

27/09/2023

Blossom Lower School and Upper House



**POLICY FOR ADMISSIONS
EYFS, Primary, Secondary School
and Post 16**

**Frances O'Garro September 2023
Review Date September 2024**

POLICY FOR ADMISSIONS

Aims

- To provide children and parents with detailed information about Blossom House School and the education and therapies provided
- To ensure that Blossom House is an appropriate provision to meet a child's special educational needs
- To make each child's start a happy and successful one
- To begin a partnership with parents that will be lasting

Mission Statement

At Blossom House, we conduct a comprehensive and thorough assessment process in order to establish if the school is an appropriate educational placement to meet the needs of the individual child or young person being assessed. This includes meeting both educational, therapeutic and social needs to ensure the placement is appropriate for achieving best outcomes for the child/young person.

Admissions Criteria

Please note, Blossom House School includes several different provisions and each has its own remit and admissions criteria as follows:

Blossom House Motspur Park & Euston Admission Criteria

Children are accepted at Blossom House only after careful assessment, to ensure that we are the right provision.

- We assess pupils if there is a space available in the appropriate year group and if the child/young person is in early years, primary, Key stage 3 (years 7, 8 and 9) and post 16. We are currently unable to assess children who require places in years 10 or 11
- All pupils at Blossom House School have a primary speech, language or communication impairment, with aspects of their cognitive profile within the average range, necessitating highly specialist teaching and integrated therapeutic provision to enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes
- Many also have additional co-occurring diagnoses such as SpLD (dyslexia).
- Approximately half of our children and young adults are diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum.
- Pupils diagnoses are taken into consideration during the initial assessment process and when a pupil is placed at the school, through planning, teaching, therapeutic input and behaviour management.
- The school is able to meet the needs of a pupil with a primary speech and language difficulty and an additional diagnosis including autism and can be an appropriate and successful placement if the pupil is able to cope with the following fundamental features of our learning environment:
 - Being able to learn within a small group setting and being able to process both academic instruction and social information at the same time
 - Coping with frequent transitions between classrooms
 - Coping with changes of staff for different lessons
 - Coping with changes to the school day e.g. trips and events
 - Coping with additional pupils joining a class
 - Coping with environmental stressors e.g. noise, heat, movement

- Coping with the demands of following an adult's agenda
- Responsive to teaching, therapy and behaviour interventions
- Sufficient attention and listening skills and behaviour regulation to manage without the need of a 1:1.
- No behavioural difficulties which require staff to be specifically trained in physical intervention

Blossom House Wimbledon Admissions Criteria

- Pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties.
- Pupils who require a functional, community-based approach to learning and are not able to access traditional classroom-based learning, linked to their learning difficulties.
- Pupils who thrive when undertaking vocational courses and supported work placements and are unable to access formal academic qualifications.
- Pupils who require intensive therapeutic support due to their co-occurring language, sensory and physical needs.
- Pupils who do not demonstrate physical behaviour which poses a risk to themselves and others. This is due to the high degree of community-based learning.
- Pupils who are able to manage unstructured time and able to transition between different settings in their local community e.g. travelling on public transport and visiting community leisure facilities.

Post 16 Admission Criteria

- Difficulties with any/all of receptive & expressive language and social communication skills and for this to be the primary need of the student.
- Able to attend in a group or 1:1 setting for at least 40 45 minutes with support/learning breaks
- Working at Level 1 or above (equivalent of GCSEs) in English and/or Maths
- Able to demonstrate academic potential to progress beyond a level 1/2 BTec course at college (for college link provision)
- Able to process and understand simple spoken information
- Able to manage transitions and work across different environments
- Able to manage unstructured times
- Able to plan a journey involving public transport with support
- Able to independently travel (College link)
- Able to engage in simple interactions with both adults and peers in a fairly appropriate manner
- Able to communicate thoughts and ideas in a way which can be understood by a listener, whether via speaking/writing
- No behavioural difficulties which require staff to be specifically trained in physical intervention
- Have knowledge and understanding of their diagnoses and the strategies/support they use

