



# **ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre**

## **ADMISSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

To ensure there are planned and robust systems in place to support an efficient and consistent approach to referrals, admissions and exclusions at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre. To also ensure assessments are conducted consistently and in a manner which will ensure needs can be met. Assessments will support the development of support plans which will allow the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre to understand thoroughly its obligations towards an individual and the local authority which has responsibility for placements, in accordance with the contract and all other documentation.

### **REFERALL**

We accept referrals from Local Authorities (LA). Whilst parents are welcome to visit the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre and can be provided with information about the Learning Centre, the Learning Centre cannot proceed to the admissions stage without an agreed package of Local Authority support.

All students must be within the designated 11-19 age range and have either a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). This SSEN/EHCP must contain a confirmed diagnosis of Autism.

In addition, the SSEN/EHCP may also include the co-occurrence of disorders with similar presentation - including language, communication, sensory processing or motor skill difficulties, learning and behavioural issues such as A.D.H.D, Dyspraxia, Hyper-mobility and Dyslexia.

Health and medical conditions such as epilepsy will not preclude a young person from consideration for a placement. The ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre staff team will seek advice and (where relevant) access appropriate training to identify whether the

medical needs of a young person can be met, according to their health care plan, prior to admission.

Home location, religious or cultural needs will not preclude a young person from consideration for a placement.

Staff at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre have received the relevant training to work with young people who can display Challenging Behaviour as part of their autism presentation. The main objective of the Learning Centre is to support young people to access activities and to equip them with the skills to be as independent as possible, within their local community. On referral, if a young person presents with Challenging Behaviour that was deemed by a risk assessment to identify that they would not safely be able to leave the Learning Centre to access activities within the local community on a regular basis, this would preclude that young person from admission.

Students must be working at NC Level 1 or above in year 6.

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre must also be satisfied that the parents are supportive of the placement and that the needs of the young person can be accommodated within the resources, and benefit from the aims of the Learning Centre.

Admission will not be detrimental to the needs of other students – no student should compromise the opportunities of others within the Learning Centre. It is essential that admissions are properly planned and allow for smooth transition.

Each student will start on a transitional programme and undertake a terms observational assessment with the Learning Centre.

Each student will be sensitively introduced to the Learning Centre and supported when the time comes to leave. This will be done on an individual basis, giving choice and sharing in the decision making with the student dependent on age and levels of understanding.

## **REFERALL - PROCEDURE**

1. All referrals should be made directly to ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre.
2. Vacancies are matched to need, not on a chronological basis. The Director will seek to ensure there is a balance of age, compatibility and gender within the Learning Centre and be satisfied that the young person's needs may be met.
3. Parents are encouraged to visit and inspect the Learning Centre. If they wish their child to be considered for admission they should contact the relevant Local Authority and request that admission procedures are initiated.
4. At the request of the Local Authority, the Learning Centre will make an informal assessment either at the young person's home or, if appropriate, at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre or at the school the young person is currently attending. ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre cannot undertake assessments at the request of

parents/carers.

5. Health, medical, religious, and cultural needs must be identified and assessed prior to admission to ensure these needs can be met. All medication shall be carefully recorded.

6. If the assessments indicate ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre can meet a young person's needs, a report will be sent to the Local Authority with placement details and a start date.

7. This procedure also applies to children whose referral is subject to the SEN Tribunal process. However, in this event, where the parents have received notification of the date of the Tribunal Hearing, the Learning Centre will endeavor at the request of the parent's advocate or solicitor, to undertake an assessment prior to the date of the Hearing. This is to ensure that the parents are able to state at the Hearing that ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre can meet their child's needs as laid down in the SSEN/EHCP and that a placement is anticipated from a given time.

8. All decisions relating to the proposed placement of any individual are confidential. There will be open communication with relatives, carers and advocates, which acknowledges and respects the needs of each young person.

