

Springwell Special Academy Admissions Policy

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Springwell Special Academy Admissions Policy

Overview

Admission to Springwell Special Academy will usually require the child to have a Special Educational Needs (SEN) statement (under the Education Act 1996) or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan (under the Children & Families Act 2014) which names the school as the educational provider.

Parents/Carers may make representations for a place in the school to the local authority under the Education Act 1996 (where the child has a SEN statement) or express a preference for the school under the Children & Families Act 2014 (where the child has an EHC plan). In both cases, the local authority must consult with the school over the admission of the individual child. Once the local authority has carefully considered the school's position on the placement, the local authority must decide whether to name the school in the SEN statement or EHC plan having considered the parental and school comments and whether the school is suitable for the child given his/her age, ability, aptitude and SEND and/or whether the admission would be incompatible with the provisions of efficient education at the school or the efficient use of resources.

Once the school is named in the SEN statement or EHC plan, the school is under a legal duty to admit the child [subject to any formal complaint which may be lodged with the Secretary of State for Education].

The aim of this policy is to provide some further information about the position of the school on issues of suitability and/or incompatibility.

Springwell Special Academy

Springwell Special Academy is a special school for children categorised as requiring additional support for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties. Children aged 5 to 16 years of age can be admitted to the school (Key Stages 1-4).

The school has 106 planned places within this age range.

The school is currently operating with a Key Stage 2 satellite provision based at Forest Academy (known as Springwell @ Forest) and Highfields Specialist Provision at Kirk Balk Academy.

The school's admissions criteria is to make provision for:

- Children with severe Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) Needs (not profound SEMH).
- Our Highfields@KirkBalk provision is a specialist centre that caters specifically for young people with communication and interaction difficulties. These young people will be subject to an Education Health and Care plan and must be able to function appropriately within a satellite provision.

Severe SEMH is described below:

Moderate/severe learning difficulties, mental health difficulties, acute anxiety, attachment issues.
Patterns of regular school absences.
Disengaged from learning, significant under performance.
Verbally and physically aggressive.
Reliant on adult support to remain on task.
Engaging in high risk-taking activities both at school and within the community.
Difficulties expressing empathy, emotionally detached, could have tendency to hurt others, self or animals.
Issues around identity and belonging.
Needing to be in control, bullying behaviours (victim and perpetrator).
Difficulties sustaining relationships.
Over-friendly or withdrawn with strangers, at risk of exploitation.
Provocative in appearance and behaviour, evidence of sexualised language or behaviours.
Slow to develop age appropriate self-care skills due to levels of maturity or degree of learning difficulties.
Physical, sensory and medical needs such as that require medication and regular review.
May require development of social skills, empathy, managing own behaviour and emotions, staying safe in school and in the community
May be involved with a range of specialist professionals such as CAMHS, EP, YOT, therapeutic provision.

Assessment Places

The school may offer assessment places from time to time under the framework established by the Children & Families Act 2014. These will generally be offered where it is deemed to be in the child's best interests for a time limited placement at the school and where parents, local authority and school are agreed on the terms relating to the placement. The child will not be formally admitted to the school during an assessment placement but will be subject to the formal admission procedures detailed in this policy if the assessment place leads to a permanent placement.

Assessment places will only be offered subject to space available and in liaison with the commissioning authority's Special Educational Needs Department.

- Places will be offered for a period of no more than twelve weeks and by the end of the placement a detailed support plan will be agreed by parents, local authority and the school.

Organisation

The school operates an education delivery model based on national curriculum year groups. Due to the staffing structure and school building design, classes are based in three distinct areas with two, off-site, satellite provisions. Class sizes are between 5 and 10 pupils.

Planned places in the school are as follows:

Combined Years 1 & 2: 4 pupils

Key stage 2 SEMH: 38 pupils

Key stage 3 SEMH: 30 pupils

Key stage 4 SEMH: 20 pupils

Specialist and personalised SEMH 4 pupils

Specialist Highfields (Kirk Balk) 10 Pupils (with potential for assessment places in agreement with the Local Authority).

The school will also make provision for 5 Key Stage 3/4 pupils on specialist & personalised learning pathways that may not be based in specific class/year groups. This may include additional anxious & phobic places.

The optimum class size within each year group is 8 - 10. The staff to pupil ratio at this level provides the school with the basis on which the best educational and other outcomes for pupils can be achieved and, furthermore, allows the school to effectively promote and safeguard the welfare of all children, which given the individual needs of the pupils, is an important consideration. Health and safety of pupils and staff may be seriously compromised if these recommended numbers are exceeded.

Funding

The school receives funding from three sources:

- The Education & Skills Funding Agency provides funding for each stated place at the school up to the capacity of 106 planned places. The funding is used by the school to support the educational provision for all children on the school roll.
- The local authority which places a child at the school will also provide further “top-up” funding which should reflect the cost of making provision for that child’s individual needs in excess of the place funding. This ‘top-up’ funding is agreed between the provider and the commissioner and reviewed annually. Barnsley LA also commission an additional 10 places in full (planned place plus ‘top-up’). *
- The school may also receive additional ‘grant’ funding from other sources such as Pupil Premium

**Additional or exceptional funding may be requested from the “top-up” funding which should reflect the cost of making adequate provision for that child’s individual needs. This additional funding will be used to meet the specific needs of those pupils requiring ‘exceptional’ support and do not profile within the normal severe SEMH criteria for the school. Any additional funding, above the normal ‘top-up’ rate will be negotiated with the commissioning local authority via the statutory SEND review process and allocated on a needs basis.*

Admissions Process

Once the school is consulted by the local authority over a proposed placement, it will generally take the following approach:

- A review will be undertaken of the child’s SEN statement or EHCP to assess whether the school would be suitable for the child’s needs and/or what impact the admission would have on the existing pupils at the school.
- A review of the proposed funding would be undertaken to assess whether the level of funding is appropriate given the needs of the child and the cost of the making the provision to meet the needs.
- Where practicably possible, an observation of the child in the current setting to assess the reliability of the evidence presented by the local authority and to make recommendations as to suitability and incompatibility and if appropriate whether the child, if admitted, would meet the criteria for consideration at the school’s satellite provision.

In considering the school’s position prior to responding to the local authority, the school will take account of the planned class size, year group numbers and learning area into which the child would be placed. The school’s position is that the maximum class size and year group size is set out in this policy and numbers in excess of that maximum should be grounds for incompatibility within the provision of efficient education as it would run contrary to the model of educational provision which works effectively within the school.

Satellite Provision (Springwell@Forest and Highfields)

As part of the observation undertaken during the consultation process (described above), the school will assess the eligibility of the child to be educated within one of the school's satellite provisions. Due to the isolation of the two satellite provisions the school will consider the degree of needs and whether it is suitable for them to be placed in either setting.

Signed:

Review Date:

APPENDIX 1: Admissions

SEN Admissions

- BMBC / other local authority consults with Springwell Learning Community.
- Executive Vice Principal and Executive SENCO review paperwork – recommendations are then made.
- If the young person fits the profile or the paperwork does not give a full picture, then the Executive Vice Principal will complete a home / school visit.
- Once this is complete then the process below begins;

