



WESTBOURNE SCHOOL

Westbourne School

Admissions Policy

Version	Date	Updated by
1.0	September 2018	Leo Guy
1.1	September 2019	Leo Guy
1.2	September 2020	Leo Guy
1.3	July 2021	Darren Harte
1.4	March 2023	Richard Garbutt
1.5	April 2025	Stacey Edwards
1.6	May 2026	Stacey Edwards

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Reviewed by	Stacey Edwards	Review Required	May 2027

Admissions guidelines

Introduction

The policy supports the school statement of intent that every pupil should achieve their potential and develop an understanding of and respect for themselves and others.

Rationale

The school will admit pupils with a range of Special Educational Needs (SEN), including those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, as well as pupils diagnosed with autism or presenting behaviours associated with autism. All pupils admitted will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that identifies and details the nature of their specific needs.

Such challenges are often interconnected with other special educational needs. They may stem from adverse life experiences or be associated with underlying medical conditions. Some pupils may have a history of significantly disruptive or complex behaviours, which could include instances of aggression toward peers or adults. The school recognises that, as a result, our pupils may occasionally display behaviours that are challenging, varying in both intensity and duration.

The range and complexity of the needs and challenges presented by our pupils have continued to evolve and, in many cases, become more multifaceted. Consequently, the process of assessing these needs has also become increasingly nuanced. It is therefore essential that the school's admission process carefully and accurately identifies each pupil's individual profile of needs and determines whether the school is well-placed to provide appropriate and effective support within its available resources.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that, as far as possible, the school admits pupils whose special educational needs can be effectively supported within its provision, thereby enabling meaningful progress across all areas of their development.

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Objectives

- Ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the criteria used to assess the suitability of placements for individual pupils at the school.
- Provide clarity to all involved regarding the processes for evaluating the appropriateness of such placements.
- Ensure that parents/carers, each pupil, and representatives from the Local Authority (LA), Social Services, and other relevant professionals are fully informed about the opportunities available at the school.
- Ensure that parents/carers, each pupil, and relevant professionals understand all key aspects of school life and are equipped to actively contribute to the success of any placement.

Admissions process

Stage 1 – Initial Referral Review

Referrals to the school are typically made by Local Authorities (LAs) and should be accompanied by comprehensive information about the pupil. If sufficient information is not provided, the school will actively seek access to relevant details, including the pupil's educational history, health records, and social background.

Senior staff will review all available information, including the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), to assess whether the pupil meets the school's admission criteria. The Headteacher will determine if the school can meet the pupil's needs and deliver the provision outlined in Section F of the EHCP. If appropriate, an assessment visit will then be arranged to enable parents/carers to visit the school.

Senior leaders are expected to provide an initial response to the Referrals/Admissions Manager within 48 hours of receiving the referral. This response will fall into one of three categories:

- Accept for further assessment (proceed to Stage 2);
- Accept for assessment, pending receipt of additional requested information;
- Decline placement, due to the school being unable to meet the pupil's needs.

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Stage 2 – Assessment Visit and Follow-up

The assessment visit will include the following:

- A guided tour of the school, including discussions regarding the daily operation of the school and the curriculum offered;
- Introductions to key members of staff;
- A detailed discussion with senior leaders covering topics such as:
 - The pupil’s early life experiences;
 - Attitudes towards education and any factors contributing to previous placement breakdowns;
 - The school curriculum and how it is delivered;
 - Key school policies, including expectations for behaviour, discipline procedures, and the physical management of pupils;
 - A demonstration of the school’s preferred methods of physical intervention, should such interventions ever be necessary;
 - An opportunity for visitors to raise any questions they may have.

Visitors will also be provided with a copy of the Pupil Handbook and any other relevant documents, such as guidance on how to raise a complaint, if these have not already been shared.

Following the visit, senior leaders are expected to provide a response to the Referrals/Admissions Manager within 48 hours. The response will be one of the following:

- If it is agreed that the school can meet the pupil’s needs, that the pupil can be adequately supported with the resources available, and that both the pupil and their parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school will provide a formal written response to the Local Authority. This positive response will be based on observations made during the visit to the pupil’s current educational setting and/or the home visit, confirming the school’s readiness to proceed with the admission.
- Decline placement, where it is determined that the school is unable to meet the pupil’s needs.

