



## Assessment & Admissions Policy

Document Control Information

Version	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	November 2020	
2	June 2022	
3	July 2023	Some minor amendments
4	June 2024	Some minor amendments

Reviewed	June 2024
Responsibility	Majella Delaney / Kayleigh Turner
Committee	FGB
Review Date	June 2025
Signed	<i>M Delaney</i>

**Meath | A Speech and Language UK school | Principal: Majella Delaney**

Brox Road, Ottershaw, Surrey, KT16 0LF | 01932 872302 | [www.meathschool.org.uk](http://www.meathschool.org.uk) | [meath@meathschool.org.uk](mailto:meath@meathschool.org.uk)  
Non-Maintained School | DfE No. 936/7063

Meath, is a Speech and Language UK school. Speech and Language UK is the operating name of I CAN Charity, a registered charity in England and Wales (210031) and Scotland (SC039947), which is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (00099629). Registered address: 2 Angel Gate, Hall Street, London, ECTV 2PT

## Meath School

### Assessment & Admissions Policy

For referrals for Meath placement

#### 1. Entry Criteria

1.1. In considering children for admission, all the evidence will suggest a Language Disorder (including Developmental Language Disorder) and/or Speech Disorder as the child's primary need. Children who meet the entry criteria present with:

- speech and/or language skills which show marked deficits in comparison with abilities in other areas.
- non-verbal abilities that fall within the average range or just below, to include pupils with mild-moderate learning difficulties.
- clear social motivation and intent to learn as part of a group.

In some instances, Social Communication Disorder (including some presentations of Autism Spectrum Disorder) may be an additional primary need, but only where the above three criteria are also met.

1.2. In ascertaining this, consideration is given to a range of areas, and children who are well supported within Meath School are likely to present with all/some of the following difficulties alongside their speech and language needs:

- \* attention control problems.
- \* co-ordination and/or perceptual difficulties.
- \* immature social/emotional behaviour.
- \* social interaction difficulties, usually linked to their speech and/or language disorder.
- \* mild-moderate sensory impairment.
- \* pragmatic difficulties.

1.3. These pupils may also show one/some of the following characteristics in their language profiles:

- \* reduced understanding of verbal language.
- \* difficulty understanding and using syntactic structures.
- \* inaccurate or reduced vocabulary.
- \* slow processing, inaccurate storage and difficulty with retrieval of information.
- \* poor understanding of higher-level language.
- \* limited ability to use language to express ideas and meet needs.
- \* poor intelligibility.
- \* poor discrimination and production of sounds.
- \* frustration in attempts to meet expectations.
- \* poor understanding of situations, leading to social and emotional difficulties.
- \* poor problem solving and independence skills.
- \* immature social and play skills.

- \* poor listening and attention skills.

Assessment will help to clarify the balance of these needs and the consequential impact on a child's educational needs and the barriers in accessing learning.

## **2. Assessment for placement**

- 2.1. All children will undertake a full assessment prior to an offer being made and prior to admission into the school. The purpose of the assessment procedure prior to placement is to decide whether the special educational needs of the child fall within the entry criteria for the school; whether the school can meet the full range of the child's needs; and understand the barriers to learning and functional comprehension of a child in order to allocate them an appropriate class should placement be offered. Due note is given as to what reasonable adjustments may be required to accommodate a pupil within the school. The procedure does not constitute a full assessment for all intervention purposes.
- 2.2. The school will consider referrals for admission from Local Authorities and from other purchasers, who will forward the appropriate paperwork which includes the Education Health Care Plan and associated reports. Upon receipt of the referral request and paperwork, acknowledgement is sent to the referring party within ten working days. An assessment of a child must be carried out when a SENDIST hearing has been arranged and the Tribunal request written confirmation of a placement from the school. This assessment follows the same process and cost as all other assessments. Confirmation of an available place at Meath School can then be formally made to the Tribunal.

## **3. Assessment Procedure**

The following abbreviations are used:

Principal	Principal or Acting Principal
ACM	Assessment Centre Manager
EP	Educational Psychologist
SLT	Speech and Language Therapist
Teacher	Assessment Teacher
Admin	Assessment Administrator
LSA	Learning Support Assistant

The following timetable gives an outline to the assessment. Flexibility is needed in this process and adjustments have to be made to accommodate unforeseen circumstances and the particular needs of the child.

