



ROYAL
PATRONAGE



Hassocks

Admissions & Procedure Policy

Policy Review Date: 12th October 2023

Next Review due: 12th October 2024

Responsibility: Principal

Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity for the Admissions process to LVS Hassocks and ensure it is fair and consistent. It is written with reference to the SEND Code of Practice (DfE00205-2013, January 2015), approved by governors and reviewed annually.

Introduction:

LVS Hassocks is an independent special school for young people aged 11-19 with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition. We offer day placements over 38 weeks in Key Stages 3 and 4. Sixth Form day placements include work experience and a college link.

Many of the young people who are referred to LVS Hassocks have encountered negative school experiences as a result of their diagnosis. These can include:

- Poor attendance, disengagement from learning and social isolation at school which may have included bullying
- School breakdown as a result of their autism spectrum condition
- Elevated levels of anxiety
- A range of mental health issues such as feelings of low mood and low self-esteem

In many cases, over time, these factors combine to reach crisis point and lead to school refusal or multiple school exclusions which result in a poor quality of life for the young person and their family. It is often at this point that referrals are made to LVS Hassocks. For these reasons, the school strongly believes that referrals and admissions to the school should be a partnership building process with parents, the placing authority and the school, designed to ensure that the school can meet the needs of the prospective student.

The Admissions process appreciates how challenging the transition into a new placement can be for young people and their family. It recognizes that the process needs to be planned sensitively and thoroughly.

The time frame for the admissions process depends on a number of factors including:

- The quantity and nature of the referral information
- The number of young people already waiting for assessment
- The time of year and availability of placements
- Sourcing specialist training to support health needs where required

All referrals and admissions to the school are coordinated and arranged through the Admissions Team which is made of a panel of Senior leaders, practitioners and other professionals from across the school.

Admissions Criteria:

In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, all applicants are carefully considered to ensure that:

- The school is suitable for the young person's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs
- The placement is compatible with the provision of efficient education for other students already attending the school, and the efficient use of resources
- No applicants will be treated less favourably during the admissions process on the grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010

All young people admitted to LVS Hassocks:

- Have a primary diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition
- Are likely to have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Are aged between 11-19
- May have additional needs associated with ASD such as ADHD or high levels of anxiety

Additional information:

- Students will have abilities in the average or above average range but may display atypical learning styles and uneven (spiky) profiles of cognitive strengths and difficulties
- Students may have a range of needs that are directly linked to their autism spectrum condition resulting in inflexible thinking patterns, social communication and interaction difficulties, emotional dysregulation and sensory difficulties.
- Students will have needs and ability profiles that are compatible with an appropriate key stage peer group
- Students may present with additional medical conditions including mental health issues and stereotypical behaviours, but the school reserves the right to decide whether these can reasonably be managed safely and effectively within its existing resources.
- All placements are for 38 weeks
- Students will be limited to approximately 60 minutes journey time each way
- International students will require a guardian resident in the UK
- The site is of an open nature and therefore not be suitable for young people who have a known history of absconding or who may attempt to run away
- The schools will accept students that are privately funded by parents, trusts and other funding bodies
- The school can support up to four Tribunal cases in any one academic year
- Admission will not be detrimental to the needs of the other learners – no student should compromise the opportunities of others within the school.
- The school must be satisfied that the parents/carers are supportive of the placement
- The school cannot admit students with severe PDA profiles or who show extreme violence to others.

Referrals:

Referrals are accepted at any time and new admissions can take place throughout the year.

Most referrals are made by local authorities, but in many cases begin as parental enquiries. We encourage parents to visit the school as part of their search for an appropriate placement for their child. To this end, the school hosts regular Open Days, the dates for which can be found on the school website, www.lvs-hassocks.org.uk

Admissions Process:

Stage 1 – initial referral either by parent(s)/carer(s), local authority or advocate acting on the parent(s)' behalf

- Referrals are accepted at any time and new admissions can take place throughout the year
- Referrals are processed in order of receipt
- All referrals are reviewed by the Admissions Team which meets weekly during term time
- We request as much information as possible including educational, medical and any safeguarding reports to assist with the decision on whether to proceed with the referral.
- We work with parents/carers and external agencies to ensure that decisions on whether to offer an assessment visit are based on complete, accurate, reliable and up to date information.
- We may visit the young person in their current placement or at home if they are not currently placed at a school

Stage 2 – school based assessment visit

- When a decision has been made that the reports indicate that the young person meets the admission criteria and there are places available in the relevant key stage, an assessment visit to the school will be arranged
- During the visit the young person will experience a range of informal assessments, to ensure the young person's needs can be met
The young person is encouraged to give their views on the school during the visit
- The school may request additional assessment visits if this is considered necessary to make an informed decision on the suitability of placement
- For Year 6 students being assessed for the new cohort of Year 7s, a group assessment day may be arranged for potential Year 6 students. This will involve time working with individuals with staff but mainly group-based activities to show interactions between peers
- A decision of the prospective admission will be made at the next Admissions Team meeting immediately following the assessment
- The placing authority and other interested parties will be informed of this decision as soon as possible following the Admissions Team meeting

Please note

- Failure to disclose information that may affect the validity of the admission process at any stage may lead to the process being terminated
- Should the Admissions Team consider the school an unsuitable placement for the young person for any reason as detailed above in 'admissions criteria', the application will not be progressed to the next stage
- This decision is made only after careful and sensitive consideration by the Admissions Team at any of the stages 1, 2 or 3
- The Admissions Team's decision is final
- Further information for the decision will be given only at the discretion of the Admissions Team

Stage 3 – transition into school

- Following successful assessment visits a placement will be offered
- Any placement offered will be subject to the full cost of the placement unless there has been prior agreement between the placing authority and the school
- Following acceptance of the place and confirmation of funding, a transition plan will be agreed
- A parent pack will be sent to the family which includes useful information about the school and forms (such as Code of Conduct) to be signed and returned
- Sometimes, a graduated transition with a reduced timetable is required in order to re-engage the young person in learning
- Each young person is supported by relevant staff as determined in the transition plan
- A Post Entry Review is booked which will be within a 6 week time frame