



St George's
School Edgbaston

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS OF PUPILS WITH EHCPS:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Revised: September 2023



1. Who do I speak to about the provision the school offers?

Our SEND Information report is your first port of call. This details the provision we offer and helps you to understand our core and non-core offer. This should be read alongside our SEND Policy – both documents can be found on our website; should you require a paper copy or enlarged font please speak directly to our Admissions Team who will be happy to assist.

Pre-entry access to our SENCo is limited. As a busy school with a large Inclusion Department, our SENCo is kept very busy working with our current students, their parents and our staff. You will appreciate that we have many enquiries from parents of pupils with SEND and, if our SENCo were to meet all of them, they would have little time to carry out their essential duties. We offer several Open Days throughout the year and monthly tours. Members of our Inclusion Department are available during the Open Days and our SEND Administrator conducts the monthly tour. They will be happy to answer any queries you may have.

You may have further queries you would like to discuss with us; we will do our very best to answer you as soon as possible but as a busy school with a limited infrastructure we may take a day or two to respond. We ask that you consider any questions you have in advance as we cannot offer unlimited access to our Inclusion or Admissions Departments.

2. I would like my child to attend St George's School. How do I apply?

You must do this via your local authority (LA). You should inform your LA that you have a preference for our school and ask them to consult with us with regards to placement. They will then send us consultation documents (typically a copy of the latest EHCP, annual review notes, IEPs and reports from any professionals who have assessed or provided support for your child).

We ask that you discuss the consultation documents with your Principal Officer before they are sent; you should be happy that the information sent is up to date, relevant and accurately reflects your child. Out of date documents (i.e. professionals' reports a year or more old, EHCPs that have not been reviewed in the last twelve months) or omitted information delays the consultation process.

3. Why do you need to read this information?

We need to understand exactly what your child's needs are. The consultation documents will give us insight as to their ability, how they access the curriculum, levels of independence and social interaction.

The EHCP and professionals' reports will detail your child's strengths, areas of need and targets; they will also provide recommendations as to how best help your child access their academic and social curriculum. We need the information in Section F of the EHCP to ensure we have the provision your child requires.

4. Will you read my child's EHCP before I ask my authority to consult?

Quite simply – no. We have a high volume of applications and consultations for students with SEND; therefore, we only read EHCPs when sent via consultation from your local authority.

5. Can my child repeat a year?

If the information we gather supports this request, and it is agreed by all parties that it is in the best interests of your child, then yes.

You should seek the agreement of your Local Authority before they send the consultation documents in order for us to process the application appropriately. If your LA does not support your request you should seek the support of your SENDIASS. Your child cannot repeat a year at St George's without your LA being in agreement due to funding implications amongst other things.

6. My child is currently out of a school setting. Do you offer home schooling provision?

No; the school does not have the staffing infrastructure to enable this.

7. My child has not attended school for a period of time. Do they have to follow a full timetable immediately?

If your child would benefit from a phased transition you should discuss this with the school. We do have pupils who enter the setting via a phased transition, but do expect this to be a finite agreement and that your child will attend for the full school day as quickly as possible. We cannot accommodate sending staff to the home to deliver a curriculum for the times when your child does not attend.

8. Transferring into KS4

The school has a wide range of GCSE options on offer, as well as Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT; we are also able to offer some more vocational courses and (BTEC pathways) to identified students. It is not always possible to offer the courses

your child has chosen in their current setting, and they may be expected to choose alternatives from our options blocks.

9. How many GCSEs does my child have to take?

That depends on the needs of your child and the courses they choose. The majority of pupils take English Language, Maths and Double Science (which is a combination of physics, chemistry and biology) GCSEs, as well as a combination of option subjects. Most students will take a full GCSE pathway; however, some may take a combination of GCSE and BTECs, others may take Functional Skills in the core and/or solely BTEC options.

