



Nurturing to Learn

ADMISSIONS POLICY

KsENT Special Schools: Admissions Guidance
Elms School

Name of school	Elms School
Address	Elms Vale Rd, Dover, Kent CT17 9PS
Tel	01304 201964
Email	office@elms.kent.sch.uk
School Type	Foundation Special School
Designation	SEMH (Primary); SEMH with LD (Primary and Secondary)
Primary Need	SEMH (Primary) SEMH with LD (Primary and Secondary) ASD and ADHD are frequently co-morbid with SEMH needs.
Class structure	Mixed Y1/2, others in year groups with some individual exceptions Two-form entry from Year 5
District Served	Dover, Deal, Sandwich, Folkestone and Shepway
Area	South Kent
Age range	5 – 16 (Y1 – 11)

Elms caters for pupils with SEMH needs, often co-morbid with ADHD/ASD/FASD/PTSD/ODD/attachment difficulties. Pupils join at various times from Y1 – Y11 and have often been out of education for some time. This presents its own set of challenges, but the school has a good record of helping pupils modify their behaviour and re-engage with learning so that they can be successful. The school has increased its roll from 96 to 156, however, 156 is the maximum we can take in 2022/23. Many pupils travel from a wide area across Kent to attend Elms School.

Cognitive functioning

Average ability (within two years of age-expected scores) or above average ability; KS2 scaled score of 90+; projected to attain GCSE scores of 4 – 9: Primary phase only. At Secondary transfer these pupils would move to Goldwyn or Portal House School, unless Elms is parental preference.

Below average ability (SEMH with Learning Needs): attainment more than two years below age-expected scores, moderate delay with General Conceptual Ability (GCA) or Full-Scale IQ score within centiles 1 – 5, projected to attain Entry Level exams, Functional Skills level 1 or equivalent or GCSE grades 1 – 3: Primary and Secondary phases.

Our broad and balanced curriculum is relevant, engaging and provides opportunities to achieve academic success as well as equipping pupils with skills for life. Pupils take exams at Entry level in maths, English, Science, ICT and Humanities. Pupils also take Functional Skills at level 1 in maths, ICT and English where they are capable, with some taking GCSEs in these subjects as well. We offer GCSE in Art and BTEch levels 1 and 2 in Home Cooking Skills and Sports. Pupils take the Duke of Edinburgh Award or an Entry Level in DT.

Our highly-trained staff provide bespoke therapeutic interventions, such as Thrive, to target

developmental gaps and enable pupils to manage their behaviour and regulate their emotions so that they can form meaningful relationships throughout their lives. We also use Restorative Approaches to build and maintain a sense of community and to provide our pupils with the ability and attitude to respect the viewpoints of others and, when necessary, take responsibility for resolving conflict and putting things right. We use Team Teach as our behaviour management programme, focussing on de-escalation and refocussing our pupils. We also offer Lego Therapy across the lower and middle school to support pupils with their social skills development.

The school is arranged in two phases: the Primary School (years 1 – 6), the Secondary School (years 7– 11). The Y1-8 school follow a Primary model, following a differentiated National Curriculum, whereas the upper school offers subject specialist teaching leading to accredited outcomes.

Elms School has been recognised as 'good' following an OfSTED Inspection in October 2017.

Admissions to the school are the responsibility of the LA, in conjunction with the Headteacher acting on behalf of the governors. Admissions are carried out under the Local Authority admission guidance.

The Parents decide they want non-mainstream education (i.e. place in a special school). The duty imposed on the LA by section 316 of the Education Act 1996 to educate the child in a mainstream school is lifted. Parents express a preference for a particular maintained special school to be named in their child's statement/EHC Plan. Schedule 27 of the Education Act 1996 requires the LA to comply with parental preference unless:

- The school is unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs.
- The placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children with whom the child would be educated.
- The placement would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

The Local Authority will have deemed that a child may be suitable through a clear assessment and referral process which results in papers being submitted to the school as part of the consultation process.

All admissions to the school comply with the legal requirements as outlined within the Equality Act 2010. As such Elms School does not discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

Furthermore, Elms School will fulfil its legal duty to make 'reasonable adjustment, as outlined within the Equality Act 2010. This means that adjustments which are necessary and reasonable, for the benefit of current or prospective pupil(s), will be made once identified. However, the aforementioned legislation explicitly states that schools are not obliged to anticipate and make adjustments for every imaginable disability and need only consider general reasonable adjustments. Additionally, it is legally recognised that there will be times when adjustments cannot be made because to do so would have a detrimental effect on other pupils and would therefore not be reasonable.

All pupils at this school will access a broad and balanced curriculum comprising of the National Curriculum, Vocational, Life and Social Skills courses. Some pupils may also be identified to receive additional 1:1 or small group interventions, dependent on their current individual needs.

The process for admission and transition to Elms School is as follows:

1. The LA Area Office makes referrals to the school following recommendations by County panel.
2. The Headteacher considers whether the school is likely to be able to meet the needs of the pupil and whether there is space for the pupil in their year group.
3. If it is deemed that the school can probably meet needs, the Headteacher will invite the child and family to visit the school for a meeting and tour.
4. Following the meeting, the Headteacher will decide whether the school can meet needs.
5. The Headteacher then contacts the LA who will advise parents/carers.
6. The transition process begins with planned visits to the school, increasing to full-time attendance. The length of time taken for this will depend entirely upon how well the pupil is settling. Every effort is made to overcome problems associated with transport to and from school during this transition period.