St Nicholas Priory C.E.V.A. Primary School and Nursery

'I did not come to be served but to serve.' Matthew 20.28

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR Pod Admissions

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Board on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board on November 2025. Updated November 2025, to be reviewed September 2026

Introduction

The Pod at St. Nicholas Priory CEVA was developed in September 2019.

Our aims from the Pod are for the children to be eager to come into school and engage in their learning even with the challenges they face. To grow in confidence, managing their emotions using the zones of regulation. We aim for children to become better skilled socially and emotionally, taking turns, sharing, showing empathy and playing with and alongside their peers throughout the school day. We aim for all children in the Pod to gain the skills and confidence needed to move towards a successful reintegration into their mainstream class or other provision. We work together with parents and staff to ensure all our children are enjoying, achieving and thriving.

Process of Admissions

Where a CYP's (Child/Young Person) special educational needs are such that they are likely to need specialist provision not normally available in a mainstream school.

The level and type of provision required by a CYP is considered at the point of agreeing an EHCP, or at an annual review. Often in the current climate Specialist settings are not available and there at St. Nicholas Priory CEVA Primary School and Nursery we have established our own school provision in order to meet the needs of our pupils in our school.

In order to ensure the process for admissions is fairly considered, a panel meeting will take place every half term/ as needed to discuss the needs of the child/children who may need a place in the Pod. This also can include a review of children who may need to exit the Pod.

Pod Admissions Panel

Panel members may include, but not limited to:
Mrs Grimmer - Headteacher
Mr Rust - KS2 SENDCo/KS2 Deputy
Mrs Powley - KS1/EYFS SENDCo and Pod Lead
Mrs Dyble - EYFS/KS1 Deputy head

The panel was established to ensure that fair and reasonable decisions are made. Each case is considered against the indicators for admission. Indicators are used rather than criteria, as a set of absolute standards for judgements would not permit individual cases to be considered according to the particular needs and circumstances of the child.

Considerations to be made when admitting children to the POD:

1. The pupil has an EHCP or in exceptional cases, is currently undergoing a statutory assessment of their needs.

2. Either: The pupil has persistent, complex and long-term learning needs. Evidence should include:
Pre Key-Stage/P scale/ National Curriculum formative functional assessments in line with currently available national data . Attainment levels for pupils are expected to remain Pre-Key Stage Standards for much of their school careers.
The pupil falls outside the range defined above, but also has significant needs (meets the criteria for statutory assessment) in one or more of the following areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- sensory and/or physical
- behaviour, emotional and social development.

3. Additional indicators may include:

- a predicted high level of dependency throughout his/her life severely under-functioning in most aspects of school and social life

- a need for multi-agency input from both Health and Social Services with access to after school and respite care.

4. The child would benefit from a highly differentiated curriculum in smaller classes which is not available in mainstream despite additional TA hours and intensive support. Typically the child's needs will have already been supported through a high level of additional resources within a mainstream classroom or nursery setting.

5. The parent expresses a preference for special school placement which is agreed by SENDCo and/or Pod Admissions Panel
Or
The parent prefers a placement in mainstream school, but evidence exists that no reasonable steps could be taken by the LEA or school to overcome the 'incompatibility with the efficient education of other pupils' (Education Act 1996).

6. how could the child or young persons needs impact on the cohort of children. Does consideration need to be given to the dynamic of the group and alternative provision need to be made for the child or young person.

The Pod entry criteria checklist

We have developed a Pod entry criteria to ensure all children are considered equally and the needs of each individual child are considered.

