



FOREST BRIDGE SCHOOL

Admissions Policy and Procedures

Admissions policy

The pupil must have a diagnosis of autism (asd/aspergers/asc)* and an EHCP.

The only routes for admission are:

- For local authorities to formally consult the school for a pupil placement and for the school to assess if they can meet need and have an appropriate cohort.

The Governors will ensure that an appropriate number of pupils are placed in each Key Stage to facilitate an age appropriate peer group.

As Forest Bridge School is publically funded we are unable to offer places to pupils whose families wish to privately fund the placement, or accept consultations from private bodies or companies.

*If the authority is confident that a diagnosis of autism will be given to a pupil but they are awaiting assessment, a pupil could be admitted with that assumption of diagnosis being received in the unforeseen circumstance of the pupil not receiving a diagnosis the school will work with the LA to find an alternative provision. In any event, the placement will terminate no later than the end of the academic year in which the pupil was placed.

Admissions Procedures

Forest Bridge School is publically funded so can only accept referrals from a Local Authority (LA) where the school is named in the EHCP. Parents/carers are welcome to visit and request information about the school (including the admissions process), and may choose to ask their LA to name the school in the pupils EHCP. The school holds regular visitor sessions.

The school cannot admit the pupil unless the EHCP names the school. We encourage parents/carers to engage in a dialogue with their LA to help determine whether the school would be an appropriate placement for their child.

Places are usually taken up at the start of the academic year but by arrangement with the Headteacher can be accessed at any time of the year.

Forest Bridge School will always work with LAs to enable them to assess students' needs.

1. Parents/carers inform the LA of their preference for a place at Forest Bridge School.
3. The LA will send the EHCP and supporting documents to the school requesting a consultation on a pupil placement.
4. Once the EHCP and supporting documents have been received from the LA, these will be reviewed by a member of the senior leadership team who will then discuss the application with at least one other member of the senior leadership team.
5. If from the draft EHCP and supporting documents it appears likely that the school can meet the pupil's needs and are in a position to offer a placement, referring to the principles set out above, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, a member of the senior leadership team will arrange to meet and observe the prospective pupil. This may be:
 - In their current school; this will be the preferred option in most cases
 - In the home setting; if it is in the home setting then two members of staff may visit
6. If the family has not previously attended a school tour they will be invited in for a tour of the school and hear about the provision by a member of the senior leadership team. If the family has any questions or concerns they are encouraged to arrange a phone call/meeting with a member of the senior leadership team.
7. (If appropriate) The school's comments to the LA on the draft EHCP will focus on the following:
 - Can the school meet the pupil's needs?
 - Would the placement be an inefficient use of resources?
 - Would the placement have a negative impact on the other pupils in the school?

The school leadership team will come to a view within the statutory 15 working days of gathering all relevant information as to whether the school believes they can meet the needs of the pupil. In deciding if we can offer a placement, we consider if the pupil will fit into the cohort where there is a placement available. They will then contact the LA to inform them of their view. The LA will determine whether to name the school in the EHCP. If it does, a start date will be agreed between the LA, school and parents/carers. There will be no fee payable by the parents/ carers.

If the LA are considering naming us, either when we have said we cannot meet needs or have not offered a placement at this time, the Local Authority should engage in a full conversation with the school to ensure that the school can meet needs and accommodations can be made

so that attendance is not incompatible with the education of others. If the Local Authority and school can not agree a way forward the school may seek legal advice.

8. Once the LA has confirmed that the offer of a place is going to be taken up, the LA will take responsibility for making transport arrangements with the parents/carers, if necessary.

In order to secure the placement, the LA must confirm in writing to the school that they accept the placement and the funding outlined in the offer letter and any subsequent correspondence. They also need to send an updated EHCP naming Forest Bridge in Section I.

9. A meeting will be arranged around transition. Transition plans will be made with the LA, the pupil's current school, and the parents/carers. Transitions can be difficult for pupils who have autism. It will be essential to consider mechanisms/strategies that may make the process easier for the pupil. These may include Social Stories or a Transition Book. Pupils will also be invited in for at least one transition visit. These will be planned with parents/carers and will be bespoke to pupils' individual needs.

At this meeting with the family/current setting will also have the opportunity to provide the following up-to-date information regarding their pupil in order to establish how the school might best meet the pupil's needs:

- Social communication skills and areas for further development
- Behaviour and areas for further development
- Academic ability and areas for further development
- Independent living skills and areas for further development
- Religious and cultural needs

There will also be a discussion regarding parents'/carers' aspirations for their child's future and how they think the school can help facilitate this.

The school will also send out an admissions pack which will include information about the school for parents/carers and pupils and detailed pre-admission questionnaires. The papers must be back in before the pupil has their first transition visit. Where a student has a medical condition that requires training for staff this needs to be completed before the placement commences

10. Prior to admission the Headteacher will seek to ensure that the following information has been received:

- The pupil's EHCP.
- The pupil's communication profile and/or previous communication reports.
- Previous ABA assessments/current programming.
- All other plans such as those which relate to the pupil's personal and health needs.

- Completed pupil information pack.
- Whether the pupil is looked after and, if so, the name of the contact person and key personnel in the placing authority.
- Where any court order exists around parental or family contact, or special guardianship, that this information is shared with the school in advance of admission.
- The name and contact details of the pupil's parents/carers.
- Details of any other matters which makes the pupil particularly vulnerable or a danger to others.

11. Prior to admission, Forest Bridge School will identify the specific provision needed to meet the following areas of need for each pupil, details of which will be shared with all relevant members of staff ahead of the pupil starting:

- Health/medical/physical.
- Social communication.
- Academic ability.
- Independent living skills.
- Emotional regulation.
- Sensory needs.
- Religious and cultural needs.

12. A baseline assessment will commence within two weeks of the pupil starting at the school. This will inform the pupil's individual Personalised Learning Objectives (PLO's) that will then be drawn up and discussed with parents/carers prior to implementation and within the first half-term of a pupil's time at Forest Bridge School.

13. All pupils will have an annual review as laid down by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice and Transition Review meetings from year 10.

Appeals

Parents/carers and pupils have a right of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Needs and Disability) against a decision of an LA not to make an EHCP and about the content of an EHCP, including the school or other setting named in the EHCP or the type of school or setting.

Parents/carers or pupils wishing to challenge a decision should first contact their local special educational needs mediation service. The LA will be able to provide contact details.

If this does not resolve the issue, parents/carers or pupils should submit their appeal to the Tribunal within 2 months of the date on their decision letter or a month from the date of the mediation certificate - whichever is later.

The SEND Tribunal will be made up of at least 3 appropriately trained members. Parents/carers or pupils can take someone to represent them, or a friend to the Tribunal. More information is provided here:

<https://www.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-disability-tribunal/overview>

Waiting Lists

If school believe they can meet a pupils' needs but do not currently have a placement available in an appropriate cohort/class then the pupil will be offered a place on the waiting list. The local authority will need to confirm they want the pupil placed on the waiting list.

When a placement becomes available the school will always look at pupils who are on the waiting list, prioritised by date placed on the waiting list and taking into consideration the age and best fit for the place available before offering out the placement.