- Understand social norms in a school and college setting even if the student is not always able to fully adhere to these
- Demonstrate acceptable behaviour the majority of the time
- Ability to follow an adult's agenda in adult-led tasks and demonstrate respect
- Some level of self-organisation – has achieved some independent life skills and is able to take responsibility for some areas of their lives.
- Able to manage a workload with some independence, showing initiative
- Able to use strategies to manage anxiety/emotional wellbeing or be working towards this.
- Respond appropriately to feedback e.g. on communication, behaviour, work
- Can cope in a group setting without 1:1 support.
- Have good or excellent (90%+) attendance in school and in lessons
- Some understanding of the Post 16 provision and willingness and motivation to engage and participate.
- Does not demonstrate behaviour that could be construed as a safeguarding risk to themselves or others

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) including Adapted Curriculum (AC) **Admission criteria:**

EYFS Overview

The EYFS at Blossom House Lower School is inclusive of Nursery, Reception and Year One children. Admission to the EYFS is dependent on a number of factors, and each child's needs will be considered individually. However, in general a child entering the EYFS would be expected to:

- Demonstrate some ability to jointly attend with an adult to an activity
- Be able to learn as part of a group.
- Be able to follow simple instructions.
- Demonstrate communicative intent.
- Demonstrate some examples of functional, expressive communication e.g. verbal or non-verbal communication, used consistently and with purpose
- Show some problem-solving abilities e.g. puzzles, construction, tasks of daily living
- Show some signs of non-verbal cognitive strengths
- Be able to transition between activities with universal supports e.g. visual supports, verbal countdowns

Transition into the Blossom House Lower School Primary section from the EYFS is not automatic. Each child's needs and progress will be considered in line with the main school admissions criteria and consultation with the Primary Admissions team will take place when the child is in Year One (during the Autumn Term) to ensure that they will be able to access the step-up in demands of the Blossom House Lower School Primary section. Additional assessments, for example from an Educational Psychologist, may also be requested. Progression will be subject to the annual review process and parents will be kept informed of any multi-disciplinary discussions and decisions that take place that would impact a child's progression from the EYFS to the Primary section of Blossom House Lower School.

Adapted Curriculum Overview

The Adapted Curriculum at Blossom House Lower School consists of range of classes from Early Years, up to and including year 7. The Adapted Curriculum Early

Years Class is a mixed class of Nursery and Reception Children (some Year One pupils may remain in the Early Years Adapted Curriculum class at the discretion of the multi-disciplinary team, if it is felt that they would benefit from additional time in this setting). Pupils of Year One age and upwards are taught within one of the other five classes within the Adapted Curriculum. Classes are typically grouped by the sensory profiles, regulation needs and communication/interaction needs of the pupils and are therefore not always the same age as their peers. However, pupils within each class are usually within a couple of school years of one another. The environment of the Adapted Curriculum is specifically designed to be low-arousal and highly therapeutic. The approach supports the development of spontaneous functional communication as a primary aim.

Admission to the Adapted Curriculum is dependent on a number of factors, and each child's needs will be considered individually. However, in general a child entering the AC would be expected to:

- Show some signs of non-verbal cognitive strengths
- Show some emerging problem-solving abilities e.g. puzzles, tasks of daily living
- Demonstrate capacity for adopting a consistent, functional, communication method e.g. verbal or non-verbal
- Struggle to demonstrate their skills consistently to others e.g. not always able to respond appropriately to direct requests and/or questions
- Present with sensory processing needs and/or seek significant amounts of sensory stimulation
- Be self-directed in their attention, often struggling to jointly attend to an activity with an adult
- Present with emotional regulation needs, often showing high dependency on communication partners to calm, organise and/or alert them within different situations

Progression through the Adapted Curriculum's classes is not automatic and will be subject to the statutory annual review process. Parents will be kept informed of any multi-disciplinary discussions and decisions that take place that would impact on their child's continued progression through the Adapted Curriculum.

Admissions Process

Children are admitted to the EYFS, AC, Primary, secondary or P16 at any time during the year should the school be an appropriate educational placement and a place is available.

