



The Orchards

BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Admission Arrangements

(Statutory Information)

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Review Director:	Imogen Bosmith
Signed by Chair of Local Governing Body:	Ben Spivey
Signature:	
Policy Suite:	Personal Development, Behaviour & Attitudes

Agreed protocols for admission and transition to The Orchards Specialist School between Trafford Local Authority (LA) and The Orchard's School, including monitoring protocols for placements – September 2022

General information

The Orchard's Specialist School is a special school catering for pupils with severe and complex learning needs who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan detailing the following needs:

- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD);
- Severe and Complex Communication and Interaction Disorders (including severe autism);
- Severe and Complex Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties;

The school is organised on one site catering for nursery, from 3 years old and primary age pupils.

The Orchards Specialist School is currently funded to provide 116 places in total for pupils over the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 years (YR – Y6). An additional 12 places for children aged 3 to Year N has also been granted. Any additional pupils after that must be agreed by the LA on the understanding that element 1 and 2 funding and top up funding is paid by them or the LA the child is from.

The organisation of the school is based upon learning need, attainment and chronological age throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's planning for the start of each academic year is determined by pupils' learning needs and the required ratio of adults to pupils in order to ensure the most appropriate and safe learning environment.

Decisions around pupil admissions during the school year have to be carefully considered by the LA and The Orchard's Specialist School. The LA is responsible for the efficient use of resources and therefore must have regard to the total number of places available at the school without prejudicing the existing pupils. The school has to ensure an effective transition to an appropriate group, where available.

Emergency placements, for the purposes of assessment, have occasionally been agreed between school and the LA and there is a clear protocol in place for the LA to consider any such requests that includes consultation with school, parents and involved services in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice. The two main features of an emergency placement for the purpose of assessment are that:

- it must be agreed to by parents, school, the LA and all involved agencies;
- an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment must start on admission.

During the process, The Orchards School will work closely with the officer responsible for the EHC needs assessment, parents and professionals providing advice, to develop a view about the likelihood of an EHC Plan being indicated and whether continued placement at a special school of the nature of The Orchards School is required to meet

need. Pupils accessing emergency placements, for the purpose of assessment, take up a place on the school roll.

Out of Cohort - pupils on roll at The Orchards School are taught within groups based on learning need and not chronological age. However, they are recorded as being taught within cohort.

School Population

The population at The Orchards Specialist School is made up of pupils who fall into the following groups:

- Pupils with an EHC Plan that names The Orchards Specialist School;
- Trafford pupils who have been through the statutory assessment process during Years N - 6 and whose needs, as detailed in the EHC Plan are consistent with the type of need catered for at The Orchards Specialist School.
- Trafford pupils placed at The Orchards School following consultation with The Orchards School before the EHC Plan was finalised
- Those pupils who have moved into Trafford from another authority and who previously attended a special school catering for the same type of need as The Orchards Specialist School
- Pupils who have transferred from another LA's special school, for whom another authority has approached Trafford LA to request a place for one of their pupils already attending a special school, and who have needs that are consistent with the type of need catered for at The Orchards Specialist School
- Pupils who have transferred from an Trafford mainstream or SSC, identified following a Annual Review Meeting whose needs may have changed and can no longer be met within their current setting, and which are now consistent with the type of need catered for at The Orchards Specialist School.

Admissions to The Orchards Specialist School

Trafford LA is the admissions authority for the school and co-ordinates all admissions to the school following the agreed protocols detailed below.

Please note that the LA takes parental preference into account when considering a school placement for any pupil. However, in order to be admitted to The Orchards Specialist School, the pupil must have a Draft or Final EHC Plan that details needs of the following kind:

- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties;
- Severe and Complex Communication and Interaction Disorders (including severe autism);
- Severe and Complex Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties;

Initial visits

It is good practice that when parents of a child who has an EHC Plan or who is going through an EHC needs assessment, are considering any school placement for their child, they should look at the range of provision available to them. Many parents are unclear about the type of need catered for at The Orchards Specialist School and an

initial visit to the school will clarify this and help them to consider all options and express their preference.

The majority of requests for visits to The Orchards School are made following discussions with SENDIAS. In these cases, the nominated person from the team will inform The Orchards Specialist School of the name of a prospective viewer and pass on to parents the school's telephone number.

The Orchards School may receive some direct requests for visits. In these cases The Orchards Specialist School will request that these parents contact EHCP Team initially to request a visit. The team will then contact The Orchards School to confirm the visit can go ahead.

Visits to the school are organised in the following way:

- All enquiries for visits go to the Assistant Head for Families who keeps a log of prospective and actual visits;
- Visits will be co-ordinated by the Assistant Head for Families;
- Visits will be led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (or as authorised by the Assistant Head), on behalf of the LA, so that the outcomes of any EHC needs assessment decision or placement are not pre-empted;
- The named person will escort parents on a tour of the school and then, if required, either, be available to answer questions/talk to parents
- Parents/carers may sometimes be accompanied on their visit by family friends or educational professionals on the understanding that the visit is for the parents/carers.

General admissions procedures:

If the LA decides, after considering all the professional advice and information available and consulting further with parents and the professionals who gave the advice, that a pupil has needs that are consistent with the described profile of the pupils at The Orchards Specialist School, or if placement at The Orchards School is a parental preference then:

- The LA will consult with The Orchards Specialist School by sending all paperwork to the Assistant Head of School for Families.
- The Orchards School will organise a visit to see the potential pupil in their school or setting or at home if needed;
- The Orchards School will complete a consultation form providing their agreement, comments or disagreement with the admission of the pupil;
- The LA will then discuss any comments with the school and submit papers with The Orchards Specialist School's views to the LA's SEN panel.

If the placement is agreed at the SEN panel, the LA will:

- Follow the timing of admissions and transition arrangements;
- Finalise the EHC Plan detailing the start date and transition details, or:
- Inform the requesting LA of agreement to the placement by letter.

If the placement is not agreed at the SEN panel, the LA will:

- Consult further with The Orchards Specialist School and professionals;
- Name an appropriate placement on the final EHC Plan, or:
- Inform the requesting LA of the decision by letter that includes reasons why the placement has been turned down.

Timing of admissions and transition arrangements:

- Admissions into The Orchards Specialist School will mainly be at the beginning of the autumn term following a planned transition from pre-school or from primary school
- Mid-year admissions will for the most part be made at the beginning of a term to allow for a well-planned transition and for the appropriate staffing changes at each school to be made
- Admissions in the summer term may compromise an equitable transition for the pupil and a start date may be planned for the commencement of the forthcoming academic year (September). Decisions will be made following consideration of each individual case
- For pupils who have moved into Oldham from a distant authority, who are not able to continue attending their previous special school, The Orchards Specialist School and the LA will jointly agree an earlier admission date that will include a well-planned transition.