## **BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

Our admissions assessment is the process by which we decide whether to admit a young person or not; and where we determine the level of support that young person will require. Once a young person has begun their placement at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre, their individual needs will be measured through baseline assessment. In ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre, the baseline assessment period runs from the date of admission to the end of Month Three.

### **Baseline Assessment - Procedure**

1. Baseline assessment will be undertaken on all students new to ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre. The intention is to provide data on attainments and abilities so that future progress can be ascertained.

2. The Baseline Assessment will consist of historical information as well as updated reports that may include, Speech and Language, Psychometric Assessment, Autistic Continuum Disorder Profile, Functional Skills Assessment, Behaviour analysis and general observation. These will be compiled with information from various professionals, staff members and parents.

3. Baseline Assessment should, for the majority of young people, cover the following areas:

- Cognitive ability assessed by qualified educational or clinical psychologists using standardised assessments and observations.

- Communication skills assessed by qualified speech and language therapists
- Social skills and functional skills assessed by psychologists, and teaching staff using standardised tests and observation
- Educational attainments assessed by teaching staff using standardised and National Curriculum assessments.
- Sensory sensitivities assessed by psychology and education staff using standardised assessments and checklists. Advice from Occupational Therapists may be sought for young people presenting with more complex sensory processing difficulties.
- Behaviour assessed by psychologists, pastoral and education staff.

4. Parents and carers will be invited to contribute to the assessment process with the Learning Centre, and will be offered opportunities to meet with relevant staff to discuss the results of their child's assessment.

5. Parents and carers will be invited to contribute to any baseline assessment meetings as partners to agree and discuss the assessments and plans as appropriate.

6. Appropriately trained staff within a multidisciplinary team will carry out assessments.

7. Copies of the reports that form the baseline assessment will be given to parents and carers and these will be presented in a format that is understandable. These will also be shared with those outside bodies who have a professional interest in the young person's wellbeing and education.

8. The Baseline Assessment will normally be completed within 3 months of the student commencing attendance at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre.

All records will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre Confidentiality Policy.

## **EXCLUSION**

It is to be expected that ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will be best able to manage young people who present with challenging behaviour as a consequence of their autism or related condition. Exclusion from ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre would be very rare, and only happen in extreme circumstances. Behaviour policies and strategies, partnership with parents, staff training and development in the management of complex and challenging behaviour will seek to avoid the need to exclude a young person.

A young person's parents and Local Authority will be informed of inappropriate behaviour that causes particular concern. The Learning Centre will liaise with parents and the LA to review the statement if appropriate. A Support Programme written in conjunction with all relevant staff and agreed by the Director of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will be forwarded to parents, Local Authority, Social Care (if required) and, when appropriate, discussed with the young person. Exclusion will only then be considered as a last resort if this plan should prove unsuccessful.

The Director of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre is the only person authorised to exclude a young person. Before a young person is excluded all other alternatives/strategies should be considered. The safety, education and welfare of all students and staff is of paramount importance and therefore, on occasion, exclusion may be the only appropriate course of action.

## **EXCLUSION - PROCEDURE**

1. A decision to exclude a student will only be taken in response to serious breaches of the Learning Centre's Behaviour Policy, or if allowing the student to remain in the Learning Centre would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the Learning Centre.

2. A decision to exclude should not be taken in the heat of the moment unless there is an immediate risk to the safety or welfare of the student or of other persons.

3. Exclusion will not be appropriate for minor incidents such as failure to complete homework, poor academic achievement, lateness or truancy, pregnancy, or punishing parent(s) for the behaviour of students, for example, by extending a fixed period exclusion until the parent(s) agree to attend a meeting.

4. Before deciding the type of exclusion a full investigation will take place with the Director of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre considering all facts and evidence from all parties concerned. This will take into account the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre policy on Equality and Diversity, checking whether the incident appears to be provoked by discriminatory practice and, if necessary, consultation with others but not involving anyone who may later take part in the review of the decision. The student should be enabled to participate to give their version of events where possible.

