

Admissions Policy

Introduction

Gretton School is an independent specialist provision for children and young people who have been diagnosed with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC), specifically high functioning autism and Asperger's Syndrome (AS). The school offers co-educational, day and weekly boarding placements for children aged 5 to 19.

Students must have a final Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care Plan and will be diagnosed with high functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome. However, due to the variation in diagnostic terminology, students may be diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder, autistic spectrum condition, autism or as having autistic traits.

Whilst many children may have additional needs, a diagnosis of ASC, AS or autistic traits is the primary requirement for admission to Gretton.

All proposed admissions are carefully considered to ensure that the school is suitable to the student's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs; and that the placement would be compatible with the provision of efficient education for students currently on roll at the school. Admissions into Key stage 4 and 5 will also take into account current programmes of study, to ensure the effective delivery of accredited qualifications.

Student numbers are managed to ensure a maximum of 6 or 7 (where appropriate) students per class, providing students with an appropriate peer group, according to key stage and ability levels.

Where possible, placements will commence at the beginning of an academic term, although consideration will be given to individual circumstances. Where appropriate a gradual transition will be planned, involving multi-agency liaison and school visits.

Where a vacancy is not immediately available, the student's name will be added to the admissions waiting list and a placement will be made available as soon as is practicable. Placement offers are valid for a maximum of 6 months, assuming that there have been no significant changes to the child's needs or statement / EHC plan provision. Where a placement has not become available during this time frame a further assessment will be completed prior to admission.

Criteria for Admission

- The student must have a Final Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care plan identifying ASC/AS as their primary need
- The student's placement needs to be supported by the referring Local Authority who will, in most cases, provide appropriate fees.

- Parents/Carers should be supportive of the placement and in agreement with the strategies and ethos of the school
- Continued parental support is necessary for the placement to continue once the student has started at Gretton
- The Senior Management team must be satisfied that the school can meet the student's needs
- The Senior Management team is responsible for ensuring an appropriate gender, ability and age balance within the school
- Travel distance from home will also be taken into account
- The student's needs can be met by the residential provision, where appropriate

Pre-Admission Procedure (LA referral)

1. Following receipt of paperwork from the LA, a member of the senior management team and Referrals Officer will review the enclosed reports and respond to the LA within 15 working days:
 - a) to request further information from the LA
 - b) to confirm in principle that the placement may be appropriate, pending assessment
 - c) to advise that the placement would not be appropriate, stating reasons
2. Where appropriate an assessment will be offered and permission sought to contact the parents/carers.
3. Parents/carers will be invited to visit the school and meet with staff to discuss their child's needs and the facilities available at Gretton.
4. The school will arrange for an assessment of the student. Arrangements may vary depending on timescales, availability and the student's needs; for example additional visits may be arranged to the student's home or their current education provision. Discussion will take place with parents prior to the assessment visit as to how best to prepare the student and where appropriate a schedule and social story will be emailed to the parent to help in this preparation in order that account can be taken for each student's autism.
5. Following assessment further action may include:
 - Recommendation for a further assessment visit
 - Recommendation for further clarification / assessment to be sought from professionals as to suitability of placement (This might include an Educational Psychology assessment)

An assessment report will be sent within 10 working days of the final visit to the LA, recommending whether the school can meet the student's needs. Any offer

letter will include details of fees, support level, proposed amendments to the Statement / EHC plan and a start date.

6. Following confirmation from the LA that funding has been agreed, the school will contact the parents//carers and current school, if appropriate, to commence transition planning and placement contracts will be issued. Transition planning will take account of the student's individual needs and autism.

Pre-Admission Procedure (Parent Enquiry)

Parents and Carers are able to contact the Referrals Officer via telephone on 01223 277438 or via the website www.grettonschool.com, to request a copy of the school prospectus, to discuss the school provision and enquire about admission procedures.

Appointments to visit the school are available on request, providing an opportunity to tour the school and meet with various staff members.

Applications for a place can be made by contacting the Local Authority.

Should a parent/carer choose to appeal a Local Authority decision not to support placement, the school will comply with assessments and visits as required by SENDIST.

Assessment Procedure

- An education assessment will be conducted by the Assessment Team; including a senior teacher or member of the senior leadership team and member of the behaviour support team
- A residential assessment will be conducted by the Head of Care, where appropriate
- An Educational Psychology assessment will be completed where appropriate

The assessment will involve the following:

- A tour of the school
- Parents/carers to meet with a member of senior staff and / or the Residential Manager to discuss needs and their child's understanding of their diagnosis of autism
- Education Assessment
- Theory of Mind assessment
- Classroom observation
- Residential observation (where appropriate)

Admission Procedure

The form tutor or member of the assessment team will liaise with parents / carers and the Local Authority to devise a Transition Plan, which may include:

- Transition visits to Gretton School

- Part-time timetable and schedule for gradually increasing attendance
- Aims for transition including individual strategies relating to each student and their autism

The Referrals Officer will send a welcome pack to the parents / carers, including information about the school, consent forms and student information forms, including 'My Profile' documentation.

Previous school files and other relevant professional reports will be requested from the LA. Safeguarding records will be stored in the Head Teacher's office.

The Pastoral Manager will implement therapy support as outlined in the Statement / EHC plan and recommendations from the assessment report

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) will be sent to parents/carers within three weeks of admission and will be reviewed on a termly basis.

Gradual transition plans will be reviewed regularly with an aim to move towards full time attendance as soon as is appropriate.

Appendix 1:

Referral Flowchart

