



The Belsteads School Admissions Policy

Version	1
Name of Responsible (ratifying) Committee	Peter Adams – Proprietor Signed:
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Contents

Page 2	Introduction
Page 3	Purpose School Information Profile of a Student Likely to be Suitably Placed
Page 4	Admission Criteria
Page 5	Legislation Access to Admission Information Admission Process

INTRODUCTION

The Belsteads School is an independent special school approved by the Secretary of State to admit students for whom Statements / Education Health Care Plans are maintained under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996.

The current approval for the school is for 12 students with Severe and Moderate Learning Difficulties, ASD and associated behavioural difficulties, aged 10 - 16 years.

In developing the Belsteads School admission policy, Senior Management have taken account of the need to provide helpful information to parents / carers and referring agencies, based on clear and objective admission criteria. We are committed to working in close collaboration with other agencies to ensure the provision of the most effective service, which is in the best interests of the student.

In considering admission, The Belsteads School comply with the Independent School Standards 2015, having regard for the revised Regulations contained within the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, which came into force in January 2015.

The Belsteads School currently receives referrals from Local Education Authorities, although will consider requests from other agencies. Students are primarily referred because the severity and diversity of their needs is such that they cannot be met effectively in mainstream schools or have not been met in similar establishments. In aspiring to meet such needs, we believe that it is essential that a systematic approach to admission be adopted, planning therefore commences at the time of referral.

All students admitted have statements of Special Educational Needs / Education Health Care plans. The school offers small groupings with supportive and committed staff, experienced in providing a clearly structured and personalised education. Our curriculum strives to be responsive to each learner, and build on individual strengths and interests. A rolling plan is in place, which supports a balance of stimulating contexts for learning through different learning experiences, themes and subjects.

The Belsteads School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Admissions Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010) and takes account of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2015. We welcome students irrespective of their gender, race, religion, ethnic or national origins, disability or special educational needs, provided that there are good prospects of meeting their needs without unduly prejudicing the education and the welfare of other students.

We recognise that factors governing student admissions are complex and vary from case to case. These factors might include:

- Nature of the student's needs and previous educational experiences
- Recommendations / expectations of the referring body
- Wishes of the parent / carer and student

PURPOSE

We have formulated this policy to:

- ensure that the school admits those students whose needs, as identified in their Statement of SEN / EHC plan, can be met effectively and in doing so maximises the potential to make progress in all aspects of their development.
- set out the framework within which decisions are made about admissions to the school
- set out the criteria that will be applied where referrals exceed the number of places available
- meet DfE registration as an Independent Special School.

Through this policy we aim to ensure that all parties:

- have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of admission
- have a clear understanding of the opportunities and support available within the school
- are prepared to play their part in ensuring, as far as is possible, the success of any placement.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name	The Belsteads School
Address	Back Lane Little Waltham Essex CM3 3PP
Telephone Number	07537 990355
Email Address	jo.burdon@belsteads.essex.sch.uk
Website Address	www.thebelsteadsschool.com
School Classification	Independent Special School (Secondary)
Ages	10 - 16 years
Year Groups	6 - 11
Primary Needs	SLD, MLD, ASD
Numbers	12 Co-educational
Contact Details	Jo Burdon (Head Teacher) Peter Adams (Proprietor)
Registered Office	As above

PROFILE OF A STUDENT LIKELY TO BE SUITABLY PLACED

Those students likely to be suitably placed will have a diagnosis of SLD / ASD / MLD, which may be compounded by medical conditions including ADHD, Dyslexia / Dysgraphia, ODD and OCD. These can manifest themselves in a combination of difficulties including:

- Severe/Moderate / generalised learning difficulties
- Significantly delayed Speech Language and Communication skills
- Social communication difficulties
- Significant difficulties in attention and impulsivity

- Limited independence

Students are likely to experience a combination of low self-esteem, together with a significant degree of emotional vulnerability. As a result, they may exhibit:

- Unpredictable and intense patterns of behaviours which significantly disrupt the learning of themselves and their peers.
- Distractibility that inhibits their progress even with significant adult support and increasingly individualised personalised learning programme.
- Behaviour which is bizarre and/or self-injurious and/or endangers others.
- Significant anxiety / unhappiness, stress and/or disaffection over a sustained period often accompanied by prolonged periods of absence, leading to a negative attitude towards education.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Referrals for admission to The Belsteads School will arise from a student's Statement of Special Education Needs / EHCP or Annual Review recommendations agreed by the LEA.

