



**JOSEPH PAXTON CAMPUS**

# **ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES Summer 2024**

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**WIRRAL HOSPITALS' SCHOOL: JOSEPH PAXTON CAMPUS**  
**ADMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The appropriate Local Authority representatives and the Governing Body respectively have agreed the following Policy and Procedures to be used for the admission of students to the Joseph Paxton Campus of the Wirral Hospitals' School.

**2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wirral Hospitals' School offers full-time education to students aged 11-16 on its main campus base at Joseph Paxton Campus. Admissions are for young people with physical and mental health problems, including anxiety, which have prevented them from being able to succeed in mainstream school settings. Many of the students have been out of school for considerable periods of time. The school also provides outreach in the form of individual tuition for 5-16 year-olds who are in-patients at Arrowe Park Hospital.

**3. FUNDING**

The current funding arrangements, agreement and practice are that Pupil Entitlement is taken for Yr 11 students. In addition to this, the school receives block funding from Wirral LA and claims **all other associated funds** from mainstream schools for students in all years.

**4. INITIAL CONTACT**

Referrals are received from the following:

- a) Headteacher of the student's school (nominated staff may complete referrals with the Headteacher's consent)
- b) Children and Young People's Department
- c) Hospital Consultants
- d) Community Paediatricians
- e) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Broad guidance for referral to Panel is as follows:

- Students who have a medical condition which makes full time attendance at **a mainstream** school impossible and for whom the mainstream school/other agencies are unable to make suitable alternative provision.
- Students for whom there are serious concerns about their psychological, emotional, and/or social well-being and where there is medical intervention in place.
- Students who are particularly anxious, leading to school phobia/non-attendance AND who it is felt would benefit from the environment of Wirral Hospitals' School, Joseph Paxton Campus

**Note:** Due to the lack of spaces for Year 7 and 8, it is highly unlikely that a student with a diagnosis of ASC, who has not successfully made the transition to high school, will be offered a placement. In these cases, it is far more appropriate to use the EHCP process to identify a suitable, long-term provision.

**ALL students must be on the roll of a mainstream or special school and must have a medical condition which is temporarily preventing them from attending their school. Consequently, referrals directly from parents or the Local Authority for students with an EHCP will not be accepted unless the student meets the criteria for Admissions Outside of Usual Procedures.**

The threshold for referrals to Wirral Hospitals' School, Joseph Paxton Campus broadly follows the processes to be carried out in cases of EHCP assessment requests.

Specifically, schools **must** have conducted, and be able to evidence:

- A school-led multi-agency consultation process, including specialist health professional(s) and, where possible, Educational Psychologist(s).
- A school-led intervention package, both prior to, and following, the multi-agency consultation.

**Note:** The evidence supplied by schools when making a referral should include documentation from the relevant agencies involved in the multi-agency consultation process. This should clearly outline the advice given to schools and the steps schools have taken to implement this advice. This evidence should also include the impact of each aspect of the intervention package offered to the student.

Any concerns emanating from other agencies, including Wirral's Attendance Service, Youth Services, Youth Offending Service, etc. should be raised, in the first instance, with the school the student attends. If it is agreed to be appropriate, the referral to Joseph Paxton Campus will then come from the student's school.

All referrals must be supported by the student's parent(s) or carer(s) with parental responsibility AND the school that the student attends. In the case of students in the care of the Local Authority, the referring school MUST liaise with the LA LACES team and the designated teacher at WHS. We acknowledge a particular duty of care towards Children Looked After and accept responsibility as an agent of the corporate parent for their well-being and, therefore, wherever possible and appropriate, treat referrals regarding Children Looked After with expediency and flexibility.

In most cases, the initial contact is made by the mainstream school in the form of an informal enquiry by telephone to discuss the student concerned. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher at Wirral Hospitals' School will explore the background to this informal referral and will give advice accordingly. Based upon this advice, the referring school may or may not choose to make a formal written referral.

