



# ADMISSIONS POLICY

| <b>Document control table</b>         |              |                   |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Document title:</b>                |              | Admissions Policy |                          |
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| <b>Version number:</b>                |              | V1                |                          |
| <b>Date approved:</b>                 |              |                   |                          |
| <b>Approved by:</b>                   |              |                   |                          |
| <b>Date of review:</b>                |              | September 2023    |                          |
| <b>Document History</b>               |              |                   |                          |
| <b>Version</b>                        | <b>Date</b>  | <b>Author</b>     | <b>Note of revisions</b> |
| V1                                    | January 2023 | LC                |                          |

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# Aspire Admissions and Referral Arrangements for the Academic Year 2022/23

## Introductory Statement

Rotherham Aspire Pupil Referral Unit is a caring, nurturing and developmental environment for young people who have been excluded from or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. After receiving our support over a period of time we recommend individuals move on to their next destination with the skills needed to make this succeed.

Our aim is to re-engage its pupils into education and progression to employment, training or further education. Admission will be through the referral process outlined in this policy. Referrals may be made at any time throughout the year.

## Pupils Supported by the School

Aspire works alongside the local authority to ensure our vulnerable children and young people have access to quality education; we work predominantly with Pupils who have been permanently excluded from school

- Children and young people who are at risk of permanent exclusion from school.
- These placements are intended to be short interventions based on children's needs at KS1,2,3, generally children at KS4 follow a Vocational Pathways, placements can be part-time or full-time. Mainstream schools can refer for a placement through Primary and Secondary Inclusion Panels as facilitated by the Local Authority; this is after other avenues have been explored including, a robust graduated response and a period of time with Aspire Outreach Support. Schools submit referrals to the panels and each case is discussed at a fortnightly meeting attended by Rotherham LA, Rotherham Aspire, EPS, Specialist Inclusion Team, CAMHs and guest Head teachers.

Referral is included as appendix 1.

## Number of Places Available

Rotherham Aspire works in close proximity with the LA and offers the following placements, broken down as follows:

- Primary (age 4-11): 10
- Secondary Placements (age 11-16); 95
- Specialist Y11 SEMH EHCP placements 12

The school operates a maximum class size of eight pupils in order that the educational provision is effective and safe.

Rotherham Aspire endeavours to meet the needs of the Local Authority and the mainstream schools, we are average place funded throughout the year, this means that at times we have more than the average placements and in September we are not at capacity

*\*Demand for places increases during the year and is at a peak between Easter and June before year 11 leavers release places again.*

Additional commissioned places may be available through negotiation with the LA dependant on the organisation.

*In considering the school's position prior to responding to the local authority, the school will take account of the staffing capacity, Key stage, curriculum offers and opportunity, planned class size, year group numbers and learning area into which the child would be placed*

## Registration Arrangements

Where pupils are on the roll of another school and attend for a short period of time (i.e. intervention placements through agreement with the host school) the pupil will be dual registered (main) at his/her mainstream school and dual registration (sub) at Rotherham Aspire. Where pupils are not on the roll of another school (i.e. mainly where they have been permanently excluded) they will be single registered at Rotherham Aspire.

## Referral Arrangements

To acquire a place at the school, pupils must be referred by primary and secondary inclusion panel and this referral is supported by the associate professionals.

Who can refer:

**Schools/Academies:** Referrals via permanent exclusion - comprehensively completed EP1 or equivalent and all supporting documents must be included. Referrals for intervention places in line with graduated response and referral documentation from panels.

For exceptional cases the local authority will agree on admission with Rotherham Aspire.

How to refer:

**1. Permanent Exclusion:** Complete the EP1 form – fully completed forms with supporting evidence must be in place. Incomplete forms or lack of supporting documentation will trigger the forms and referral being returned. There is an expectation that the Headteacher or representative of the excluding school makes contact immediately with the Local Authority Pupil Reintegration Team so that this can be sent to Rotherham Aspire as quickly as possible. The EP1 or equivalent must be with Rotherham Aspire by the date of the Permanent Exclusion in order for Rotherham Aspire to be able to make 6th day provision.

- 1. Partnership Placement:** For children and young people at risk of permanent exclusion. Schools follow referral protocol agreed through the RMBC and Rotherham Aspire. Referral forms should be submitted to RMBC Primary and Secondary Inclusion panels. A discussion is held and decision made about each case to ensure transparency and openness.
- 2. LAC Placements:** Where crisis situations have arisen and children need access to education who are of LAC status, then Aspire will work closely with Virtual Schools or the equivalent out of authority provision to facilitate a placement in the best interests of the child.
- 3. Exceptional cases.** Where pupils who are not attending mainstream school and for whom a mainstream place is not appropriate the local authority can refer for an exceptional

placement using Strategic Fair Access Panel. These referrals will be agreed through Head of Access to Inclusion (RMBC).

