

Elms School



Admissions Policy

Version: 3.0

Date Released: 28th June 2019

Elms School is a day special school for pupils aged 5 to 16 years (Years 1 – 11).

Pupils have SEMH as their Primary SEND as a result of deep-seated and long-term emotional and social difficulties, as documented in their EHC Plan. They may also have identified/diagnosed health needs such as ADHD, ADD, ASD, ODD, PTSD, OCD, FASD, attachment difficulties, personality disorders or other medical conditions, but respond well to learning strategies and provision suitable for SEMH students. Some students may have ASD as their primary need, with associated behavioural needs and they also respond well to the learning environments offered by KsENT SEMH schools. Schools for pupils with SEMH needs are committed to reversing the patterns of failure associated with school and learning.

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.

Pupils join at various times from Y1 – Y11 and will have experienced some time in a mainstream setting. This presents its own set of challenges as they may have been out of education for some time, but the school has a good record of helping pupils modify their behaviour and re-engage with learning so that they can be successful. They may have attended several schools prior to admission and many pupils will have high levels of anxiety about starting at a new school. Some pupils will have been out of school for some time. We believe that a smooth transition is vital if a pupil is to be successful at Elms. Therefore, we encourage pupils to begin their transition to us on a part-time basis until they feel comfortable and happy to stay for whole days. This should be done in conjunction with parents' wishes and availability of transport, but in our experience a gradual transition is more likely to be successful than simply commencing full-time.

The school has increased its roll from 96 to 156, however, 158 is the maximum we can take.

Pupils in Years 1 – 6 are mixed ability, whereas pupils in years 7 – 11 have moderate learning difficulties along with their other areas of need. This means that our pupils are working below GCSE grade 4 in core subjects.

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 three phases: the lower school (years 1 – 4), the middle school (years 5 – 8) and the upper school (years 9 – 11). The lower and middle 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.

Many pupils travel from a wide area across Kent to attend Elms School.

Admissions to the school are the responsibility of the LA, in conjunction with the Headteacher acting on behalf of the governors.

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.

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 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.

Admissions are carried out under the Local Authority admission guidance. See Appendix 1.

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 make a decision as to 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.

APPENDIX 1

ADMISSION GUIDANCE TO A SCHOOL FOR PUPILS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

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.

In considering the parental request for placement within a maintained special school for pupils with SEMH and learning difficulties the Local Authority must have regard to the following admission guidance:

Students have SEMH as their Primary SEND as a result of deep-seated and long-term emotional and social difficulties, as documented in their EHC Plan. They may also have identified/diagnosed health needs such as ADHD, ADD, ASD, ODD, PTSD, OCD, FASD, attachment difficulties, personality disorders or other medical conditions, but respond well to learning strategies and provision suitable for SEMH students. Some students may have ASD as their primary need, with associated behavioural needs and they also respond well to the learning environments offered by KsENT SEMH schools.

Schools for pupils with SEMH needs are committed to reversing the patterns of failure associated with school and learning.

Some students are not ready to learn in a SEMH needs provision and display extreme behaviours such as unpredictable, high levels of violence and aggression. Alternatively, they may be so traumatised that they are completely withdrawn and barely communicate. These pupils may need an alternative provision with very small classes and therapeutic input alongside a personalised curriculum.

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**

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 phase.**

APPROVAL & ADOPTION

This policy was formally approved and adopted at a Full Governing Body Meeting held on:

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

UPDATE SCHEDULE

Version	Date	Reason for Update
1.00	28/11/12	First version of Policy
1.01	19/11/14	Review and Amendments
2.0	14.12.16	Review and Amendments
3.0	28.06.2019	Review and Amendments