Admissions are subject to Panel decision regarding meeting of criteria, actions taken by the school prior to the decision to refer, AND suitability of placement, both in respect of the needs of the young person being referred and the needs of the other young people already at the school.

## **5. FORMAL REFERRAL**

All referrals must be submitted on the official referral form, which must be completed in full.

All referrals must be countersigned by the school's Headteacher, both to acknowledge their awareness and support of the referral, and to accept the terms of WHS's admissions policy at the time of referral.

Once the formal referral is received, they are reviewed by the Headteacher to check for appropriateness. The Headteacher then writes to the referrer to inform them if the case will proceed to panel OR, if not, the reasons why, along with actions necessary.

Referrers are asked to provide as much information as possible, including, but not limited to:

- Health and medical
- Attendance
- Academic attainment and achievement
- Special Educational Needs
- Looked After status

- FSM / Ever 6 status with dates
- Social/emotional behavioural issues and how these impact on the young person, peers and school.
- Transport
- Involved agencies – evidence from the multi-agency consultation process
- Details of strategies employed by referring school to overcome presenting difficulties – evidence of support strategies devised prior to, and following, the multi-agency consultation process, along with their impact
- **Note:** The One Page Profile (or alternative) used by the mainstream school to summarise the student's difficulties and support needs **must** be included with any referral. In addition, where a pupil has physical medical needs, their IHCP must also be included with the referral.

If the student's own school is NOT the principal referrer, they must be contacted by the referrer, informed of the nature of the referral, and asked to supply relevant information as above. This will relate to the list above. This information is collated by the Wirral Hospitals' School officer with responsibility for admissions, who will present the referrals to the admissions panel for consideration.

#### 5[a] **Closing date for Panel:**

- The closing date for receipt of referrals to Panel will be **5 pm on the penultimate day of the previous half term**. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, late referrals will not be considered until the next Panel.

#### 5[b] **We might be full:**

- If there are no spaces available within a specific year group, the referral will not proceed to a home visit and panel discussion. Instead, records will be kept of the pupil's name and date of first referral. The Headteacher will write back to the school explaining that there are no spaces within that year group and advising the school to seek an alternative provision/level of support. In addition, the panel will contact Wirral LA to raise awareness of the high demand for places
- In these cases, if one or more spaces become available prior to the next admissions panel, the admissions clerk will write to all schools advising them of the situation, so that they can choose to re-refer, if still deemed appropriate.
- Where a Panel is held but places overall, or for particular groups, are limited, the Panel will have the option of agreeing admissions on a prioritised, needs-led basis, rather than that of applicants simply meeting criteria.

#### 5[c] **Children Looked After [CLA]:**

Where schools wish to use the option to accelerate the appropriateness of admission for Wirral CLA, this must be done through, and with the support of, the Wirral LA Virtual Headteacher.

#### 5[d] **How many attempts are schools allowed to make?**

- A re-referral from previous panels will only be accepted in circumstances where additional information has been provided following the initial referral and/or where there have been significant changes to the circumstances of the young person, clearly outlined in the referral.
- If the referral has been unsuccessful due to a lack of intervention strategies and/or multi-agency approach offered by the school then any re-referral will only be considered following the implementation of such strategies AND after a reasonable timescale for their potential success has passed.

## 6. **HOME VISITS**

Upon receipt of an appropriately completed referral form, the Headteacher of Wirral Hospitals' School, or his representative, will contact the parent/carer to carry out a home visit and initial interview. This visit may also include an appropriate member of the Wirral Hospitals' School Senior Leadership Team or the SENCO. The purpose of the visit is to provide an opportunity for the young person and their family to talk freely and honestly about their difficulties and to communicate their thoughts and feelings about the referral.