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Stage 3 – School and/or Home Visit

At this stage, the Headteacher or a senior leader will undertake a visit to the pupil's current school and/or home.

A school visit allows staff to observe the pupil within an educational setting, providing valuable insight into how they interact with the school environment, peers, and staff. This helps in making a more accurate and informed assessment of the pupil's needs.

A home visit offers an opportunity for an informal discussion with the pupil and their family, helping to build rapport and provide additional information about the school. It also enables staff to gather further background information about the pupil, supporting a well-informed decision on whether a placement offer is appropriate.

Potential new Admission form to be completed.

Stage 4 – Review of offer

If, following the visits, it is agreed that the school can meet the pupil's needs, that the pupil can be effectively supported with the resources available, and that both the pupil and their parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school will formally write to the Local Authority offering a place. Arrangements for admission will then be made.

In exceptional circumstances, the school may also offer a taster day as part of the referral process to further support the transition and ensure the placement is appropriate.

Stage 5 – Transition Planning and Induction

Following a successful admission, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil, their family, and the Local Authority to develop a bespoke transition plan to support a smooth and positive start to the new placement. Transition arrangements will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupil, ensuring a personalised and supportive approach.

The school is committed to maintaining full transparency throughout this process. As part of the transition, the Family Liaison Officer will arrange a visit for the parent/carer and pupil, during which a further meeting will be held to discuss the transition plan in detail and complete all necessary documentation.

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The pupil will also be introduced to their designated Wellbeing Support Worker, who will lead an initial "Getting to Know Me" session to help build a positive relationship and further ease the transition into school life.

Admission criteria

- The pupil will admit students aged between 9 and 18 years of age;
- The pupil will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with specialist school listed in section I.
- The pupil will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning (in some cases, pupil's levels of ability as measured using psychometric tests may prove difficult and information may be missing. In these cases, the school will base its judgements on its ability to meet needs);
- The pupil may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their SEMH/ASC needs;
 - The pupil may have one or more specific learning difficulties;
 - The pupil will express a commitment to the placement;
 - The pupil'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 pupil, available at any time throughout the year. The school cannot be the main residence for any child.

The Local Authority will:

- provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the pupil
- nominate The School in Section I of the EHCP
- agree contractual arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school
- make any arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school.

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Admissions process

Westbourne School is an independent school for pupils from ages 9 to 18 years, with special educational needs. All pupils admitted to Westbourne School will have been initially referred by their Local Authority (we accept referrals from a variety of different authorities). Westbourne School welcomes enquiries and visits from parents.

A significant aspect of the referral process is to ascertain that the school can address the Outcomes as described in Section E and provide the provision set out in Section F. of their EHCP This may relate to all four areas of need:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Sensory and/or Physical

In doing so, this should be without negatively impacting upon the efficient education for others.

The school has a dedicated member of staff who is responsible for overseeing the referral process. It is through this staff member that visits are coordinated, information is gathered and arrangements for admission are undertaken.

An admission will only be undertaken when the approval for funding is granted by the appropriate person who holds this authority, within the funding LA.

Westbourne School applies the statutory reviewing process (for EHCPs, as set out within the SEND Code of Practice) and will use this to inform the funding authority of any changes to provision. These changes can relate to the provision provided by Westbourne School and/or identify the type of provision that would better meet need.

The reviewing process will also be used to identify the next phase of education placement (this could be, but not exclusively, a transfer to a maintained mainstream school, a different special needs setting, a college of further education or employment).

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The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school only admits pupils whose Special Educational Needs can be met. To summarise, in all cases, pupils will only be considered for admission if:

- Pupil has a current EHCP
- Funding has been formally agreed with the respective Local Authority and an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) has been completed and signed by relevant parties
- The special needs of the pupil can be met by the school
- The provision, described in Section F of the EHCP, is such as can be met by the school
- All up to date information concerning the pupil, including the most recent reviews, reports and the EHCP will be provided by the funding authority
- There is a place available in the appropriate class/year group
- It is compatible with the provision of efficient education for others
- The child/young person's attendance does not jeopardise the safety of others.