Examples of these exceptional cases could be:

- A pupil who is without a school place (detached) and has a complex educational history\* which supports the need for an alternative setting.
- A pupil who has been registered as Child Missing Education and for whom, when located, an alternative setting is considered appropriate provision due to their complex history (The pupil must have moved out of their school's area of coverage e.g. Catchment Area).
- A pupil who has been registered as Child Missing Education and for whom when located has a complex educational history which supports the need for an interim placement pending a long term setting being identified.

\* Complex history – Pupils with a complex education history will have one or more of the following:

- A pupil who has previously been attending an alternative provision out of county and is not deemed school ready by professionals via a multi-agency meeting.
- A pupil who has two or more Permanent Exclusions with the most recent exclusion being within 2 years of the request for a place.

Other services and agencies (e.g. Education Support Services, Educational Psychology, Youth Justice Service, Social Care) and parents and carers may be asked to supply additional information to support the referral process. Partnership places are offered only when agreement has been reached with the mainstream school and parents or carers.

## **The Role of the Local Authority in Permanently Excluded Placements**

RMBC is responsible for arranging full-time education for permanently excluded pupils. RMBC commissions Rotherham Aspire to enable it to fulfil this legal duty.

RMBC works closely with Rotherham Aspire to create a contract agreement, negotiated and drawn up to provide a number of places under an agreed Service Level Agreement.

The Specification will set out the obligations of the school, the commissioning authority and the child's host school so that all parties are clear about:

what will be delivered; how; when; at what price; the responsibilities of the parties to the agreement to maintain the highest level of support to the child; and what monitoring arrangements will be agreed to review the contract performance. The school will seek and welcome contractual arrangements with key local authorities proximal to the school. The school will collate demographic and outcome data gathered in relation to the pupils' needs, attendance, academic performance and SEMH progress. This will be reviewed jointly with the local authority commissioner on an agreed schedule.

## **School and Academy Commissioners**

The school will also provide similar contracting procedures for individual schools and academies. This will be a local service level agreement arranged with the school or academy to provide alternative provision according to need. This will be bespoke in order to provide personalised programmes of alternative provision as set out in the Operational Guidance- Head of Inclusion

RMBC. The Specification will set out the obligations Rotherham Aspire and the commissioning school or academy so that all parties are clear about: what will be delivered; how; when; at what price; the responsibilities of the parties to the agreement to maintain the highest level of support to the child; and what monitoring arrangements will be agreed inline with the Operational Guidance.

## **Induction**

Once a placement is agreed all pupils will attend a planned induction programme.

Once a pupil has undertaken the initial meeting with parents/carers and Rotherham Aspire staff, they undertake a baseline assessment and they also complete a pupil profile with staff. Pupils are placed in the centre/ class which is most appropriate to them based on their developmental stage, academic ability and age.

Pupils are continually monitored and assessed through group activities, one to one sessions with staff, and feedback by staff through line management with the Senior Leadership Team.

## **The Admission of Pupils with Special Educational Needs.**

Pupils with an education health and care plan, naming mainstream, who have been permanently excluded will be admitted through the same process as documented above. Our SENDCo will work with the EHCP team to ensure the best course of action is followed for the young person.

## **Criteria to be Applied in Respect of Other Pupils when Oversubscribed.**

The following oversubscription criteria will apply when there are more referrals than places available in order of priority:

1. Children who are permanently excluded prioritised in the following order:
2. Children who are looked after by a local authority
  1. Other permanently excluded children.
3. Children referred under the exceptional cases procedure prioritised in the following order:
  1. Children who are looked after by a local authority
  2. Children referred through Strategic Fair Access
4. Children who are placed in Aspire through Primary and Secondary Inclusion Panel.

## **Offers**

Offers of places are made in line with agreed protocol from commissioning bodies.

Referrals will be accepted unless the following apply, the commissioner fails to fund the place, or the school is full.

## **Procedure Following an Offer**

Once the offer of an intervention place has been made, if the commissioner fails to accept the place by an agreed date, it will be assumed that the commissioner no longer wants the place and the offer will be withdrawn.

## **Appeals Against any Refusal to Accept a Referral**

Wherever a referral is refused, the commissioner can submit an appeal to the RMBC through the complaints procedures. Any appeals will be heard within 15 working days.

## **Complaints**

Any objections to this policy or its application should be raised with Rotherham Aspire in the first instance, if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution; they are able to complain following the RMBC complaints procedures.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Rotherham Aspire is committed to equal opportunities and admits pupils across the full spectrum of academic abilities. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and there is a learning support programme for pupils with special educational needs.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be published on the school's website before the end of the preceding September