DOUCECROFT SCHOOL SERVICES
ADMISSION PROCESS
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PLACING AUTHORITIES

- Parents looking for a school place for their child may visit the school at any point during the referral and admissions process. They should ring the school office to make an appointment. Space in the calendar is allocated each week to ensure senior staff have the time to spend talking to parents. At busy times of the school year an appointment may not be available for several weeks.
- Senior staff will meet with parents to discuss the needs of their child. They cannot at this stage make any commitment to whether the school would be suitable or if a place will be available.
- Placing authorities must make a formal referral to the school before the admissions process can begin.
- The school is happy to work with authorities on a consultative basis to assess whether a child’s profile fits the remit of the school services.
- Placing authorities should make it clear with the referral whether a day or residential place is required. If a residential place is required then what type of place.
- On receipt of a referral senior staff and therapists will look at the information provided by the authority and:
  - Decide the child does not fit the remit of the school and shred the paperwork
  - Consider on paper the child meets the criteria for placement and commence admissions
  - Seek further information from the placing authority.
- The school will write to the placing authority with their decision on admissions and if going ahead will require acceptance of this decision in writing. (email is acceptable)
- Once formal acceptance of the admissions process has been received the school will commence the admissions process. No offer of a place will be made at this stage, any fee level quoted will be subject to adjustment at the end of the admissions process.
- The admissions process is designed to collect as much information about the child as possible. Senior staff will visit current placements and talk to staff who know the child and complete the admission’s behaviour risk assessment. They will meet with parents/carers, respite providers and anyone else who has been involved with the child up to this time from whom relevant information can be collected. The reason for this process is to ensure that clear information is available to the admissions panel to aid their decision on whether to offer a place or not.

This information is correct at the time of writing it may be adjusted in response to referral rates and the capacity of the school.
At any point during the admissions process the school may decide that the child’s needs cannot be met and will contact the placing authority to inform them that a place will not be offered. The school will expect the placing authority to inform parents of this decision.

If, having agreed to the admissions process being undertaken the placing authority then withdraws the referral the school services reserve the right to charge the placing authority for expenses incurred up to that point.

Once the admissions process is complete senior staff will prepare a report for the admissions panel, the admissions panel may consist of senior staff not involved in the admissions process, school governors, Autism Anglia senior staff or trustees.

The admissions panel will carefully consider all the information collated on the child including the child’s statement and make a decision as to whether a place can be offered. In making this decision they will consider:

- Does the school have any vacancies within the appropriate key stage
- The requirements on the child’s statement and whether the school can meet these.
- How the child will fit in with current cohort of students
- Any additional resources the child may need and the fee level to be set to provide these resources
- Are the child’s parents/carers willing to work with the school to support the child.
- They may also consider that a child referred for a day place would be more suitably placed as a residential student taking into account distance and issues with transition.

The outcome for the admissions panel will be shared with the placing authority. If a place is offered and the fee level accepted the placing authority must reply in writing before the child’s transition to the school can begin.

Placing authorities usually have an individual placement agreement which both the school and local authority sign.

The school will expect placing authority to inform parents of the outcome of the admissions panel.

Once the school receives written confirmation that the placing authority accepts the place, the start date and fee levels then the school will organise the child’s transition into school.

Essential information will be collected from parents/carers

A welcome booklet will be prepared to share with the child

Transition visits will be organised leading up to the agreed start date.

All places at Doucecroft are offered initially on a two term trial basis. At any point during the two terms trial the school, the local authority or the parents can decide the place is no longer appropriate.

Doucecroft School Services adheres to the National Independent School Contract.

If a child’s place is accepted by the local authority and the child then does not start the school services may charge fees for the agreed notice period.

Once the two terms trial period has been completed a place is usually confirmed subject to usual annual review. If there are still concerns about
the suitability of the place the trial period may be extended for up to a term. In extending the trial period the school must have a clear idea that this additional period will be beneficial to the assessment process

- Once a place has been confirmed the school regularly reviews the placement both at annual review and less formally at internal reviews. If there are significant changes made to the child’s statement/ECHP which the school cannot meet or should the child’s needs change to such a degree that they can no longer be met by the placement, the school will reassess the placement and if necessary give notice on the placement as laid out in the National School’s Contract following discussion with the placing authority and parents/carers.
This information is correct at the time of writing it may be adjusted in response to referral rates and the capacity of the school.