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| <b>Policy Title:</b>                    | <b>Admissions Policy</b>  |                               |
| <b>Date of Issue:</b>                   | Autumn Term 2020  |                               |
| <b>Date of Review:</b>                  | Summer Term 2022  |                               |
| <b>Author &amp; Role</b>                | Mrs Karen Wells – Deputy Headteacher  |                               |
| <b>Ratified by:</b>                     | Governors Policy Committee  |                               |
| <b>Date:</b>                            | 19/11/2020  |                               |
| <b>Policy Committee Responsibility:</b> | <b>Chair</b><br>W Blundell  | <b>Vice Chair</b><br>H McCann |
| <b>Outcome:</b>                         | This Policy:<br>details colleagues' responsibilities and reflects the school values and philosophy in relation to all admissions to the school to ensure each child settles into the life and routines of the school as easily as possible. The school wishes to work in partnership with parents / carers, and to be supportive and sensitive to the needs of the child and his or her family. |                               |
| <b>Cross Reference:</b>                 | SEN Information Report  |                               |

### **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

Astley Park School is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

### **POLICY REVIEW**

To ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please contact the author of the policy.

## **Admission Policy**

### **Introduction**

Astley Park School is a special school for pupils aged 4-16 years who have a wide range of learning difficulties including moderate, severe or complex learning difficulties, children who are on the autistic spectrum or have communication and language difficulties. The school is located within Lancashire.

### **Rationale**

Through our Admissions Policy and Procedure, the Staff and Governors wish to ensure that all admissions to the school enable a child to settle into the life and routines of the school as easily as possible. The school wishes to work in partnership with parents / carers, and to be supportive and sensitive to the needs of the child and his or her family.

### **Aims**

- To ensure that a child's introduction / transition to Astley Park School is made as easy as possible for the child and his or her family.
- To establish professional and supportive links with parents / carers.
- To begin a positive partnership with parents / carers this will continue throughout the child's stay at Astley Park School.
- To enable the parents / carers to learn about the school, the curriculum and its staff.
- To enable the staff to make early assessments of the child to ensure that Individualised Education Programmes / protocols and procedures are in place as soon as possible.
- To liaise with parents / carers and all professionals who have worked with the child prior to them attending Astley Park School, in order for the staff to gain an early knowledge and understanding of the child's special educational needs.

## **Admissions Procedure for Children Approaching Statutory School Age**

1. Parents / Carers request a without-prejudicial visit to see Astley Park School.
2. An appointment is made with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or school SENCO. Parents / carers are given information about our website containing information about the school including: Local Offer and SEN Information report and have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. During the visit the parents or carers and child meet the school staff and are able to see class groups in action. They also have the opportunity to have short discussions with individual members of staff, where appropriate and meet some of the pupils.
3. Parents / Carers make a request for a place via the Local Authority SEN office.
4. The SEN office send the pupils papers for consideration and request a place at Astley Park School. This is done via a secure email sent to the Headteacher.
5. The SENCO or Deputy Headteacher reads the papers submitted and visits the child in their current nursery, school or home setting to ensure the school is able to meet the special educational needs of the individual.
6. If the child's special educational needs can be met and a place is available, a letter is forwarded from school to the Local Authority (LA), offering a place and stating an agreed start date for the child.
7. The Local Authority (LA) confirms the child's placement at Astley Park School at the local special school head's panel meeting followed by a letter to the parents / carers. A copy of this letter is also sent to school.
8. The Local Authority (LA) also forwards a transport request form to parents / carers which when completed is processed by the LA transport department.
9. Prior to the child's start date, the school will send a welcome letter and information for parents/carers with details about the school website, uniform requirements, Data collection and permission form, procedures for the payment of dinner money, school holiday dates etc. together with information about any transition visits that have been arranged for the child. There will also be an opportunity to meet key members of the school team via parent information afternoons and our meet and greet evenings. Visual social stories can also be provided to aid transition and alleviate any anxieties about starting school. Assistance is provided for parents / carers for the completion of any forms, if it is required, via our parent/carer manager.

10. During our meet and greet evenings parents / carers will meet with their child's new teacher and wider class team and are asked to provide any information which they feel will be useful to help their child settle into school easily. This may include details about the any medical and personal care needs, such as use of medication, any existing input from health professionals i.e. occupational, physio or speech therapy, food preferences and dislikes, cutlery requirements/use, toileting requirements including any programmes currently in place, favoured/ motivating activities and any other supplementary information that may support a positive transition.
11. During the child's transition visits, parents / carers are provided with the opportunity to discuss any queries about school with the Parent/ Carer Manager, Class Teacher, SENCO, Deputy Headteacher and / or Headteacher. Where required, parents / carers also meet with the school nurse, to discuss any medical issues, draw up medical protocols, risk assessments, manual handling plans and complete medical consent forms.
12. During transition, school staff will liaise with the child's present nursery or setting to enable them to be provided with any essential information such as the child's IEP, individual targets and assessment data. Permission is gained from parents / carers to enable this liaison to take place. A representative from school may also attend any annual review, TAF or CAF meetings on request to gather information in preparation for admission.
13. Children who will be commencing their place at the start of the academic year will also be invited to attend our whole school transition week, which takes place in July, prior to the end of the summer term.
14. **The First Day at School**  
The child is welcomed into class on his or her first day and gradually introduced to the activities on offer and the school routine.

