

Admissions Policy

Overley Hall School



Overley Hall
School

Approved by: Support & Scrutiny Board

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by:

Legislation: Independent school standard 15

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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 learners who apply
- ✿ Outline transition arrangements

Legislation

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

- [School Admissions Code](#)

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

- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

This policy complies with our funding agreement.

Definitions.

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

This includes children who appear to have been in authority care outside of England and/or have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

Availability and offer

Overley Hall School is an Independent special school providing specialised education for up to 24 learners aged between 8 and 19 years of age. Our learners are placed by authorities nationwide so many reside onsite, in Wellingtonia Children's Home (which is under the Overley Hall Ltd umbrella), for between 39 and 52 weeks a year. We are also able to offer education-only day placements.

We provide individualised, specialised education for children with complex needs associated with learning difficulties, autism, communication, anxiety, and other diagnoses (see Appendix 1). All our children can be described as having complex needs and typically have two or more co-existing conditions such as Autism and ADHD, or severe learning difficulties with a mental health need.

Prior to admission, we carefully consider the impact a referred child may have on others due to their vulnerabilities.

Many of our pupils have additional needs linked to symptoms of attachment and trauma. Our staff to pupil ratio is high with many of our children having 1:1 staffing. We recognise the vulnerability of all children with or without learning disabilities but are aware of the enhanced vulnerability of our learners due to their cognitive, social communication and language difficulties. We support learners who not only require a differentiated curriculum but who, at times, require further adaptations to teaching and the environment to enable them to make progress.

Overley Hall School has a 'can do' ethos who places emphasis on maximising individual achievements at whatever level they might be by adopting our pedagogical (teaching) skills and approaches. We focus on what our learners *can do* rather than what they can't do. We aim to personalise our curriculum offer to transform life chances.

How to apply

Initiation

Referrals to Overley Hall School typically come from:

- 🌸 Heads of School and Care provisions
- 🌸 Clinical Psychologists
- 🌸 Parents
- 🌸 Social workers
- 🌸 Psychiatrist (occasionally)
- 🌸 SEND Department
- 🌸 LA Commissioners

People may call the school on 01952 740262 or email your enquiry to bev.doran@overleyhall.com where we will be happy to give you more information and answer any queries you may have. A wealth of information about Overley Hall School and Wellingtonia Children's Home can be found at www.overleyhall.com. If you wish we will happily post out a school prospectus to you.

If an initial discussion has established that Overley Hall School may be an appropriate education placement for a child/young person:

1. A request for the referral paperwork including Education Health Care Plan will be made
2. A meeting at the school will be arranged to have further discussions to establish if the school and Wellingtonia (if the child/ young person is to be a

resident) feel the holistic needs of the young person can be met. It is also important to us that the parents and authority representatives feel that Overley Hall has an ethos, and curriculum that will enable their child to thrive. (Parents are encouraged to work with their local authority to agree that Overley Hall is a suitable setting for their child).

3. Senior school staff will then consider whether there is a compatible peer group for the learner.
4. Senior school and care staff (if a resident) will then arrange a visit to see the learner to enable them to gain all the information they need to consult with the various specialists at school regarding the pupil's specific needs. (This usually involves meeting the young person in their current school, at home or in the current childcare provision). This enables us to ensure that the placement at Overley Hall School will be able to meet the needs of the young person.

Following the meeting with the learner and all those currently supporting them, 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.

If it is deemed that the school placement may be able to meet the learners needs a second assessment visit is then arranged, this time at Overley Hall School, so that senior staff may meet the young person and all of the relevant authorities can visit Overley Hall, i.e.

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

The family and the Local Authority Placement Team will be informed as soon as practicable, based upon the variants outlined above, as to whether the application has been successful. This notification should take place within 14 days of all completed actions.

