

# Policy for Admissions

Cambian Spring Hill School

Policy Author / Reviewer	Samantha Campbell
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Staff Groups Affected	All Staff

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## 1. Monitoring & Review

The Policy Author will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later one year from the date of approval shown above, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Principal. The policy reflects COVID-19 arrangements.

### Legal Status

Complies with Part 6, Paragraph 24 (3) (a) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations

### Applies To:

- The whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

### Other Relevant Documents

Equality and Diversity Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)

Attendance Policy

Inclusion Policy

### Availability

This policy is made available to parents, guardians, carers, staff, and pupils from the school office and website.

Signed:



Samantha Campbell

Principal

September 2022

## 2. Policy

At Cambian Spring Hill School we are registered to care for and educate children from the ages of 8 to 19, covering Key Stages 2 - 5. No child/young person is refused entry on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation. We require confirmation of the date of birth of a child.

### Individual Profile

Our school provides for children and young people with a primary diagnosis of ASD and comorbidities, which may include mental health, ADHD, ADD, and other difficulties. Most of our children are referred to us and funded through the local authorities.

All of our children and young people (CYP) have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Pupils enter our school via two routes: internally via our own care homes or externally via direct approach from Local Authorities or commissioners. Parents/carers are welcome to visit the school as part of a tentative enquiry.

### Internal – Transfer from another Cambian Site

Integral to the placement of a child in a Cambian Children's home is the provision of education. It is incumbent on us to ensure that the educational placement, in being fit for purpose, is bespoke to the unique needs of the child/young person. The decision regarding entry to our school is as a result of due diligence processes and of a multi-disciplinary discussion whereby transition and placement plans are agreed. Fundamental to this process is the quality of communication from the time when the Commissioning Manager makes the initial contact with the care and education colleagues' right through to the child/young person being admitted on to the school roll. High quality communication and transparency between the school and the children's home is essential to this process.

### External – Referral is received from a Local Authority or other Commissioner

In line with the Special Education Needs Code of Practice 2014, a multi-disciplinary decision is reached whereby the child/young person visits the school; this is often with parents/carers and a Social Worker. If it is agreed that the school is, in principle, the most appropriate educational and care setting for the child/young person then a transition plan is implemented once funding is agreed. Parents/carers will also be asked to provide the school with any further information that they feel will enable us to provide their child with the best possible education. If agreed, a place is offered based on availability and in accordance with statutory legislation. In 2010, much of the Disability and Discrimination Act was replaced by duties in the Equality Act 2010 with further amendments implemented in 2011. The Department for Education (DfE) consulted on further changes to schools' duties, which came into force in September 2012. Cambian Spring Hill School has a dedicated Admissions and Transitions Coordinator; she works productively with all parties to ensure queries and concerns are positively managed in a timely fashion and decisions comply with statutory expectations. Decisions are only made upon receipt of all relevant information. An offer of admission will not be made until all relevant and up-to-date information has been scrutinised by members of the education, care and clinical teams. This is because it is essential to ensure that Spring Hill can meet need in terms of EHCP outcomes and can appropriately safeguarding the individual. As a wholly

Independent School, Local Authorities cannot name Spring Hill without the school's agreement.

### School Standards Regulations

We tailor accredited pathways up to and including GCSE's, Level 1 and Level 2, BTEC's and Princes' Trust and can deliver some 'A' levels if required. We will work in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant reviews, including the annual review and PEP's for Looked after Children, are carried out as required by regulation and best practice. The school will make reasonable adjustments to meet need to ensure statutory compliance.

### English as an Additional Language

Our school will make provision for children and young people (CYP) who have English as an additional language, (EAL) in the assessment procedure. We do not regard children (CYP) as having a 'learning difficulty' solely because the 'language or medium of communication of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught' (Education Act 1996, Section 312(1), (2) and (3)). However, pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) will be provided with appropriate support provided they meet our School Academic criteria. They will be assessed to gauge the support that may be needed in order to ensure equal access to the curriculum along with all other aspects of life at our school. Our school has a policy and procedures for students requiring English as an Additional Language (EAL).