5. Exclusions can be either fixed, normally for a period of not more than 15 days to allow for a 'cooling off' period or to allow for the provision of additional resources. Permanent exclusion is an extreme measure made after consultation when the Learning Centre can no longer meet the young person's needs, whatever the level of resources that might be made available.

6. A fixed period exclusion shall not exceed a total of 45 school days in any academic year.

7. The young person shall be returned to the care of the parent or placing Authority as appropriate.

8. The ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre Director must notify the Parent(s), students, Local Authority and any other relevant body by telephone at the earliest opportunity of any decision to exclude. This must be confirmed in writing to the LA within 24 hours.

9. The Director who excludes should notify the parent(s)/guardian immediately by telephone, followed by a letter within one school day. Exclusion should normally begin on the next day. The letter should explain:

- Why the decision was taken
- Steps to enable the young person to continue their education
- Their rights and how to appeal
- Their right to see their child's school record
- If the exclusion is permanent, the date the exclusion takes place and details of any relevant previous warnings, exclusions or measure before the present incident
- If the exclusion is fixed, the date and time of return
- The name and telephone number of the LA Officer, together with the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) (England & Wales). Correspondence should be in a format that the parent(s)/guardian can understand.

10. The Learning Centre will provide work for the young person to undertake and/or guidance with regard to activities and occupation of time during the period of exclusion.

11. A meeting will be convened at the earliest opportunity with the Local Authority. The outcome of this meeting will be a strategy plan to be adopted for the young person's return.

12. In the case of a young person who is looked after by the Local Authority the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre Director will convene an urgent review meeting to agree the next steps.

13. If a young person is to be temporarily excluded for more than 15 school days in one term, the Director must plan how to enable them to continue their education; how to use the time to address the young person's problems, and in conjunction with the LA, what arrangements will best help the young person to re-integrate into the Learning Centre at the end of the exclusion.

14. A meeting will be held following any fixed term exclusion to outline the conditions for return, emphasising the need for appropriate behavior and compliance with Learning Centre rules. This meeting will take into account the young person's ability to modify their behaviour and their ability to understand why they were excluded.

15. If a fixed-term exclusion is to be extended for any reason, the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre Director must write again to the parent(s) explaining the change.

16. Permanent exclusion is only appropriate when the Learning Centre cannot meet the student's needs whatever the level of resources that might be made available. The Director will consult with the staff team, parent(s) and the Local Authority. It is particularly important that parent(s) are encouraged at an early stage to play a positive part in the resolution of the young person's difficulties. ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre will plan how to enable the student to continue their education if the student remains on roll throughout the appeal process.

17. The Director will inform the LA immediately of all permanent exclusions, and all exclusions which result separately or in total in the young person missing more than five schools days in any one term; or those which deny the student's chance to take an examination. Short fixed period exclusions of one to five school days should be reported each term unless the LA requests more frequent reports.


18. The Director will liaise with the LA and arrange reviews to establish if additional support and resources can be made available or whether changes to the Statement or EHCP are required. If these are made, the exclusion should be withdrawn.

19. When a young person is excluded they should be referred to the appropriate sources of help and support. Strategies will be put in place to assist the student in returning to school, and to ensure that they feel welcomed. Advice and information is available to a parent(s) through the funding LA's SEN partnership scheme.

20. If a parent(s) sends a student to the Learning Centre or refuses to collect him or her during a formal exclusion, the Learning Centre should have due regard for the student's safety and contact the LA/Education Welfare Office for advice.

### **POLICY REVIEW STATEMENT**

This policy will be reviewed every year or earlier should legislative change or other event require it.

SIGNED:.... 

POSITION:.....DIRECTOR

DATE:.....1<sup>st</sup> July 2021

REVIEW DATE:....1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

FOR & ON BEHALF OF

ASPIRE: Lifeskills