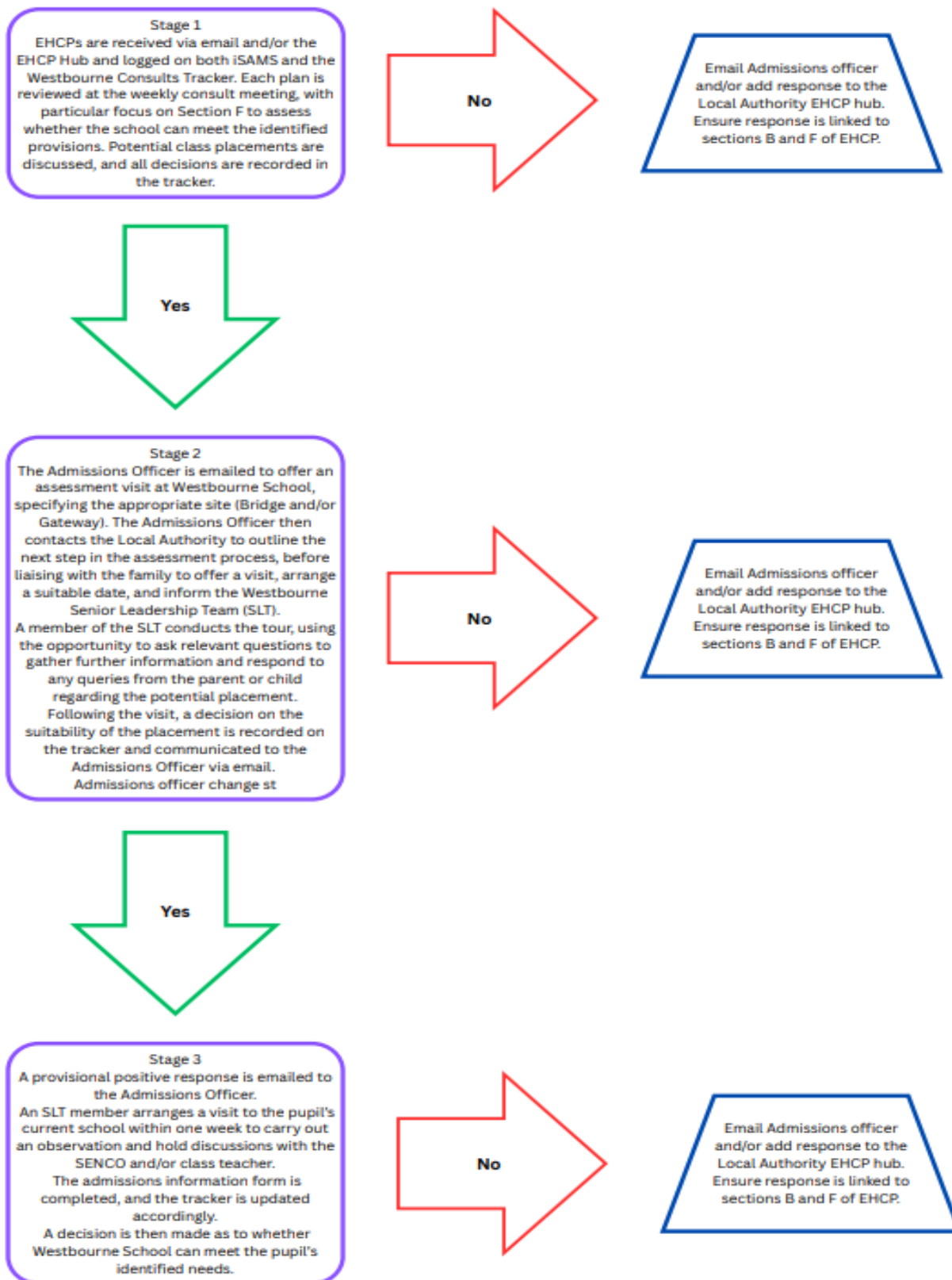
Pre-Placement procedure

Once a placement has been agreed the following actions will be undertaken in preparation for the pupils to take up their placement:

