Oak Bank School

Admissions Policy

Prepared by	Date Approved	GB/ Committee	Review Period	Next Review
VR/LB	July 26	Full Board	1 Year	July 27

Admissions Process and Criteria

Oak Bank School is a specialist setting for children whose **primary need is social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH).** It is expected therefore that children entering the school will have identified SEMH needs and hold an Education, Health and Care Plan that states as such. Oak Bank School caters for pupils from year 5 to year 13 in key stages 2, 3, 4 and 5.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the school admits, as far as is possible, those pupils whose special educational needs can be met effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of development.

Admission to the school shall be determined by formal consultation.

Children who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may have immature social skills and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships. These difficulties may be displayed through the young person becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. SEMH can manifest as difficulties relating to problems of mood (anxiety or depression), problems of conduct (oppositional defiance and more severe conduct problems including aggression), self harm, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Some children may have recognised disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), attachment disorder, an anxiety disorder or more rarely schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Admissions Criteria

<u>When considering the appropriateness of a placement request, it is anticipated that a pupil would be identified as exhibiting at least one of the following behaviours:</u>

- Expressed desire to harm others for reasons of self- esteem and/or status, including psychological intimidation or bullying
- Regular sustained aggression towards staff and peers which may include violence and assault whilst in crisis
- Impulsive behaviour likely to cause significant (needing first aid) harm to themselves or others and necessitating the need for frequent physical intervention from trained staff
- Persistent inability to manage their own behaviour
- Persistent non-compliance with directions, rules and routines regularly disrupting learning and which may occasionally lead to absconding from school
- Inappropriate sexualized behaviour (The impact of this will need to be considered in relation to the safety of current vulnerable pupils)
- Regular low-level self-harming, obsessional behaviour which includes eating disorders
- Persistent lack of empathy and respect for the needs, feelings, emotions and rights of others including inappropriate emotional responses and actions in a given situation, stealing, vandalism
- Behaviours associated with the use of prohibited materials affecting performance in academic and social situations and affecting the pupil's ability to interact appropriately or manage his/ her behaviour without intervention
- Severe and regular damage to property
- Regular safeguarding concerns which may need unplanned access to specialist support staff

The school is unable to support pupils whose primary need is ASD as this is a communication and interaction need as defined in the Code of Practice 2014.

The pupil should not have persistent non-attendance as their rationale for placement.

The school is unable to support pupils with complex medical and personal care needs.

Upon receipt of a consultation the SENDCo will determine whether it would be suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or if the attendance of the child or young person would be compatible with the efficient education of others, or an efficient use of resources. If the school is deemed appropriate and a place is available, then the SENDCo will assess the provision required to meet the child or young person's needs and the level of top-up funding to support this. The SENDCo may speak to professionals from other agencies including Health and Social Care who may make recommendations as to the child's suitability or compatibility. Should it be agreed that a place is appropriate an offer letter will be sent to the relevant local authority who will then decide whether they wish to accept the place at the level of funding requested.

Oak Bank School currently has capacity for 127 pupils from Central Bedfordshire and neighbouring local authorities. Whilst there is no specific class size number, the limited space in many specialist teaching areas means that Oak Bank School has a limit of six pupils in many classes in order to avoid potential risks to safety and wellbeing.

In the event of the school being at capacity local authorities may request that a child be added to a 'waiting list'. However, as the majority of pupils remain on roll for their whole school career there is no guarantee that a place will become available.

However, priority will be given to:

- Pupils who have moved into the local authority and previously attended a 'like for like' provision.
- Pupils who are looked after

As a specialist setting we are committed to meeting the needs of pupils with SEMH difficulties. We do accept however, that in some cases the SEMH need may be so profound that the needs cannot be met within Oak Bank School. For example where risk of violence is so extreme that it cannot be managed safely in our specialist setting or the need for therapeutic intervention is beyond what can be provided within the resources available. These cases will be considered through the EHCP review process.

Reasons for not admitting a child must comply with the SEN Code of Practice criteria which are that the school is:

- Unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs
- Incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated
- Inefficient use of resources

Oak Bank School will only consider the admission of pupils who are in Year 11 in exceptional circumstances and when meeting the above criteria. For example, the case of a child or young person in local authority care, with an EHCP moving into the authority, might be considered exceptional. The rationale for this is to minimise disruption at a crucial time to established Year 11 pupils who will be in their final stages of accredited courses and involved in preparation for onward transition from the school.

Determining the level of top-up (additional funding above place funding) <u>The Admission Process.</u>
The attendance and admissions officer will arrange a home visit to start the admission process. This will help us gather information about the pupil so that we can ensure a successful transition. At this meeting the attendance and admissions officer will outline the transition plan, complete all necessary paperwork and give a start date; although this may be dependent on the Transport Commissioning and Entitlement Team at the local authority if the student is entitled to free transport.

A tour will be arranged for the pupil after the home visit. During the visit the pupil will meet a variety of staff and may be introduced to their key worker.

If there are other professionals involved with the pupil, the school may request a meeting with them to gain a better understanding of the pupil's needs prior to admission.

All pupils will have a phased transition. The expectation is that this will be a 2 week part time timetable. At the end of the initial 2 week period a meeting will be held with the SENCO, behaviour team and key worker to evaluate progress of the pupil and identify whether the pupil remains on a part time timetable or whether they progress to full time. The result of this meeting will be shared with parents/carers by phone. The aim is always to ensure that the pupil becomes full time as soon as possible, whilst ensuring that their emotional wellbeing remains paramount.

Transport
Parents/carers must apply for transport via their local authority website. They will then decide if the transport will be granted and inform parents of the provider.

Post 16 Applications
Pupils who have SEMH as their primary need on their EHCP will be considered for the post 16 provision providing they meet the above criteria. Post 16 applicants will have to demonstrate that a place at Oak Bank School beyond year 11 will enable them to build on Key Stage 4 having attended and engaged satisfactorily well in the programmes provided in Year 11 and where other post 16 providers would not provide suitable education or training as part of their progression plan.

Pupils will be asked to fill in an expression of interest in February and then asked to attend an admission interview to ensure that the place is suitable. Once a place has been agreed, students will work closely with the Head of post 16 to ensure a smooth transition.

Charging Agreement Out of Authority
All Out of Authority students who are placed at Oak Bank School will be invoiced on a termly basis to be paid immediately.

Banding rates are listed below.

Standard funding	(previously band 4)	£43,464
Exceptional funding	(previously band 5)	£22,811

All enquiries regarding admissions should be made to the SENDCo Mrs Victoria Rankin
vrankin@oakbank.beds.sch.uk