Placement

After a decision has been made about suitability of placement, and everyone agrees, (including the placing authority), and funding has been agreed, a placement is offered. Once a placement is confirmed parents/guardians are given a Placement Assessment Profile (Referral Form) 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

For a **residential placement**, the decision about suitability of placement will be made by the Head of School and the registered manager in consultation with the placing authority. Before making such a decision, a referral form must be completed. In addition, placement impact risk assessments must be undertaken and considered before any agreement to place a young person can be undertaken.

Referrals will be screened in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy. Overley is committed to ensuring referrals are adequately scrutinised to protect not only the referral but also young people currently attending school and living in the home, therefore Overley Hall will:

- meet the young person, parent(s) or carers
- Where possible invite the young person and / or parents to visit the school and home
- Provide a copy of the prospectus, virtual tour and statement of purpose to the placing authority, parent(s) or carers
- Request and scrutinise an up-to-date chronology
- Request and scrutinize the learners care plan
- Request and scrutinize the learners EHCP
- Request and scrutinize other relevant information about the young person for example:
 - a) Individual Education Plan
 - b) Transition documents
 - c) Psychology reports
 - d) Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy reports
 - e) Latest Annual Review documentation
 - f) Recent looked after review reports
 - g) Pathway plan
 - h) Other relevant plans
 - i) Reports from health specialists

As part of the referral process Overley Hall will meet the young person in their environment preferably in their current home placement and their educational placement.

If appropriate, Overley Hall will ask the parents to visit prior to any decision being made.

Once the decision has been made to accept the placement a transition plan will be put in place around visits for the young person and planning around bedroom such as colour scheme etc. Where possible as many key staff will visit the young person prior to them moving to Overley so that they are more comfortable when they move.

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.

Special Circumstances

During periods which may affect the admissions procedure, such as the country being amid a pandemic, slight deviations to the admission procedure may occur. These differences may result in reducing visits/contact during the assessment period and post admission period. Overley Hall School will endeavour to ensure all parties (parents, carers, and local authority officers) are provided with sufficient information to be able to make informed decisions. Overley Hall School will not accept a young person without meeting them and assessing their learning needs prior to admission.

Assessment

All young people arriving at Overley Hall School join us on a three month assessment period. At the end of this assessment period, and if we feel that we cannot meet the child's needs or the authority and/or parents feel we are not an appropriate placement the contract can be ended.

All professionals involved would be kept informed at an early stage of our intentions if we considered that we may terminate the contract and further meetings arranged as and when necessary.

Transition

Transition would be planned according to the needs of the learner. Discussions would take place on how best to manage flexibly the transition to Overley Hall School.

Transition takes place at the young person's pace as much as possible and as much time given to the process as is necessary for the transition to work.

Here are several examples that we have used in the past that have been very effective:

- Using photographs of different areas of the building, and their staff team to help them feel more comfortable when they arrive
- Short visits by the young person with staff, parents etc. usually involving an activity.
- Unaccompanied short visits.
- Increasing visits to include an overnight stay bringing items with them to keep in their bedroom
- Increasing overnight stays.

Support for parents/carers and families.

We appreciate this can be a very difficult time for parents and families and therefore try to keep them as involved as possible in the process and in the design of the young person's school curriculum.

We understand that parents may find at the beginning a daily telephone contact helpful to reassure them of their young person's progress and well-being and are happy to put this into place. A specific day and time will be set up for Key workers to telephone parents to update progress and keep them informed.

The young people will also be encouraged to contact their parents over the phone, through email, web cam, or by sending photos, cards postcards etc., with Key workers helping as often as necessary.

Within the first week of admission at Overley Hall School.

Within the first week of admission to Overley Hall School we will have :

- ✿ Commenced writing the Positive Support Plan
- ✿ Set up the admission folder
- ✿ Have a date agreed for the first review, post admission, PEP, LAC, CIN
- ✿ Ensured that the young person is aware of the fire drill procedure
- ✿ Ensured that the young person has been made aware of the Complaints procedure (as appropriate)

Allocation of places

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

Admission number

Overley Hall School has an agreed admission number of twenty-four learners for entry with two of these places are for day learners only. The school has up to six class groups which can vary in size depending on the cohort of young people at that present time, their cognitive abilities and needs. Class sizes may vary between one and six pupils. Most classes have three or four learners.

