

The Lotus Academy Trust



Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

The Damara School



Specialist SEMH Independent School

Admissions Policy

Approved by: Trust Board

Initial Ratification: 31 August 2019

Review: October 2020; Oct 2021, Sept 2023

Next review due by: September 2025

Vision

Our vision is to provide every pupil with safe, rewarding, personalised education and support to improve their life chances, prepare them for life and the world of work.

The School is a co-educational day school, providing specialist education for up to 39 pupils, aged 5-16 years with a primary diagnosis of social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). The School is non-denominational and has a secular ethos but respects the cultural needs and religious beliefs of all.

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to set out the school's admission procedures and to demonstrate that pupil admissions will be fair, open, and transparent.

Legislation and guidance

The Admissions Policy is in accordance with:

- Regulation 5 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Departmental guidance on school attendance (page 7)
- Children Missing Education
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006: regulation 15
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006: regulation 10

Admission Criteria

- The pupil will be aged between 5 and 16 years
- Pupils have a primary diagnosis of social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)
- Pupils must be referred to the school by Local Authority Commissioners and not directly by parents or carers
- Pupils may have Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) however this is not a requirement for a referral
- The pupil may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their emotional and behavioural difficulties. Difficulties are often the cause or the result of other special educational needs
- Difficulties may arrive out of difficult life experiences or be the result of some medical condition. Some pupils may have a long history of disturbed, difficult or delinquent behaviour of a serious kind that may include violence towards peers and/or adults
- The pupil must express a commitment to the placement
- The pupil's parents/carers must express a commitment to the placement
- The admittance of the pupil will not be detrimental to other pupils already on the school roll
- There is a space available in the pupil's academic year group

The LA will:

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the pupil
- Name the school in Section I of the EHC Plan
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school

The Referral Process

Stage 1

Referrals made to the School will normally be made by the Local Authority. Commissioners will use the referral form (Appendix 1) which must be completed in full and accompanied with the pupil's most recent IEP, professional reports and behaviour plan if available. Where this is not the case, the school will seek access to such information as possible including information regarding the individual's Education, Health and Social background. Senior staff will analyse all available information on the pupil to assess whether the pupil meets the admission criteria for the school.

The SLT will assess whether or not the school can meet the pupils needs and if so, arrange for an initial visit to the home or a mutually convenient venue close to the home before a visit to the school.

Stage 2

The visit to the home will include:

- Discussions with the family and other professionals (if involved) around whether the school can meet the child's needs, their strengths, concerns, relationships and aspirations

The visit to the School will include:

- a tour of the school
- an introduction to key staff
- a discussion with senior staff concerning School policies and procedures and the assessment programme

Visitors will also receive relevant information e.g. School Prospectus, Home School agreement, etc

Stage 3

If, following the visits, we believe we can meet needs based on stage 2 and that the pupil and parents/carers are committed to the placement, then the Assistant Headteacher will contact both the LA to inform them of our decision to offer a place and arrangements will be made for admission. Parents/carers will be provided with a welcome pack detailing the school's key policies and procedures.

Stage 4

Once the pupil walks through our doors, the pupil will engage in a 2-week intensive Assessment programme. This includes the use of diagnostic and personality assessments to determine the pupil's academic levels, strengths, skills, prior knowledge, concerns and aspirations. All data produced during the assessment programme forms the benchmark or starting point from which progress is measured and informs personalised planning and interventions

Information provided to parents on acceptance of a referral

The following information, as part of the school prospectus will be provided to all parents and prospective parents of pupils:

- a. the school's address and telephone number
- b. name of head of school and CEO
- c. information relating to the proprietor
- d. contact details of the Chair of Trustees
- e. the school's aims and ethos

Completing the Admissions Register

The school admissions register contains an index, in alphabetical order, of all the pupils at the school. (see Appendix 2)

A pupil is classed as a pupil at the school "from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school."

It includes the following details for each pupil:

- Full name
- Sex
- The name and address of every known parent and an indication of the parent(s) with whom the child normally resides
- Emergency contact details of the parent with whom the pupil normally lives (include at least 2 emergency contacts)
- Day, month and year of birth
- Day, month and year of admission (or re-admission) to the school
- Name and address of the school last attended, if any

Pupils with multiple addresses, or whose address will change

If a parent tells the school that the pupil will live with a parent at another address in the future (either as well as, or instead of, the pupil's current address), the register must include:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will normally live
- The pupil's new address
- The dates from which it is expected the pupil will live there

This information is only required where it is reasonably practicable for the school to obtain it.

