



Admissions Policy

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1. Introduction

Castlebar School is a primary special school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years old. The school caters for primary age pupils with:

- Complex Learning Difficulties and global developmental delay. This is defined as pupils within the very low MLD/higher SLD range. In cognitive psychological terms, pupils operating at or just below the 1st centile.
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders at a complex level. ASD pupils admitted to Castlebar must fit within the cognitive and general profile for admission.
- A range of complex sensory impairments e.g. Hearing and Visual Impairment. The pupils with the impairment must fit within the cognitive and general profile for admission.

2. Designated Capacity

The current designated capacity of the school is 162 pupils. Classes are either arranged in mixed ability groupings (maximum of 8-10 pupils) or needs based classes (maximum 6-7 pupils). Class groupings will generally have mixed year groups; this is known as vertical groupings. Some of our hearing and visual impaired pupils also have access to our special support service and all pupils receive SLT and OT input through a facilitative approach which enables the class staff to deliver provision.

3. Admission Criteria

The admission procedures for Special schools do not conform to the same enrolment and admission procedures applicable to Mainstream schools.

Local Authorities have a responsibility to request a placement for a pupil in a Special school. The procedures they are required to follow are detailed in the SEND Code of Practice. All placements at Castlebar are offered according to the criteria set out in the school and Ealing's local offer (details on Castlebar School website).

Pupils admitted to Castlebar have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC). Castlebar will be named in their EHC with the support of the parents/Carers and the LA where the young person lives. Castlebar may on occasion consider out of borough referrals; however Ealing pupils will have precedence.

Pupils can be admitted into Castlebar at any time of the academic year. However, most admissions are in September. Pupils can only be admitted into Castlebar when a vacancy occurs. The number of vacancies varies from year to year depending upon how many pupils leave the school. New pupils can be admitted into any of the year groups, currently years Reception to 6, providing that appropriate capacity is available.

The Children and Families Act 2014, places a duty on schools to make arrangements for children with medical conditions. Pupils with medical needs have the same right of admission to school as other children and cannot be refused admission or excluded from school on medical grounds alone. The school's Medication and First Aid policy highlights arrangements for admissions where pupils have significant medical needs. The school works with parents and health care professions to ensure the needs of pupils are met. Pupils with more severe medical conditions will have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) or Careplan linked to their Statement/EHC. The IHCP is written by a Health Care Professional and details the arrangements required to meet the medical needs of the child.

The Governing Body has delegated the responsibility for admission to Castlebar School to the Headteacher with the following recommendations regarding placement:

- It must be appropriate to the pupil's age, ability and Special Educational Need (as set out in paragraph 2 above).
- The pupil's presenting Special Need must be Low Moderate to Severe Learning Difficulties (including Autistic

Spectrum Disorders and Sensory Impairment).

- It must be compatible with the interests of other young people already in the school.
- It must be an efficient use of available resources.

4. Admission Process

The LA sends a copy of the proposed EHC plan to Castlebar with supporting advice.

1. The Headteacher/SLT makes a preliminary decision on the basis of the information received from the LA and in light of the Governing Body recommendation as previously stated. The Headteacher or Senior Manager will contact the existing provision to observe the child in the existing provision.
2. Following the observation and a discussion with the Headteacher/Senior Manager, the school will inform the Education and Health Care Co-ordinator (EHCCo). The EHCCo will be asked to contact the parents/carers so they can come and visit the school. They must at this stage bring the child with them.
3. The Headteacher/Senior Manager will meet both pupil and parents/carers, show them around the school and answer any questions. The Head/Senior Manager informs the parents that he will make a recommendation and that they should also give feedback to the EHCCo.
4. The Headteacher/Senior Manager informs the LA of the school's view regarding the admission of this pupil/student and the reasons which led to it.
5. The SEN panel will then finalise the EHC plan and make the final decision with regard to placement.

Please note that Visitors' Sessions are organised by the school on a regular basis to provide parents/carers and professionals with opportunities to view the school and its provision.

5. Children Missing From Education (CME)

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Statutory duties and responsibilities are required of: the school, the local authority and parents/carers, as determined by the Education Act and the 2016 DfE Children Missing in Education guidance.

Local authorities: should have robust policies and procedures in place to enable them to meet their duty in relation to these children, including ensuring that there are effective tracking and enquiry systems in place, and appointing a named person to whom schools and other agencies can make referrals about children who are missing education. At Ealing the contact is School Attendance service: cme@ealing.gov.uk

Parents' responsibilities: Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home but there are conditions that must be met and additional requirements for children with EHC plans. Please refer to the Children missing from education guidance: see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Schools' responsibilities: The school must enter pupils on the admission register from the date that the school has accepted the child will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register in line with their attendance policy. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance.

Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance and in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

6. References

SEND Code of Practice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

School Admissions Code:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>

Children and Families Act 2014:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Keeping Children Safe in Education:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Children Missing from Education Sept 2016 Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Castlebar School

Reviewed October 2019 (CME included))

RATIFIED BY THE GOVERNING BODY ON: TBC (Spring 2020)

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