or other sources are up to date, that the multi-disciplinary team are available and that the time between assessments and starting at St Piers is minimised to ensure that plans to meet needs are as current as possible.

2.2.3 Target Timescales

- i. Referral to assessment:** Within ten days of receiving a referral and all the relevant paperwork (subject to availability of the child/young adult and parents/carers) a 'familiarisation meeting' (see 3.4) will be arranged at St Piers Campus.
- ii. Assessment to funding submission:** While it is important to give managers sufficient time to compile an Integrated EHC delivery plan and to calculate the level of input for each service it is imperative that this process is completed in a timely way to increase the chances of securing the placement. The target for this element of the process is 10 working days.

2.3 Assessment Principles

The overriding principles for accepting a placement are:

It is clear we can meet the needs of the child or young person. The key considerations are:

- That the child or young adult has special educational needs as detailed in a current EHCP and will benefit from the specialist approaches that have been developed at St Piers.
 - That the provision at St Piers College or school is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young adult¹.
 - That the school and college can demonstrate that they are able to optimise the potential for the child or young adult, in terms of positive outcomes.
 - That children or young adults with special educational need scan positively contribute to developing a diverse cohort, as well as contributing to the continued viability of our specialist epilepsy services.
- That the placement is **financially viable**; the clear principle is that all costs associated with the placement, should be identified and reflected in the fee.
 - That the placement is **operationally feasible**; key areas for consideration are:
 - That at the point of assessment, the capacity and capability to provide a productive and safe learning environment for the child or young adult, from the beginning of the academic year, is considered. In practice where the existing capacity and capabilities are not sufficient, the focus will on demonstrating what would be required to develop sufficient capacity and/or capability and whether it could be achieved within a reasonable timescale.
 - How to best meet an child or young person's need in relation to their joining an existing 'classroom' and/or 'residential' cohort or becoming part of a new cohort. The key focus should be on the positive benefits of children and young people interacting with their peers. However, consideration should also be given to the change in demand for placements, which means that the potential for accommodating placements with different needs profiles, without compromising service delivery, should be explored.

2.4 Needs Profiles

The organisation has developed specialisms for children and young adults in the areas listed below, our approach is to form 'classroom' and 'house' peer groups, where abilities and capacity are complementary. While consideration should be given to these areas of specialism, the focus should be on how we can develop resources and experience to provide the right environment for individuals and their peer group.

- Have epilepsy or other neurological disorder that significantly impacts on the learner's ability to engage with or access mainstream education and also on their daily living skills and emotional well-being.
- Have difficult to control epilepsy or other neurological disorders, which have an effect on education ranging from complex and multiple learning difficulties to more moderate learning difficulties.
- Have a learning disability and a degree of social interaction difficulty, including those students who are within the range of Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

¹ This consideration is a requirement in the SEND code of practice 2015

- Have severe learning difficulties and behavioural difficulties including those students who are within the range of Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- Have an acquired brain injury sustained through illness, surgery or accident.

3. Key stages of Assessment

This section provides details of the key stages of assessment from the receipt of a referral. A flowchart showing each of the stage and their relationships, is included as Appendix A.

3.1 Referrals received

Referrals for placements can come from a range or sources including:

- Parents
- Current place of education
- Local Authority
- Clinical Commissioning group

It is important to note that for a number of key local authorities, commissioners now rely on Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPSs), rather than making referrals to providers. We are able to access these systems as we have been approved as a provider through a tender process. Most of the systems are currently focused on securing placements for children, with commissioners seeking to expand to post-19 placements. The DPS systems send details of potential placements to preferred providers, with the expectation that providers submit outline proposals for those placements, which they feel they can support.

When the referral has come directly from a parent or carer, contact will be made with the relevant commissioner as soon as possible to ensure they are aware that St Piers is being considered. It is important at this stage to consider the initial view of the commissioner in the assessment process, whether positive or negative.

At this stage the BDT will log all details of the referral on the 'referral tracker' spreadsheet.

3.2 Initial Review by the Business Development Team (BDT)

While the pro-active approach of generating referral through DPSs and a tailored approach to marketing communication should ensure that we only consider placements where we have the existing or potential capacity and capability to meet the needs of a child or young person.

An initial review is required of:

- The current capacity of Education, Residential, Health and Therapy, based on operational projections, for the subsequent academic year and beyond. This is kept up-to-date by operational management.
- The Business Development Team will also complete a 'light-touch' review of the child or young adult's Education Health and Care Plan, with a focus on those requirements

that we may not be able to meet with the current capacity and capability. Any of this type of requirement will be flagged to operational management prior to arranging a 'familiarisation day'. Only in exceptional circumstances would a referral be declined at this point in the assessment process.

Following the initial review, in consultation with operational management, the child or young adult are invited to attend a **'familiarisation day'**, with the aim that both the assessment of St Piers by the child or young adult and their parent/carer and St Piers assessment of how the organisation can meet their needs, can be done in one day, thus streamlining the assessment process and increasing the likelihood of a placement.