### Appendix

It should be recognised that the child/young person may be ambivalent, at best, about the school and that because of this they may well not take in all the information given – to this end, further information will need to be offered at a later date. Our Clinical team and Student Support and Wellbeing Officer can support this process by designing bespoke Social Stories and providing photographs of the schools and care environment, if appropriate. There is a video of the school on our website for all to access. We expect the child/young person to have visited at least once before starting a placement and for those transitioning into a residential placement, this process may take longer, depending on the set of particular circumstances.

A child/young person may be referred to Cambian Group at any time during the academic year in one of two ways:

- Via internal Cambian Group referral
- Via a local authority - as much information as possible will be sought at the point of referral to inform assessment as to whether the referral is appropriate and as to whether the school/care setting is able to meet the needs of the individual.

Information sought should include:

- full name;
- age and date of birth;
- gender;
- ethnic background, cultural needs, religious needs/persuasion;
- current health and medication needs and history;

- current year group, in school;
- educational history, needs, current provision, support and additional interventions received, clinical reports and a copy of the most recent EHCP;
- risk issues (e.g. absconding, false allegations), level of supervision required, information regarding history of self-harm/suicide, history of volatile and aggressive behaviour, child protection issues, risks presented by third parties;
- expectations and requirements sought by the placing authority to meet the young person's needs;
- the name, address and telephone number of the young person's case accountable social worker (if applicable);
- the young person's legal status;
- the young person's and their family's social history;
- any special issues e.g., restriction of contact, child protection and criminal history (if any) and whether any existing criminal proceeding are outstanding.

The information provided will assist the Principal and/or Registered Manager in their assessment as to whether a school/care placement is viable and appropriate. The Principal/Registered Manager will consider whether there is sufficient staffing in terms of safe and appropriate care and management of need, and assess the potential impact that the admission may have on existing group or home dynamics. Should a referral be accepted for admission, the Admissions and Transitions Officer will notify the relevant commissioner as soon as practically possible in order that the appropriate contract arrangements can be administered with the relevant placing authority. Prior to the onset of any new placement, comprehensive discussions are undertaken to inform all parties of information relating to care and education routines and expectations. Parents/carers and Social Workers will receive a pre-admissions pack of information and sign a number of permissions documents in relation to aspects such as external visits, medication, food intolerances and photographs, for example.

## Transitions

Transitions in to school are agreed in the best interests of the child. What may work for one child may not work for another. Whilst some children are able to manage immediate transition to Spring Hill on a full time basis, others may need a much slower package of support. In the event of a bespoke transition, a timetable will be agreed prior to the official start date.

Transitions from Spring Hill is undertaken in a planned and structured manner. These are managed well in advance and actions are agreed and driven via meetings with parents/carers and the Annual Review process.

