

ADMISSIONS



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1. Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity for the Admissions process to Strive IA and ensure it is fair and consistent. It is written with reference to the SEND Code of Practice, approved by the Director and reviewed annually.

2. Introduction

Strive IA is a primary and secondary day alternative provision for boys and girls aged 6 to 18. We are a special alternative provision which caters for the needs of pupils who have communication and interaction difficulties and concurring social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, including associated challenging behaviour. Many of the pupils attending the centre have additional special educational needs such as neurodivergent conditions such as autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit and hyperactive disorders (ADHD) which many affect their speech and language development. Many of our children may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or in the care of the local authority children we care for team. Places for pupils are commissioned at the centre by schools and several local authorities.

3. Admissions Criteria

Special educational needs

Strive IA can deliver therapeutic and educational outcomes for young people with one or more of the following needs.

The pupil has an EHC Plan which indicates that the child has a diagnosis or is awaiting a diagnosis of:

- a) ASD and associated communication and interaction difficulties
- b) Anxiety- There are indications that the child cannot or is unlikely to cope socially and emotionally in a mainstream centre setting and is distressed by the experience.
- c) ADHD
- d) Language and communication needs that have led to social isolation in centre.
- e) Neurodevelopmental trauma and/ or mild pre – birth trauma compromising process needs.
- f) Children have abilities in the average or above average learning range but may display atypical learning styles and uneven (spiky) profiles of cognitive strengths and difficulties.
- g) Learners may present with additional medical conditions including mental health issues and stereotypical behaviour.

However, the centre reserves the right to decide whether these can be reasonable be managed safely and effectively within it's existing resources.

Please note:

We are unable to support children with the following areas of need:



Children with severe SEMH including Schizophrenia, Psychosis, Severe personality disorders. Children who have complex physical and sensory need.

Additional indicators Strive IA support:

- a) The child is in need of additional/ alternative care e.g. Child we care for system, adopted, kinship, special guardianship
- b) There is a history of loss or bereavement in the family
- c) There are family difficulties including limited family support, family breakdown, mental health in the family, moving of centres and home

4. Child views and School/Parental/Carer preference

The views of the child and parental/ carer preference are important admissions indicators in our admissions decisions. They are considered subject to the provision being appropriate to the age, ability, aptitude and special education needs of the child.

- a) Admission to Strive IA is consistent with the child's views and aspirations as set out in the EHCP
- b) The view of the pupil is, as far as possible, expressed and evidenced and indicate a positive preference for a change to their current type of provision
- c) The centre must be satisfied that the referrer, parents/ carers are supportive of the centre placement at Strive IA, including being adherent to the policies and procedures that are in place.

Age

Children currently educated out of their year group remain as such or revert to their chronological cohort on admission to Strive IA

- a) The admission request is for children in Key stages 1,2,3,4 and NEET (16-18yrs)
- b) Consideration has been given to the stage of education and future transition points for this child.

Ability and aptitude

Consideration will be given to whether the placement is compatible with the efficient education for other children already attending the centre, and the efficient use of resources including adult support.

- a) Learners will have needs and ability profiles that are compatible with an appropriate key stage, peer group or cohort.
- b) The child's behaviour is not detrimental to the needs of other learners.
- c) The child is willing to accept help from the staff at Orchard and to be able to access social inclusion through the on-site provision



Travel

- a) The pupil lives within a travelling time that is appropriate for the child, to Strive IA
- b) Required travel to and from Strive IA would not be detrimental to the pupil's wellbeing or readiness to learn/engage.

The timeframe for the admissions process depends on a number of factors including:

- The quantity and nature of the referrals received
- The time of year and availability of placements
- Sourcing specialist training and adult support to meet health and learning needs

5. Admissions procedure

Many of the children who are referred to Strive IA have encountered negative experiences as a result of their diagnosis. This may include elevated levels of anxiety, reduced attendance, disengagement from learning and social isolation at centre. In many cases, over time, these factors combine to reach crisis point and can lead to school refusal. For these reasons, the centre strongly believes that referrals and admissions to the centre should be a partnership building process with parents/ carers, the local authority and schools and the centre, designed to ensure that the centre can meet the needs of the prospective learner.

Our admissions procedure appreciates how challenging the transition to a new placement can be for a child and their family. It recognises that the needs of each child need to be planned for sensitively and thoroughly. It is for this reason that all transition times will be unique to each individual child to ensure that they have the best start to a new centre to settle and build trusting relationships with staff and peers.

Children will be considered for Strive IA if they are between the ages of 6 and 18, they meet the admissions criteria and there is a space in the appropriate cohort/group.

The admissions procedure is as follows:

1. Initial enquiry:

Referrals are accepted at any time and new admissions can take place throughout the year. The initial referral can be made by school, the local authority or an advocate acting on behalf of the parents/ carer's behalf. We encourage families and/or Local Authority Education case workers to come and visit the Centre or participate in an initial conversation with the Provision Manager. During these visits and conversations, we request as much information as possible to assist with the decision as to whether a referral to Strive IA would be appropriate.

