

## **ATKINSON HOUSE SCHOOL**

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY, CRITERIA AND PROCEEDURE**

Children are referred for Special Education at Atkinson House School through Northumberland County Council Admissions Panel. More information, including contact details, can be found at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=2310>.

Written referrals will be sent to the Head Teacher by the Local Authority in order for the school to consider whether the child's Statement of Educational Needs or Health, Education and Social Care Plan can be met at Atkinson House School.

The Head teacher and senior staff will consider the papers and inform Northumberland County Council SEN Department informing them of their admissions decision.

### **NATURE OF THE SCHOOL**

Atkinson House School first opened in September, 2000, and we remain Northumberland Councils only designated provision for pupils aged 11-19, with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH).

We are committed to and passionate about the learning and progress of our pupils. Staff and governors have high aspirations for our children and we aim to provide a high quality, relevant and balanced education for all our pupils that focuses on individual, personal and academic achievement.

### **KEY UNDERSTANDINGS**

- The LEA has a duty to place pupils.
- If more applicants arise than there are places available, the priority order of applicants will be determined by the LEA in consultation with the Head Teacher.
- The LEA will endeavour to respect year group cohorts when seeking to place pupils.
- The LEA will respect key stage cohorts when seeking to place pupils.
- The school will be open and flexible when the LEA seeks to place a pupil. For example, the school will recognise that "going over numbers" may not be a very big issue if there are poor attenders in a cohort.
- A formal offer of a place at Atkinson House School will not normally be given until the school has been visited by the pupil and parent(s) / carer(s). So as not to disenfranchise any parent(s) / carer(s) the school visit may occur outside normal school hours and the normal working week.
- All pupils will partake in a Child Centred Review (CCR) once a year.

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

1. Pupils will be subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs (refer to 8, below)
2. The child's background profile should contain evidence of more Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties than can be addressed through the individual attention, routine counselling and support that teachers are usually able to offer through mainstream school's behaviour / discipline, SEN and pastoral policies and structures.
3. There should be evidence that the difficulties that the child is experiencing in making curriculum and / or behavioural progress are the result of severe SEMH difficulties and not related to other factors such as simply a lack of attendance at school, the product of work that is beyond, or below, his competence, or his teachers' not having tried a range of teaching and learning approaches to modify the child's behaviour in the school setting.
4. There should be evidence of the child's previous school(s) having notified and sought the involvement of appropriate agencies and support services external to the school.
5. That the child's problems have been exhibited in a variety of situations and over a significant period of time.
6. That the child's individual education plan contains appropriate targets for improvement and that progress has been assessed and recorded accurately and objectively.
7. That reviews have concluded, that despite meaningful intervention by the mainstream school(s), it is unlikely that the pupil's need can be met without significant extra resource.
8. In exceptional circumstances an assessment place may be made available to a pupil without a Statement of Special Educational Need, provided criteria 2 - 7 have been met, for whom it would be helpful to do so in order to clarify the precise nature and extent of the child's special educational needs. This will be available under the "shared placement scheme" offered to Northumberland schools.

This will, in turn, depend on the availability of places within Atkinson House School and must not prejudice the provision of effective education for statemented pupils already admitted to the school, or the admission of a child for whom the statementing process identifies Atkinson House School as an appropriate placement.

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

The school will continually liaise with the LEA Special Needs Officer for the school's pyramid concerning the pupil roll. This information will be available to the statements panel.

1. Following a statements panel meeting the paperwork on any pupil the LEA wishes to place at Atkinson House School will be sent to the head teacher.
2. The LEA will seek the head teacher's observations about the appropriateness of the placement. These views may be in respect of the pupil himself or numbers / organisational issues within the school.
3. If the head teacher feels that there are issues that make placement inappropriate, then he will indicate this in writing. The LEA and school will then try to find a mutually acceptable way forward.

4. If the head teacher considers that placement is appropriate then he will initiate placement procedures, in consultation with the LEA, as appropriate.

#### **PRE-ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

1. The pupil and parent(s) / carer(s) will be invited to visit the school and meet the head teacher, staff and pupils. At this meeting the way the school operates and runs will be explained to the visitors. Our expectations of pupils will be explained as well as our working methods.

##### **We will cover;**

- curriculum availability
- rewards and sanctions
- physical restraint
- parental involvement
- medication
- school uniform, jewellery and items of value
- alcohol, smoking and illegal substances
- emergency contact arrangements
- they will be given a school prospectus
- contact detail(s) form
- e-safety/digital use pro-forma
- photo
- 

2. If both parent(s) / carer(s) and school are in agreement, then at the end of the visit a date and time for admission will be arranged.
3. On occasion, after the parent(s) / carer(s) visit, the parent(s) / carer(s) may express the opinion that they do not want their son to attend Atkinson House School. The head teacher will inform the appropriate LEA officer of this who will then co-ordinate an LEA response.
4. On occasion, after the parent(s) / carer(s) visit, the head teacher may feel unable to offer a place to the pupil. The head teacher will discuss his reservations and opinions with the appropriate LEA officer. Together they will endeavour to seek a mutually agreeable way forward.

Where three or more pupils are to be admitted into a class group or cohort their admission will be on a gradual or "drip feed" model. This has the advantage of creating less disruption to the school as the new pupils and increased numbers are absorbed into the school.

#### **DAY OF ADMISSION**

On the first morning of their attendance at Atkinson House the pupil will be met by a senior member of staff and introduced to the Form Tutor. Access to the breakfast bar and social area will be arranged. Any concerns will be addressed by staff to alleviate any issues.

April 2017