All parents/carers will be encouraged to attend an **'Open Morning'**, particularly those who are unsure or who are looking for a placement for future years.

3.3 Open Mornings

We aim to provide the type of access to the school and college, which will allow children and young people and their parents the right level of experience, to make an informed choice about whether this is the right place for them. This needs to be proportional, which means at referral stage the preferential approach will be for children and young people and their parents to attend a **'familiarisation day'**. However, we recognise that some parents want to visit the school without their child first or do not want to make the commitment to what can seem a formal process or they are looking for a placement for future years. For these groups of parents we will continue to deliver **'Open Mornings'**.

Places on **'Open Mornings'** are subject to an initial review of the child or young person's circumstances, in a discussion between BDT and the parent to ensure that broadly speaking, and subject to assessment during familiarisation day, we are likely to be able to meet needs.

The focus of these sessions will be for children and young people and their parents have an opportunity to find out more about St Piers and as appropriate, secure a date for a **'familiarisation day'**

3.4 Familiarisation Days

The 'familiarisation days' are so named, as they give children, young adults and their parents/carers the opportunity to become familiar with St Piers and for operational managers to become familiar with the child or young person.

A key principle of this approach is that it is not possible to re-create placement conditions to carry out a meaningful assessment. On this basis, the approach is to complete the process in a day, ***recognising that the first 6-12 week of a placement, will be the period in which the approach to meeting needs is calibrated and further developed***

As part of the planning process for these days, consideration should be given to whether additional information or context is required by operational managers, to give greater context the Education, Health & Care Plan. As EHCPs don't always provide sufficient insight into important requirements, impairments or behaviours, consideration should always be given to:

- Having a conversation with people who currently provide support to the child or young adult, including the parent.
- Completing an '**Outreach Visit**': This will involve a visit to the child or young adult's home and/or current placement, with the objective of observing details about how the current placement operates and what should or could be taking forward to a placement at St Piers. Consideration, subject to availability, should be given to asking House Managers, Lecturers and Teachers to complete these visits, to draw on their direct operational experience and to give them some ownership in the decision making process.

The assessment element of the familiarisation day will involve operational managers from Education, Residential, Therapy and Health. Operational managers will focus on further exploring and testing the requirements in the EHCP and any other information that has been gathered in order to develop an **Education, Health and Care delivery plan**, which will form the basis for calculating the fee and the submission to the Local Authority

3.4(i) Covid-19 Addendum

As a result of restrictions placed on visitors to Young Epilepsy and the St Piers School and College campus, Virtual Familiarisation Days will take place via Teams or other appropriate video conferencing application. A virtual meeting will be set up by the Business Development Team with participants to include:

- The young person and their parent(s) or carer(s)
- A Young Epilepsy representative from Education
- A Young Epilepsy representative from Psychology

Optional participants, based on need and/or placement type, may also include:

- A Young Epilepsy therapist
- A Young Epilepsy residential manager
- A Young Epilepsy health manager

The virtual assessment element of the familiarisation meeting will involve consultation with operational managers from Education, Residential, Therapy and Health. Operational managers will focus on further exploring and testing the requirements in the EHCP and any other information that has been gathered in order to develop an **Education, Health and Care Delivery Plan**, which will form the basis for calculating the fee and the submission to the Local Authority

3.5 Education, Health & Care Delivery Plans

The output of the 'Familiarisation days' will be an Education, Health & Care Delivery Plan (EHCDP). The objective of this plan is to demonstrate to all parties, with a focus on the commissioner as funder, that St Piers can meet the requirements of the EHCP. The EHCDP will identify and calculate the input required from each function, to meet the requirements of the EHCP, this will be represented in terms of the function and hours, to allow for the translation into a fee. Where it is perceived that St Piers does not currently have the capacity or competence to meet the requirements, the EHCDP should provide details of any additional development St Piers would need to undertake to meet the requirements. Where there are differing views on whether St Piers is suitable for the

placement, the decision will be reviewed in conference with the Director of Integrated Care, the Principal and the Director of Business Development.

3.5 Submissions to Commissioners

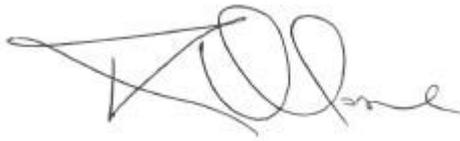
Operational Managers will work with Business Development Team to ensure that all information from the EHCDP is entered into the fee setting model for the calculation of the fee. In parallel, the Business Development Team will work with Occupational Health to price the equipment required for the placement. It is important to note that a composite fee will be submitted, which includes equipment costs.

Following completion of the fee calculation, Finance will review and approve and review before a submission is made to the commissioners.

This procedure is agreed by the Executive Team and will be implemented by those functions involved in assessing and securing placements.

Signed:

Date: 30 September 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Moore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Director of Business Development

Date of review: September 2020

Tim Moore

Date of next review: September 2023

Appendix A