## Transport

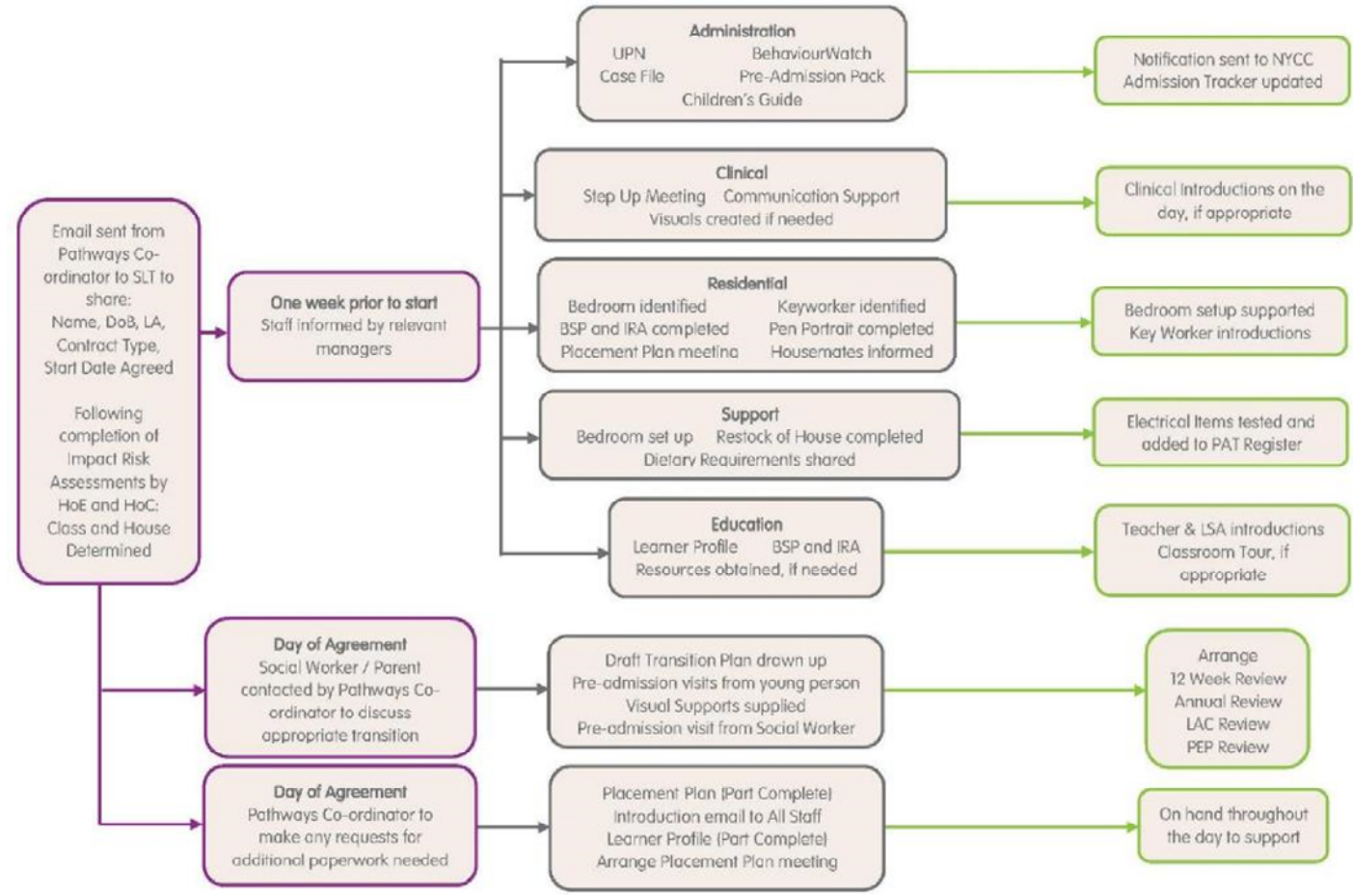
It is the parents/carers responsibility to arrange transport to and from school via Local Authority Passengers Transport Teams.

## Referral & Assessment

Upon receipt of a referral and associated documentation, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) scrutinises documents to ascertain whether the referral meets the admission criteria. Arrangements are made with the LA and/or Social Worker to co-ordinate an initial assessment visit. Such visits are likely to include:

A visit to the home – family or care-setting *and/or* a visit to the current school/education setting

Note: the undertaking of an initial assessment does not guarantee the automatic offer of a place.



### 3. Criteria

Each application is assessed on a case-by-case basis; we take account of the unique needs of the individual child/young person and consider whether Spring Hill School and/or Children's Home, would be the most suitable provision for the individual. As identified above, children and young people (CYP) are admitted on consideration of documentation including but not limited to: EHCP documentation, reports from key education, care and health professionals, previous school reports etc.

