



# **POLICY :**

## **Admissions The Pod Parley First School**

**Author: Head Teacher**

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**Review Date: Summer 2025**

**Review Frequency: Three years**

## **CASTLEMAN ACADEMY TRUST**

### **The Pod, Parley First School Admissions Policy**

The POD is a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Unit based at Parley First School (PFS) for children with significant Complex Communication Needs and Social Communication which may have an Autistic Spectrum Condition.

#### **Setting**

The POD is situated within the site of Parley First School. It is a self-contained unit, attached to PFS. The staff to pupil ratio is 1 to 2.5. The philosophy of the POD is to prepare our children to work independently and ultimately, for them to be able to access mainstream provision at some level.

#### **The POD Provision**

- The POD will provide for pupils in Reception through to Year 4.
- A maximum of 10 pupils can be accommodated. Broadly speaking, children will be taught in age related groups, however groups will be combined by 'stage not age' as well as taking into account individual needs where appropriate.
- The Dorset Council Special Educational Needs department administers all admissions. Requests for placement from out of Dorset will, in the first instance, go through the Special Educational Needs section of Dorset's Children's Services.
- Pupils will need have average or above average cognitive ability and be working within 18 months of the Age-Related Expectation (ARE) for their school year. This is so that pupils are able to access the curriculum we use to deliver Mathematics, English and Science.

#### **Admission Criteria**

To be admitted to The POD at Parley First School:

- An Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) or a draft EHCP, will be required before consideration can be given for admission (reviewed within the last 12 months).
- Pupils will have significant Complex Social Communication Needs.
- Pupils will need to be of an appropriate chronological school age with the appropriate personal care skills appropriate to their age and profile to fill the available place.
- A stable and secure environment is a priority within the POD 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 pupil admission is deemed by the school (in partnership with external professionals) to have a potentially negative impact, for reasons of safety and wellbeing, a placement will 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 POD 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 child in their current setting and/or home setting to observe their functioning and assess the suitability of The POD to meet the child's/young person's needs.
- The allocation of places will also take into consideration the age of the pupils to ensure a mix that meets social need as well as effective curriculum access.

### **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 POD and once a place is offered, ask their Local Authority to name the school in their child's EHCP. 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 the Local Authority support. We therefore encourage parents to engage in a dialogue with their Local Authority.

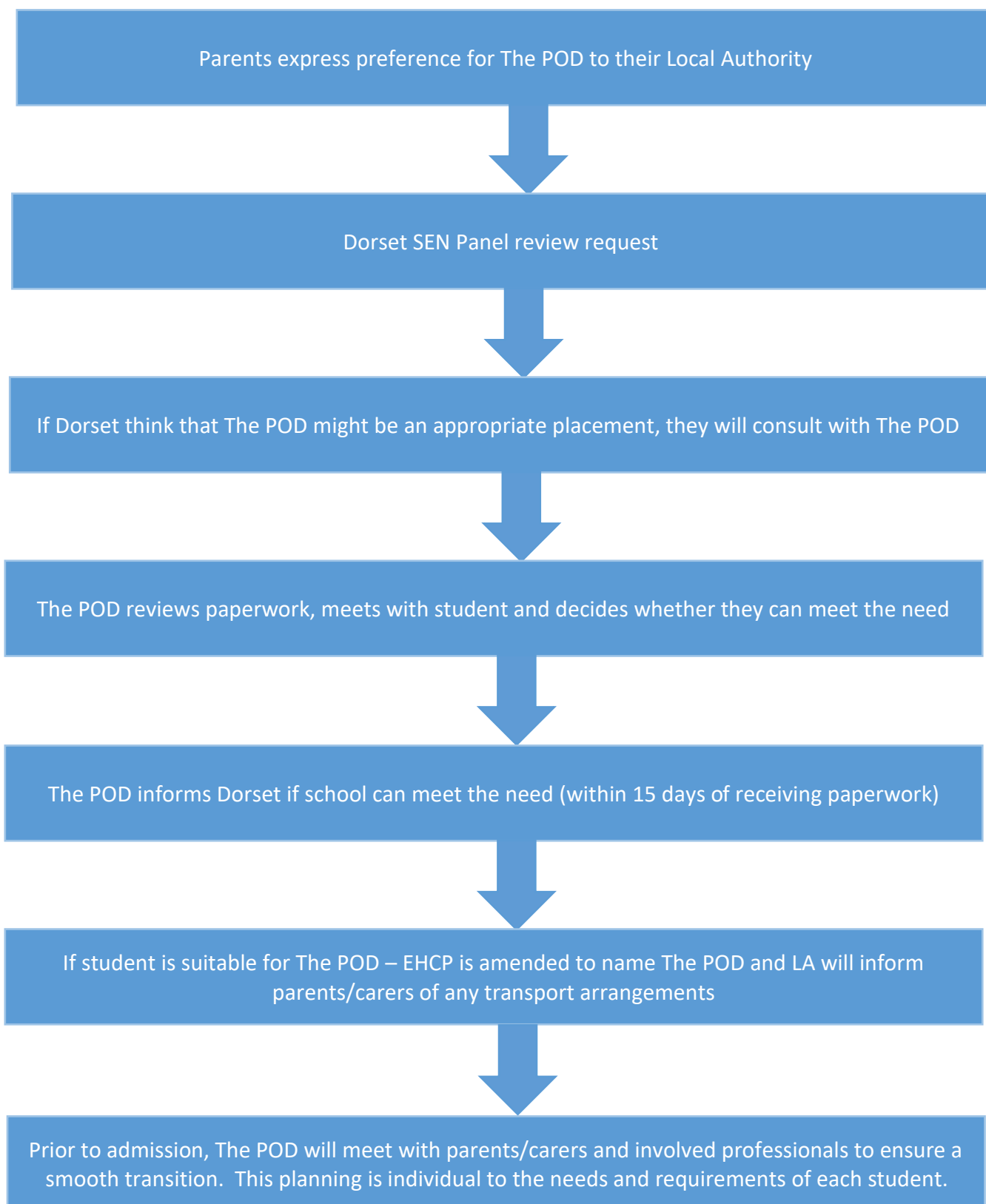
Where the Local Authority intends to name the school in an EHCP, The POD will consider the proposal and where possible, will consent to being named in line with the above criteria except where admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children, and 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 POD will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015.

If The POD 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 POD will set out the facts and matters it relies upon in support of its contention, in line with the admission criteria above.

Where The POD 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 a Partnership Agreement. Although admission is not dependent on signing the document, we strongly promote a respectful cohesive partnership.*

## **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 EHCP, 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 Dorset SEN Panel. If The POD can meet an applicant's needs, it is an appropriate placement. If The POD 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 children and Persistent Absence Children**

Full-time attendance for all children is The POD's goal. If there are any part-time children, 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 POD 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 children off roll.

## **Assessment Places**

On occasions, the Local Authority may request for a pupil to be placed on an assessment basis. The 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.