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| The Belsteads School **Admissions Policy** |

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| **Version** | 2 |
| **Name of Responsible Person** | Peter Adams – Proprietor  Signed: |
| **Date Ratified** | 16 October 2019 |
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| **Electronic Location** | T Drive - Policies |

# **INTRODUCTION**

The Belsteads School is an independent special school approved by the Secretary of State to admit pupils for whom Statements / Education Health Care Plans are maintained under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996.

The current approval for the school is for 18 pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties, ASD and associated behavioural difficulties, aged 10 - 16 years.

In developing the Belsteads School admission policy, Senior Management have taken account of the need to provide helpful information to parents / carers and referring agencies, based on clear and objective admission criteria. We are committed to working in close collaboration with other agencies to ensure the provision of the most effective service, which is in the best interests of the pupil.

In considering admission, The Belsteads School comply with the Independent School Standards (DfE, 2019), having regard for the revised Regulations contained within the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, (DfE, 2014).

The Belsteads School currently receives referrals from Local Authorities, although will consider requests from other agencies. Pupils are primarily referred because the severity and diversity of their needs is such that they cannot be met effectively in mainstream schools or have not been met in similar establishments. In aspiring to meet such needs, we believe that it is essential that a systematic approach to admission be adopted, planning therefore commences at the time of referral.

All pupils admitted have Education Health Care plans. The school offers small groupings with supportive and committed staff, experienced in providing a clearly structured and personalised education. Our curriculum strives to be responsive to each learner, and build on individual strengths and interests. A rolling plan is in place, which supports a balance of stimulating contexts for learning through different learning experiences, themes and subjects.

The Belsteads School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Admissions Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010) and takes account of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2019. We welcome pupils irrespective of their gender, race, religion, ethnic or national origins, disability or special educational needs, provided that there are good prospects of meeting their needs without unduly prejudicing the education and the welfare of other pupils.

We recognise that factors governing pupil admissions are complex and vary from case to case. These factors might include:

* Nature of the pupil’s needs and previous educational experiences
* Recommendations / expectations of the referring body
* Wishes of the parent / carer and pupil

# **PURPOSE**

We have formulated this policy to:

* ensure that the school admits those pupils whose needs, as identified in their EHC plan, can be met effectively and in doing so maximises the potential to make progress in all aspects of their development.
* set out the framework within which decisions are made about admissions to the school
* set out the criteria that will be applied where referrals exceed the number of places available
* meet DfE registration as an Independent Special School.

Through this policy we aim to ensure that all parties:

* have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of admission
* have a clear understanding of the opportunities and support available within the school
* are prepared to play their part in ensuring, as far as is possible, the success of any placement.

# **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

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| Name | The Belsteads School |
| Address | Back Lane  Little Waltham  Essex  CM3 3PP |
| Telephone Number | 01245 330510 |
| Email Address | anna.mears@belsteads.essex.sch.uk |
| Website Address | www.thebelsteadsschool.com |
| School Classification | Independent Special School (Secondary) |
| Ages | 10 - 16 years |
| Year Groups | 6 - 11 |
| Primary Needs | SEMH, MLD, ASD |
| Numbers | 18 Co-educational |
| Contact Details | Anna Mears (Headteacher)  Peter Adams (Proprietor) |
| Registered Office | As above |

# **PROFILE OF A PUPIL LIKELY TO BE SUITABLY PLACED**

Those pupils likely to be suitably placed will have a diagnosis of SEMH / ASD / MLD, which may be compounded by medical conditions including ADHD, Dyslexia / Dysgraphia, ODD and OCD. These can manifest themselves in a combination of difficulties including:

* Severe/Moderate / generalised learning difficulties
* Significantly delayed Speech Language and Communication skills
* Social communication difficulties
* Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
* Significant difficulties in attention and impulsivity
* Limited independence

Pupils are likely to experience a combination of low self-esteem, together with a significant degree of emotional vulnerability. As a result, they may exhibit:

* Unpredictable and intense patterns of behaviours which significantly disrupt the learning of themselves and their peers.
* Distractibility that inhibits their progress even with significant adult support and increasingly individualised personalised learning programme.
* Behaviour which is bizarre and/or self-injurious and/or endangers others.
* Significant anxiety / unhappiness, stress and/or disaffection over a sustained period often accompanied by prolonged periods of absence, leading to a negative attitude towards education.

# **ADMISSION CRITERIA**

Referrals for admission to The Belsteads School will arise from a pupil’s EHCP or Annual Review recommendations agreed by the LA.

All admissions take account of the need to provide education appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and additional educational needs (AEN).

Pupils can be admitted at any time of year.

Where a request for admission is received, and there is a place available within the school, the following criteria will be applied in order of priority in deciding whether a place is able to be offered:

* The pupil falls within the terms of the current approval for the school and presents with the aforementioned profile
* The pupil has an EHCP which specifies that the pupil has SEMH/ ASD / MLD.
* There is room within the appropriate year group
* Adding another pupil to the group will not adversely affect the provision of efficient education for the pupils with whom he / she would be educated or the efficient use of resources
* Offering the pupil a place will maintain a positive balance between the types of AEN within the group and school.
* There is evidence from professionals that the pupil will benefit from access to a highly personalised programme within a special school.
* Pupil, parent / carer and, where appropriate, social worker express commitment to the placement.

## **Refusal of Admission**

The Senior Leadership Team reserves the right to refuse admission in the following cases:

* the school is fully subscribed
* where the admission of a pupil would compromise the Health and Safety of pupils and/or staff within the school
* where admission would not be compatible with the efficient and effective education of others

# **LEGISLATION**

In formulating our Admissions Policy, we have taken into account the following legislation:

* The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2019
* Equality Act (2010)
* Education Act 2011

# **ACCESS TO ADMISSION INFORMATION**

A copy of the admission policy is located in the main office and is published on the school website.

Additional information can be obtained through direct contact with Anna Mears (Headteacher) or Peter Adams (Proprietor).

**ADMISSION PROCESS**

Admission to The Belsteads School is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team who will look objectively at every referral received. In considering the appropriateness of a placement they will consider the dynamics of the existing pupil group, potential identified risks and the school’s ability to safely manage these.

Once a referral has been received the following steps will be taken:

# **Stage 1**

## **Initial enquiry**

Verbal or written enquiries should be made to the Headteacher. Detailed information concerning the pupil should accompany any referral.

Referral information received

## Consideration of documentation by Senior Leadership Team

In determining the suitability of the referral, consideration will be given to the pupil’s educational, health and social history and whether the profile of the pupil is in keeping with the provision we are able to provide.

If applicable, an observation visit will take place at the pupil’s current educational provision.

# **Stage 2**

## **Visit**

The introductory visit will include:

* A tour of the school
* Introduction to key staff
* Discussion with a member of the SLT concerning such issues as curriculum, school expectations in respect of learning and behaviour, key policies including positive handling

If, following the introductory visit, all concerned agree that the pupil’s needs can potentially be met, a mutually convenient date will be arranged for the pupil to spend a session in the school. If appropriate, parents will be asked to remain on site during this session.

**Stage 3**

**Offer**

Following attendance at the school, and dialogue with the pupil and parents / carers, representatives from other agencies e.g. social care, a final decision by senior leadership will be made, and the referring agency informed accordingly.

Confirmation of funding including any additional resources and transport will be sought from the LA.

Once the offer of a place has been accepted by the referring agency, The Belsteads School will arrange a pre-placement planning meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to finalise admission arrangements, clarify roles and responsibilities and to complete the admission pack.

All new pupils will start on a transitional timetable to be agreed at the pre-planning meeting. **No pupil will start immediately, on a full time timetable, unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

**Stage 4**

**Admission**

The pupil’s name will be entered in the Admissions Register on the agreed admission date.

# **Where a place is not offered**

## Letter of confirmation to referring agency outlining reasons

In situations where it is agreed that the needs of the pupil cannot be met within The Belsteads School, a letter outlining reasons will be forwarded to the referring agency.