

ST DOMINIC'S SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Written by:	Head of Admissions
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Admissions Procedure

CRITERIA

St Dominic's School offers provision for up to 184 pupils and students with autism and/or specific learning difficulties including speech, language and communication needs, from the age of 7 to 19 years. St Dominic's has provision for 21 Sixth Form students.

For a child to be admitted, the Academy must be named by a Local Authority (LA) in the child's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). This generally follows extensive consultation with the Academy. Pupils/students will be considered for the Academy when it is clear that they will benefit from the provision and that they meet the following criteria:

- a. Applicants will have an EHCP. However, in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to make an emergency placement. Examples of exceptional cases when it may be necessary to make an emergency placement include:
 - i. the child's medical circumstances have changed suddenly, causing a rapid and serious deterioration in the child's health or development
 - ii. where a child arriving unexpectedly in the LA exhibits such significant learning difficulties as would normally warrant an EHCP.
- b. Applicants will have a range of special educational needs and disabilities, some of which may be complex. This may include one, or a combination of the following:
 - i. Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC/ASD)
 - ii. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
 - iii. SpLD - Specific Learning Difficulties such as Dyslexia & Dyspraxia
 - iv. Moderate Learning Difficulties
 - v. Fine and Gross Motor Difficulties
 - vi. Motor Planning and Co-ordination Problems
 - vii. Sensory Processing Difficulties
 - viii. Perceptual Difficulties
 - ix. Emotional Vulnerability
 - x. Anxiety

Parents/carers wishing their child to attend St Dominic's School should ask their LA to name the Academy in their child's EHCP.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

A child cannot be refused admission on the basis of 'oversubscription' when the academy is named in their EHCP.

VISITS

In cases where the Academy is a possible placement for a child, the family will be encouraged to visit. However, there can be no binding comment about the child's suitability, nor an offer of a place, before the LA has made a recommendation about placement. If families request a place at the Academy prior to any formal contact by the LA with the Academy, they should be referred to the LA SEN Team.

REFERRAL

To acquire a place in the Academy, children must be referred by a Local Authority. The LA must attach the child's EHCP, their most recent Annual Review and any appended reports about the child from the professionals involved. The Admissions Manager will review the referral papers and request any additional reports required in order to make a decision. A child may be invited in for a period of assessment, particularly if the referral is for an in-year placement, in order to make the best decision possible, taking into account the needs of both the child and the pupils and students already on roll at the Academy. This invitation to assessment should be agreed by the LA before the child attends the Academy.

The Academy will consider all referrals and respond in writing within the time limit set by the LA. If a decision is taken by the Academy not to offer a place, the Academy will give the reasons for that decision according to the Code of Practice. Due to the complex nature of the needs of our pupils and students, we assess referrals to the school in light of the needs of the whole school population, i.e.

- that there is a vacancy in the year group or key stage appropriate for the child's chronological age and developmental stage
- that the child's needs can be met within the school
- that there will be sufficient resources and expertise available
- that the placement will not be incompatible with the efficient education and welfare of the other pupils and students

If the points above are met then the child will be offered a place. If the school is oversubscribed and there is no suitable class available with a space the LA will be notified accordingly and the referral declined in accordance with the reasons below.

The reasons for any decision should be expressed in terms of the needs of the child, whether a place is available at the school within the appropriate provision (e.g. year group or key stage) and/or the efficient education of other pupils and students already at the Academy so that it is clear why the Academy considers that the child does not meet the published Admissions Criteria.

OFFERS

If the Academy can accept a referral, the Admissions Manager will write to the LA accepting the referral, making an offer which will include details of financial requirements, the support to be offered, a start date, the date by which the offer should be accepted and the address to which to respond.

If the LA fails to accept the place by the date set out in the letter, it will be assumed that the LA no longer wants the place and the offer will be withdrawn.

TRANSITION

When placement has been agreed, staff from the Academy will make contact with the child's current placement to arrange a transition programme with exchange of information and reciprocal visits where practical and appropriate.

EXIT CRITERIA

A pupil or student will be referred to the Annual Review / SEN Panel if:

- a. It is considered that he/she has progressed and developed such that it is the view of the Academy that he/she may be able to access a differentiated mainstream curriculum.
- b. Other changing needs of the pupil or student indicate that alternative provision may be more appropriate, including more specialised provision.

ST DOMINIC'S SCHOOL SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

1. Priority will be given to students already on roll at the Academy.
2. Students will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that defines their primary additional needs as related to learning; some students may have more complex needs that cannot be supported in a mainstream FE college. An FE college will have assessed the student and supported this.
3. The Local Authority will have supported the identification of St Dominic's School as the most appropriate placement.

Documentation that could be used to provide evidence of need (this is not exhaustive):

- EHCP
- Annual reviews
- Transition plans
- Medical reports
- Therapy reports
- Other (e.g. educational psychology)

Decisions on whether to offer a Sixth Form placement would initially be made by the Principal and Head of Upper School. In general, this decision would then be submitted to the Local Authority for consultation at panel (although different LAs have various mechanisms in place for decision making) and they would then inform the Academy, school or college of their view.

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

If a parent or guardian of a child 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 Academy in the child's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name the Academy, the Academy agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal.

Where the Academy, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) has determined that it should be named in a child's EHCP, the Academy must admit the child to the Academy.