Assessments and observations are undertaken at Spring Hill School and in the current academic and home setting and interviews with parent/carers and the child, if appropriate, and other key professionals; these form a fundamental part of the admissions process and, in their own right, do not constitute a formal offer of placement.

During the initial stage of the assessment process, the following factors will be considered to further inform whether Cambian Spring Hill School is suitable for CYP and whether their admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other learners. The Principal/Registered Manager take into consideration:

- a primary diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome, high-functioning autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder/Condition, specific communication and language disorder, social interaction difficulties
- Communication needs specific to that child e.g. Makaton, PECS, assistive technology requirements
- ADHD, ADD and Mental Health disorders (Levels 1 – 3), associated SEMH and SpLD as a co-morbid diagnosis only and not as primary diagnosis or main need, unless assessment identifies need could be met – this decision is made at the discretion of the Principal further to consultation with the Clinical team
- the young person is socially and academically compatible with the existing cohort where there is a vacancy; admission of any new starters must not be detrimental to the needs of existing cohort – no child/young person should compromise the opportunities of others within the school or residential setting, as appropriate
- the child/young person is compatible to our small and compact learning environment where everyone is in close proximity to each other: some additional diagnoses may require the child/young person has access to additional space (e.g. their own teaching room) which we may not be able to provide for without additional resource
- for children and young people with a physical disability, accessible places in the school and in the residential home are available or whether it would be possible to make reasonable adjustments within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010
- if there is a secondary diagnosis, including but not limited to Down's syndrome, visual Impairment, hearing Impairment, mental health needs and genetic disorders whether these needs can also be met within the school and the residential home



- whether medical needs can be accommodated within current staffing arrangements; medical needs requiring on site nursing care cannot usually be accommodated
- all CYP should have current up-to-date paperwork or reports and should be the subject of a full EHCP (current and up-to-date) or undergoing statutory assessment

Following the assessment visit(s), a decision of whether to offer a placement or not will be made by the SLT; Cambian Commissioning Managers will liaise directly with referring parties to appraise them of the outcome. Assessments will vary in length depending on the needs of each child/young person and the range of information initially supplied; follow up assessment visits, 'phone calls and/or requests for further information or reports may be required. Students can be offered a place and start at any time during the year if there is a vacancy available, however there may be a waiting list for placements.

Should Spring Hill School decide that they are able to meet need, representatives from Local Authorities and/or Social Care are strongly encouraged to visit the school and, if appropriate, the Residential Home, prior to formal offer. The expectation is that at least one visit from the parents/carers (if appropriate) and child/young person is undertaken. We are looking to gain an understanding for how the child or young person reacts to the environment. Vacancies are always matched to need. The Principal and Registered Manager will seek to ensure compatibility of age, social ability, communication style and gender if applicable. The Principal/Registered Manager should be satisfied that the child/young person feels comfortable in the environment and that all needs can be met. Occasionally the placement may not be suitable if a child does not have an appropriate peer group or the dynamics of our open campus present with potential health and safety risks or risk-taking behaviours that cannot easily be managed, e.g. frequent absconding off-site, fire-setting etc.

Cambian Spring Hill School cannot meet the needs of children or young people who:

- demonstrate social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) that are not a co-morbid condition with ASD
- suffer from severe and chronic psychological symptoms as a consequence of sexual trauma or display significant sexualised behaviours
- engage in significantly harmful and/or self-injurious behaviours
- present with profound and multiple learning disabilities background
- Have prevalent sexualised behaviours that would place the individuals at risk
- Have presenting substance/alcohol dependency

### Therapeutic Framework

At Cambian Spring Hill School we utilise STEP: the Cambian Therapeutic Framework to underpin our provision. This means we support children and young people (CYP) through a 3-stage journey of stabilisation, strengthening and transition.

STEP means we offer a sensory supporting, totally inclusive environment underpinned by standards that support the development of insight, confidence, independence and enable a CYPs positive personal progression.



