

Title	Assessment and Admission Policy
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Definition(s) and Abbreviations

RSM Royal School Manchester

RCM Royal College Manchester

SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Low incidence needs- Deaf/hearing impaired, blind/low vision, deaf-blind, complex health issues, severe physical and multiple disabilities, severe and complex autism with severe learning difficulties and limited functional communication.

Non-Maintained Special School- non-profit making school, approved by Secretary of State for Education under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996 as an independent special school. They have demonstrated that they operate to a level at least equivalent to state maintained special schools and their day-to-day running is controlled by a governing body, the articles and instruments of which will be agreed by the Secretary of State.

Children's Home - The CSA 2000 defines a children's home as "an establishment... [that] provides care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children". A child is defined by the CSA 2000 as a person under the age of 18 years. 'Wholly or mainly' means that most of the people who stay at a home must be children. Young adults aged 18 and over who live or stay at the home must be in the minority.

Independent Specialist College - An Independent Specialist College, legally established to provide education. They are not maintained schools or FE colleges. They provide specialist post-16 education and support to young people with some of the most severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities or low incidence needs. In many cases they offer specialist residential provision which would not be economical for a local authority to replicate.

(Young Person's) Care Home –The CSA 2000 defines a care home as "an establishment is a care home if it provides accommodation, together with... personal care for, (*for the definition as applicable to our residents*)persons who are disabled or infirm". Please note- we do not provide nursing care.

Short Breaks Children Services and Young Peoples Services- Short term care supporting children and young people in need and their families. Seashell runs two Short Break services providing overnight stays for the child or young adult within the children/young adults care homes.

EHCP- Education Health and Care Plan

Purpose

Seashell-Transforming lives

Seashell supports children and young adults with the most complex learning difficulties, disabilities, and additional communication needs from across the UK.

We provide specialist education, care and support at our outstanding school, our college, residential homes and through our health and wellbeing services and community facilities.

Seashell staff have specialist training and expertise in meeting the needs of children and young people with low incidence high needs, including a range of complex learning disabilities, including multisensory impairment, autism sensory processing difficulties, behaviours of concern, severe learning difficulties, profound learning difficulties and complex medical needs.

The purpose of this policy is to describe the referral and assessment process for the following services:

Royal School Manchester - Royal School Manchester is a co-educational day and residential special school for children and young people aged between 4 and 19 years with complex learning disabilities and additional communication needs. Our areas of specialism are severe and complex autism, multi-sensory impairment and profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Royal College Manchester - Royal College Manchester is an independent specialist further education college. Accommodating students aged between 19-25 years. It offers placements for both day and residential students.

Seashell children's home – is not currently progressing admissions

Seashell young adult's home- a registered care home for young people 18-25 years with low incidence needs. [STATEMENT OF PURPOSE SEASHELL YOUNG ADULTS HOME](#)

Seashell Children's Short Break Services for 3-19 year olds [STATEMENT OF PURPOSE SEASHELL CHILDREN'S SHORT BREAKS](#)

Seashell Young People's Short Break Services for 18–25-year-olds. [STATEMENT OF PURPOSE SEASHELL YOUNG ADULT'S SHORT BREAKS](#)

Each year Seashell receives applications in excess of the number of places available. The process described in this document aims to ensure that decisions are fair and open. Seashell has a commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Policy

Mission Statement

Seashell is dedicated to providing a creative, happy and secure environment for children and young people with complex learning disabilities and additional communication needs.

Seashell offers a holistic approach with Seashell Royal School Manchester, Seashell Royal College Manchester, our 17 home-from-home care houses, our multi-disciplinary team of specialist therapists & nurses and our sports, health and wellbeing offer.

Seashell focuses on the extended family that cares for each one of our students and residents and about the difference that can be made to all those connected lives. We strive to include the whole family and the wider community in the life experience of our children and young adults.

Our Pledge

Seashell helps children and young adults with very complex needs, and their families, live their best lives.

Our Values

Our value runs through the core of Seashell. These are the things that are really important to us.

- **Integrity** Honesty, trust and commitment go to the heart of everything we do. We pride ourselves on ethical working and strong leadership. We respect our children and young people, their families and our colleagues and we promise to do our very best, every day, to support the extraordinary people in our care.
- **Innovation** Our children and young people are exceptional and we are constantly striving for pioneering new approaches, research and advances in both technology and different ways of caring, communicating and educating. We believe that amazing people deserve amazing support.
- **Involvement** We pride ourselves on developing strong partnerships with our children, young people and families to provide the very best support and life outcomes. By working together and harnessing the best care and support, technology and knowledge we can help people live their best lives.

Policy Statement

Seashell has an 'open' referral system that allows families/carers, local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups and professionals to refer possible applicants for admission to Seashell in respect of specialist placement, or where the child/young adult is to be enrolled in school or college, although they may not attend on site, such as outreach services.

