



# Arbour House School

## Admissions Policy

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## **Introduction**

Arbour House School is registered for children and young people aged 6-18 years with complex social and communication needs including autism. It operates as an independent co-educational special school which provides up to 25 places. The School is owned and managed by the Potential Ltd (trading as Potens).

## **Aims**

The purpose of this Admissions Policy is to provide clarity with regard to the criteria for admissions for local authorities, parents/carers and other professionals to ensure that the process and decisions are fair and consistent.

This policy will outline the criteria for admissions. It has been written with reference to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice 2015 and approved by the Board of Proprietors and will be reviewed annually. It is available on the school website or upon request.

## **Admissions process**

Arbour House School welcomes parents/carers and professionals to visit the school to enable families, carers and local authorities to consider whether the school might be suitable for the young person. We encourage parents/carers to visit a range of provisions in order to get a feel for the type of provision which may be suitable and to help in the decision-making process. We may also review documents such as Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, Annual Reviews and other specialist reports at this early stage to give an indication of whether Arbour House School might be a suitable option to consider.

With the support of the local authority, the school undertakes a Pre-Placement Assessment with the young person and their parents/carers. This can be in the school setting or within the home, as appropriate.

This assessment, together with further information from parents/carers and professionals, is considered by the school to determine whether we would be able to meet the young person's needs and support them effectively and holistically to make the best progress possible. This Pre-Placement Assessment is then sent to the Headteacher and Regional Director for approval.

Once the decision to offer a place has been made the Headteacher and Regional Director will liaise with the local authority regarding contractual arrangements and fees.

## **Admissions Criteria**

All pupils will have complex social and communication needs, including Autism. All pupils will have associated learning difficulties (as specified in their Education, Health and Care Plan).

Pupils may also have associated conditions such as SLD/MLD/ADHD and/or other health or social and emotional needs.

The initial assessment will indicate the appropriate and safe staffing levels. Staffing levels are reviewed ongoingly, but more formally at a 3-month review of placement meeting which is held as part of our standard procedures and good practice. Consideration during assessment will take into account the appropriate age peer group and academic and social compatibility of the pupil with the existing cohort. The number of pupils in each class group will be limited from 3 to 4 pupils for core curriculum teaching.

A placement may not be offered if parents/carers are not in agreement with the school's methodologies and approach as outlined during visits and documents such as the prospectus and statement of purpose. Obviously parents/carers need to be supportive and work in partnership with the school for placements to be successful. Journey time will also be taken into consideration when making an offer of placement.

Arbour House School is committed to equality of opportunities for pupils and aims to meet the needs of all by taking into account differences in:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Social
- Religious backgrounds

This also takes into consideration individual pupils' abilities, needs and learning styles.

All reasonable actions and adjustments will be taken to meet these needs, but as in any school, there may be occasions when this is not possible. In these cases, if Arbour House was not deemed the appropriate school then placement would not be offered. Consideration will also need to be given to pupils whose physical vulnerability may put them at risk.

Decisions by the Headteacher will be guided by the SEN Code of Practice 2015 as to whether Arbour House School is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or their special educational needs. It will also take into account the effective education of

other children with whom the child would be educated who may already be at the school, and whether the placement would be compatible with the efficient use of resources. The Headteacher is supported by the Regional Director who will work alongside the Headteacher and confirm assessments and admissions prior to entry into the school.

### **Naming Arbour House School on an Education, Health and Care Plan**

Arbour House School has been registered by the Department for Education (DfE) as an approved independent special school that can be named by parents and local authorities on Education, Health and Care Plans. Before naming a special school, Local Authorities must consult the school who will consider whether the young person meets the school's admissions criteria.

### **Tribunals**

The decision to accept a tribunal is undertaken by the Regional Director and Headteacher.

### **Accessibility plan**

This document can be accessed on the school's website or upon request.

### **Emergency admissions**

Due to the needs our pupils have for a well-planned transition, we do not take emergency admissions. However, we endeavour to work as quickly and responsively as possible with local authorities and with families to provide a start date as soon as is feasible, taking into account the needs of the incoming pupil and their families and balancing this with the needs of the other pupils at the school.

### **Prior to confirmation of placement**

The School must be able to meet the needs of the young person as detailed in their Education, Health and Care Plan or assessed needs before admission of the pupil. No service will be provided unless it is required to meet the needs of the young person and/or specified in the Education, Health and Care Plan or agreed and funded by the Local Authority through a revised contract.

## **Contract and fees**

Contractually, all pupils will receive a range of support requirements. Additional reasonable services will be provided to enable Arbour House School to meet additional specific individual needs as specified in the Education, Health and Care Plan or agreed by the Local Authority following the school's pre-placement assessment. These services will be confirmed prior to the contract being issued. Complex medical procedures that require additional support and training to non-medical staff will be considered through a joint meeting between the Headteacher and appropriate medical professionals.

Fees should be paid termly and is invoiced by Potens' Head Office only.

## **Post confirmation of placement/provision**

All pupils will benefit from a bespoke, life-centred creative education that takes account of individual interests and strengths, balanced by a modified National Curriculum Programme of Learning throughout their school day, as outlined in the school's prospectuses, statement of purpose, website and other information. The School will endeavour to meet appropriate ethnic/cultural requirements. The School has a multi-faith ethos as its foundation and recognises the value and importance of tolerance of all faith systems and those with no faith.

## **Appealing against an admissions decision**

To appeal an admissions decision made by the Headteacher of the School, parents/carers or local authorities should write to the Regional Director within 14 working days of receipt of the letter outlining the reasons for appealing the decision.

The Appeals Panel will be chaired a member of the Board of Proprietors who will review all of the assessment information and reason(s) for appeal and make a final decision within 5 working days of the appeal letter.