

1A. Admissions Policy and Procedure-Sheiling School

Reviewed: SMT, June 2024 (Every 2 years)

Ratified by Board: August 2024

Next Review date: Spring Term 2026

EDI Assessment: SSET does not currently identify any EDI impact of this policy; should new information come to light, this will be considered at the next review

1. Admission to The Sheiling Ringwood - Sheiling School

Prospective students, who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and are identified as having moderate, severe or complex learning difficulties, in particular ASD, may be referred to The Sheiling Ringwood either by parents and local authorities (LAs) or Social Services departments, or through tendering consortiums of LAs.

The stages for admission of students to Sheiling School are usually as follows:

1. For approaches by:
 - a. **Informal - Parents/carers:** parents/carers and, if appropriate, relevant professionals, will be invited by Sheiling School's Referrals and Transitions Officer or School Administrator for an informal visit to the school.
 - b. **Formal - Funding authorities:** usually the authority will provide the relevant documentation on the student's education history, including their current EHCP, for initial consideration by Sheiling School. In the case of tendering consortiums, this may have a strict timescale attached and parents may only be invited to consider Sheiling School at a later stage of the process.
2. On receipt of an enquiry, the School Administrator Transitions and Referrals Officer will invite the parents /carer or LA for an informal visit. If wishing to pursue a placement, parents will be asked to complete an application form and submit relevant, up-to-date documents including, but not limited to, annual review reports, consultant assessments etc. The school will also need to see a copy of the prospective student's current EHCP, in identifying provision in Section F and determining whether this provision can be met at Sheiling School.
3. Upon receipt of a completed application and all relevant records, a decision will be made by the Senior Management Team (SMT) regarding whether it is appropriate to further the admissions process. This decision is based upon a number of factors including age, SEN and compatibility with class, house and peer groups. Arrangements will then be made to visit the student at their current school/college and/or home/residential setting (if a residential placement is requested). After this pre-assessment visit, the SMT will decide if a student will be invited for an assessment day. The length of the visit is decided according to individual needs and, for residential students, is generally from 11am on the arrival day to 2pm the following day. However, it may be decided by the relevant team around the student that this is not in their best interest.

4. During the assessment day, all relevant staff, including therapists, will meet the student. It may be necessary to interview the parents/carers on this day too. Following the assessment day, the School Administrator, in liaison with the SMT, will determine if Sheiling School can meet the needs of the student concerned. If this is the case, then usually within 10 to 15 term-time working days of the assessment taking place, the School Administrator will either:
 - a. Offer, in writing, a place at the school, stating start date and including these documents:
 - i. Terms of admission
 - ii. Term dates
 - b. Advise in writing that there is no current vacancy at Sheiling School and offer that the student's name is kept on a waiting list.
 - c. Advise that Sheiling School cannot meet the student's needs and therefore will not be offering a place.
5. In the event of a place being offered, parents/carers and/or LAs will be requested to confirm in writing, by the date stated in the offer letter, their acceptance under the Terms and Conditions of Admission at the stated fee level (Assessment Fee). Fees are quoted on an individual basis and are included in our offer letter and we require formal confirmation from those funding the placement that they have accepted the terms of the placement detailed in our offer.
6. Where an offer of a place is not accepted by those funding the placement by the date stated in the offer letter and the place is then requested, the Sheiling may need to decline the place or amend the fee or other aspects of the offer, or reassess.
7. Upon receipt of confirmation, and no later than two weeks prior to the admission start date, the Transitions and Referrals Officer or School Administrator will send the parents/carer an information pack. This will include details of the student's Teacher and House Manager as well as a clothing list for residential students. A transition-in plan will be compiled outlining details and strategies to support the student with their move to Sheiling School. This will usually include further visits by Sheiling staff to the student's current environment(s) and a student's guide differentiated to meet the needs of the student's individual needs. Transition visits, for the student to visit Sheiling on one or more occasions to familiarise with the environment and staff, prior to starting their placement, may also be appropriate.
8. At the same time, it is customary that the funding body will issue the contract for the place to the school. The Finance Team and Head of School will review and return the contract. The majority of placing authorities use the National Contract and some will also use other/ bespoke contracts.