- Staff team informed;
- SENCO's/DSL to review pupil needs and create/share:
- Relevant learner documentation
- Behaviour plans / Pupil risk assessment;
- Communication needs;
- EHCP needs / classroom strategies

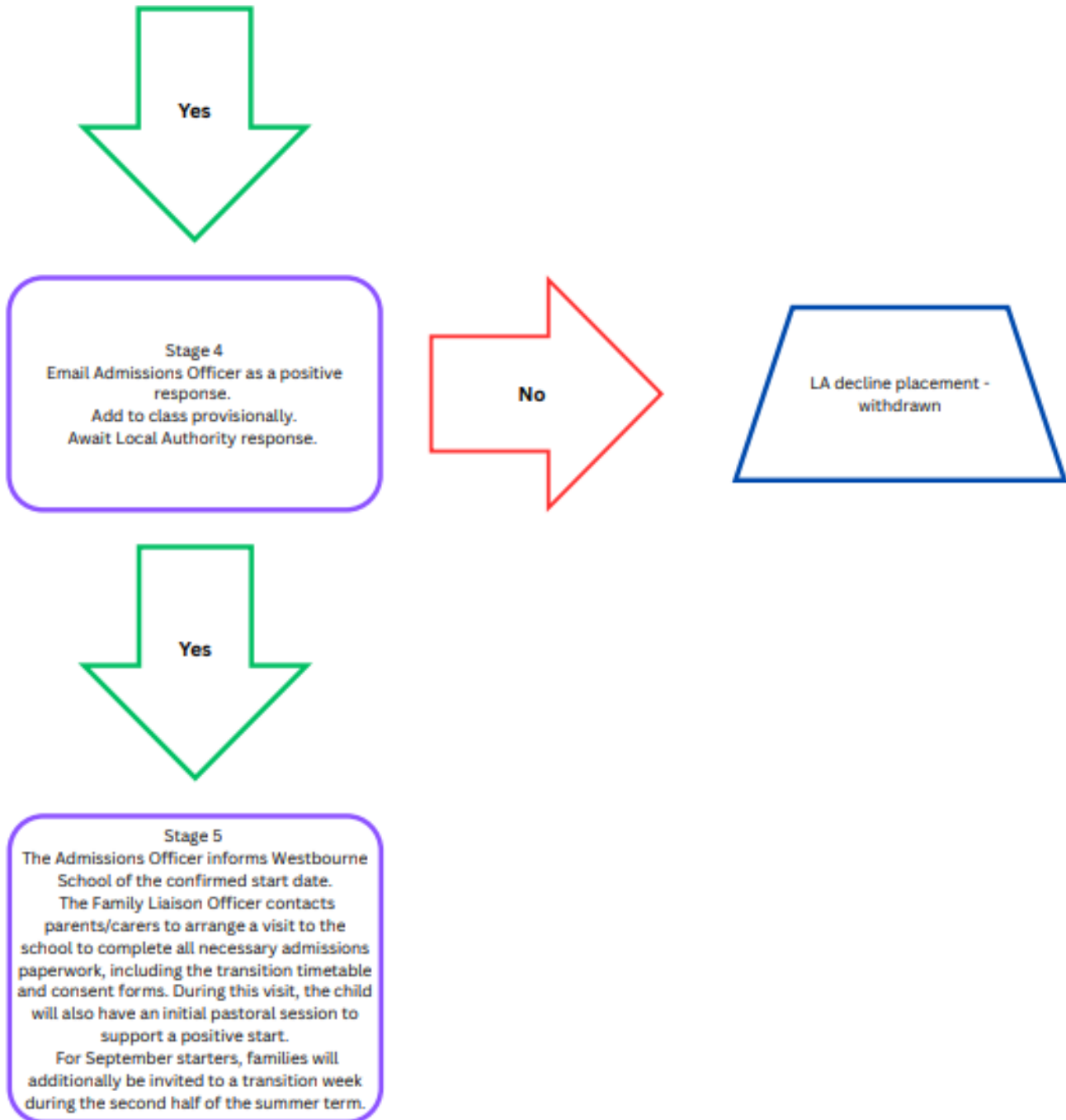
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Admissions Process – Appendix A



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Admissions Process – Appendix A continued



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