Dual-registered pupils, or pupils moving to another school

If a parent tells the school that the pupil is also registered at another school, or will be attending another school in the future, the register must include:

- The other school's name
- The first date on which the pupil attended or is due to attend that school

Again, this information is only required where it is reasonably practicable for the school to obtain it.

Establishing a pupil's 'full name'?

This would normally be the same as the name on the pupil's birth certificate or other official identity document. However, it may also be the full name by which the pupil is generally known.

The school should be satisfied that it is "reasonably practical" for the local authority (LA) to identify the pupil and match up the name on the admission register with information held by other public bodies.

There is no requirement to see a copy of a child's birth certificate, nor is there any other mandatory documentation that parents have to provide to confirm their child's details.

So long as the school's admission authority is satisfied that the information supplied on a child is correct, they can enter this into the admission register.

Holding the register electronically

The admission register will be kept by means of a computer, provided that:

- A back-up copy is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic, micro-fiche or printed copy
 - The admissions register is held electronically in cloud-based storage

- Inspectors (both Ofsted and any LA officer authorised) are allowed access to the electronic register and back-up copies
- Any amendments, their dates, the reasons for them, and the name or title of the person who made the amendments are made clear
- Back-up copies are retained for a period of 3 years after the end of the school year to which they relate

Point of contact

The point of contact for commissioners is CEO: Sandra Govender (07860537119)

Pupil Admission Numbers

The school has a pupil admission number of 39 full-time equivalent (FTE) places. Pupils will not be admitted above the admission number unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a guide, the admission numbers are broken down into:

Key Stage 1	9
Key Stage 2	9
Key Stage 3	9
Key Stage 4	12

We will adopt a 3-year growth plan:

Key Stage	Year 1 (20/21) 03/21	Year 2 (21/22)	Year 3 (22/23)
1	3	6	9
2	3	6	9
3	3	6	9
4	0	6	12
Total	9	24	39

Pupil registration and information sharing

The school will make sure that all pupils are registered accordingly in line with section 434 of the Education Act 1996.

Oversubscription Criteria

In the case of oversubscription, after the admission of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs, the following criteria will be applied:

1. Looked After Children who are in public care and previously Looked After Children
2. An assessment of individual needs and whether these can be best met by a placement at the school.

Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to equal opportunities and admits pupils across the full spectrum of academic abilities. All pupils have equal access to the holistic curriculum and additional therapeutic support.

Removing a pupil from roll

1. Pupils of compulsory school age

Compulsory school age is between the ages of 5 and 16, according to legislation.

We will legally delete a pupil of compulsory school age from our admission register if they:

- Are registered at our school because of a school attendance order and another school is substituted for it, or the attendance order is revoked by the local authority (LA) because arrangements have been made for the pupil to receive full-time education otherwise than at our school
- Have been registered as a pupil at another school, except where it has been agreed with us that the pupil should be registered at more than one school
- Are registered at more than one school and have ceased to attend our school, and the proprietor of any other school at which they are registered has given consent to the deletion
- Have ceased to attend our school and we have received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school
- Have ceased to attend our school and no longer usually live at a place which is a reasonable distance from our school
- Have been granted leave of absence and:
 - Have failed to attend our school within the 10 school days immediately following the end of the leave of absence period; and
 - We do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend our school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - Both us and the LA have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is
- Are certified by a medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to our school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Have been continuously absent from our school for a period of 20 school days and:
 - At no time was their absence during that period authorised by our school; and
 - We do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend our school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - Both us and the LA have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is
- Have been detained as a result of a final court order or order of recall for 4 months and we do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to school at the end of that period
- Have died
- Will cease to be of compulsory school age before our school next meets and they have indicated that they will cease to attend our school
- Have ceased to be a pupil of our school
- Have been permanently excluded from our school

This is explained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and its 2013 and 2016 amendments.

2. Pupils at special schools

As The Damara School is a specialist provision, a pupil who is registered at a special school under arrangements made by an LA cannot be removed from our school's admission register without the consent of that LA, or if that LA refuses to give consent, without a direction of the Secretary of State.

3. Pupils not of compulsory school age

A pupil not of compulsory school age can be deleted from our admission register if they:

- Have ceased to attend our school
- Have been continuously absent from our school for a period of 20 school days and:
 - At no time was their absence during that period agreed by our school;

- We do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend our school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
- Our school has failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is
- Have died
- Have been permanently excluded from our school

We will decide what enquiries to make, and whether they are reasonable, before removing a pupil from our school roll. The term 'reasonable enquiries':

- Gives schools and LAs some flexibility in decision-making, particularly as the steps that need to be taken in an individual case will vary
- Makes clear that there is a limit to what the school and LA are expected to do

This is explained in the DfE's guidance on children missing education (pages 12 to 14) which also includes a list of actions which it's "reasonable to expect" that the LA and the school complete and record one or more of, in the event of a child's whereabouts being unclear or unknown.