Selection

Overley Hall is a school that caters for young people with complex needs, most of whom have autism and 'moderate to severe' learning difficulties. Appendix A lists the diagnosis we feel we are suitably able to cater for.

All of our learners have an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Need (in Wales).

Oversubscription criteria

All children whose EHCP names Overley Hall School will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

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 (see below). Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Oversubscription criteria.

1. Highest priority will be given to Looked After Children and all previously Looked After Children.
2. Priority will next be given to children based on social or medical need such as epilepsy. The school requires supporting evidence if you are making an application based on social or medical need.

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

Children below registration school age

Overley Hall School supports learners between the ages of 8 and 19. If a learner is below this age they will be entitled to attend the school full-time as soon as they have had their 8th birthday. Parents and Local Authorities may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year as agreed with the school.

Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a learner on behavioural grounds unless we have good reason to believe that the learner may adversely affect the provision we can offer to them or our other learners.

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.

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: bev.doran@overleyhall.com

Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission has been 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

Email: bev.doran@overleyhall.com

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Senior Management Team and School Support and Scrutiny Board annually. Feedback from parents/carers of learners and Local Authorities will also be considered.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and then approved by the Support and Scrutiny Board.

When there are changes to admission procedures this policy will be updated immediately and an updated copy placed on the school website.

Links with other policies.

Wellingtonia Admission's Policy

Equality & diversity policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Appendix A



Overley Hall School is a specialist school which caters for complex children who often have co-morbid profiles and fall into the following categories.

1. Social	2. Diagnosis	3. Other	4. Diagnosis and Provision
<p>We can educate and support pupils with varying levels of complex needs, ranging from mild to severe and will usually include a number of the following:-</p>			
<p>a) Pupils with communication and language needs, who may present with any of the following: Difficulties in communication with peers, leading to social isolation and apparent behaviour difficulties</p> <p>Elevated levels of frustration or anxiety caused by the inability to participate in learning and/or social contexts</p> <p>Communication difficulties that impact on: -classroom -participation and interactions with peers</p> <p>Language disorders/Speech Disorders and difficulties with listening skills</p> <p>b) Students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions and associated</p>	<p>a) Pupils with mild to moderate levels of the following: Anxiety-based problems including Attachment Disorder, Separation Anxiety, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Tourette's Syndrome</p> <p>b) Depressive Disorder's including depression and self-harm</p> <p>c) Disruptive Behaviour Problems including ADD/ADHD, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder,</p>	<p>a) Pupils requiring input to develop the following:</p> <p>Sensory motor skills</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Challenging behaviour</p> <p>Varying range of cognitive functioning ranging from severe to high functioning</p> <p>Abuse and neglect</p> <p>Functional skills</p> <p>Anxiety</p> <p>Sensory modulation</p> <p>Motor skills</p> <p>Sensory skills</p> <p>Perceptual skills</p>	<p>Pupils with moderate to severe levels of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism • Angelman Syndrome • Fragile X • Down Syndrome • Smith McGinnis • Dyspraxia <p>Other conditions where pupils would benefit from an eclectic mix from the following list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person Centred Approach • Individual tailored educational/therapeutic programmes of study • Therapeutic approach to complex co-morbidity • Intensive Interaction • Sensory Integration • Attention Autism • SCERTS • Speech and Language Therapy • AAC • Occupational Therapy • Clinical Psychology • TEACCH • Theraplay • Makaton

<p>conditions such as: ADHD and PDD</p>	<p>Pathological Demand Avoidance</p> <p>d) Foetal Alcohol Syndrome</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest School • Highly Structure Approach • A 24 hour/Continuous Curriculum/Waking day Curriculum • Engagement pedagogy
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