



# CASTLEMAN ACADEMY TRUST

## **POLICY :**

### **Admissions The Link Broadstone Middle School 2020/21 and 2021/22**

**Author: Executive Headteacher**

**Date: March 2021**

**Review Body: Trust Board**

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**Review Date: Spring, 2022**

## CASTLEMAN ACADEMY TRUST

### The Link, Broadstone Middle School, Admissions Policy 2020/21

The Link BMS is a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Unit based at Broadstone Middle School (BMS) for students with a primary diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and anxiety (school phobia).

#### Setting

The Link is situated within the site of Broadstone Middle School. It is a self-contained unit, attached to the rear of BMS. The staff to pupil ratio (depending on numbers on role) is predicted to be 1 to 2.5. The philosophy of the Link is to prepare our students to work independently and ultimately, for them to be able to access mainstream provision at some level.

#### The Link Provision

- The Link will provide for pupils in Year 5 through to Year 8.
- A maximum of 15 pupils can be accommodated. Broadly speaking students will be taught in age related groups, however, groups will be combined by 'stage not age' where appropriate.
- The BCP council Special Educational Needs department administers all admissions. Requests for placement from out of BCP will, in the first instance, go through the Special Educational Needs section of BCP's Children's Services.
- Pupils will have a diagnosis of ASC and/or school phobia and may have co-morbid conditions such as speech and language communication needs (SLCN).
- Pupils will need to have average or above average cognitive ability and be working within 24 months of the Age-Related Expectation (ARE) for their school year. This is so that pupils are able to access the digital curriculum we use to deliver Mathematics, English and Science.

#### Admission Criteria

To be admitted to **The Link BMS**:

- Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a draft EHCP, with "specialist provision" stated will be required before consideration can be given for admission. (Reviewed in the past 12 months)
- Pupils will have a primary diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Conditions.
- To enable access to an appropriately differentiated National Curriculum. Pupils must be 'Higher Functioning' i.e. have cognitive ability at or above age-related expectations and be working within 24 months of this range as demonstrated by national or school benchmarking data.

- Pupils will need to be within their school year age, with the appropriate personal care skills and correct peer group profile to fill the available place. This will be evidenced through EHCP or current educational setting.
- A stable and secure environment is a priority within the Link and must be maintained. The school will carefully consider (through the referral process) the vulnerability that is likely to be felt by any student within the school. If a student's admission is deemed by the school to have a potentially negative impact, for reasons of safety and wellbeing, a placement may be deemed unsuitable.
- Pupils must be able to keep themselves safe and refrain from physical aggression towards themselves, others and property. The skills and expertise within the provision will not meet the needs of these pupils.
- An agreement from the LEA must ensure adequate funds to support the Link in meeting pupil needs as described by the EHCP.
- 1:1 provision must not be stated as a requirement of the EHCP. Staffing ratios will not allow for this level of support.
- Pupils and their parents/carers, must attend a pre-admission visit.
- A visit will be required to the student in their current setting to observe their functioning and assess the suitability of The Link to meet the child's/young person's needs.

### **Admission Procedures**

Parents are required to arrange to visit the school and are welcome to request further information about the school. Parents should inform their Local Authority of their preference for a place at The Link and may ask their Local Authority to name the school in their child's Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHC Plan. On some occasions, professionals who are involved in a young person's placement or who have a significant professional interest in their wellbeing, may recommend that the school may meet their needs and inform parents. The school can only proceed to the admissions stage with Local Authority support. We therefore encourage parents to engage in a dialogue with their Local Authority.