- 3.1. Assessment team to read referral papers and decide an offer of assessment. We consider the widest range of information possible in making our judgement. This will include previous reports, parental/carer contribution, formal assessments, informal information, observations and assessment. It may also include (but not always) approaches to other professionals with knowledge of the child, or observations of the child in the assessment centre or in their current setting (with appropriate permissions).
- 3.2. We give equal and serious consideration to all referrals for placements at Meath. We recognise that many of the children referred have complex difficulties and aim to make judgements to the best of our ability. If the school

deems that, after reading the documentation, the pupil's special educational needs could not be met at the school the papers are returned to the referring agents within 10 school days with a letter/phone call explaining the situation. If the pupil's special educational needs might be met, the referring body is contacted (within at least 10 school days of receipt of papers) to arrange for an appointment to be made for the child to spend 2 days in the assessment service. Details of the assessment days are sent to the referring agents who inform the family wherever necessary. Confirmation that the appropriate assessment fee will be met is requested from the referring body (See Assessment Service Policy).

- 3.3. Letter to LA within ten working days of receipt of referral papers either offering an initial face to face triage appointment, full assessment date or explanation if no assessment offered. Written response sent to other referring body given within 10 working days of receipt of referral papers.
- 3.4. Between LA letter/written referring body response and assessment day:
  - \* Admin to raise fee invoice (via finance department), to be paid at least three weeks before assessment date (unless short notice booking), thus securing that date. A non-returnable fee will be charged for each assessment carried out. There is a charge for short notice cancellations. There is donation support for some assessments through the Supporting Families Fund for lower income families acting as the referring body.
  - \* Where possible, class group to be informed at least one week prior to assessment of their involvement (or as soon as paperwork is received for late bookings). The groups to be prepared for the presence of the assessment child.
  - \* Referral papers to be made available to assessment team one week prior to assessment day.
  - \* Approaches to existing placement if needed for information.
  - \* Principal/ACM to decide who approaches whom.

#### **4. Schedule**

The assessment at the school is used to observe the pupil in a variety of contexts and using standardised testing where possible to highlight:

- \* Speech, language and communication skills and difficulties
- \* Cognitive/learning skills (non-verbal)
- \* Social interaction and play skills
- \* Learning style and behaviours in a school context

The assessments, observations and tests are carried out by a multi-disciplinary team which consists of:

Highly Specialist SLT  
Specialist Teacher  
Educational Psychologist  
Learning Support Assistant (LSA)

All the information gathered will be evaluated by the multi-disciplinary team and a decision will be made as to the child's primary barrier to learning and any secondary barriers. Whether the child's special needs could be fully met by placement at Meath

School will be decided by the Principal following discussion with the assessment team. The final decision will be advised to the referring body by the Principal by phone/email within seven working days and thereafter in writing.

#### Timetable (example) Day 1

9.30 – 10.30	Arrival and individual session with SLT
9.30– 10.00	Case History with family (Teacher)
10.30 – 10.50	Break with SLT and Teacher/LSA
10.50 – 11.30	Observation in class Teacher
11.30 – 12.30	SLT assessment
12.30	Lunch with LSA
12.45-13.00	Play observation with LSA/Teacher
13.00 – 13.30	SLT assessment / Teacher Assessment
13.30	Home

#### Timetable (example) Day 2

9.30 – 10.40	Assessment session with EP
10.30-10.50	Break with EP and Teacher/LSA
10.55 – 12.20	In class observation/individual session with EP
12.20 – 13.00	Lunch and play with LSA/EP
13.00	Home / Play with LSA
13.30	Panel meeting with all professionals
14.30	Feedback to parents/carers - LSA to support child if on site
15.30	End of day

- 4.1. Verbal feedback on outcomes of assessment and profile of the child is given to parents/carers by assessment team at end of 2nd day. All the information gathered will be evaluated by the multi-disciplinary assessment team and a decision will be made as to whether the child's special educational needs could be fully met by placement at Meath School by the Principal, in consultation with the Assessment Team. The final decision will be advised to the referring body by the Principal by phone/email within seven working days and thereafter in writing. Specialist reports from the assessment days are forwarded to the purchasers within 15 (Surrey) school days of the assessment date.
- 4.2. Reports go to the administrator after assessment for proofing, collation and sending out within fifteen working days (Surrey term time). These reports should clearly reflect the individual expertise and experience [professional skills and abilities] of the professionals who compile them.
- 4.3. Focus of reports:
  - Teacher- description of class observations, play skills, social interaction skills and attention, learning, literacy and maths skills, informal sensory and physical observations.
  - \* SLT- assessment of attention, play, social skills, receptive and expressive language, speech sound production and oro motor skills with analysis and conclusion
  - \* EP - balance of cognitive, behavioural, and social aspects discussed including analysis of assessment and conclusion.

