



Willoughby School

Admissions policy

January 2012

Willoughby is a Local Authority maintained Special School, and will accept students on the following basis:

- At the request of Lincolnshire County Council and on the understanding that the Education, Health, and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs can be met by Willoughby School.
- If the needs of the students as outlined in their Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs can be *fully* met by the school (SLD/PMLD), and that the school has been identified as being appropriate for the student with the appropriate professional additional advice.
- Careful consideration will be given to all potential admissions, but decisions will be made based on the appropriateness of the setting, the current and future cohort make-up, staffing needs, support needs, behavioural needs and any additional circumstances.
- If the student has been awarded an 'assessment placement' subject to the necessary criteria being met, and school being able to provide a place.

If a student resides outside the county of Lincolnshire and a request for placement at Willoughby is made, places will be awarded following consultation with the Headteacher, Governing Body and the Local Education Authority, and providing that their Statement of Special Educational Needs can be met here.

In extenuating circumstances e.g. parents relocating to the area mid-year, students may from time to time be awarded placements at Willoughby following discussion between the LA, Head Teacher and Governing, and providing that their Statement of Special Educational Needs can be met.

Where it is impractical to admit a student due to limited space or high numbers in year groups, students will be prioritised according to their individual need, following consultation between the Head Teacher, Governors and LEA.

The School will work closely with the County Portage Service in order to support families with pre-school aged children. Input from the Portage service does not automatically assure a place at Willoughby School, but does allow the student to be dealt with in the appropriate channels at school, medical and County Council level.

Willoughby School works closely with a variety of professional agencies to ensure that students are dealt with and offered places fairly. The School works in partnership with all relevant agencies so as to ensure that any student and their family referred to Willoughby at any level will have been offered information, advice and guidance at every opportunity.

Willoughby School prides itself on being a community that allows all stakeholders to develop in an environment free from bullying of any kind; whether it is gender, race, cultural or background based. Willoughby School has clear policies that detail the ways in which we prevent, monitor and evaluate issues, as well as the ways we promote, celebrate and learn from diversity of any type.

Willoughby School is committed to the safeguarding of its entire community. Safeguarding practices will be applied and monitored for any pupil admitted to school.

Additional Lincolnshire County Council Information

A01

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN

Reference Points

Government Legislation

- **DCSF School Admissions Code**, February 2007. All schools and admission authorities are legally required to act in accordance with the mandatory provisions of the Code.
- **DCSF Code of Practice on Admission Appeals**, January 2003 (new version is due January 2008)

Lincolnshire Admissions Forum Protocols apply to **all** Lincolnshire schools.

- **In-Year Fair Access Protocol**, June 2007 (this amalgamates the previous protocols covering mid-year admissions, the mid-year admission of Children in Public Care and the admission of Hard to Place children.) Printed in full in *Going to School in Lincolnshire*.

Publications produced by the Local Authority.

- **Going to School in Lincolnshire** – Provides general school admissions information and advice, including school contact details and admission policies. This is updated every year.

- **Lincolnshire Guide to Starting School for Parents and Carers-** Provides information and advice for parents on applying for their child to start school for the first time in Reception.
- **Lincolnshire Guide to Secondary School Transfer for Parents and Carers-** Provides information and advice for parents of children transferring from primary/junior to secondary school.
- **Primary Education, A guide for parents with children 4 – 11 years old.** Available in Chinese and Polish
- **School Admission Appeals, a Guide for Parents and Carers –** Provides information and advice on independent appeals for community and controlled schools.
- **Foreign languages versions of the secondary transfer** guidance for parents and carers are in preparation, please contact the Admissions Team for details of languages currently available.
- **How do I get a school place in Lincolnshire? A guide to parent and carers.** Available in Arabic, Chinese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Turkish

Websites

- www.gtsil.co.uk provides information on Lincolnshire schools and the admissions process. It also contains copies of County Council publications.
- www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/admissionsconsultation provides information on Admission Policy Consultation.

Contact Points

For parents' use:

Education Team 01522 782030

Email: schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Please ensure that these contact details are quoted in all communications with parents e.g. for obtaining appeals papers in letters refusing a place in Community and Controlled schools.