All admissions take account of the need to provide education appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and additional educational needs (AEN).

Students can be admitted at any time of year.

Where a request for admission is received, and there is a place available within the school, the following criteria will be applied in order of priority in deciding whether a place is able to be offered:

- The student falls within the terms of the current approval for the school and presents with the aforementioned profile.
- The student has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHCP which specifies that the student has SLD/ ASD / MLD.
- There is room within the appropriate year group / Key Stage
- Adding another student to the group will not adversely affect the provision of efficient education for the students with whom he / she would be educated or the efficient use of resources
- Offering the student a place will maintain a positive balance between the types of AEN within the group and school.
- There is evidence from professionals that the student will benefit from access to a highly personalised programme within a special school.
- Student, parent / carer and, where appropriate, social worker express commitment to the placement.

Refusal of Admission

The Senior Management Team reserves the right to refuse admission in the following cases:

- the school is fully subscribed
- where the admission of a student would compromise the Health and Safety of students and/or staff within the school
- where admission would not be compatible with the efficient and effective education of others

LEGISLATION

In formulating our Admissions Policy, we have taken into account the following legislation:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2015
- Equality Act (2010)
- Education Act 2011

ACCESS TO ADMISSION INFORMATION

A copy of the admission policy is located in the main office and is published on the school website. Additional information can be obtained through direct contact with Jo Burdon (Head Teacher) or Peter Adams (Proprietor).

ADMISSION PROCESS

Admission to The Belsteads School is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team who will look objectively at every referral received. In considering the appropriateness of a placement they will consider the dynamics of the existing student group, potential identified risks and the school's ability to safely manage these.

Once a referral has been received the following steps will be taken:

- Initial assessment of the referral information will be undertaken by a member of the senior management team, who may request further information.
- The school's decision regarding the offer of an initial interview or refusal of the placement will be communicated to the local authority.
- Parents / carers, social worker if applicable and student will be invited to visit the school.

We acknowledge that the admission of a student can be challenging and difficult for the parents/carers as well as the student. The school's services are flexible and needs led and, therefore, we offer support via telephone communication, email, home visits (where appropriate) and appointments that are sensitive to the requests and circumstances of parents/carers. Wherever possible, we aim from the outset to move at the pace of the student.

We acknowledge that for some students their placement at The Belsteads School may require additional resources, over and above the norm, to be put in place. Where this is identified, the local authority will be made aware in advance of the offer of a place.

Stage 1

Initial enquiry

Verbal or written enquiries should be made to the Head Teacher. Detailed information concerning the student should accompany any referral.

Referral information received

Consideration of documentation by Senior Management Team

In determining the suitability of the referral, consideration will be given to the student's educational, health and social history and whether the profile of the student is in keeping with the provision we are able to provide.

Stage 2

Visit

The introductory visit will include:

- A tour of the school
- Introduction to key staff
- Discussion with a member of the SMT concerning such issues as curriculum, school expectations in respect of learning and behaviour, uniform requirements, key policies including positive handling

If, following the introductory visit, all concerned agree that the student's needs can potentially be met, a mutually convenient date will be arranged for the student to spend a session in the school. If appropriate, parents will be asked to remain on site during this session.

Stage 3

Following attendance at the school, and dialogue with the student and parents / carers, representatives from other agencies e.g. social care, a final decision by senior management will be made, and the referring agency informed accordingly.

Confirmation of funding including any additional resources and transport will be sought from the LEA.

Once the offer of a place has been accepted by the referring agency, The Belsteads School will arrange a pre-placement planning meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to finalise admission arrangements, clarify roles and responsibilities and to complete the admission pack.

Stage 4

The student's name will be entered in the Admissions Register on the agreed admission date.

Where a place is not offered

Letter of confirmation to referring agency outlining reasons

In situations where it is agreed that the needs of the student cannot be met within The Belsteads School, a letter outlining reasons will be forwarded to the referring agency.