- 4.4. All conclusions collated and merged to form a "Joint Recommendations" report to identify needs and provision required to meet those needs (and to address whether child could be appropriately placed at Meath if LA referral or Tribunal). Principal to check that EHC (EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE) Plan needs can fully be met at Meath and, if not, areas of vulnerability to be highlighted if LA referral or Tribunal.
- 4.5. If the child has a specific behavioural, physical, sensory, or perceptual disability, this will need to have been assessed carefully by the team. The additional support that may be required, the adjustments that may be needed should be carefully considered. If an LA or Tribunal referral, the offer of placement may be dependent on securing the necessary additional staffing support as identified in the assessment process. Details should be included in reports.
- 4.6. If the child shows, or is reported to show, symptoms of severe emotional distress, or if there is evidence of access to specialist services, these should be noted in assessment reports. They should be highlighted in the reports etc., so that specialist help may be considered.
- 4.7. Families, in combination with Local Authorities, are responsible for the organisation and funding of any transport arrangements. Support in locating overnight accommodation will be given to families where necessary. The funding of this should be agreed between the LA and parents/carers for LA referrals.

## **5. If placement is taken up**

### **Pre-Admission and Admission Procedure**

- 5.1. Following confirmation of acceptance of a place, we aim to make the transition to Meath School as smooth as possible for both the child and parents/carers. The Assessment Centre Multidisciplinary assessment information will be available to support the school to identify an appropriate class on entry. Smooth transition will be aided by invitations to attend the summer fete and at New Parents/Carers Day; provision of detailed information from the assessment service; and a carefully planned induction period for the child in consultation with the assessment team and parents/carers.
- 5.2. A link to Parent Mail is sent when a child's place is confirmed, and it is the parents/carers responsibility to complete all forms prior to the child starting at school. The forms include:
  - \* General and detailed information about the school and its procedures
  - \* A medical form to be completed and returned as soon as possible (this is to ensure any additional support is in place as well as ensuring all staff are informed of medical needs and procedures prior to entry.
  - \* A therapy questionnaire
  - \* An ethnicity form
  - \* Emergency contacts form
  - \* Personal information and emergency contacts
  - \* Electrical gadget disclaimer form
  - \* Extra-curricular activities consent form
  - \* Jewellery consent

- \* Photo, website, Speech and Language UK consent
- \* Pupil Premium form
- \* Sunscreen and insect repellent permission form
- \* Acceptable use of IT policy agreement
- \* Term dates
- \* A letter from the Chairperson of Friends of Meath
- \* Home School Agreement
- \* Access to school uniform ordering via Parent Mail
- \* A link to Meath School Policies is provided: Medical, Health & Safety, Behaviour & Bullying, Safeguarding (Inc. Child Protection), Inclusion, Home Learning, Home-School Liaison, Homework, Parent/Carer visits, E-Safety and Acceptable use, Pathway to Participation

## 6. Entry to the School

6.1. An induction programme for new families and pupils is put in place:

- New children entering at the beginning of the academic year are asked to attend the school on a staggered entry basis in September, thus ensuring that time can be allocated by staff for new pupils and their families individually.
- Children entering at different points in the year will have time allocated with staff and their families individually on the agreed start date. **(a start date will be given that will be at least two weeks from the date of receiving the final paperwork – this is to allow for sufficient time to prepare class, transition and ensure enough time is allocated to learning about the child’s individual needs prior to starting)**
- Families, to include parents and/or carers and siblings, are encouraged to accompany their child on their first day at school.
- Frequent liaison between all staff and families is positively encouraged, especially in the first months of a child’s time at school.
- Discussion about the Individual Learning Targets are arranged by the class team & family within the first term.

6.2. The process of the first day is carefully managed by senior staff to enable a smooth and relaxed first day for parents/carers and child. The following is the aide memoire that staff use once the family have arrived:

- Child to class with parents/carers (if boarder to see Care Staff and bedroom first).
- Parent/carers to Principal to check paperwork.
- Complete Therapy questionnaire, consent forms, emergency contact details.
- Confirm transport arrangements for the day and in the future.
- Member of trained senior management to complete formalities over medical and dietary issues (to be recorded, medicine stored safely, and information circulated to staff teams).

6.3. During the first term, once the pupil has settled, initial Individual Learning Targets (ILTs) are agreed and shared with parents/carers, and an Individual Progress

Meeting (IPM) is set up for the second half of the first term where progress to date can be discussed between the parents/carers and the class team.

- 6.4. Prior to the first Annual Review the parents/carers are asked to submit a parental/carer written contribution to the Annual Review outlining their thoughts on their child's first two-three terms at Meath School.

### **Equality and Inclusion**

At Meath School, we will continuously seek to ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity. Every individual will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability, and other factors as detailed within the school's Equality Policy. These meet in full the requirements of the Equality Act, October 2010.