



Admissions Procedure

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The Link Secondary School

Admissions Procedure

Entry Criteria

The Link School is a school for young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, including students whose communication needs are as a result of their Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Young people should present with a primary or significant delay or disorder in speech, language and communication. The speech, language and communication impairment and additional needs will be significant enough to prevent the young person from learning in a mainstream setting.

All young people must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or be in the process of an assessment for an EHCP.

Any other need such as hearing impairment, physical disability or emotional and behavioural disorder will be secondary to the language and communication impairment and will not be acute.

All young people will require an education programme delivered in a structured environment in which language and communication development forms an integral part.

All young people will require speech and language therapy intervention delivered through a variety of forms such as whole school approaches, small groups and / or one to one therapy.

On the Primary site pupils may range from learners who require one to one support for learning to pupils who can work in pairs or small groups for the majority of the curriculum. On the Secondary site all young people are expected to work independently for a short time within the small classroom setting.

On the Primary site pupils may require support with basic self-help and toileting programmes. By Secondary age all young people will be independent in basic self-care skills.

The satellite site caters for pupils with demand avoidant behaviour who have had challenges working in traditional learning groups, whether this has been in a mainstream setting or special school setting. Many of the children have a dual diagnosis of ASD and Attention deficit/Hyperactivity needs. This site is appropriate for children who require a nurture based setting with a highly individualise learning programme.

Any placement at The Link will be as a result of careful consideration of the young person's needs, how effectively the needs can be met and whether they can be met without detriment to other students already in the provision.

The Head Teacher and Governing body apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend the school.

Admission

Parents are welcome to visit the school for a school tour and a discussion with a member of the senior leadership team, although it should be noted that there can be no binding commitment about the student's suitability, or an offer of a place, before the LA has made a recommendation about placement.

The school has a philosophy of student centred learning where barriers to learning are considered from the outset with thought to the most appropriate provision to enable the young person to overcome these barriers in their learning. The individual approach to admissions is considered important to help parents make the best and right decision for their child whether this is to finally be at The Link or another more appropriate school.

The Local Authority responsible for the young person will need to support any application via a consultation process with the school. This will involve sending an official letter of consultation with any relevant paperwork, alongside the school inviting the young person for a day assessment. Consultation with parents, communication with the current educational provision and discussion with school professionals who have been involved in the assessment will also be an important part of the process.

Once the assessment process has been completed and the staff team agree that the needs and provision set out in the EHCP can be met, the responsible Local Authority will follow their procedures as to whether to agree to the placement and funding. Once agreed the Academy Admissions team will produce a funding agreement between the Academy and the Local Authority.

Our admissions range from Year R to year 6 on the Primary site and Year 7 to Year 13 on the Secondary site. Pupils in the satellite site may cross the Primary and Secondary age range, although they will be grouped by cognitive ability and key stage. Young people usually enter the school at the start of the academic year; however admissions can take place across the school year. Admissions for each year group are determined using the same criteria, namely:

- Whether The Link would be suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEND of the young person.
- Whether the attendance of the young person at The Link would be compatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.
- If there is a space in a compatible class, meaning there must both be a space in the relevant Key Stage and a space in a suitable class to meet the young person's needs.

The standard number of students on roll at The Link is 147, with 53 places available at Primary, 70 available at Secondary and 24 places at the Satellite site. Young people are taught in small classes that have a maximum of 9 learners. Students are grouped by their learning ability and learning style across the school to ensure they have an appropriate peer group and to make the best of their strengths as well as giving them the best opportunity to overcome their learning barriers. It is sometimes necessary to admit one young person over another, dependent upon whether there is a space available in the appropriate class for the student's learning style and need. Priority is normally given to young people from Sutton LA and Croydon LA, followed by other neighbouring authorities, namely Merton and Surrey, followed by other South London boroughs. This ensures that the school is able to work with

Local Authorities to educate young people in a suitable school near to the student's home. Occasionally a young person who has a sibling in the school will be given priority over another learner if their special educational need fits the admissions criteria.

Oversubscription criteria

If The Link School is oversubscribed but the needs of the young person can be met, then the application will be added to a waiting list system for the relevant age group and type of need and reassessed if a place becomes available in an appropriate class.

If The Link School has exceeded the Local Authority commissioned places it may still be possible to offer a placement but Sutton LA would be expected to pay the additional placement cost. If it is another LA requesting an additional place then they would be required to negotiate with Sutton LA regarding the payment of the additional placement cost.

Exit criteria

A young person will be referred to the LA SEN panel if:

- It is considered that he/she has progressed and developed such that it is the view of the school that he/she may be able to access a differentiated mainstream curriculum
- Other changing needs of the young person indicate that an alternative provision may be more appropriate, including more specialist provision

Appeals (The First-Tier Tribunal –Special Educational Needs and Disability)

If a parent or guardian of a young person in respect of whom an EHCP is maintained by a Local Authority appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), either against the naming of the school in the young person's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name the school, the school agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal. Where the school, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) has determined that it should be named in a young person's EHCP, the school must admit the learner to the school.

Related Policies

Equality and Diversity Policy

SEND policy and Local Offer