

Admission to school for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Purpose

This guidance sets out the Haringey Council's principles and criteria when considering school placements for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It outlines the basis on which decisions are made about school and college placements for children and young people up to the age of 25 who have Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.

Principles

- The local authority is committed to meeting the needs of children and young people within the local community in Haringey. Haringey has developed good local provision to meet a range of needs, including young people with complex needs. This provision is described in the local offer.
- Haringey Council is working with its partners in the health service and the voluntary sector to develop links to local services in the community so that children and young people can build relationships and access support with their families, even where their difficulties are complex.
- Haringey Council aims to maximise opportunities for independence in the community, particularly as young people approach adulthood.
- A small number of children and young people with the most exceptional levels of education, health and/or care needs will not be able to have their needs met locally in Haringey or in another local authority's maintained provision. Where this is the case, the local authority will consider independent day provision.
- In exceptional circumstances, the local authority will seek residential provision. For example when:
 - a child/young person's educational needs cannot be met in provision within reasonable travelling distance from home, or
 - a child/young person is in the care of the local authority, or a Child in Need, and social care professionals determine that the needs of the child or young person cannot be met at home, or that there are significant risks to the child or young person living at home, and
 - it has not been possible or value for money to make local care arrangements.
- Residential provision must provide 'value for money' and deliver good outcomes for the child or young person.
- In post-16 provision, we expect that residential provision will be funded for a maximum of 3 years or when the young person turns 25, whichever is sooner. The local authority will consider exceptions when the outcomes specified in their Education, Health and Care Plan have not been met within three years.

Admitting a child with SEND to a Reception Class

Children will normally be admitted to school in the September following their fourth birthday. The application process for entry to Reception opens one whole year in advance of a child being admitted to school (for example, the application process opened in September 2016 for entry to Reception class in September 2017).

If a child does not have an EHC Plan or an EHC Needs Assessment is in process, parent/carers are strongly encouraged to apply for a school place through the normal

admissions process, details of which can be found on the Haringey school admissions website - <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/schooladmissions>. Parents/carers of children without an EHC Plan are able to express preference(s) on their application for any mainstream school.

Where an EHC Needs Assessment has been requested or agreed but the final plan has not been issued before national offer day (16 April or next working day), a place at a mainstream school will be offered in strict accordance with the school's published admission criteria.

Parental preference in determining a school placement

Haringey Council is committed to ensuring that every child in Haringey has the very best start in life, including world class education.

The 0-25 SEND Code of Practice states that where a child or young person has an EHC Plan, if a child's parent/carer or a young person makes a request for a particular nursery, school or post-16 institution the local authority must comply with that preference and consult with that institution. The institution will be named unless:

- it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or
- the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others or the efficient use of resources.

Where Haringey Council determines that a placement would be unsuitable for the child, incompatible with the efficient education of other children or an inefficient use of the Council's resources it may name another suitable school or enhanced provision.

For example, if a parent/carer has requested a place for their child in a special school and the local authority concludes that the placement is unsuitable for the child or is incompatible with the efficient education of others or would be an inefficient use of resources, it will name a mainstream school, normally the nearest to the child's home, following all necessary consultations described in the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice. Similarly, if a parent/carer requested a place in a mainstream school and the local authority concluded that one or more of the conditions above applied, it will name a suitable special school or enhanced provision.

Consulting a school

Before deciding to name a school in an EHC Plan, the local authority must consult the governing body, principal or proprietor of the school or college concerned and consider their comments very carefully. They will consult the school or college by sending a copy of the draft plan. If another local authority maintains the school, they too must be consulted. There is not a duty on the local authority to name independent providers in the same way that there is a duty to name maintained establishments. For an independent institution to be named, that Authority must assure itself that the school is the best use of resources for the child.

Placement at Residential Provision

Residential provision for children and young people with SEND must be agreed jointly between budget holders for education, health and social care.

The decision will be made on the basis of evidence showing that:

- local provision has been considered and is not suitable,
- local provision has stated they cannot meet needs, following formal consultation by the local authority or a visit
- the local authority has agreed to consider residential provision in a child or young person's EHC Plan or statement and is working with the family to identify the provision.

Educational placements are usually agreed for a maximum of 38 weeks per year and 30 hours per week. In exceptional circumstances, for example, a child in care to the local authority, placements can be up to 52 weeks.

The local authority will make the arrangements with the provision in which a child or young person is placed, and will work closely with parents/carers throughout the process. Residential placements will be subject to close analysis and possible financial negotiation to ensure best value for money on the behalf of the local authority.

Parents/carers may choose to place their child in residential provision or independent provision and fund the provision independently of the local authority, subject to the provision being able to meet needs. In this case, the child or young person's EHC Plan will name an appropriate local authority provision and state that the parent has made their own arrangements in independent provision. The local authority will inform parents/carers about any concerns they may have about the capacity of the provision to meet needs and will intervene if there is evidence that the child's needs cannot be met appropriately.

Admitting a pupil without an EHC Plan to a special school

Admission to special schools and enhanced provisions will normally be reserved for pupils with an EHC Plan or statement but pupils without one may be admitted for an assessment. Consent will only be given by the local authority if all relevant professionals and the child's parents/carers are in agreement.

A child would be admitted in an assessment placement where it is considered to be the best way forward for the child, for example, following a rapid and serious deterioration in the child's health or behaviour which means maintaining their current placement is an inefficient use of resources.

Very rarely, a young person returning home from a secure unit or young offender institution may be placed in a special school for assessment. However, the local authority would normally expect an EHC Plan to be agreed, if appropriate, and a special school placement named, before the young person is released.