2. Assessment period

Once an official request has been made by the local authority, or the school, Strive IA will ask for relevant documentation and/or Education Health Care plans from the



relevant local authority. We will then review the documents and information gathered from the initial enquiry to determine whether the admission criteria is met and a good 'fit' is likely. **Please note, failure to disclose information that may affect the validity of the admissions process at any stage may lead to the process being terminated.**

When it has been determined that there is a high probability that the centre can meet the child's needs and other criteria are met e.g. availability of places, an assessment visit will take place. This may include a home visit, a visit to see the child in their current setting or an invite for the child and family to come and spend time at the centre. This allows the centre to confirm its impressions on a child's needs and it offers the child an opportunity to experience centre life at Strive IA.

Should the centre consider itself to be a unsuitable placement for the child for any reason as detailed in the above 'Admissions criteria', the application will not be progressed to the next stage. The decision made at Strive IA is final and cannot be overrode by the local authority or school.

If the centre feels that they can meet the needs of the child, the centre will negotiate with the referrer and the approximate start dates and core fee model. The referrer will submit all paperwork to the referring panel for them to decide and allocate a placement.

3. Offer agreed

Any placement offered will be subject to the full cost unless there has been prior agreement between the placing authority and the centre. Once the local authority/school/ referrer has agreed to a placement, funding, and contracts have been signed, the parents/carers will need to arrange transport with the relevant council. The transition visits will only take place once the contracts have been signed.

We will request a completed and signed contract from the local authority, school, and referrer, and we will require parents/carers to complete enrolment forms to enable us to create an account on our Centre Management System and provide consent for activities/trips/medication/etc.

4. Bespoke transition

Meanwhile, we will be working on a bespoke personalised integration plan for the child to ensure their start with Strive IA is as successful as possible. Please note, at this point that some children need a step-by-step plan to help them assimilate to centre life and we create this plan based on the child's needs. It is adjusted as time goes on because some children assimilate more quickly or more slowly than they originally thought.



6. Refusal of placement

Strive IA will only refuse a place on the following grounds and based on admission and assessment guidelines and that:

1. The centre is full and therefore, there are no available places
2. This also applies to spaces with the appropriate Key Stage for each child
3. The child's needs do not meet the admissions criteria as specified by Strive IA. If the child's needs cannot be met, this will be specified in writing to the referrer as part of the consultation period
4. There is insufficient funding available to fund a place for the child's needs
5. The placement is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
6. The placement is incompatible with the effective education of other young persons
7. The placement would be incompatible with the effective use of resources
8. Please note that the decision made by Strive IA is final and cannot be overridden by the local authority, Parent(s) and Guardian(s)

7. Reviewing a child's placement

Placement at Strive IA will be reviewed annually in accordance with statutory requirements within the EHCP. If it is felt that the placement is no longer meeting the child's needs or is impacting the needs of the other children, an early review may be called, and placement will be terminated.

Exit criteria

- a) The child has progressed to such an extent that they could now thrive in mainstream or specialist provision with support
- b) The child is approaching a change in Key stage or key transition point
- c) The child's attendance drops significantly, and they are no longer accessing the centre
- d) The child or referrer express the wish for a change in provision
- e) The child's behaviour has become a threat to the health and safety of other children and/ or staff.
- f) The child's behaviour has become detrimental to the learning and emotional needs of the other learners. Strive strongly feel that no child's behaviour should compromise the opportunities of others within the centre.
- g) There is insufficient funding available to place a child and meet their needs.
- h) The child's needs change to include additional support that was initially not forecasted in the initial assessments during the admission process.

8. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Strive IA welcome all applicants irrespective of any learning needs and/or disabilities. However, its facilities (physical and otherwise) for children with significant learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities are currently limited.



Strive IA will do all that is reasonable to comply with the Equality Act 2010 so that Strive IA may accommodate the needs of disabled applicants for which, with reasonable adjustments, Strive IA can cater adequately. Strive IA will do all that is reasonable to ensure the application procedure (and any information about the centre) is accessible for disabled applicants and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary.

Parents must inform the centre when submitting a Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by Strive IA. Parents of disabled children may be invited to a preliminary meeting with the Director or Manager of the centre to discuss ways in which any disadvantages could be lessened or eliminated from the admissions process and to ensure that the applicant can be adequately catered for should an offer of a place be made. The centre may request further information, such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report, and any associated correspondence from the student's current centre that Strive IA considers necessary to make a fair assessment.

If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the Centre is unable to adequately cater for the needs of those children with disabilities, parents will be informed why an offer will not be made.

If an applicant's disability becomes apparent after admission, Strive IA will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made to allow the young person to continue at the centre. If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, Strive IA is unable to adequately cater for and meet the needs of the student, the Provision Manager may request parents to withdraw their child.

9. Reviewing process

This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be published on the Provision's website before the end of the preceding September. The policy will remain on the website throughout the Provision year. Any change to the policy will be proposed in draft in the preceding July and circulated to commissioners and referring centres.