The key requirements which Seashell believes are fundamental to providing a service for a child, young person or adult are:

- To work in partnership with local authorities in providing unique specialist services for low-incidence groups of children and young adults.
- To inform the local authority when an application is received directly from a family/carer and continue to keep them appraised of how/if the request progresses.
- To only ever consider offering a placement or outreach support to a child/young adult where it feels it can meet the level, type and need compatible with the knowledge, skills and expertise of its staff.
- To only agree to a placement where Seashell has the ability to meet the communication, complex medical health needs, learning behavioural and social needs of the child/young adult.
- Where Seashell is named in a draft EHCP or via a consultation requiring confirmation within 15 days, the placement will be conditional, dependent on an in-person assessment. This is due to the complexity of needs of the children and young adults who require an educational placement at Seashell.

Application Process

Stage 1: Initial contact

Potential students, parents/carers, teachers, health teams, local authority social workers and/or Children/Young People's Services/Special Education Needs & Disabilities/EHCP teams can contact Seashell to express an interest at any time. In the first instance, enquiries should be

directed to the Family Services Admissions Department either by phone (0161 610 0741) or email admissions@seashelltrust.org.uk

Information about Seashell is available online (www.seashelltrust.org.uk).

If they have not already done so, young people and their parents/carers are advised to contact the Children/Young People's Services/Special Education Needs & Disabilities/EHCP teams (and/or social worker) of their local authority for support in helping them explore all possible options.

Following a short telephone consultation with the referrer to gather preliminary information (Initial Enquiry) we will request further documentation as required, including an up to date Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). If the information gathered from the Initial Enquiry indicates we may be able to meet need, a visit (either virtually or on-site) to Seashell is arranged. Written confirmation of the visit is sent to parents/carers.

The visit presents parents/carers with an opportunity to look around the service at Seashell and represents the start of Seashell's information gathering process. Parents/carers are asked to provide (hard copy or electronic copy) recent reports or other relevant information if required.

If, following the visit, parents/carers wish to pursue a placement, they should complete and submit the application form and health and wellbeing questionnaire. *Due to the high number of applications received by Seashell, it is recommended that the application forms are returned to the Admissions department within one week of receiving the documents.*

Stage 2: Request/Application

All information collected populates an Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) document, which is uploaded to SharePoint along with copies of reports and information from the family/carer and current provision.

A member/s of the education/care/clinical assessment team will arrange to observe the child/young person either in their current school setting or at home (this may be done virtually) and gather additional information needed by the assessment team.

If, after considering all relevant information, it is felt Seashell would be unable to meet the young person's needs, the family and local authority are informed in writing.

Stage 3: Assessment

It is important that families/carers accompany their child at the assessment in order to provide relevant information to the multidisciplinary team. Parents/carers are asked to bring a recent vaccination list, GP summary and latest letters or reports from consultants and health professionals, if these have not already been provided.

A multi-disciplinary team of educational and therapeutic staff conduct assessments in person at Seashell, or remotely via a video call.

We will liaise with the current school/placement or short break service to collect any additional information for the assessment process e.g. specialist aids/equipment necessary to facilitate participation in activities planned during the assessment.

On-site assessments help us evaluate how well the child/young person might adapt to the learning and/or care environments that Seashell provides. If Seashell considers it to be in the

child/young person's best interest, we can arrange to carry out the assessment in the existing provision.

RSM holds assessments throughout the year. Admissions are usually in line with the start of each academic term (September, January, April).

RCM assessments take place throughout the academic year prior to the expected enrolment date, usually the following September. A final report (MDT) and costings will be provided to the relevant Local Authority/funding provider on or before the 11th March, prior to the deadline for the Local Authority to name the provision and amend the EHCP (31st March).

Any late applications received where the relevant assessments and reports cannot be completed in time with the funding deadline will be processed in a timely manner and sent no later than the 30th June, prior to the September placement.

A draft assessment report (IAT) for RSM and RCM applications will be prepared within two weeks of the assessment. We will inform families and professionals immediately if the assessment process identifies that we cannot meet need.

The Residential Care and Short Breaks Service undertake assessments and admissions throughout the year, although placements may only be offered subject to availability. Residential assessments are only available for RSM and RCM applicants and will be prepared within the same timescales as the education assessments (two weeks). Short Breaks assessment report timescales may vary.

Stage 4: Placement Decision

When all assessments are complete, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) hold a post assessment moderation meeting to consider all information. Seashell allocates places according to the following principles;

- What is the level of need and can we meet those needs?
- Can we create a purposeful learning programme?
- Would the student/resident have a relevant peer group?
- Does the student need Seashell?

If there is a dispute between services about our ability to meet need, then a review of the information and assessment findings is undertaken with the Heads of Service and Director of Care and Education. The final decision will be made by the Director of Care and Education.

Seashell will prioritise placements for those children and young people with highest support needs, including those in transition between key stages. Seashell will notify families and professionals of the placement decision as soon as possible and send a copy of the final (MDT) report to parents/carers as well as to the relevant local authority.

RSM moderates assessments throughout the year, after the completion of the reports.

RCM moderates assessments throughout the year for the intake on the following September, in line with Local Authority deadlines.

