



ADMISSIONS POLICY

February 2025

Version History

Version Information Version No.	Updated By	Updated On	Description of Changes
1.0	Michele Aldridge	February 2019	Review
2.0	Michele Aldridge	February 2020	New format
3.0	Michele Aldridge	February 2021	Reviewed and updated
4.0	Pip Smith	February 2022	Review
5.0	Pip Smith	February 2023	Review
6.0	Pip Smith	February 2024	Review
7.0	Pip Smith	February 2025	Review

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1 Scope

- 1.1 This document describes The Serendipity Centre Ltd's (TSCL) policy on referrals and admissions to The Serendipity School.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Students referred to the TSCL have a range of diverse and complex educational needs and may not have had access to effective school or educational provision for some time.

- 2.2 In aspiring to meet such needs, it is essential that TSCL adopt a systematic approach and that planning commences at the time of referral.
- 2.3 Furthermore, The Serendipity School practice is in line with the Education Act 1993, the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0-25 years, (Department for Education [DfE] 2015), which ensures TSCL meets the demands required of education settings in terms of the formulation, implementation, review and evaluation of individual programmes for students.

3 Applicable Documents

- 3.1 When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents.

- [AD1] Curriculum Policy
The Serendipity School
- [AD2] Data Protection Policy
The Serendipity School
- [AD3] Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
The Serendipity School
- [AD4] Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy The
Serendipity School

4 References

- [RD1] National Contract for the Placement of Children and Young People in Day & Residential Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools NASS (2007). NASS, York

5 Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions

Abbreviation or Acronym	Description
AD	Applicable Document
LA	Local Authority
RD	Reference Document
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan

6 Referral and Admissions Criteria

- 6.1 The Serendipity School supports girls between the ages of 9 and 19 with social, emotional and mental health needs. The identified complex and additional needs of our students may also involve challenging behaviours often associated with attachment

disorder; adverse childhood experiences (ACEs); learning difficulties; ADHD and autistic spectrum conditions (ASC).

6.2 All referrals to The Serendipity School are made via the Local Authority (LA) responsible for the student and every referral is assessed individually to consider whether the school can meet the needs of the student, to achieve the best possible outcomes for them. Prospective students must meet at least **one** of the following admission criteria:

- Have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in which The Serendipity School is named as the student's school, or is being considered as the named school.
- Be in the process of assessment for an EHCP in which The Serendipity School is named as the student's school.
- Have agreement from the Secondary Resource Panel (or other body responsible for the placement of students) of the LA responsible for the student that they will attend The Serendipity School.
- Be placed in the residential care of TSCL and moved out of the catchment area of the previous education provision.

6.3 Additional factors governing student admissions for a specialist school such as The Serendipity School are complex and vary from case to case. These factors might include:

- The wishes of the parent/carer.
- The nature of the child's needs and previous educational experiences.
- Recommendations of the referring body.
- Suitability of The Serendipity School for the student (for instance, the needs of the student must not compromise the safeguarding of the staff and existing students).

7 Refusal of Admission

7.1 The Head Teacher reserves the right to refuse admission in the following cases:

- The school is fully subscribed and admitting further students would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources (see Waiting List below).
- The admission of a student would compromise the safeguarding of current students and/or staff within the school, or disrupt the education of students already within the school.

8 Waiting List System

8.1 The Serendipity School operates a waiting list system in the event of the school being fully subscribed.

- 8.2 The waiting list is overseen by the Head Teacher and will be reviewed when a space becomes available.
- 8.3 Decisions will not be dependent on the date of admission to the waiting list, but rather upon the needs of each individual young person on the list and the needs of the current cohort to ensure the provision of efficient education and resources.
- 8.4 As soon as a young person has been selected from the waiting list, contact will be made with the placing local authority and a suitable date for their admission will be arranged.

9 Referral and Admissions Procedure

- 9.1 A parent/carer or social worker may make initial enquiries and request a school visit, but a LA Placement Officer must refer all admissions.
- 9.2 On receipt of the referral documentation, a meeting of relevant staff discuss whether The Serendipity School can meet the needs of the student.
- 9.3 If a placement is considered to be suitable the referring authority receive notification in writing, which includes how the needs of the student will be met, and details of funding if a placement is being offered.
- 9.4 If the young person is accepted, TSCL and the placing LA will formalise the arrangement via an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA).
- 9.5 Once the placement and an admission date has been agreed with the referring authority TSCL prepare a detailed plan to promote the successful transition of the young person into the education or education and care placement.
- 9.6 The detailed plan will include home visits, school visits, meetings with previous school setting and a bespoke transition timetable suited to the student's individual need.
- 9.7 The timetable will build from part time to full time at a pace which suits the student, so to maximise the opportunity of success.

10 Initial Assessment

- 10.1 In the first six weeks of a student's placement, needs are identified based on the information provided at admission by the referring LA, by initial observations of staff and by an assessment of literacy and numeracy skills.
- 10.2 The results of these assessments provide a baseline for the student; determine a bespoke curriculum; highlight the need for additional support in literacy, numeracy, and any other areas within the curriculum and allow the necessary provision to be made to meet the student's therapeutic needs.

- 10.3 For children looked after (CLA) these outcomes inform the initial Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting, held at The Serendipity School, within 4 – 6 weeks of admission. In conjunction with information from the EHCP, Personal Progress Targets (PPT) are set.
- 10.4 Students are encouraged to be involved in planning their own individual education targets and monitoring how they can make progress.
- 10.5 The curriculum is under constant review and further amendments to its structure are made as necessary, to ensure they continue to address the needs of the student as an individual.

11 Reporting and Recording

- 11.1 The Serendipity School has a thorough review system in place which includes three types of review: a Personal Progress Target (PPT) review, an Annual Review of the EHCP, and a Personal Education Plan (PEP) review for students who are CLA.
- 11.2 In conjunction with feedback from the student's subject teachers, the SENCO will review the PPTs on a half termly basis, looking especially at the student's individual targets, taken from the EHCP, their progress towards these targets, and plan the next steps in supporting the student. The school's Special Education Needs and Disability Policy [AD3] (available upon request) contains further information of this process.
- 11.3 In addition, parents/carers, social workers and Virtual School leads of all students receive a weekly report from the school.
- 11.4 Further reports include interim reports at the end of the Autumn term and at the end of the Spring term, with an annual school report at the end of the Summer term.
- 11.5 Regular communication is essential as this enables The Serendipity School to monitor the on-going success of all placements and where required, make adjustments quickly and effectively in order to maximise the chance of a successful placement.
- 11.6 Multi-agency working is central to the approach taken by The Serendipity School, from admission right the way through to a student's transition into further education, training or employment.
- 11.7 The Serendipity School works with a wide range of agencies to ensure that the school and others act in the best interests of each student.
- 11.8 Face to face meetings with parents, carers and other professionals working with the student are held on a regular basis to discuss progress or any concerns about a student's welfare or attendance.
- 11.9 In addition, Home-School link meetings are held annually with subject leaders, to share progress and review student attainment, as well as discussing their next steps towards achieving qualification or their attainment.

12 Monitoring and Review

- 12.1 In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, the Head Teacher will review this policy every year.