Admissions Policy

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Version Control since July 2021

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1. Introduction

The policy supports the school statement of intent that every student should overcome barriers to learning and achieve their true potential. Phoenix Bay school's vision is to provide the best education for every child.

2. Rationale

Phoenix Bay School admits students with a range of special educational needs. Many will have social and emotional difficulties and associated mental health issues including those on autism spectrum.

Many of our students have needs that have created barriers to successful engagement in mainstream education, including ADHD, autism and attachment difficulties. They will have a statement of special educational needs or an Education and Health Care Plan that 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 some medical condition. Some of the students have a long history of disturbed or difficult behaviour of a serious kind that may include violence towards peers and/or adults. 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 safely, effectively and efficiently.

3. Aim

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

4. 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 students at Phoenix Bay School
- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement
- Parents/carers, each student and representatives of LA's, social service departments and other interested professionals have a clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at Phoenix Bay School
- Parents/Carers, each student and representatives of LA's, social services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at Phoenix Bay School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement Admissions process

Stage 1

Referrals made to Phoenix Bay School will normally be made by Local Authorities (LA). A range of detailed information concerning the student should accompany these referrals. Where this is not the case, the school will seek access to such information as soon as possible including

information regarding the individual's Education, Health and Social background. Senior leaders will review all available information on the student to assess whether the student meets the admission criteria for the school.

The Principal will assess whether or not the school can meet the students' needs and if so, arrange for a home and school visit.

Stage 2
The visits will include

- A discussion around the successes and challenges experienced by the child to date
- A discussion with parents and carers regarding their hopes and expected outcomes from the proposed school placement.
- A discussion with the young person regarding their hopes and expected outcomes from the proposed school placement.
- A tour of the school
- An introduction to key staff
- A discussion with senior staff concerning such issues as:
- The school curriculum
- The content of key school policies, including the school expectations for good behaviour and discipline and the physical management of students.
- An opportunity for each visitor to ask any questions they may have

Visitors will also receive (if they have not already) a school prospectus and/or other relevant information e.g. complaints procedure.

Stage 3
If, following these visits, all concerned are agreed that the student's needs can be met at Phoenix Bay School and that the school is satisfied that it can safely and effectively meet the student's needs with the resources available and that the student 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.

6. Admission Criteria

The student will be aged between 5 and 16 years of age (KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4)
The student will have a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)
The statement (or EHCP) will usually highlight that the student has social, emotional and mental health issues (SEMH) and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) resulting in difficulties in communicating & socialising and regulating emotions.

- The student will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning. (In some cases, student'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 student may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with the needs highlighted on their EHCP
- The student may have one or more specific learning difficulties
- 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 student, available at any time throughout the year.

The Local Authority will:

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the student
- Nominate Phoenix Bay School in Section IV of any statement or Section 1 of an EHCP
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the student to and from Phoenix Bay School
- Make any arrangements for transporting the student to and from Phoenix Bay School

7. Equal opportunities

Phoenix Bay School is committed to providing equality of opportunity and will not discriminate on the grounds of disability, race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership, or age, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.