Residential Care and Short Breaks moderate assessments throughout the year, but are dependent on a number of factors, including peer matching, dynamic risk assessments and how

these determine if we can still meet the needs of, and are appropriate for, the child and their families.

Stage 5: Appeals

When school or college refuse a place, they notify parents by letter.

This letter includes the reason for refusal; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal.

If a parent wishes to make an appeal, they must set out their grounds for appeal in writing within two weeks of receiving the decision.(see admissions appeals policy).

Stage 6: Funding

In line with required timescales, a completed (MDT) report is sent to local authorities together with details of the annual cost (including the cost of any individual equipment the young person may require). All placements are subject to funding agreement from Local Authority Education/Social Care departments and/or Continuing Health Care, where applicable.

Stage 7: Transition

Once the placement has been confirmed, Seashell invites students to transition link days in school/college during the summer term (or as applicable) ideally supported by staff from their current school. A record of transition information is provided to students on their second visit.

Transition visits to children/young people's care services are coordinated by registered managers with families on an individual basis throughout the year.

All personal information gathered throughout the admissions process is subject to the Seashell [Privacy Promise](#)

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Director of Care and Education to:

- Review information and make a decision where services are in dispute about offer of placement

It is the responsibility of governors to:

- Lead the internal appeals process
- Refer to external appeals if required
- Communicate the outcome of the appeal with family and relevant professionals

It is the responsibility of the Family Services/Admissions department to:

- Receive and respond to initial contact from family/professionals.
- Inform local authorities of enquiries and progress of applications.
- Ensure that information about the child/young person is shared with the relevant team on SharePoint.
- Organise initial visits to the organisation.
- Liaise with departments throughout the assessment period.

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Service to ensure that:

- This policy is followed by teams.
- The decisions to offer/not to offer are moderated and involve the multi-disciplinary team

- Communication with external stakeholders is coordinated.
- They collaborate to ensure clear decisions are made and lived experience is considered throughout the assessment process.
- Relevant teams are prepared and resourced to support admission following an offer of placement.

It is the responsibility of the Education, Clinical and Care teams to:

- Coordinate and carry out assessments with MDT
- Ensure that decisions regarding placements are made and moderated in a timely way
- Communicate the outcome of the assessment to families and funders in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the Head of school/college and the Registered Manager to:

- Ensure that the cost of placements are finalised in line with the offer.

It is the responsibility of the Finance team to:

- Ensure the costings are accurate.
- Ensure the costings are completed within the required timescales.

Related Document(s)

Transition Policy

Appeals Process

Equality Analysis Form

STAGE 1: Initial Screening

1. Person(s) responsible for this assessment:

Name	Simon Robson	Tel	179
Email	simon.robson@seashelltrust.org.uk		
Department	Family Services/Admissions	Date	November 2023

2. Details of policy / service / strategy / procedure / guidance document / function:

Name of document	Assessment and Admission Policy
New or existing document	Existing

3. Briefly describe the aims and objectives:

The purpose of this policy is to describe the referral and assessment process for the following services: Royal School Manchester; Royal College Manchester; Seashell Children's home; Seashell Young People's home; Seashell Short Breaks Services

4. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

Parent, carers, students, professionals (Local Authorities, CCGs, other providers) and Seashell staff by having a better understanding of the process.

5. Are other departments involved, what will be their involvement and responsibilities?

- School, College, Clinical, Positive Behaviour Support, Care – Assessing and to provide written report within two weeks of assessment.
- Finance – agreeing costings and providing financial information
- Governors – Admissions appeals

6. What outcomes are expected?

All internal and external stakeholders will have a clear understanding of, and adhere to, the process and expectations of the Seashell admissions process.

STAGE 2: Gathering data and analysis

7. Have you consulted on this policy / service / strategy / procedure / guidance document / function in the last 12 months?

All internal services have been consulted in this process. We have also taken on board views and comments from families who have recently completed the applications and assessment process.

8. What evidence has been used for this assessment?

Admissions records logging each step of the process, timescales and outcomes, feedback from stakeholders regarding the experience.

Assessment of Potential Impact

9. Could a particular group be differently affected in a negative way?

Protected Characteristic	Negatively affected (Yes / No)	Evidence
Age	No	Within the parameters of the 0-25
Disability	No	We are not a pan-disability service, but specialise in low incidence/high need that other service are not able to accommodate
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	n/a	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	
Race	No	
Religion or Belief	No	
Sex	No	

Sexual Orientation	No	
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10. If you have entered YES against any of the protected characteristics above please complete section 10. If not, please proceed to section 11.

Are there any other policies / services / strategies / procedures / guidance documents / functions that need to be assessed alongside this screening?	
Should this policy / service / strategy / procedure / guidance document / function proceed to a full Equality Analysis?	
No	
Date by which the full Equality Analysis is to be completed	

Declaration

11. I am satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Completed by	Simon Robson	Date	November 2023
Role	Admissions and Progressions Manager	Date for Review	November 2025

Please forward an electronic copy to Equality and Impact Coordinator and the relevant Head of Department. The original signed hard copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.