Childs name:

DOB:

Year group / class:

Criteria to be met:	YES / NO	Details:
Can need be met in a mainstream classroom	YES / NO	
A defined area of SEND need	YES / NO	
Behaviour plan	YES / NO	
Observations made by SENDCo/ SCT	YES / NO	
Assessment : Learning levels are significantly below age expectations and progress is limited. (Pre - Key Stage Standards)	YES / NO	
Highlighted concerns in the home / classroom setting	YES / NO	
Discussions had by behaviour team/ SCT with recorded concerns and incidents	YES / NO	

Learning plan forms completed by class teacher - little progress being made	YES / NO	
Referral made to external professionals	YES / NO	
Has not met GLD in their prime areas of need.	YES / NO	
Has an EHCP final/ draft/ application sent	YES/NO	
Are the child's needs able to be met in the pod? Would they benefit from a 1:1 or other provision in the mainstream class.	YES/NO	
Would the dynamic of the class be suitable for this child?	YES/NO	

Exit criteria:

criteria to be met:	YES / NO	Details
Is able to self-regulate their own emotions	YES/NO	
Behaviour targets are met	YES/NO	
Significant reductions in severity of PA incidents	YES/NO	
Learning plan target have been achieved consistently	YES/NO	
Able to access their peer group daily without support (transitioned)	YES/NO	
External agency recommendations have been met	YES/NO	
Able to form successful relationships with adults	YES/NO	
Successful transition sessions achieved	YES/NO	
Will be able manage the academic demands within the mainstream class	YES/NO	
Pod intervention no longer needed	YES/NO	
Specialist placement found	YES/NO	

Essential indicators for a child to be considered for a place.

1. Essential Indicators

i) Pupils who require special education provision because they have a physical disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties may be age related and may fluctuate over time.

j) The pupil has other significant, complex needs. These are such that several different agencies would be involved in supporting the pupil and their family which would require a significant lead professional role to manage and integrate all the different sources of support. The complexities referred to above must include one or more of the additional complexities listed below

or

k) The pupil has a physical disability with additional complexities as a result of trauma and an assessment place (time limited) is required because potential functioning isn't clear

2. Additional complexities

a) A physical disability that cannot be accommodated in a local physically accessible mainstream school.

b) A sensory need such as a hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment requiring regular (main case load) support from the sensory impairment team for the pupil to access the curriculum.

c) An emotional or mental health vulnerability which is not just a temporary response to a life event, but an enduring difficulty requiring specialist interventions from psychology services or CAMHS in order to function in a mainstream environment

d) A Communication and Interaction difficulty, including autism, which means the pupil requires specialist interventions from the SENSS C&I team to access the mainstream curriculum and develop functional independence.

e) A mild/moderate learning difficulty such that the young person will require an additionally differentiated curriculum.

3. Learning levels

d) Pupils may be able to progress towards accessing mainstream sessions for at least 10% of their time in school and benefit from inclusion after an immersive period in the Pod. Many children will benefit from much more time in the mainstream classroom but this is dependent on individual need. Some Children will progress to external specialist placements.

e) Pupils are accessing the curriculum at Pre-Key Stage standards or Engagement Model level. However some pupils may be able to access the mainstream curriculum but many may

need learning presented in a highly specialised and flexible way with opportunities for consolidation.

4. Voice of the child

c) Children and Young People have a right to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter affecting them from the early years. Their views will be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability by the admissions panel.

5. Parent views

a) The parent's/carer's views about their child attending the Pod are very important and will be taken into account unless it would not meet the needs of the child, be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, or be an inefficient use of resources.

Places for EYFS children

Where possible, for children transferring from early education settings to the primary phase, a provisional recommendation should be made in the year previous to transfer so that parents can consider all possible options, this should be done alongside the child's EHCP coordination in the form of a consultation for placement.
Where a child in the EYFS does not have an EHCP, the SENDCo needs to make plans to work with the parents and nursery in order to make an application as soon as possible in the summer/Autumn term.

For any children in our Nursery, we will also consider a place in our EYFS Pod provision in order to meet the needs of those children. This is likely to be a hybrid model, such as a dual placement in both our Nursery setting and EYFS Pod provision. This is currently only open to Nursery pupils on our school role and is not open to external pupils.