For school staff use only:

School Admissions Team

If your query is about Reception intake and Secondary Transfer Admissions:

Admissions Officer 01522 553509

Team Leader 01522 553339

Technical Support 01522 553243

Other numbers 01522 553229 and 01522 553227

If your query is about Policy Consultation, Publications, Published Admission Numbers,

Mid-year Admissions or Appeals:

Admissions Officer 01522 553304
Team Leader 01522 553212
Mid-Year Admissions 01522 553226
Admission Appeals 01522 552241 and 01522 553301
General number 01522 553380

Email: schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Fax Number: 01522 553257

Ethnic Minority Achievements Support (EMAS) Service

The service works in partnership with schools and ethnic minority communities. It aims to meet the needs of learners of English as an additional language (EAL) and ethnic minority pupils who are at risk of underachieving.

The Primary School
Sturton by Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2BY tel: 01427 787190

Admissions Committee

Schools must have an Admissions Committee consisting of the Headteacher and at least two Governors. The Code states that decisions on admissions must not be taken by a single individual and this includes the Headteacher.

General Arrangements

Headteachers of all schools should be aware of their obligations to admit children up to the Published Admission Number (PAN) for any particular year group as described in the Code, unless one of the statutory exceptions below applies.

When the duty to offer a place does not apply:

- **Twice excluded pupils**

Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools parents can still express a preference for a school place, but the requirement to comply is removed for a period of two years following the second exclusion.

- **Pupils with challenging behaviour.**

Exceptionally, **outside the normal year of entry**, and where an application is made outside arrangements covered by an In-Year Fair Access Protocol, **admission authorities** (this means that in community and voluntary controlled schools the decision rests with the admissions team, not the governors) may decide to refuse to admit a child with challenging behaviour even though there are places available, on the grounds that admission would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. This will normally only be appropriate where a school has a particularly high concentration of children with challenging behaviour or previously excluded children **and** one or more of the following exceptional circumstances exists, namely that the school:

- a) has required special measures or has recently come out of them (within the last two years);
- b) has been identified by Ofsted as having serious weaknesses or requiring significant improvement and therefore given 'notice to improve' ;

- c) is subject to a formal warning notice;
- d) is a Fresh Start school or Academy open for less than two years; or
- e) is a secondary school where less than 30% of children are achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, or a primary school where fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in both English and Mathematics for four or more consecutive years.

PARENTS RETAIN THE RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST THESE REFUSALS

Poor Practice

- **Interviews.**

Children and parents **must not** be interviewed in connection with the admission process, except in the case of a boarding place (and then only to establish suitability for boarding).

- **References/past reports**

These should not be asked for and admission cannot be conditional on receipt of these, nor dependent on them being satisfactory. The Code (section 3.2) and the Lincolnshire Admission Forum's In-year fair Access Protocol are very clear on this issue.

Once a school has admitted up to the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year cohort there should be no more admissions except where parents are successful at independent appeal. For further advice, call the Admissions Team.

Mid-Year Admissions

Schools will commonly receive enquiries from parents considering a move to the area. It is good practice to allow parents to visit the school, whether a place is likely to be available or not.

Recommended practice is to indicate whether a place is available **at the time of the enquiry**, with the clear warning that any places may no longer be available by the time the move is finalised.

Places should not normally be allocated unless there is a binding legal commitment to a move to the area (signature of tenancy agreement or exchange of contracts).

Places allocated in advance of a move should not normally be held for more than 6 school weeks.

Children from Overseas

Detailed guidance on the arrangements for the admission of children from overseas, including asylum seekers and EAA nationals, is given in the School Admissions Code (sections 1.52 to 1.63). If in any doubt please seek advice from the admissions team.

Children from overseas may present many challenges, not least because they often arrive in all National Curriculum Key Stages, mid-term, with little or no English. However, they must be considered in the same way as other children in the UK when applying for a school place and schools must not refuse on grounds of language.

N.B. The DfES announced in July 2000 that newly arrived children from overseas, whose first language is not English, need not have their examination results included in school league tables if they arrive in school during years 5, 6, 10 or 11.

