



CORNFIELD SCHOOL

Admissions Procedure

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1. Overview

Cornfield School is a specialist setting for students with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). Cornfield School is a boy's only school and caters for students in year's 4 through to year 11 in key stages 2, 3 and 4. All students who attend Cornfield School must hold a current EHCP and have a primary need of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the school admits, as far as is possible, those pupils whose special educational needs can be met effectively and in doing so ensure students are able to make progress in all aspects and not just academically.

Cornfield School currently has capacity for 72 students from West Sussex and neighbouring local authorities. The educational modelling of the school varies depending on the key stage of the students. The variation in modelling includes areas such as, class focus, staffing ratios, subject provision, transition model, etc. In all instances class sizes are limited to a maximum of 8 students in order to avoid potential risks to safety and wellbeing.

2. Background

Children who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may have immature social skills and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships. These difficulties may be displayed through the young person becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. SEMH can manifest as difficulties relating to problems of mood (anxiety or depression), problems of conduct (oppositional defiance and more severe conduct problems including aggression), self-harm, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Some children may have recognised disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), attachment disorder, an anxiety disorder or more rarely schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

3. Admissions Criteria

In order to determine the appropriateness of Cornfield School for a specific student, it is important that all parties are open and honest to ensure a true representation of both the school and the student are given.

To assist families, consulting local authorities, professionals and most importantly students in determining if Cornfield School is an appropriate option to consult, we have set out a series of criteria to support the process.

What the school can support:

- **Social Skills**
 - Difficulty in forming and maintaining relationships, exhibiting inappropriate social behaviour, or experiencing social withdrawal.
- **Emotional Regulation**
 - Challenges in managing emotions, leading to frequent outbursts, mood swings, or anxiety.
- **Behavioural Issues**
 - Engaging in disruptive behaviours, aggression, or defiance in school settings.

- **Academic Impact**
 - Struggling with school performance due to emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- **Mental Health Indicators**
 - Symptoms of anxiety, depression, or other mental health conditions that interfere with daily functioning.
- **Family and Environmental Factors**
 - Consideration of external influences such as family dynamics or socio-economic status that may impact emotional health.

What the school cannot support:

- Complex medical needs
- Personal care needs
- Primary diagnosis of
 - Communication and Interaction
 - Cognition and learning
 - Sensory & Physical
- Dedicated 1:1 support

In addition to the above points further consideration is given to a small number of supplementary factors due to the unique needs of SEMH students. For example, no family members (e.g. siblings, cousins, uncles, etc.) will be admitted, where a related student or member of staff is already part of the Cornfield community.

Further information relating to an eligibility checklist can be found in Appendix 2 of this policy.

4. Consultation Process

Admission to the school shall be determined by formal consultation via the Local Authority; West Sussex County Council.

The consultation process is thorough and robust to ensure that in the event of a student being admitted to Cornfield School, there is the highest possible chance of it being a highly effective and successful placement.

The consultation process comprises of 6 stages;

- Stage 1 – Consultation sent via the Local Authority (West Sussex County Council)
- Stage 2 – Desktop Review
- Stage 3 – Current Educational Placement Visit (home visit if not in education)
- Stage 4 – Cornfield School Visit & Interview
- Stage 5 – Outcome / Implementation Plan
- Stage 6 – School Induction

Further information on each stage can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

5. Unsuccessful Consultation

Reasons for not admitting a child must comply with the SEN Code of Practice criteria which are that the school is:

- Unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs
- Incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated
- Inefficient use of resources

As a specialist setting we are committed to meeting the needs of pupils with SEMH difficulties. We do accept however, that in some cases the SEMH need may be so profound that the needs cannot be met within Cornfield School. For example, where risk of violence is so extreme that it cannot be managed safely in our specialist setting or the need for therapeutic intervention is beyond what can be provided within the resources available.

In the event of the school being at capacity, students can be placed on a 'waiting list'. However, as the majority of pupils remain on roll for their whole school career there is no guarantee that a place will become available.

Cornfield School will only consider the admission of students who are in Year 11 in exceptional circumstances and when meeting the criteria listed above. The rationale for this is to minimise disruption at a crucial time for Year 11 students, who will be in the final stages of their accredited courses and also navigating their preparations for onward transition away from Cornfield.

APPENDIX 1

Consultation Process

The consultation process comprises of 6 stages. At the end of each stage a decision either to; a) proceed to the next stage, or b) the placement is not suitable, will be made. Once a final recommendation on the student's suitability for Cornfield School has been made, the Special Educational Needs & Assessment Team (SENAT) at West Sussex County Council will make the final decision and provide a written response to the student's parent(s)/carers/guardians.

- Stage 1 – Consultation sent via the Local Authority (West Sussex County Council)
 - The school will receive student paperwork from the local authority and must include the following;
 - Most recent EHCP
 - Educational Psychology report
 - Most recent Annual Review documentation
 - Any Risk Assessments / Personal Handling Plans from current educational setting
 - Any relevant assessments / reports from agencies working with the student
- Stage 2 – Desktop Review
 - Once the correct documentation has been received, the admissions team will review the submitted documentation in order to create a student profile, which can be used to determine if Cornfield School is possibly an appropriate setting for the student.
- Stage 3 – Current Educational Placement Visit (home visit if not in education)
 - Following a successful Stage 2, the admissions team will carry out a visit to the student's current educational setting and conduct an anonymous observation focusing on the student's relationships and current academic working level. If the student is not in education, the admissions team will organise a home visit in order to meet parent/carers and gain an understanding of the student and their wishes.
- Stage 4 – Cornfield School Visit & Interview
 - Following a successful Stage 3, students, families and relevant third parties will be invited for a tour of the school and an interview with the Headteacher (or member of SLT deputising in his absence) The interview is informal and is used as an opportunity to gather information for both the school and also the student.
- Stage 5 – Outcome / Implementation Plan
 - Following a successful Stage 4, an implementation plan will be created in co-operation with all relevant parties connected to the student to ensure a smooth integration to Cornfield School. The implementation plan can be fluid and flexible and will be based on the needs of the student and the experience of the school.

- Stage 6 – School Induction
 - The student will receive an induction to Cornfield which will be facilitated by the admissions team. Communication will be made to all relevant parties at the end of the first day and the first week. A full review will take place after attending Cornfield for 4 weeks.

APPENDIX 2

Eligibility Checklist

As part of the stage 2 Desktop Review, an eligibility checklist will be used to determine the level of suitability for the student to be admitted to Cornfield school.

This is not an exhaustive list and further information gained from the submitted documentation may also be used to determine eligibility.

Factor	Descriptor	Met / Not Met
Primary Need	There is a primary need identified as Social, Emotional and Mental Health	
Gender	Student is male (school is a male only setting)	
Age	Is aged between 8 and 16 years of age and in Key Stage's either 2, 3 or 4	
Distance	Lives within 40 minutes of the school during commuting times	
Relationship	Has no family connections to existing members of the school community	
Violence/Harm	There is a low/manageable risk of the student causing harm to a member of the school community	
Academic Level	The current academic level falls within an acceptable range compared to age related expectations	
Medical Needs	Does not require medical interventions provided by a medically trained professional	