A Home Visit is essential to the application process and, without this, applications will not proceed. However, in the rare and exceptional circumstances where a parent/carer refuses a home visit, and after discussion between them and the Headteacher of Wirral Hospitals' School regarding this, it will be at the discretion of the Panel as to whether the application can progress.

**Where appropriate and possible, as a result of the home visit, the Headteacher may decide to investigate/confirm any information received with the home school.**

Any relevant information from the visit will be relayed to the admissions panel to further inform their decision making.

## **7. ADMISSIONS PANEL**

**The Panel chair is a senior Educational Psychologist. The number to be present to be quorate is 3.**

Referrals are discussed six times a year (in the third week of each half term, except Autumn 1, which takes place in the fourth week) by a panel consisting of:

- Wirral LA Senior Educational Psychologist
- The Headteacher of Wirral Hospitals' School or, in his absence, the Deputy Headteacher
- A representative from Wirral LA
- A member of Wirral Hospitals' School Senior Leadership Team and/or SENCO
- The Local Authority Senior Attendance Officer
- A member of the CAMHS team
- A senior member of the LA Home Teaching Service, whenever possible

Note: Senior members of staff from other schools (SLT / SENCO) may be present as observers of the panel process. This is a non-voting position and the member of staff will not be present for any discussions regarding students from their own school

If the panel consider that Wirral Hospitals' school is not appropriate for the young person at this time, the Headteacher of Wirral Hospitals' School writes back to the principal referrer named on the referral form stating the reasons for this. It should be noted that Panels are held half-termly, allowing opportunities for re-submission if/when circumstances change or new evidence becomes available.

As agreed with the Local Authority, the Panel may feel it is appropriate that the Headteacher of Wirral Hospitals' School to write to the referrer named on the front of the referral form suggesting ways in which the referral could be enhanced with additional information, which might then better support a re-submission, should it be felt that an admission may be appropriate at a later date.

If the Headteacher of the referring school wishes to be informed of the panel decision instead of the named referrer this should be clearly indicated on the original referral form.

## **8. ADMISSIONS OUTSIDE OF USUAL PROCEDURES**

The criteria for admissions other than through the half-termly admissions panels are strictly defined as:

- Students at significant risk of serious self-harm or suicide, and/or CLA students who meet the normal admissions criteria and for whom the Local Authority deem a placement at WHS is appropriate.
- Students who have been a Tier 4 inpatient in a CAMHS unit, meet the normal admissions criteria, and for whom it is felt by their medical staff that an instant return to mainstream is inappropriate.

Admissions under this process will be carried out by the Headteacher, following consultation with the Chair of the Admissions panel. All admissions to be subsequently ratified by the full panel at the next admissions meeting.

In these cases, where the initial contact has come from health professionals or the local authority, the Headteacher of WHS will liaise with the student's mainstream school in order to share all relevant information and data.

## **9. INDUCTION INTERVIEW**

Within two weeks of the admissions panel, all students and their parents/carers will have been invited to attend a formal induction interview. This is carried out by the student's House team and takes the following format:

### Health issues:

Students and families are asked to share with their House Team information about their reasons for referral to JPC. They are asked to identify how much of this information they would like to share with their teachers. Specifically, students are asked "If I was your teacher, what would I need to know about you in order to make sure you could learn to the best of your ability?"

The information provided in this section of the induction interview forms the basis of the 'New Student Information Sheet' that is provided to all teachers.

### Attendance and Engagement:

At the interview, the family are given the opportunity to describe their situation, their feelings, aspirations and expectations from their standpoint. They are invited to be as honest as they can be in order that an accurate assessment can be made.

The House team gives the family the important details about the Joseph Paxton Campus which includes careful consideration of the key principles underpinning the school's approach:

- Joseph Paxton Campus is a community which respects the right of every member to feel safe and secure. Every member of the community is expected to display respect, both for themselves and others.
- Work is a key expectation. As the school day is shorter than a mainstream school day, the available time must be utilised to the full without the need for constant encouragement or reminders. Students must accept the need to be responsible for their own learning, and will be supported in this.
- Attendance is vital to each student's chance of success. As such, we aim for full attendance for all students, within the context of their health needs. This is discussed clearly and openly with all students and parents, with likely barriers to attendance identified and strategies to overcome these barriers devised.