Ethnic Information

The DfES requires LAs to collect statistical data about pupils in its schools and it would be helpful, therefore, if you could arrange for Form EC67 "Particulars of a child on admission to school" (available on NetLinc) to be completed at the time of a child's admission. Parents are not obliged to give this information.

For further information and support contact the Ethnic Minority Achievement Support (EMAS) Service, see above for contact details.

Early and Late Transfer

Children will normally be placed in the year group to which they belong by chronological age. Where it is proposed that a child be placed in a different cohort, the relevant **Admissions Authority** must take this decision (this means that in community and voluntary controlled schools the decision rests with the Admissions Team at the LA, not the governors). This is particularly important where it is proposed that a child transfer a year early, or late, from Primary to Secondary education. Detailed guidance on the relevant procedures should be sought from the Admissions Officer (Primary Admissions and Secondary Transfer) well in advance. If such a request is refused, parents **may** have the right of appeal to an independent panel against this decision. This is a complex area and early consultation with the Admissions Team is recommended.

Sixth Form Admissions

Children already attending a school in Year 11 have the automatic right of transfer to the school's sixth form, provided that a suitable course, or combination of courses, can be provided and the child meets the school's published academic standards (usually a certain number of GCSEs at specific grades or better). Admission to the sixth form **must not** be refused on grounds of behaviour, attitude or attendance. Any refusal must be in accord with the school's published arrangements. Parents have the right of appeal to an independent panel against any refusal.

Transfer from Year 12 to Year 13

This is an area on which the Code is silent. However, after taking advice from both the DCFS and Legal Services there are two possible scenarios;

1. Where a school sets out from the outset criteria to be met for progression from Y12 to Y13.

Acceptance of a place is therefore in the knowledge of the consequences of not keeping up with the work. In this case the school may lawfully take away the place. Parents/students dissatisfied with this would have to follow the route of complaint to the Governors etc as set out in Going to School in Lincolnshire.

2. If there are no progression criteria.

The expectation here is that the offer of a place in the sixth form is for a two year commitment. For a school to remove a student from the roll in this situation would be unlawful, as none of the criteria for doing so would be met.

It is recommended that materials associated with the Sixth Form, for example the brochure, be reviewed to ensure this is clear.

Admission Appeals

Where a place is refused, the parent or carer of the child **must** be informed of their right to an appeal to an independent appeal panel.

In community and voluntary controlled schools these appeals are arranged by the school admissions team, panels and clerks are provided by Legal Services.

Parents may obtain the necessary papers to start an appeal from 01522 782030. Parents will find further information on www.gtsil.co.uk.

Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools may arrange for an independent panel to be convened by Legal Services, or may convene their own panel, provided it is fully compliant with the Appeals Code. It is particularly important that the Clerk to the panel is appropriately qualified and that Clerk and panel members are trained. For the Clerk to the Governors also to be Clerk to the independent panel would potentially expose the procedure to challenge via the Ombudsman.

Yearly Consultations on PANs and Policies

- Admission authorities (**Governors in Foundation and Aided schools**) are required to consult before determining an admission number for each normal year of entry and the oversubscription criteria to be applied if applications exceed this number. In Lincolnshire the consultation takes place during February.
- In primary schools with a nursery and secondary schools with a sixth form, the separate arrangements for admission to these years must be included in the consultation.
- If a Voluntary Aided or Foundation school has any supplementary forms, for example to do with aptitude selection in a specialist secondary school, these are also subject to consultation.
- The determined admission arrangements, including the admission number, must be published. **Governors in Foundation and Aided schools** must determine the final version by 15 April and publish it (e-mail to schooladmissions@lincolnshire.co.uk) by 29 April.
- Consultation and publication take place through the website www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/admissionsconsultation. The website includes guidance on the process and links to relevant documents. The Admissions Team alerts neighbouring LAs to the progress of the consultation each year.
- An Admission authority must respect determined admission number(s) and apply the published arrangements in admitting pupils to its school(s).
- All schools and admission authorities must operate in accordance with the agreed Coordinated Schemes for Lincolnshire and the arrangements for Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools must reflect this.