When a parent telephones the school to find out about Blossom House School they will usually speak to the Admissions officer or the Admissions Lead Speech and Language Therapist who will enquire about specific information such as:

- Date of Birth
- Diagnosis
- Local Authority and EHCP status
- Current School Placement

Based on this information, and if there is a place available in the school, parents would then be invited to send the relevant paperwork for their child (usually EHCP and any supporting reports). These reports would then be reviewed by the Admissions Lead Speech and Language Therapist and/or a Speech and Language Therapist member of the Admissions Team (based in the EYFS and/or the AC).

Based on this information, parents would either be:

- given an appointment to visit the school with their child (an initial assessment)
- or contacted via email to explain why the school would not be able to meet needs

Parents are then asked to complete a questionnaire for their child prior to the initial interview. Parents are also asked to supply any other information including Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Paediatrician/Neurodevelopmental assessments and Educational Psychologist (EP) assessments and current school reports that may be useful in providing a fuller picture of their child and his/her special educational needs.

At the initial interview, the parents will usually be seen by the Admissions Lead and the child will be seen by a senior Speech and Language Therapist. For EYs, the parents and child will be seen in the same room. The parents will discuss their child's

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) profile in more depth (including a case history) with a member of the Admissions Team and the child will engage in informal, play-based assessment with a Specialist Speech and Language Therapist.

At the interview, there is an opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion about the school's possible suitability for the child should the parents wish to pursue Blossom House as an option for their child.

If the school is not deemed appropriate, the Admissions Lead will suggest alternative provisions to consider. This may also be communicated at a later time following the initial assessment if there is a need for additional discussion regarding the most appropriate outcome of the assessment.

If the child is considered to be a possible candidate for the school, they will be offered a more detailed assessment at the school as follows:

- Nursery Age - a morning assessment
- Reception – a morning assessment
- Year 1- a full day assessment
- Year 2 upwards- up to three full days
- Multiple visits to the school may be necessary if the child requires additional time to settle and demonstrate their strengths and needs to the admissions team.

The assessment visits are booked in with the Admissions Officer.

During their in-depth assessment, the child will spend time in the classroom with his/her appropriate peer group and is supported to do this by a member of the Admissions Team. Informal assessment and observation will be carried out, as well as monitoring of the child's ability to follow a typical morning/day within the school. Formalised assessments which will include Speech and Language and may also include maths and literacy will be carried out if required. Feedback from all members of staff working with the child is crucial and is considered prior to deciding as to whether Blossom House School can meet the child's needs.

Further assessment of a child's cognitive profile may be recommended to parents/carers to determine the exact nature of the child's difficulties.

Following the assessment period, parents will receive an outcome regarding our decision, usually by telephone. A written outcome letter will be sent.

If requested ahead of the child's assessment, a full report will be compiled, detailing the assessment period and the outcomes of the assessment providing evidence for this. There will be a fee for this service.

Offers made are subject to the Statutory Review Process. This means that a child's place will be reviewed after their first term at the school, at their annual review and at interim reviews when required. This is in accordance with the statutory annual review process (SEND Code of Practice pg. 194) and is to ensure that the placement remains appropriate in relation to the following criteria:

- To ensure that the school continues to be suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs outlined in the EHCP
- Their attendance is not incompatible with the efficient education of other children in the school or the efficient use of resources.

Parents will then need to inform the LA that an offer has been made and that they would like to pursue this. Parents are asked to inform the school of any decisions made by their LA.

Once the child's place has been confirmed, parents are asked to keep in close contact with the school to ensure that their child's transition to Blossom House School is successful.

Oversubscription

If Blossom House School is oversubscribed, details will be kept and parents will be encouraged to keep in touch with the school if they continue to require a place.

(cf Equality Act 2010 Part 6 : Education)

For information detailing the Transition Process please refer to the Transition Policy.

For information relating to pupils who require an adapted curriculum to support their transition, please refer to the Holistic Curriculum Policy ('Adapted Curriculum and Transitional Pupils' section).