The Sheiling Ringwood will comply with the terms and conditions of the National Contract (NC), where applicable, or other specific contracts with the LA once this has been signed by both parties. The Sheiling Ringwood will also comply with the guidelines of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Every student is admitted on the understanding that the first 12 weeks of the placement is seen as an assessment period. An Assessment Review will then be held at the end of the first term/assessment period. The ongoing fee level will be confirmed at the Assessment Review. In exceptional cases, it may be necessary to extend the assessment period and to request additional support for the student if additional information or support needs emerge during the assessment period. This could involve

material changes being requested to the levels of educational or non-educational provision within the student's EHCP. Where possible, the Assessment Review will be combined with the Annual Review of the EHCP, or the Annual Review requested and held afterwards if implications for EHCP provision need to be discussed. In all cases, the Sheiling will seek to advocate for our students and ensure that needs identified have suitable provision included for them within their contract and fee.

The Sheiling Ringwood reserves the right to postpone or cancel the process of admission of a student if circumstances change, eg. the student's needs or behaviours change or if there is no longer space and appropriate facilities for that particular student.

2. Terms of Admission

2.1 Fee Structure

Once a place has been offered and it is accepted by the funding authority, an invoice will be sent out and fees become due within 30 days of receipt. Charges may apply for late payment.

Every student is admitted on a 12-week assessment basis. At the Assessment Review, the fee will be confirmed and subsequently reviewed annually.

Fees are payable termly in advance unless otherwise agreed.

We provide a bespoke quote for fees which is calculated on an individual basis and tailored to the specific, individual needs of each student.

Fees may be adjusted yearly to take into account the rate of inflation, or other costs such as changes in regulatory requirements and staffing, etc. Any changes required in view of the student's educational or non-educational needs and the associated provision will also require an adjustment to fees eg. for increased direct or indirect therapy intervention. Any increases will be notified to LAs – or the person responsible for funding the placement - well in advance of any increase taking place.

- Accounts will be due on presentation of three termly invoices.
- Fees are based on an individually priced package of education, care and health provision.
- If any sum payable under a contract is not paid within the 30 day period then a charge may be applied. The sum will bear interest at the applicable rate under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, accruing on a daily basis.
- Fees generally exclude personal expenses, pocket money and transport costs (other than included off site visits which will be charged as extra, when appropriate).
- LAs will be notified of increases well in advance and in line with the NASS or current mutually agreed national contract.
- It is our policy to make it clear at the Assessment Review whether the initial fee quoted in our offer letter is confirmed and that all relevant parties are aware of the current fee level. The LA will also be informed in writing.

2.2 Policy of Review

After initial assessments, Individual Education Plans are formalised in consultation with teachers and house staff working directly with the student, according to the Code of

Practice. All pupils have an Annual Review of their EHCP.. Parents of privately funded pupils are encouraged to follow the same procedure. Summary reports are sent out to all parties two weeks prior to the Annual Review.

Every child admitted to the school is offered a place on the understanding that this will cease in the July after the statutory school leaving age is reached (for Upper School Programme students this will be the July after turning 19).

In line with the Code of Practice, the student's Transition Review will take place during Year 9 and all subsequent Annual Reviews will take account of the need to update the student's transition plan/arrangements. The review will consider the suitability of ongoing placement in Sheiling School's Upper School Programme (Years 12 to 14). Following the review, a Transition Action Plan will be drawn up.

2.3 Exclusion and Withdrawal Policy

Exclusion:

Please refer to our separate Sheiling policy document 1B Exclusion Policy which can be accessed via our website.

Withdrawal:

If a student is withdrawn by parents/carers or the placing authority, 6 weeks' notice is typically required in writing, or equivalent fees are expected to be paid in lieu of notice. The notice period may vary depending on the terms and conditions of the agreed contract. The Sheiling Ringwood reserves the right to charge interest at 5% per month on accounts overdue by more than two months.