Our goals for the pre-admission stage are:

- Discussion within our multidisciplinary team about our suitability to meet needs
- Supporting the CYP themselves and our staff team to be ready for the admission

#### 4. Process

**Parents/carers and/or professionals are welcome to arrange a visit to Cambian Spring Hill School prior to a referral being made or during the referral/assessment process.**

Typically, a preliminary visit will include a tour of the School and Children's Home (if appropriate), introduction to key staff and discussion regarding the school policies and curriculum. Visitors will have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. If appropriate, the visit will include a tour of the residential home by the Registered Manager, where any additional matters can be discussed within the residential environment. An assessment visit will also be arranged to observe/meet the child in their current educational/residential setting and gather information from parents/carers/professionals involved. If, following these visits and further assessment visits or paperwork review where necessary, all concerned are agreed that the child or young person's needs can be met at Spring Hill School, and that the CYP and parent/carers are committed to the placement, a formal placement offer will be made to the local authority via Cambian's commissioning team.

If funding is agreed by the local authority for placement at CSHS a transition plan will be agreed. The nature and length of transition will vary from child to child depending on their needs. Prior to a residential placement commencing a placement planning meeting will take place, chaired by the Registered Manager and attended by all relevant professionals and family members. A SHS placement plan will be drawn up and the placing LA may also create their own plan which will be shared with SHS. Upon entry, there is a 12-week assessment period, during which there will be regular communication between all involved and towards the end of which a meeting will be convened to propose permanency of the place or discuss concerns.

How we welcome our new residents is extremely important to us; we aim for it to be as positive as possible for the child and their family

It may be the first time away from home for some or a new placement may have been felt appropriate due to certain situations beyond the control of the young person. Whatever the reason, coming to Spring Hill School may be a traumatic time for each child and young person and all staff must make themselves familiar with the needs, dislikes, interests etc. in order to begin to develop a relationship with the new resident. The Registered Manager will make available detailed notes and information on each resident to assist in this process.

Each new resident will be assigned a key worker who will, within an appropriate timescale, work through the induction process. This will ensure that the young person has a knowledge of fire safety, who to contact if ill, upset, concerned etc. and who he can complain to if required. This will also be a time to begin to understand some of the rules and boundaries in place which help to make Spring Hill School a calm, peaceful environment in which to live and learn.

Depending upon the abilities and level of understanding of each new resident, they will be introduced and integrated into the dynamics of the other young person's resident at the earliest opportunity.

## 5. Transition

We plan for our young people to transition on to their next provision in a positive and purposeful way; this could be to a mainstream school, college, or other educational establishment or perhaps supported accommodation or a return back to the family home.

Our Transitions and Admissions Coordinator works with other professionals from the LA, Health and Social Care; we expect all parties to be proactive in securing the best next steps for all of our children and young people and work positively with Social Workers to support them to undertake their responsibilities in relation to transitions.

Spring Hill School is not accountable for the sourcing of other placements; this is the responsibility of the Social Worker Local Authority, social care or SEN team to manage. The move should, wherever possible, be promoted as positive, progressive and in the young person's best interests. Any relevant documentation will be forwarded to the new establishment. The school and, if relevant, the Children's Home will be as supportive as possible throughout the process to ensure the best interests of the child are met.

## 6. COVID-19

In order to ensure robust risk management measures relating to transmission, there will be a requirement for parents/carers and Social Workers to follow robust protocol relating to transition. If a child tests positive they will be required to spend time self-isolating prior to immediate start date or when returning to site after visiting the family home; this is to support risk of spread.

These arrangements are personalised to each individual set of circumstances and will be recorded upon agreement. At all times, parents/carers and Social Workers will be required to undertake completion of a disclaimer to reassure Cambian colleagues that they understand their obligations with respect to risk reduction. From September 2022 site no longer requires evidence of negative LFT testing however, we do ask you to sign our Cambian Group protocol regarding minimisation of spread to support site to run as smoothly as possible and safeguard medically vulnerable individuals.