Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children

Admissions Policy

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1. Introduction

Frank Barnes School is a primary school for Deaf children with a bilingual teaching philosophy in British Sign Language (BSL) and English. We cater predominantly for severely to profoundly deaf children whose first or preferred language is or likely to be BSL. The curriculum is delivered through BSL as the medium of instruction and used to teach English as the second language for reading, writing and speaking/listening. The children have access to Deaf and hearing adult role models in order to develop a positive Deaf identity and knowledge of Deaf culture and community.

We admit severe to profoundly deaf children with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) from across all the London boroughs, and in exceptional cases, the Home Counties.

1.1 Our admissions criteria are as follows:

- Deafness is the primary need listed in the EHCP
- Severely to profoundly deaf
- BSL is required for access to the curriculum and to support learning of English/spoken language
- Social and emotional needs require access to a Deaf peer group to support positive self-esteem and Deaf identity
- Teaching is required from a Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) and bilingual support staff for language access and development.
- The school is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child

We have a positive view of all Deaf children and may admit children with **additional** needs (needs beyond deafness) provided that their needs can be met through a differentiated curriculum and with support from existing staff in the classroom as well as from external professionals, e.g., SENCO, OT, PT, EP, etc.

Sometimes we are unable to admit children with more **severe or complex** learning needs that require specialised teaching programmes over and above those provided by a Teacher of the Deaf, and/or where we feel their needs cannot be met within a peer group. This would be influenced by the complexity of their needs and how well they align with the effective education of others in the cohort.

We are, however, sometimes able to offer placements for children with additional or more complex needs if their Local Authority can provide them with additional

1:1 support. Our Special Education Needs policy provides further information on our procedures and practice in meeting the needs of pupils with additional SEN.

In some cases, we offer placements for children undergoing the statutory Educational Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process, which are agreed in liaison with the Local Authority, e.g. refugee children, provided we have assessed that we can meet needs.

2. Admissions across Key Stages:

2.1 Placements for 2-3 year olds (Nursery)

Eligible pupils are admitted to the Nursery from the age of 2 years, usually on a part-time basis. In most cases we will offer two full consecutive days and an additional consecutive half day placement (15 hours' equivalent) in consultation with parents, unless the school and parents feel a different arrangement is needed. Full time places may be considered for 2-year-olds with a Child In Need (CIN) plan or those with a Child Protection (CP) plan. Placements for 2-year-olds are based on various factors, which may include:

- the travel distance from home to school;
- consultation & decision by Local Authority e.g. Child in Need;
- additional factors linked to the individual case.

2.2 Placements for 3–5-year-olds (Nursery/Reception)

Eligible pupils aged 3 and 4 are admitted full-time (30 hours) to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), once placement funding from the child's Local Authority has been agreed via a signed Placement Agreement Form.

2.3 Placements for 5-year-olds upwards (Year 1-6)

Eligible pupils across the full primary age range (5 to 11) are admitted to the school full time if their needs can be met following an assessment against the school's admissions criteria.

3. Additional funding for 1:1 support:

Following our assessment procedures it may be decided by the school that some children require additional support (e.g.1:1 Teaching Assistant) to meet their specific learning, behaviour, physical or medical needs, and this additional funding will be requested by the school from the Local Authority as part of the placement agreement.

This request will be based on the information in their Education Health Care Plan, where it is felt they require intensive language input to fully access the curriculum or have an additional physical, sensory, medical, emotional, behavioural or specific learning need. Whilst receiving the 1:1 support the primary focus would be on developing independent learning, language and social skills. This support would be reviewed in the annual EHCP review with the aim that it would be reduced or withdrawn at the earliest possible opportunity. If this additional funding is not agreed or provided, then the child's placement may be at risk.

If a pupil has already begun a placement and then requires additional staffing, this additional funding will be sought in an interim or Annual Review/EHCP review where evidence will be provided for this need.

4. Admissions Procedures

We recommend that all parents make an initial visit to the school and if they wish, with the peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) from their Local Authority. They will meet with the Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher or a senior member of staff and be given a tour of the school.

> In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), paragraph 9.80, all consultations for placements in Camden special schools must be sent to and coordinated by the Local Authority, as it is the LA, not the school, that holds the statutory responsibility for naming a placement in an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The formal consultation package should include a current EHC Plan, the most recent annual review, a recent audiology report detailing the child's hearing profile, and the latest relevant professional report/s, such as from a speech and language therapist, educational psychologist, or other specialist supporting the child's development. Following receipt of a formal consultation from the child's Local Authority (LA), all potential pupils will be required to attend an assessment morning to determine if their

needs can be met appropriately at Frank Barnes School. Parents may also request a visit and assessment of their child prior to naming or requesting a placement at FBS via formal consultation from their LA.

The child is given the opportunity to meet the classteacher and their year group peers and will spend a morning in their appropriate class group, joining lessons, assembly, playtime and lunchtime to assess their knowledge, skills, ability, and aptitude. Classteachers, the school-based Speech and Language Therapists, SENCO and the Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist will carry out their assessments and complete an assessment form and give this to the school's Assistant Business Manager (ABM) with responsibility for Admissions, who will then liaise with the Headteacher to confirm to the consulting local authority whether we are able to meet the needs of the child.

We will provide a response within 15 days on whether we are able to meet the child's needs, as required under section 39(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the associated SEND Regulations. However, we are unable to offer or agree a placement. Only Camden Local Authority may confirm a placement following consideration at their termly SEN Admissions Panel.

To ensure full compliance with the SEND Code of Practice and to maintain transparency in decision making, please ensure that Camden SEND & Inclusion Service via SEN.Enquiries@camden.gov.uk are copied into all consultations. This allows them to coordinate responses appropriately and consider placements in line with their published admissions arrangements, capacity impacting on effective education of other children, and efficient use of public resources.

Camden SEN department will confirm to the consulting local authority whether a place is being offered. If the pupil's Local Authority agrees to accept the offer and fund the placement they will need to sign our Placement Agreement form and inform the parents. The ABM will then liaise with the Local Authority and confirm a start date in writing to parents and both the child's Local Authority and Camden SEN department.

The home-school transport can only be granted by the pupil's home Local Authority. It is not the responsibility of Frank Barnes School or Camden Local Authority unless the pupil is a Camden resident.

Parents will be sent an admissions pack to complete and return to school before their child's start date. Completed forms should be returned at least 2 weeks before the start date. The pack will include:

- Pupil Details;
- Home School Agreement;
- Emergency Contact Details;
- Permission/Consent Form;
- Medical/Health Needs Form;
- Free School Meals Form;
- Request for Birth Certificate;
- Any other relevant paperwork, e.g. EHCP, School reports, medical reports etc.

Parents are asked to accompany their child on their first day in order to help them settle into the school. If parents are unable to accompany their child on their first day or during the first week, they will need to make an appointment to come to school to complete the necessary forms before their child is due to start, otherwise the start date may be postponed. The school will arrange for interpreters to be available to support parents with completing the forms if necessary.

4. DOCUMENT CONTROL

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