These fundamental principles form the basis of the Home-School Agreement. The role of the family is also stressed, with the parent/carer given the Home/School Partnership agreement to sign. Parents/Carers are asked to keep a dialogue open with school; they are expected to be supportive of and communicative about their child.

### Roll Status:

The dual-roll nature of placements at Wirral Hospitals' School is discussed with students and families. Clear information is given about the importance of maintaining contact with the student's mainstream school and about the information we routinely share with schools during a young person's placement with us.

#### Re-integration:

Parents and carers are expected to agree with, and actively support, the principles of the school and to understand the temporary nature of the provision. Particularly at KS3, an emphasis will be placed on the drive to reintegrate.

During the course of the interview, the idea of the student returning to mainstream school will be discussed and explained to the student and their family. It is emphasised that the role of Joseph Paxton is to help students develop whatever they need in order for them to access full-time, mainstream education.

#### Lines of communication:

Any specific family requirements or needs will be established so that effective communication can happen and that all families have access to information. Emergency contact details are discussed and shared.

#### Transport:

The issue of transport is addressed. For those for whom transport remains a problem, it is made clear that Wirral Hospitals' School is unable to provide or organise transport for students. Travel to and from Joseph Paxton Campus is the responsibility of the parents/carers. Parents/carers will be advised to approach the mainstream school and request assistance with meeting the cost of transport, if the young person is not able to use public transport. Students and families are given the option for a referral to travel training.

#### General:

The family is given the opportunity to ask questions and offered a tour of the school accompanied by the Learning Mentor who will be able to answer any further questions informally.

#### Sensory Profiles:

Students and families are asked to complete a sensory profile questionnaire, although this might be done at a later date by the Learning Mentor if time is limited. This profile is handed to the SEND team, who will then use it, along with other SEND information about the young person, to offer specific advice to teachers and TAs.

## **10. ADMISSION**

Once the induction interview has been completed, the House Mentor and Pastoral TA will consider the information provided and allocate the student to a teaching group. This is based upon academic performance, specific social and emotional needs, and medical issues relating to the student. In addition, consideration is given to the sensory profile of the student.

In KS4, the students are usually taught in four classes in year 11 and three in year 10; in KS3 there are two year 9 groups and a mixed year 7/8 group. However, the exact profile of each year group can vary year on year, depending on the number of referrals received for each year group.

A start date is agreed, including details of any phased induction period. This will be as soon as practicable, usually the next day, so that students will begin school quickly to minimise any further disruption to their education.

General background information in the form of a 'New Student Information' sheet is given to the staff prior to the student's admission. This includes the targets set during the interview and the date of the first review.

## **11. Ongoing monitoring**



In order to ensure that the placement at JPC remains the best option for each student, attendance, engagement and behaviour continue to be formally monitored on a termly basis. Where concerns arise, meetings are held with the student, their family, and, where appropriate, any external professionals and the child's mainstream school.

## **12. Placements at Wirral Hospitals' School:**

Once a student's placement at JPC begins, all decisions about their individual level of access to the curriculum are the full responsibility of JPC staff. This includes decisions about the curriculum offer, programmes of study, level of study, GCSE entries, etc. all of which are made in conjunction with the student's family and, where appropriate, health professionals. Decisions are carefully made and always represent the best balance between a student's academic needs and their ongoing health issues. We take a child-centred approach to all matters and the needs of the student are always paramount in any decisions that are taken regarding their education offer. All such information is shared with the student's mainstream school as part of our termly reporting process. Safeguarding, however, remains the ultimate responsibility of the student's mainstream school.