Appendix 1: Referral form



Referral Form

Please Note: Incomplete referral forms will not be accepted

1. Referring School, Organisation or Local Authority

Name of referring authority	
Last school attended	

Date of last attendance			
Name of referrer			
Tel. No.		Email	

2. Pupil Details

Name		UPN No.					
Date of Birth		Gender	Male / Female				
Current School Year		Ethnicity					
Contact Address							
EAL		FSM					
PP		SEND category					
LAC		Other					
Social Care support (please highlight)		None	Early Help	FSP	TAC	CIN	CP
If yes, name and contact details of Social Worker							

Medical Needs *(please provide evidence from medical professionals if necessary)*

Medical	
Known Allergies	
Dietary Requirements	
Accessibility Issues	

Parent / Carer Information

Parent / Carer Name			
Tel. No.		Email	
Is parent/Carer aware of the referral?			

2. Education Profile**Pupil's prior attainment**

	Key Stage 2*	Key Stage 3*	Current
Numeracy/Maths			
Literacy/English			
Science			
ICT			
If information is not available please supply a teacher assessment			

* If available

Attendance Information

Current Attendance (%)	Authorised Absence (%)	Unauthorised Absence (%)	Date of last Attendance
Include details of any attendance interventions to date			
Is the pupil a school refuser?	YES / NO		
Attendance Officer Involvement?	YES / NO If yes, please provide contact details		
Name		Tel. No.	

Exclusion history over last 12 months (add more lines if necessary)

Dates of exclusion		Length of exclusion (days)	Reason for exclusion
From	To		

Details of any previous schools attended (add more lines if necessary)

Name of Schools	From	To

3. SEND Profile

Please provide details of the pupil's:

Primary Need			
Secondary Need			
Any Health needs?	YES / NO (If yes, provide more detail)		
Health Care Plan	YES / NO If yes please attach	IEP/ILP	YES / NO If yes please attach
Does the pupil have a specific diagnosis? (e.g. ADHD, ASD, Epilepsy, Dyslexia)		YES / NO	
Does the pupil have a Risk Assessment/Safety Plan in place?		YES / NO If yes, please attach	
Does the pupil have any professional reports		YES / NO If yes, please attach	

4. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Profile

Include as much detail as possible

Known SEMH Issues	Professional Support
Family Overview (i.e. Position of child in relation to siblings, parental details etc.)	

Other Agency Involvement (tick all that apply)

	Current	Expired	Contact Name	Email
YOT				
Police				
Malt/CAMHs				
Connexions				
Other (state)				

5. Reason for Referral

Please provide specific reasons for the referral

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6. Alternative Provision

Has the pupil attended any alternative provision?

Name of Provider	Course (if applicable)	Dates of placement

7. Additional Educational Information

Additional information Please include here any information not included in the referral form such as, being held back/jumped a year	
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8. Stakeholder views

Please rate the pupil's skills in each of the following areas

	Excellent				Poor
Attendance	1	2	3	4	
Time Keeping	1	2	3	4	
Confidence and self esteem	1	2	3	4	
Interaction with other pupils	1	2	3	4	
Interaction with Teachers	1	2	3	4	
Attitude to learning	1	2	3	4	
General behaviour	1	2	3	4	
Attitude to home life and current situation	1	2	3	4	
Parent partnership	1	2	3	4	

Pupil Views (include aspirations)

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Parent/Carer views

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Office use only

Date referral received	
I have contacted the referrer and acknowledged receipt on	
Name	Designation
Start date	
Date of visit to the home	
Date of visit to the school	
Pupil agreement and commitment to placement (sign and date)	
Parent/carers agreement and commitment to placement (sign and date)	

Appendix 2: Admissions Register

This is electronically captured on an Excel Spreadsheet

[illegible]

Appendix 3: Form for a pupil removed from the school roll

Pupil's details	
Name of pupil	
Name of parent(s) who the pupil normally lives with	
Home address	
Emergency contact telephone number for the parent(s) who the pupil normally lives with	
Pupil's new address (if applicable)	
Name of parent(s) who the pupil will normally live with	
New home address	
Date from which the pupil will live at the address	