Children are closely supported and guided by staff throughout all activities during their school day, at lunchtime, when travelling around the school and in the playground to ensure that they feel re-assured and comfortable in their new school surroundings.

Home / School diaries are sent home for parents / carers in order for them to keep in touch with what is going on in school and at home. Parents / Carers are encouraged to write in these books regularly; especially about any appointments their child may have and other important information such as whether their child has slept the previous night or refused breakfast etc. (Information and comments from parents / carers can often be a good starting point to the school day).

Parents / Carers are encouraged to come into school to discuss any issues however big or small, but we do request that they ring first to make an appointment with the Class Teacher, Parent/ Carer Support Manager, SENCO, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. The parent/carer support manager can also provide home visits where required.

Parents / Carers are also encouraged to contact school, at any time, if they need to discuss anything over the telephone. Although class staff are unable to leave their pupils unattended during the school day, they will endeavour to return any calls at the earliest opportunity.

### **Admissions / Transition Procedure for Children Transferring From Mainstream Schools**

1. Parents / Carers request a without-prejudicial visit to see Astley Park School.
2. An appointment is made with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or SENCO. The parents / carers are given information about our website containing information about the school including: Local Offer and SEN Information report and have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. During the visit the parents or carers and child meet the school staff and are able to see class groups in action. They also have the opportunity to have short discussions with individual members of staff, where appropriate and meet some of the pupils.
3. If a transfer is recommended at the child's Annual Review, the request is submitted to the Local Authority for consideration. If this is approved by the Local Authority a formal request for a place at Astley Park is made by the local authority Inclusion Service.
4. The Local Authority Inclusion Service send the pupil papers for consideration and request a place at Astley Park School. This is done via a secure email sent to the Headteacher or SENCO.
5. The Deputy Headteacher or SENCO reads the papers submitted and visits the child in their current nursery, school or home setting, if being home educated, to ensure the school is able to meet the special educational needs of the individual.
6. If their special educational needs can be met and a place is available, a letter is forwarded to the Local Authority (LA), offering a place and stating an agreed start date for the child.
7. The LA confirms the child's placement at Astley Park School following agreement at the Special School Head's panel meeting followed by a

letter to the parents / carers. A copy of this letter is also sent to the school.

8. The LA also forward a transport request form to parents/carers, which when completed is processed by the LA transport department.
9. Prior to starting, the school will send a welcome letter and information for parents/carers with details about the school website, uniform requirements, Data collection and permission form, procedures for the payment of dinner money, school holiday dates etc. together with information about any transition visits that have been arranged for each child. The transition plan may also involve visiting the child in their current school to share information about past assessments, progress made and Individual Education Programmes. There will also be an opportunity to meet key members of the school team via our parent information afternoons and our meet and greet evenings. Visual social stories can also be provided to aid transition and alleviate any anxieties about starting school. Assistance can be provided for parents / carers for the completion of any forms, if it is required, via our parent/carer manager.
10. During our meet and greet evenings parents / carers will meet with their child's new teacher and wider class team and are asked to provide any information which they feel will be useful to help their child settle into school easily. This may include details about the any medical and personal care needs, such as use of medication, any existing input from health professionals i.e. occupational, physio or speech therapy, food preferences and dislikes, cutlery requirements/use, toileting requirements including any programmes currently in place, favoured/ motivating activities and any other supplementary information that may support a positive transition.
11. During the transition process the child's personal Medical Protocols, Risk Assessments, Manual Handling Plans, Positive Handling Plans etc., are drawn up as required and agreed with parents/ carers.
12. For children who will be commencing their place at the start of the academic year, they are also invited to attend our whole school transition week, which take place in July, prior to the end of the summer term.
- 13. The First Day at School.**

The child is welcomed into class on his or her first day and because they have participated in a number of transition visits they are usually beginning to become familiar with the school routine.

Children are closely supported and guided, by staff, throughout all activities, at lunchtime, when travelling around the school and in the playground to ensure that they feel re-assured and comfortable in their new school surroundings.

Home / School diaries are sent home for parents / carers in order for them to keep in touch with what is going on in school and at home. Parents / Carers are encouraged to write in these books regularly; especially about any appointments their child may need to attend and other important information such as whether their child has slept the previous night or refused breakfast etc. (Information and comments from parents / carers can often be a good starting point to the school day).

Parents / Carers are encouraged to come into school to discuss any issues however big or small, but we do request that they ring first to make an appointment.

Parents / Carers are also encouraged to contact school, at any time, if they need to discuss anything over the telephone. Although class staff are unable to leave their pupils unattended during the school day, they will endeavour to return any calls at their earliest opportunity.

