

# Admissions policy

## Overley Hall School



**Approved by:** Beverley Doran

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### 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at the school
- Set out the school's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply
- Explain **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer your child a place

### 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

### 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Looked after children** are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

**Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or

- Became subject to a special guardianship order

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

## 4. How to apply

### Initiation

The admissions policy to Overley Hall School is usually initiated by:

- a. Heads of Schools
- b. Clinical Psychologist
- c. Parents
- d. Social workers
- e. Psychiatrist (occasionally)
- f. SEND Department
- g. LA Commissioners

Call the school on Telephone Number: 01952 740262 or Email your enquiry to [info@overleyhall.com](mailto:info@overleyhall.com). A school prospectus will be posted out.

After having an initial discussion to establish that Overley Hall may possibly be an appropriate placement, full notes including Education Health Care Plans are requested. A meeting at the school is arranged to have further discussions to establish if the school and/or Childrens home feel the needs of the young person can be met. It is also important to us that the parents and authority representatives feel Overley Hall has an ethos, and curriculum that they feel will enable the child an opportunity to thrive. It is also important to ensure the peer group for the child is compatible.

Following these initial discussions, a visit to see the pupil is arranged to enable all the various disciplines to be consulted as to the pupil's specific needs. This usually involves meeting the young person in their current school, at home or in the childcare provision. This helps Overley Hall to collect as much information as possible to ensure the placement will be able to meet the needs of the young person.

After meeting the pupil and all those involved, an in depth discussion is held with Senior Staff at Overley Hall School to discuss their special needs and if the placement would be appropriate, and compatible with the existing school and registered home population. A second assessment visit is organised for senior staff to meet the young person. During this time, all the relevant authorities visit Overley Hall, i.e.

- a. Educational Psychologist
- b. Education Officers
- c. Social Services
- d. Parents and sometimes the prospective resident.

### Placement

After a decision has been made about suitability of placement, and everyone is in agreement, including the placing authority, placement is offered. Once a placement is confirmed parents/guardians will be given a Placement Assessment Profile to complete. This helps us to be more aware of the young person's needs.

It is sometimes necessary for Overley Hall to set specific arrangements and terms, particularly

around contact, medication etc. This would be agreed at the Pre –Placement meeting at which representatives from the authorities Social services and where appropriate Education and parents would attend.

The Pre –Placement meeting will discuss and confirm the following:

- a. Proposed start date
- b. Assessment period
- c. Family address and telephone numbers
- d. Transition planning (see below)
- e. Funding/invoice details
- f. Medical info including medication details/ needs /addresses etc.
- g. Family contact arrangements
- h. Special arrangements/considerations

## **5. Assessment**

All young people admitted to Overley Hall now come on a three month assessment period, where by the contract can be terminated at the end of the three months if we feel we cannot meet the needs of the young person, or the authority and/or parents feel we are not an appropriate placement for the young person after all.

All professionals involved would be kept informed at an early stage of our intentions and further meetings arranged if necessary.

## **6.0 Transition**

We realise that the young people are individuals and their needs are individual, therefore a discussion would take place on how we are going to proceed with the Transition to Overley Hall, and we realise that we have to be flexible in order for this process to work appropriately. If it has been decided after the assessment visits, and subsequent meetings that it would not be an appropriate placement, then all concerned are informed in writing as soon as possible after the decision is made. This would be done at the young person's pace as much as possible and as much time given to the process as was seen necessary for the Transition to work.

There are several examples that we have used in the past that have been quite effective:

- Providing Children's Guide to School and to the children's home
- Using photos of areas of the building, and staff to familiarise the young people with us.
- Short visits by the young person with staff, parents etc. usually involving an activity.
- Unaccompanied short visits.
- Increase above visits to include an overnight stay bringing items with them to keep in their bedroom
- Increasing overnight stays.

We appreciate that this can be a very difficult time for parents and families and therefore try to keep them as involved as possible in this process, we would therefore invite parents to be involved with choosing of the bedroom (availability allowing), the décor of the room, soft furnishings and choosing pictures for the room and having a part in the design of the young person's school curriculum.

With this in mind we understand that parents may need initial daily telephone contact to reassure them of their young person's progress and well-being. A specific day and time will then be set up for Key workers to telephone parents to update progress and keep them informed. The young people will also be encouraged to make contact with parents either over the phone, through email, web cam, sending photos, cards postcards etc., with the Key workers help as often as necessary. Overley Hall staff will endeavour to help with escorting the young people for family visits when

appropriate.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

Please note, pupils already attending our nursery will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

## **7. Allocation of places**

### **7.1 Admission number**

The school has an agreed admission number of twenty four pupils for entry. Overley Hall is a school and Childrens home registered for children and young people 8 – 19 years of age. The Children's Home has twenty two bedrooms and caters for twenty two children and young people. This enables the school to take two day students only.

The school has six class groups which can vary in size depending on the cohort of young people at that present time, their cognitive abilities and their needs. Our class sizes can vary between one and six pupils. Most classes have three or four young people. We currently have two key stage 5 groups, two key stage 2/3 classes and two key stage 4 classes. It must be noted that this varies and is flexible depending on current cohort of pupils and students.

### **7.2 Selection**

Overley Hall is a school and Childrens home which caters for young people with complex needs, most of whom have autism and 'severe to moderate' learning difficulties. See Appendix A for a list of diagnosis we feel we are suitable to cater for and Appendix B for a list of diagnosis we do not feel we are able to cater for. As we offer a person centred approach we are very adaptable and therefore we may be able to tweak our set up, curriculum and approach to meet the needs of a young person as long as our other pupils and students are not negatively impacted on by doing so. All of our pupils and students have an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) or are currently being transferred from a Statement of Need to and EHCP.

### **7.3 Oversubscription criteria**

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place if the preplacement assessment feels Overley Hall can meet need and in a way which does not negatively impact of the pupils and students already in school.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school..
2. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need such as epilepsy. The school requires as supporting evidence if you are making an application on the basis of social or medical need.

Senior management Meetings will take place to agree the priority order.

### **7.4 Children below registration school age**

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time as soon as they have had their 8<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Parents & Authorities may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year as agreed with the school.

## 8. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted if Overley Hall feels they can meet need.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant class group and family room in the children's home. When a space becomes available it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.3 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Enquiries for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

*Overley Hall School*

*Wellington*

*Telford*

*Shropshire*

*TF6 5HE*

*Telephone: 01952 740262 Ext 0*

*Email: [info@overleyhall.com](mailto:info@overleyhall.com)*

## 9. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you should speak to your local authority SEND department or Social Services to discuss their thoughts and must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

*Overley Hall School*

*Wellington*

*Telford*

*Shropshire*

*TF6 5HE*

*Telephone: 01952 740262 Ext 0*

*Email: [info@overleyhall.com](mailto:info@overleyhall.com)*

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the senior management Team every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes.