

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Purpose

Eden Park Academy (Carlisle) is an independent school which provides up to 14 day places for secondary aged children (11-16 years), primarily young people who are in the residential care of Radical/Pebbles/Partners Services. It is an environment where students with identified and stated Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties can access a specialised and holistic education that aims to develop children in a healthy and balanced manner. For the purpose of this policy the term parents will identify birth parents and carers who have corporate responsibilities.

Scope

This policy is relevant to all members of Senior Leadership Team (SLT), staff, parents, students and local authority representatives who are involved in the admission of a student to Eden Park Academy.

Introduction

The school will work in partnership with local authorities and parents / carers to assess the suitability of students for a place at the school.

Equal Opportunities

The admissions policy will promote equally the rights of all students and not adopt a discriminatory manner regardless of a student's

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are the 'protected characteristics' as set out in Equality Act (2010).

Our Admissions Criteria

We accept referrals from Local Authorities (LA). Whilst parents are welcome to visit the school and can be provided with information about the school, the school cannot proceed to the admissions stage without local authority support.

All students should have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or require assessment of their needs; in the absence of either SEN or EHCP, Eden Park Academy will treat all students with regard to Special Educational Need and Disability Codes of Practice (2015) and until such time as referral for assessment is made.

Information on the types of Provision

The school strongly believes in finding the right school for the individual. All communications will be honest with parents and the local authority in all aspects and would expect the same transparency from other stakeholders.

The school will have two types of provision:

- Provision for students with a statement of SEN: for students who have identified SEMH and which details Eden Park Academy in their final statement of SEN
- Provision for students who require an assessment of their difficulties: for students referred by a local authority, with agreement from the Eden Park Academy, students' parents/carer and any person whose advice is to be sought in accordance with regulation 7 of the Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001

Admissions Process

We are able to give parents information regarding our assessment and admission process on enquiry. We encourage parents to engage in a dialogue with their local authority and to make a joint application. Note: the school will take referrals and organise admissions assessments at any point in an academic year. Intake is not restricted to September only.

Once a referral has been received from an LA, the paperwork will be read by the senior leadership team. If from the paperwork it is clear that the student would be suitable for the school, then the school will invite parents / carers in for an admissions interview. If it is not clear from the paperwork whether the school would be suitable then a designated member of staff will arrange to observe the student in either their current school or in the home setting. The parents and the child will then be invited in for a tour of the school and informal discussion about the provision.

Following this meeting in most cases the Head Teacher and Head of Education will be able to make a decision within 5 working days. The school acknowledges that parents have often been through lengthy processes in the past and in recognition of this, the school will aim to advise parents of the outcome as quickly as possible. However, in a small number of cases, if the decision is uncertain then rather than make the wrong decision it may be more appropriate to delay a decision whilst more information can be obtained, and school / home visits are carried out.

If Eden Park Academy is able to meet the child's special educational needs, an offer of a place and a start date will be sent to the LA and parent. The proposed fee will be suggested to the LA. When the LA confirms that the offer of a place is going to be taken up, Head office will send contracts to the LA.

The pre-placement process will typically consist of the Head Teacher or school leader meeting with parents to obtain up to date information, including but not exclusive to the following areas:

- Previous placement
- Behaviour
- Academic ability
- Religious and cultural needs
- Parents' aspirations for the future / what they want the school to do
- Current multi agency involvement
- Family organisation.

A two-week part-time transition will begin in agreement with all parties concerned. This is to ensure that students are not overwhelmed by a full-time placement at school when many have not been in education for a lengthy period of time prior to accessing Eden Park. However, attendance at previous settings is not the only reason for students to complete a transition and further information can be gained from school. Before a student can begin the process of the two-week part-time transition **ALL** requisite paperwork must have been received by the school at least 1 full day in advance. Until this is received by school a student will not be allowed to start school. This is to safeguard all concerned and to ensure that all operation requirements are met. These would include but not exclusively

- Risk assessments
- Behaviour plans
- Care plans
- Confirmation of funding
- Information of previous educational setting
- Home/school agreement

The student attending the first part of the admissions interview and, where applicable, will have the chance to talk about themselves and their schooling. The student then will be accompanied by an experienced member of the staff team and be able to, for example, join a class, tour the school or engage in other educational activity, thus enabling the school to begin to assess how they respond to their environment and peers.

Whilst this is a recommended format it may be adjusted according to individuals and induction times may be extended if deemed necessary by either parents, student or school and time tables are subject to agreed changes again based on individual needs. It is essential for parents and students that this first point of contact with the school is positive and successful and therefore Eden Park Academy will be flexible and respond to differing needs where required.

The school office will, where applicable discuss with the child's current / previous school to gather information to include:

- Whether the child is looked after and if so the name of the contact person and key personnel in the placing authority;
- Statement of Educational Needs/Record of Need;
- Current care, health, educational plans or relevant personal needs if available;
- Details of any matter which makes the child particularly vulnerable or a danger to others;
- Attendance figures;
- Details of any fixed term exclusions either informal or formal;
- Lead person details if any child protection matters have been previously identified;
- Academic levels - End of Key Stage Teacher Assessments; and
- Evidence of academic levels.

Eden Park Academy must agree to being named in a student's final statement of SEN/ECHP, except where they feel the following conditions may apply:

- The school cannot meet the child's SEN/ECHP
- The placement would be an inefficient use of resources
- The placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other students with whom the child/YP will be educated

The school must also be satisfied that the parents of the child are supportive of the placement. The parent or LA is responsible for making transport arrangements and will inform the school accordingly.

Transition plans will be made with the LA, the current school placement and the parent/carer. Transitions are often difficult for children who have SEMH. It will be essential to consider mechanisms / strategies that may make the process easier for the child. Students may be invited in for one or more transition visits. These should be planned with parents / carers and should be bespoke to individual needs.

The school will send out an admissions pack which will include information about the school for both parents and student. At this point a home/school agreement will be issued which will need to be signed by parents. Prior to admission the Head Teacher will ensure that all relevant information has been collected.

A range of baseline assessments will commence as soon as is practicable for the student after they start school. The length of time required to complete this assessment will vary, but it is usually completed within two months. Parental information, teacher observation and assessments carried out by appropriate professionals will contribute to this process. Individual Educational Plans will then be drawn up and discussed with parents / carers prior to implementation.

All students undergo annual reviews as laid down by the SEN Code of Practice.

Children Looked After (CLA)

Eden Park Academy ethos is to ensure that 'Every Child Achieves' as such the Academy holds the highest academic aspirations for its students, it is a clear

expectation that these aspirations are no different for those children who are looked after by the state. We do however acknowledge the impact care experiences can and do have on educational attainment. Additionally, the short-term nature of some of the care/education arrangements impact considerably more on educational attainment. This is addressed through students Individual Education Plans and bespoke curriculum planning along with various other strategies.

Tribunals

Although parents can indicate to their local authority the school of preference to be named at part 4 of their child's statement of SEN, the authority may not agree with the placement identified. In such circumstances parents have the right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (SEN & Disability).

Communication and Confidentiality

All decisions relating to the proposed placement of any individual are confidential. There will be open and regular communication with relatives, carers and advocates, which acknowledge and respect the needs of each user. The school will liaise with the local authority to ensure they are kept up to date.