In order to deliver interventions as detailed in your child's EHCP, we will reduce their timetable by one subject in order to allow these to take place. It may be that your child would benefit from reducing their timetable by two subjects; if this is agreed between the pupil, parents and school they will attend our Study Skills provision where they can work on interventions, study skills and homework as well as 'booster' work for subjects in which they struggle most.

10. You have 15 days to respond to my local authority so what happens next?

There are many administrative tasks around your application. Our SENCo needs to read all consultation documents, liaise with the SENCo and any other relevant staff in your child's current setting, potentially visit your child in the current setting to observe and discuss current provision, as well as liaising with external professionals if appropriate; your child is likely to need more than one taster day in order for us to assess their academic and social needs in our setting.

11. Will my child automatically be offered taster days?

If through our information gathering (as detailed in Point 2 and 4) we feel that we are not an appropriate setting for your child we would not offer taster days. We do understand that a child on paper does not always provide the full picture of the individual, but our liaisons with their current school and relevant professionals will enable us to understand whether or not it is appropriate to offer time in our setting. We will offer a taster day if we think that we may be able to meet needs or if we are unsure. The offer of a taster day should not be taken as an offer of a place.

12. Will my child be able to access 1:1 support on taster days?

We cannot guarantee this. The support we have is shared amongst the class and allocated according to the teacher's planning. Our curriculum must run for our current cohort with as little impact on resources as possible. If you feel that your child is likely to need this level of support you must discuss this with us prior to coordinating a date.

13. What will my child do on a taster day?

Primary aged pupils will spend the day with their age appropriate class; secondary aged pupils are allocated a 'peer buddy', teaching groups and a timetable. Time will be found within lessons to observe your child's ability to access the curriculum. They will spend break and lunchtime with us (food provided), and have access to our unstructured time provision. This is intended to be a positive experience for the child, and we do ask that you let us know about any anxieties, concerns or needs your child may have. The class/subject teachers will complete an assessment summary sheet on your child, which provides information about your child's academic and social abilities.

14. When will I find out if my child will be offered a place?

All applications for school placement are considered at a fortnightly Admissions Panel meeting. A member of our Admissions Team will inform you of the date at which your application will be considered. Not receiving all the information we need, or delays in response from your child's current school/most recent setting, may prolong the process; it would be helpful if you could inform your child's school that we will be in touch and request that they cooperate in information sharing.

The Admissions Panel will make the final decision as to whether a place should be offered, and will consider the information gathered from your child's taster day/s, the consultation documents and information gathered from your child's current school.

If we feel we have the provision and are the right setting for your child, we will send your Principal Officer a set of costs for the placement. We will be clear with the LA if there is any provision or resources we cannot offer from the detail in Section F of the EHCP. The Principal Officer will take the costs to their Panel (which meets once a week), where a decision will be made as to whether or not the LA agrees to fund the placement.

If we believe we cannot offer a place we will also send this response directly to your Principal Officer.

You should liaise directly with your Principal Officer, not St George's, as to whether or not your child will be placed in the school.

Parents should be aware that there is not an automatic transfer from Lower School into Upper School, or Upper School into Sixth Form. Your LA will have to consult with the school at each phase.

15. The School and the Authority have agreed my child's place in the school. What happens now?

As soon as the LA lets the school know they have agreed to place your child in our setting we will be in touch with you to discuss transition and a start date. Our staff will work in conjunction with you, staff in the current setting, external professionals (if appropriate) and the LA to ensure best quality transition.

If your child requires 1:1 adult support there may be a delay in your child entering the setting. As a small school we only employ the number of staff we need to service the cohort we have. If we need to employ somebody to work with your child, this does take time. We have to place an advert for the vacancy and leave it up for several weeks to ensure we have an appropriate pool of candidates to interview; once a candidate is offered the job we must follow statutory safer recruitment checks, which again can take several weeks. We appreciate that this may be frustrating for you and your child but, for obvious reasons, we cannot employ staff until the LA has agreed to placement.

