



Dacorum Education  
Support Centre

# Admissions Policy

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

March 2023

## Overview

DESC has a Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire Local Authority to provide 49 onsite places at Key Stages 3 and 4 for permanently excluded children and those at risk of permanent exclusion, living and/or attending school in Dacorum. The ESC works within the remit of the Local Authority's Social, Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy 2020-2023.

## Priority Referrals to Education Support Centres (ESCs)

- 1) Children who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools
- 2) Children who are at serious risk of being permanently excluded from mainstream schools
- 3) Children with a disrupted/troubled educational history who have recently arrived in the area and who cannot be placed immediately in a school
- 4) Children who, after considerable intervention and support, and with agreement of their school and families cannot cope in a mainstream school setting and agree to a managed move to the ESC

NB Children Looked After (CLA) who do not have a school place (often due to a change of care placement) or who are at serious risk of permanent exclusion are given priority treatment.

## Onsite Use of the ESC

### Referral Process

#### **KS1 and 2**

Referrals to The Haven are discussed on a regular basis with the Integration Officer and DESC Deputy Headteacher and follow the Local Authority's Tiered Approach to Behaviour, as laid out in the Hertfordshire Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy.

The Dacorum Primary Behaviour Service (DPBS) monitors and quality assures the onsite use of The Haven on a half termly basis.

#### **KS3**

Referrals are made either for a place on a 'hub' programme, or in a small group or 1:1. These are short to medium term interventions following the Local Authority's Tiered Approach to Behaviour, as laid out in the Hertfordshire Emotional, Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy with the intention of a return to the originating school or to seek a new school place. This is in liaison with Outreach Caseworkers, DESC Deputy Headteacher, KS3 Centre Co-ordinator, Inclusion Officer and referring school.

## KS4

Referrals are made proactively in discussion with DESC, the referring school and the parent/learner in the summer term of Year 9 or 10 in preparation for taster sessions in the July preceding admission for the September.

Learners in Year 9 at DESC at our KS3 Site who transition to KS4.

Children who come via Fair Access Panel (FAP) who have been permanently excluded and have had two mainstream schools and/or who have been attending a Pupil Referral Unit.

## Permanently Excluded Pupils

Permanently excluded pupils are entitled to receive full time education from the 6th Day following on from the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude.

- The referral process for these admissions is managed through the Inclusion team
- The referral process is managed by the relevant Inclusion Officer, with the support of the SEN Team Manager where the child has an EHC Plan
- The ESC is notified by the Inclusion Information Officer so that provision can be made available to the child on the 6th day of exclusion pending the outcome of the Governing Body's hearing
- If the Headteacher of the ESC is concerned that immediate admission may not be appropriate on health and safety grounds he/she should carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the Inclusion Officer so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the assessed risks to acceptable levels. In exceptional cases it may be considered that the levels of risks cannot be reduced to acceptable levels that would enable the child to be admitted to the ESC and a virtual learning programme will be put in place
- Learners with EHCP plans permanently excluded from mainstream school are entitled to short term provision in the ESC whilst appropriate provision is being sought by the SEN Team
- The ESC Headteacher will determine the appropriate admission process in accordance with the needs of the referred child and in accordance with the requirement to provide access to full-time education for permanently excluded pupils

## Pupils Referred as a Managed Move

- Children who are at serious risk of permanent exclusion and need to be considered for admission to an ESC should be referred to the Fair Access Panel and should remain on their school roll until they have been admitted to an alternative school or the ESC. It is standard practice in these instances for learners to be dual registered with the referring school and DESC, with the referring school the main and DESC the subsidiary. This enables the AWPU to be transferred to DESC.

- Children with a disrupted/troubled educational history, who have recently arrived in the area and cannot be placed immediately at a school, should be referred through the Fair Access Panel for admission to the ESC. This meets fortnightly.
- Children who have recently arrived in the area and who have been previously attending a PRU and/or were permanently excluded and for whom a mainstream school is not yet best indicated.

There has been significant reduction in the numbers of pupils who have been permanently excluded from local schools. In most cases they have been able to attend DESC on a 'managed move' basis prior to either returning to a school (mainstream or special) or remaining at DESC until the end of Year 11.

## Children With EHCPs

- It may be appropriate for children with EHCPs attending (or excluded) from mainstream schools to be admitted to ESCs as interim provision, but the following should be determined during the admission process –
  - ◆ The proposed length of the child's stay at the ESC (this may be subject to review)
  - ◆ The proposed substantive educational placement (e.g. special school, mainstream school).
  - ◆ Arrangements for the child's EHCP to be reviewed to ensure his/her needs can be met appropriately during the stay at the ESC and to ensure the EHCP is still appropriate (this review should be arranged by the relevant SEN Officer)
- In partnership with the ESC It may be considered that the young person's educational needs can be met appropriately by the ESC in order to complete their statutory education. This would be applicable at KS4.
- However at KS1-3 the ESC should never be considered to be the appropriate provision on a child's EHCP since DfE guidance for schools and Local Authorities clearly states that if a pupil's long term needs cannot be met in a mainstream school, a special school rather than a PRU should be named on a statement of special educational need.'

## Children With Medical/Attendance Needs

Admission to the ESC will not normally be considered on the basis of poor attendance or medical grounds.

## Glossary

ESC	-	Education Support Centre
CLA	-	Children Looked After
DPBS	-	Dacorum Primary Behaviour Service
FAP	-	Fair Access Panel
EHCP	-	Education Health Care Plan
SEN	-	Special Educational Needs
AWPU	-	Age Weighted Pupil Unit
PRU	-	Pupil Referral Unit