A child who is admitted to a special school or enhanced provision without an EHC Plan or statement will be subject to an immediate EHC Needs Assessment. It is likely, though not certain, that the EHC Needs Assessment will conclude that an EHC Plan should be

issued. If the child has been placed and will remain in a special school or enhanced provision an EHC Plan will always be issued.

Where the EHC Needs Assessment concludes that an EHC Plan will not be issued the child will be taken off the roll of the special school or enhanced provision within 10 school days after the local authority has notified parents that it does not intend to issue an EHC Plan. In such circumstances, parents/carers will be expected to seek a mainstream placement or make other appropriate arrangements for the education of their child.

Quality

Where a provision is judged by Ofsted as 'Requires Improvement', the local authority will only agree a placement subject to further scrutiny. The local authority would have to be satisfied that significant improvements are being made. Provision judged by Ofsted as being 'Inadequate' will not be commissioned.

If provision is inspected and judged inadequate during a young person's educational placement, the local authority may withdraw the young person with immediate effect if it is deemed to be in the interests of the young person.

Any provision, including residential provision, is expected to provide the family and local authority with review information on attainment and progress, in line with the child or young person's Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care plan.

The local authority will draw up a contract with any independent/non-maintained provider, including FE Colleges.

Haringey Special Schools

Alongside the government, Haringey Council is committed to the inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEND should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people.

However, in spite of this a small number of pupils will not be able to have their needs met in a mainstream school. Haringey has five special schools:

- Blanche Nevile School
- Riverside School
- The Brook on Broadwaters School
- The Vale School

There is also an enhanced special provision attached to a mainstream primary school catering for pupils with a diagnosis of autism (Mulberry Primary School Provision for Autism), enhanced provision in a mainstream secondary school catering for pupils with a diagnosis of autism (Heartlands) and an enhanced provision catering for children with a specific language impairment attached to West Green Primary School (West Green Language Resource).

More details of the provision in these schools and enhanced provisions can be found in their School Offers or SEN Information Reports published on their websites.

Admission to a special school will usually be considered for pupils where admitting the pupil in a mainstream school would be incompatible with the efficient education of others and it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonable steps that the local authority, or the school or college, could take to prevent that incompatibility.

These pupils will usually:

- have a significant impairment which means that they learn at a significantly slower rate than children and young people of a similar age and/or has a major impact on their ability to participate in the school curriculum without support,
- achieve academic attainments within the P scales and the equivalent of the expected attainment for a typically developing 11 year old for much of their school careers.

Admission Criteria for Haringey Special Schools

The specific admission criteria for each of Haringey's special provisions are presented below.

Blanche Nevile School

- The school must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil's primary need is being deaf or hearing impaired.
- Pupils may have additional needs and disabilities such Autism and Cerebral Palsy.

Mulberry School Provision for Autism

- The provision must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil's primary need is autism and severe learning difficulties.
- The pupil may have additional needs such as language, social & communication difficulties, sensory integration difficulties or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The pupil's attainments will be within the P scales.

Riverside School

- The school must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil can be offered a placement at any time between Years 7 and 11.
- The pupil's primary need is severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties and/or autism.
- The pupil may have additional needs and disabilities such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy and sensory impairment and/or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- The pupil's attainments will range from within the P scales to the equivalent of the expected attainment for a typically developing 11 year old.

The Brook on Broadwaters School

- The school must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil's primary need is autism or severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- The pupil may have additional needs and disabilities such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy and sensory impairment and/or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The pupil's attainments will be largely within the P scales.

Heartlands Unit

- The unit must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil will be aged between 5-16 years old (Key Stage 1 – Key Stage 3) at time of admission.
- The pupil will have a primary diagnosis of autism.
- The pupil may have additional needs such as language, social & communication difficulties, sensory integration difficulties or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The pupil can be offered and start a placement at any time during the school year.
- The pupil with developing cognitive ability will be attaining within the P scales and higher functioning pupils scales will be attaining up to and above the equivalent of the expected attainment for a typically developing 11 year old.

The Vale School

- The school must be named by the Local Authority in the child's Education Health Care Plan.
- The pupil can be offered a placement at any time between Nursery and Year 11.
- The pupil will have a range of needs including the following:
 - learning difficulties (moderate, severe, profound and multiple, global development delay)
 - physical disabilities (eg cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy)
 - medical conditions (eg epilepsy, Rhetts's syndrome, Down's Syndrome, Sotos Syndrome, chromosome disorder)
 - sensory impairments
 - communication difficulties
- The pupil may have additional needs and disabilities such as autism, sensory impairment and communication difficulties.
- The pupil's attainments will range from within the P scales to the equivalent of the expected attainment for a typically developing pupil of their age.

West Green Language Resource

- The pupil presents with severe specific speech and/or language impairment (e.g. -2 standard deviations or 1st to 5th percentile rank on a formal language assessment), as assessed within the preceding 3 months by a Speech and Language Therapist.
- The pupil demonstrates age appropriate skills in other non-verbal areas i.e. thinking skills and problem solving.

- The pupil does not have primary difficulty in the following areas - social, emotional and mental health, hearing or autism.
- The pupil has severe specific difficulty in home/first language.
- The pupil is at SEN Support, has an EHC Plan or is undergoing an EHC Needs Assessment.
- There is parental agreement to placement.
- The pupil's speech and/or language impairment is such that they are at present unable to access the curriculum at an appropriate level, in a mainstream classroom, as indicated in a report from their current placement.
- The pupil will be able to access increasing levels of inclusion into mainstream class as indicated in professionals' reports.
- Information has been gathered from current school, usually in the form of a written report, which supports the referral.

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December 2016