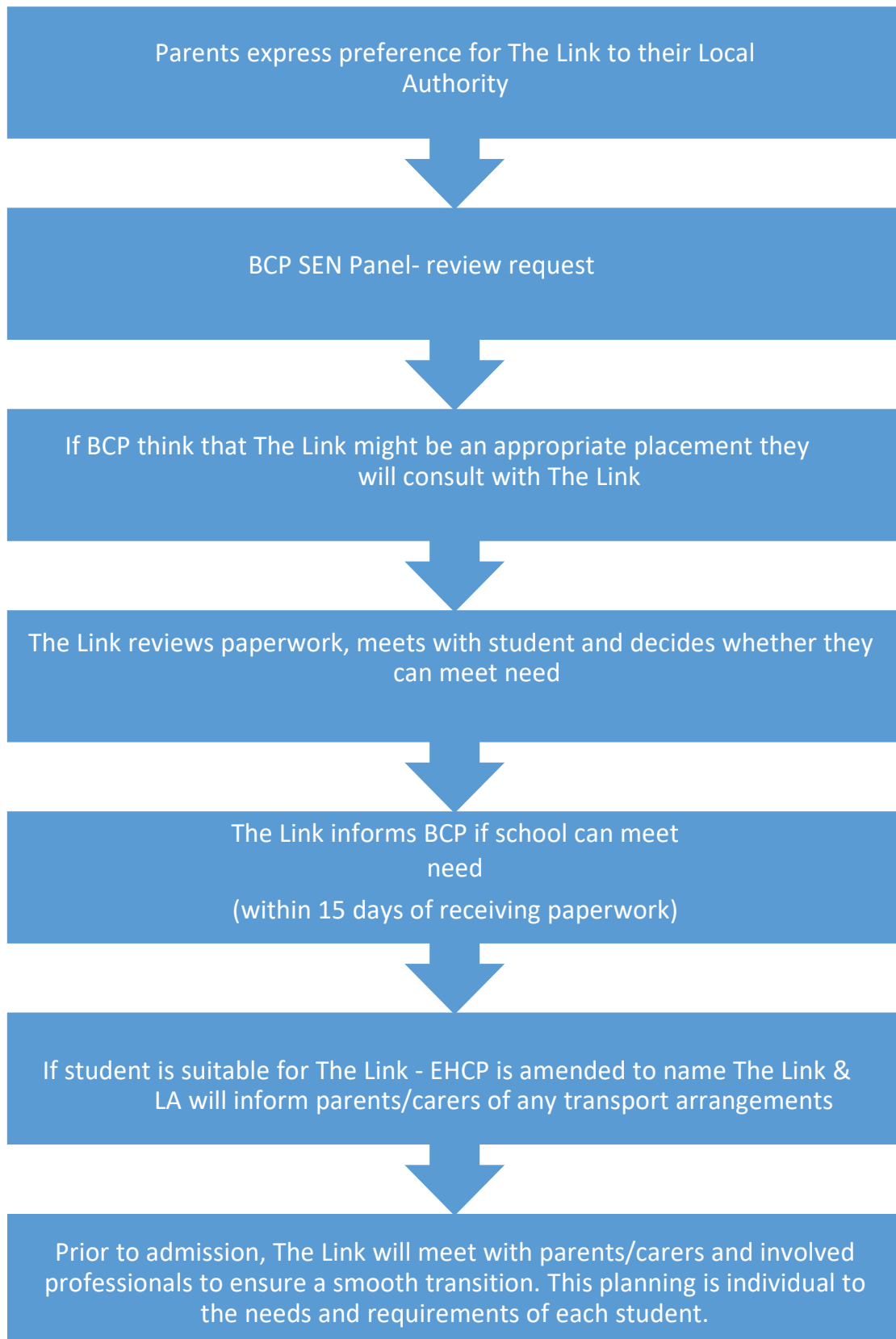
Where the Local Authority intends to name the school in an EHC plan, The Link will consider the proposal and where possible, will consent to being named in line with the above criteria except where admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children, and where no reasonable steps can be made to secure compatibility.

In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, The Link will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015.

If The Link determines that enrolling the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, it will, within 15 days of the Local Authority's notice, notify the Local Authority that it does not agree that the school should be named in the statement. The Link will set out the facts and matters it relies upon in support of its contention, in line with the admission criteria above.

Where The Link considers that the school should not have been named in the statement, it may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the Local Authority has acted unreasonably in naming the school and to make an order directing the Local Authority to amend the child's statement by removing the name of the school.

## Summary of Admissions Procedure



## **Home / School Agreement**

An essential requirement of a student joining the school is that parents/carers wish to develop a sense of mutual co-operation on behalf of their child. Parents/carers will be requested to sign the School's Home/School Partnership Agreement although admission is not dependent on signing the document.

## **Transport**

When parents/carers formally request a place for their child and this is agreed, a letter of confirmation is sent by the appropriate authority. The authority will then inform parents of any transport arrangements that may need to be put in place.

## **Appeals**

Should a placement be considered unsuitable for a young person (following the admissions procedure) feedback to parents/carers will be provided by the Local Authority as to the grounds for the decision.

If the Local Authority decides not to name the school in a child's EHC Plan the parents have the right to appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and should refer directly to the Local Authority for contact details and their intention to appeal a decision.

## **Oversubscription criteria**

The school will work collaboratively with all neighbouring Local Authorities to manage referrals through the BCP SEN Panel. If The Link can meet an applicant's needs, it is an appropriate placement. If The Link has no current vacancies within a cohort, all such applicants will go on a waiting list. Where there are more applicants than vacancies, places will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria which also act as the oversubscription criteria.

## **Part-time Students and Persistent Absence Students**

Full-time attendance for all students is The Link's goal. If there are any part-time students then this is either part of a planned transition to full-time or where there is clear medical advice that, at that time, a full timetable would be detrimental to a student's well-being. For pupils that are persistently absent it will be a part of the admissions team's highest priority to enable that student to attend.

In both cases, The Link staff will work hard to move things forward and so the student's placement is registered as full-time. If the Local Authority would like to use perceived 'gaps' then it will be necessary to move the students off roll.

## **Assessment Places**

On occasions the Local Authority may request for a pupil to be placed on an assessment basis. The Executive Headteacher, in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team, will make the decision to agree to or decline the request. The duration of the assessment placement and a review date will be set before the pupil starts and a decision will be made at the end of the placement whether the school is an appropriate provision to meet the needs and a place can be offered.