16. What does the Local Authority fund and what do I need to pay for?

The local authority pays for your child's school fees and, in some circumstances additional support/provision.

Lunches are not included and need to be paid for by you; if your child is entitled to free school meals you need to let our Finance Office know in advance of your child starting with us. As expected in your child's current setting: uniform, sports kit, school bags, trips, study guides, school planners and other sundries must be paid for by parents. All parents must pay £8 per term for their child's pupil insurance. There is an option to contribute £5 per term to the Friends of St George's, which enables the school to continue to provide some of the resources and opportunities your child has access to.

17. Will my child automatically transfer from the Lower School into the Upper School?

No. Your local authority has to consult with us for secondary school provision. We always recommend that you look at what other provisions your local authority has to

offer in order to both make an informed decision about secondary school settings, and to have other settings consulted with in case we do not offer placement. As a small school our resources are limited and we have small classes with distinct dynamics. We make our admissions decisions based on a range of factors including the incoming class structures, numbers and needs amongst other things. We make decisions based on the best interests of the child and, if we say no, then it is because we firmly believe that it would not be in your child's interests to join us at that point in time. We never say no lightly. We would love to say yes to everyone but we simply cannot.

18. Will my child automatically transfer from the Upper School into St George's Sixth Form?

No. Your local authority has to consult with us for post-16 provision. We will talk to you and your child about their hopes and aspirations for the future as well as potential examination pathways in their Year 10 and 11 annual reviews. We always recommend that you look at what other provisions your local authority has to offer in order to both make an informed decision about Sixth Form settings, and to have other settings consulted with in case we do not offer placement. If we feel we do not have a relevant certification pathway, or your child will require resources we do not have available, we would not offer a place.

19. What qualification pathways do you offer in Sixth Form?

We only offer Level 3 qualifications – A Levels and a limited number of BTECs. We do not have pathways for students not yet ready to study independently at this level. You should be aware that BTECs are not a 'softer option' and do include examinations as well as course work. It is important that your child can study independently both in and outside of lessons as, alongside fifteen hours curriculum time, your child has fifteen hours of independent study time.

20. The school has offered my child a place but the Local Authority has refused to fund the placement. What happens now?

You can appeal your Local Authorities decision and should speak to your local SENDIASS who can support you through the process. You can also elect to take your authority to Tribunal; again, you should speak to SENDIASS who can provide you with information and advice. You should be aware that the school cannot attend tribunals and you should speak to us before you pursue this route so we can be clear in terms of what information we can provide.

We do not offer places to pupils with EHCPs who do not have the support of their local authority.

21. My child has not been offered a place, but I believe the school has children with similar needs sets and the resources to meet these needs.

As a small school our resources are limited and we have small classes with distinct dynamics. We make our admissions decisions based on a range of factors including existing class structure, numbers and needs amongst other things. We make decisions based on the best interests of the child and, if we have said no, then it is because we firmly believe that it would not be in your child's interests to join us at that point in time. We never say no lightly. We would love to say yes to everyone but we simply cannot.

22. Who do I speak to if my child is refused a place?

The Admissions Panel (which is made up of members of our Inclusion Department and Senior Leadership Team) will have considered all the information made available to them (including information from our staff with regards to the taster days). No one person can make a decision to offer a place (or not) in isolation, and therefore the decision will be final.

The school will not be obliged to state its reasons for not offering a place; therefore, if your child is not offered a place you should speak to your current SENCo, Principal Officer and/or SENDIASS worker to discuss your next steps. There is no right to appeal and we will not engage in discussions over such decisions.

23. Can I reapply?

Yes. We would however encourage you to wait until your child enters the next Key Stage before you do: if we have declined a space as we think our academic and/or social curriculum is not appropriate for your child, this will allow time for your child to make the progress they need to access our setting.

If we have declined a place as we have reached our 'cap' in the class or year band you require, it may well be that we have spaces available in the future.