Placements at WHS are dependent on all three parties (student/family, mainstream school, and WHS) agreeing that it remains in everyone's best interest.

The student's own opinion is paramount in this. If the student feels that they do not want to continue at Joseph Paxton Campus, this will be discussed and agreed by the parents/carers and school staff. In this case, the student reverts to single roll registration at their originating mainstream school. Where the student does not have a current school, contact will be made with the Student Services Department at the Local Authority.

Ongoing placements at WHS are dependent on:

- Good attendance – Placements at WHS are expensive and so are guarded carefully by the Local Authority to ensure value for money. In addition, if a student is not attending school regularly then we are unable to help in overcoming their existing barriers to education.
- Engagement – Students are given every opportunity to engage fully with all aspects of academic life. It is essential that students are prepared for their next step in education, either back to mainstream schooling or on to post-16 provision. This can only happen if the student engages with the opportunities provided at WHS.
- Positive behaviour – All the students at WHS are highly vulnerable and in need of a calm, safe, supportive environment. It is essential that this environment is safeguarded at all times by ensuring the highest standards of behaviour. Specifically, students must not behave, either in school, in the local community, or on social media, in a way that has a negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of others within our community.

If there is a concern about any of the three aspects above, then steps will be taken to identify and overcome the barriers that have arisen. Consultation will take place with all relevant outside agencies and plans put in place to improve the situation. If no improvement is seen following the implementation of these plans, then the placement may be ended by the Headteacher of WHS and the student returned to the care, and single roll, of their mainstream school.

## **13. Charging/Recoupment:**

Following consultation with Wirral Headteachers and Governing Bodies, and subsequent ratification at Wirral Schools Forum, with effect from **1st September, 2012, ALL** schools will be required to pay an equivalent amount of yearly Pupil Entitlement and other related student funding received by schools, to Wirral Hospitals' School for students in Year 11.

The students will remain dual-roll - with the mainstream school identified as the main school and Wirral Hospitals' School as the subsidiary provider.

For students in all year groups, any additional SEND funding, PP funding, and/or FSM funding, plus all other related student funding will be recouped from the student's mainstream school.

Pupil Premium Plus for Children Looked After will be paid directly Wirral Hospitals' School by the LA.

These charges will apply to all students at Wirral Hospitals' School currently and in the future, whether Community, Foundation, Academy, Church Aided/Diocesan schools or other and whether Wirral or other authority schools.

#### **14. REINTEGRATION**

It is a key principle that the provision at Joseph Paxton is temporary in the first instance.

Wherever appropriate and according to individual need, KS3 students are encouraged to consider their reintegration and to be working towards it. During the course of each review, the phases required for reintegration are discussed and agreed with the student and their family. Students will usually express their own readiness to reintegrate, but this drive may also come from staff or parents/carers. Liaison with the identified mainstream school is established and a supported programme of reintegration is agreed, usually over an agreed period of time. Should the reintegration break down then the student may, with the agreement of the Headteacher, return to Joseph Paxton.

KS4 students are less likely to reintegrate to mainstream schools as the delivery of exam work and various coursework schedules can make this complicated. It is not impossible, however, and should it be agreed that this is the best way forward for the student, then a programme will be worked out with the mainstream school.

The Safeguarding Lead, based at Joseph Paxton Campus, will have responsibility for negotiating reintegration programmes and students will be supported by their Learning Mentor. At all stages, the student's parents/carers are kept informed and involved. It is acknowledged that their support is crucial.

#### **15. Arrowe Park Hospital**

Students are referred by:

- Medical Staff

Students admitted to APH children's ward will be visited by staff from WHS as soon as is appropriate and an assessment of their educational needs made.

Students who are medically well enough to receive education are taught at the bedside. The focus of this teaching is to maintain continuity for each student and ease the transition back to school when they are fit enough to return.

Any student who may subsequently need home teaching will be referred to the service by medical staff.