



# **Admissions Policy**

Review Date: September 2024

**Rivers ESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.**

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, we feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other strengths and differences.

## **Overview**

Rivers ESC has a Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire Local Authority to provide onsite provision at Key Stages 3 and 4 for permanently excluded children and those at risk of permanent exclusion, living in Waltham Cross, Cheshunt, Turnford, Wormley, Broxbourne, Hoddesdon, Hertford, Ware, Sawbridgeworth, Bishop Stortford and surrounding villages. The ESC works within the remit of the Local Authority's Social, Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy 2020-2023.

## **Priority Referrals to Education Support Centres (ESCs) and The Phoenix Centre Primary Support Base (PSB)**

All referrals to the centre is made through the Fair Access Panel (FAP) which is a central part of the local authority.

- 1) Children who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools
- 2) Children who are at serious risk of being permanently excluded from mainstream schools
- 3) Children with a disrupted/troubled educational history who have recently arrived in the area and who cannot be placed immediately in a school
- 4) Children who, after considerable intervention and support including outreach, and with agreement of their school and families cannot cope in a mainstream school setting and agree to a managed move to the ESC

NB Children Looked After (CLA) who do not have a school place (often due to a change of care placement) or who are at serious risk of permanent exclusion are given priority treatment.

## **Onsite Use of the ESC**

### **Referral Process**

#### **KS1 and KS2**

Referrals to The Phoenix Centre are discussed on a fortnightly basis with the Fair Access Officer and DSPL4 Strategic Behaviour Lead and Manager Lead and follow the Local Authority's Tiered Approach to Behaviour, as laid out in the Hertfordshire Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy. A service level agreement is put in place to agree the length of placement, timescale for reviews, CPOMS Exchange details and funding arrangements. It is standard practice in these instances for learners to be dual registered with the referring school and Rivers ESC, with the referring school being the main and Rivers ESC the subsidiary. This enables the AWPU to be transferred to Rivers ESC.

#### **KS3**

Referrals are made for a place on a onsite programme, in a small group or 1:1. These are short to medium term interventions following the Local Authority's Tiered Approach to Behaviour, as laid out in the Hertfordshire Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy with the intention of a return to the originating school or to seek a new school place. This is in liaison with Outreach Caseworkers, Outreach Manager, KS3 Deputy Head, Local Authority Inclusion Officer and referring school.

## **KS4**

Referrals are made proactively in discussion with Rivers ESC, the referring school and the parent/learner through the fair access panel process.

Learners in Year 9 at our KS3 Site can transition to KS4 if it is needed that it is the most appropriate educational setting for them.

Children who come via Fair Access Panel (FAP) who have been permanently excluded and have had two mainstream schools and/or who have been attending a Pupil Referral Unit. In this instance it may not be possible for an approach to be made to a new mainstream school.

### **Considerations for all referrals:**

When the referral process begins, we also take great care in ensuring that the mix of students on site is safe, for example if a school has referred more than one student, in a key stage the relationship between the two would need investigating before a place is offered. Similarly social issues in the community will be taken into account when offering provision.

If the headteacher of Rivers ESC is concerned that immediate admission to onsite provision on Health and Safety grounds, a risk assessment will be conducted. In exceptional cases, it may not be considered possible to reduce the level of risk to an acceptable level. In these circumstances, a virtual learning programme will be put in place.

### **Permanently Excluded Pupils:**

Permanently excluded pupils are entitled to receive full time education from the 6th day following on from the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude.

- The referral process for these admissions is managed through the Inclusion team • The referral process is managed by the relevant Inclusion Officer, with the support of the SEN Team Manager where the child has an EHC Plan.
- The ESC is notified by the Inclusion Information Officer so that provision can be made available to the child on the 6th day of exclusion pending the outcome of the Management Committee's hearing.
- If the Headteacher of the ESC is concerned that immediate admission may not be appropriate on health and safety grounds he/she should carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the Inclusion Officer so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the assessed risks to acceptable levels. In exceptional cases it may be considered that the levels of risks cannot be reduced to acceptable levels that would enable the child to be admitted to the ESC and a virtual learning programme will be put in place.
- Learners with EHCP plans permanently excluded from mainstream school are entitled to short term provision in the ESC whilst appropriate provision is being sought by the SEN Team.
- The ESC Headteacher will determine the appropriate admission process in accordance with the needs of the referred child and in accordance with the requirement to provide access to full-time education for permanently excluded pupils.

## **Pupils Referred as a Managed Move**

- Children who are at serious risk of permanent exclusion and need to be considered for admission to an ESC should be referred to the Fair Access Panel and should remain on their school roll until they have been admitted to an alternative school or the ESC. It is standard practice in these instances for learners to be dual registered with the referring school and Rivers ESC, with the referring school the main and Rivers ESC the subsidiary. This enables the AWPU to be transferred if requested to Rivers ESC.
- Children with a disrupted/troubled educational history, who have recently arrived in the area and cannot be placed immediately at a school, should be referred through the Fair Access Panel for admission to the ESC. This meets fortnightly.

- Children who have recently arrived in the area and who have been previously attending a PRU and/or were permanently excluded and for whom a mainstream school is not yet best indicated.
- There has been significant reduction in the numbers of pupils who have been permanently excluded from local schools. In most cases they have been able to attend Rivers ESC on a 'managed move' basis prior to either returning to a school (mainstream or special) or remaining at Rivers ESC until the end of Year 11.

## Children With EHCPs

- It may be appropriate for children with EHCPs attending (or excluded) from mainstream schools to be admitted to ESC or The Phoenix Centre as interim provision, but the following should be determined during the admission process –
- The proposed length of the child's stay at the ESC (this may be subject to review) and is subject to a Service Level Agreement being in place.
- The proposed substantive educational placement (e.g. special school, mainstream school).
- Arrangements for the child's EHCP to be reviewed to ensure his/her needs can be met appropriately during the stay at the ESC and to ensure the EHCP is still appropriate (this review should be arranged by the relevant SEN Officer)
- In partnership with the ESC It may be considered that the young person's educational needs can be met appropriately by the ESC in order to complete their statutory education. This would be applicable at KS4.
- However, KS1-3 at the ESC should never be considered to be the appropriate provision on a child's EHCP since DfE guidance for schools and Local Authorities clearly states that if a pupil's long term needs cannot be met in a mainstream school, a special school rather than a PRU should be named on a statement of special educational need.<sup>1</sup>

## Children With Medical/Attendance Needs

Admission to the ESC will not normally be considered on the basis of poor attendance or medical grounds.

**The circumstances of each pupil will be taken into consideration prior to admission to ensure that their individual needs are met appropriately.**

## Glossary

ESC - CLA - FAP - EHCP - SEN - AWPU - PRU -

Education Support Centre

Children Looked After

Fair Access Panel

Education Health Care Plan

Special Educational Needs

Age Weighted Pupil Unit

Pupil Referral Unit