

Admissions Policy

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STATUTORY OR NON STATUTORY	Statutory
APPROVED BY – BOARD/COMMITTEE/OFFICERS	Approved
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR UPDATE & POLICY REVIEW	Mark Smith
REASON FOR UPDATE	Review date due
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Admissions Policy

Petty Pool is a generic special College for learners aged from 16 – 25 years and is a sub contracted provision working in partnership with our FE mainstream College Partner Cheshire College South and West. Learners have a wide range of special educational needs including autism, emotional and learning difficulties some having complex learning, sensory and associated medical needs. All learners must have an Education Health Care Plan.

We support students from across the north west including Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Warrington, Wirral and Halton. We work closely with our local authority partners throughout the admission process to keep them informed of applicants. All offer of places is based on the approval of funding from the local authority.

The College provides a highly differentiated programme of study for young people with flexible, bespoke and personalised courses which allow our learners to develop skills which will help them to prepare for adulthood, access the wider community, develop independent living skills and move into volunteering, further training or employment. We offer a holistic learning environment with trained staff and resources to best support the needs of our young people.

A full description of our provision is described in our Local Offer which is available to read or download from our website:

Our planned places number is agreed annually with CCSW. This can vary year on year depending on our capacity to meet the needs of our population of learners. Currently our planned place numbers are 113. Our board of trustees are also kept informed of any increases as we ensure the organisation has the capacity and facilities can accommodate additional learners.

If the composition of admissions looks likely to exceed the number of planned places, or:

- class sizes will become too large and unmanageable
- health and safety procedures are likely to be breached
- the financial resources to provide specialised equipment or additional support become totally inadequate;

then Petty Pool will not be able to offer places to all those who have applied.

Mission Statement/Aims

Petty Pool College aims to provide every learner with an effective and enjoyable educational experience that empowers them to reach their full potential and move successfully from education to employment and independence

Admission Arrangements

We want admission to Petty Pool to be very much the students choice and for this reason our

admission process has been designed so that the student is involved in all discussions regarding joining Petty Pool, and allows the individual to follow his/ her own choices and aspirations.

The referrals system opens on 1st September each year.

Appropriate professionals and careers advisors are notified that the recruitment process has begun. We have a comprehensive tracking process to ensure transparency and we operate on a first come basis. We keep local authorities informed regularly throughout the process and applications and offers of places are based on the local authority agreeing the funding.

Assessment and Eligibility

Learner are assessed to ensure we are able to meet all learning, social, care and emotional needs. This helps to ensure learners are allocated to the appropriate teaching group and follow an appropriate curriculum.

All students must have an Education Health Care Plan or equivalent. This means that all our students have a special educational, health or social care need. We accommodate learners with a range of learning difficulties and disabilities, including moderate/mild learning disabilities, specific learning disabilities, Autistic Spectrum conditions, epilepsy, Downs Syndrome, Williams Syndrome and Fragile X. This list is not prescriptive, or exhaustive and each individual is assessed prior to entry, allowing the college to develop an individualised learning and support plan for each student. We focus on what young people can do and not what they cannot.

In line with our mission and vision and commitment to supporting young people into further training, volunteering or employment, unfortunately we are not able to support students with the most complex needs. This includes learners who require Petty Pool to provide speech and language therapy support other specialist therapy support, students who are non-verbal, have complex health and medical conditions or personal care needs. However, we will continue to work with specialists to implement the strategies and plans that have been developed to support students.

Although we support young people with challenging behaviour, we also have a no restraint policy and our provision is not suitable for those requiring support which is higher than a one to one ratio. Every learner is assessed on an individual basis, in order to determine if we are fully able to meet the young person's needs.

Assessment is based on

- The applicant's potential to become employed or be engaged in further training or volunteering
- Performance / Assessment during pre-entry process including: Initial Interview and link visits
- PPVC's ability to fully meet the applicant needs
- The number of student places still available
- The health, safety & well-being of all current students and staff including visitors to our outdoor centre

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- The appropriateness of the learning environment for the applicant
- The scope and capacity of PPVC to meet the social, emotional, and/or behavioural requirements of the applicant
- The Student / Tutor / Support ratios required for the applicant
- Local Authority funding for Additional Support Requirements
- Student ability to access a provision considered more appropriate. For example, in a GFE mainstream or ISC setting
- The level of prior qualifications attained by the applicant
- The curriculum subjects / qualification levels presently offered and capacity within each course

The Provision currently offered by Petty Pool is divided as follows:

- The Independent Living Course and the Preparation for Work are the only courses within the provision currently offered at Entry 2
- All the Vocational Courses, on the City & Guilds Certificate in Skills for Working Life Pathway, are currently only offered at Entry Level 2 or above
- The Preparation for Work Course, on the City & Guilds Certificate or Diploma in Employability and Personal Development, is currently offered to Transition Students who are leaving the provision the following summer.

All courses are offered as part of the study programme over four days and in assessing if Petty Pool is the right place for an individual, we consider their ability to participate in all aspects of the study programme.

The study programme consists of:

- Core aim - We ask students to pick a key subject that is of interest to them
- English & Maths - These compulsory subjects are covered in Functional Skills
- Work experience - External work experience linked to chosen subject area and college wide volunteering initiatives
- Non qualification activity - Preparation for Adulthood and wider curriculum activities including travel training, Enrichment, Tutorials, Residential holidays and off-site visits

For further information on the study programme please refer to Petty Pool Curriculum Offer Document. This details further the vocational streams, learning pathways and elements of the study programme tailored to meet individual interests, needs, aspirations and priorities in preparation for adulthood, employment, and future independence.

Application Procedure

Upon receipt of a referral the following steps will be taken:

1. The student and their family / guardian / social worker etc. will be invited to attend the next Autumn Open Day the college is due to hold for an informal opportunity to look at the provision and meet the staff and students.
2. All the potential students undergoing the recruitment and induction process will be asked for some / all the following information:
 - Personal Details
 - Referral for Entry Level Provision
 - Education Health & Care Plan
 - Assessment of additional support requirements
 - Functional Skills Assessments
 - Educational Psychologists Reports
 - Schools Services Care Plan
 - Social Services Care Plan
 - School Reports
 - Input from other services – details and reports

All the mentioned information is, where possible, collated prior to the learner being offered a preliminary interview with The Director of Student Services.

3. If the Director of Student Services feels Petty Pool College is a potentially suitable placement for the learner who has been referred, they will be invited for a preliminary interview.
4. Upon arrival, prior to interview, the learner will be given a full tour of the college by current Petty Pool students and complete a confidential personal record containing their home, educational and medical details with support from the college administrator and whoever has accompanied them to the interview where required. A digital photograph will also be taken and inserted onto the document for reference purposes.
5. The student will take their confidential record into their interview, and the remainder of the information on the form regarding behaviour, mobility, personal care needs, relationships with others etc. will be given via question and answer during the interview and information recorded by hand. During the interview, the candidate and their support / family member will naturally be given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the provision too.
6. Following this interview a decision is made on whether to offer the learner a link visit.
7. Students deemed suitable for link visits will be offered a two-day taster timetable during the subsequent week. The learner will undergo a Functional Skills diagnostic assessment, spend one half day in each vocational stream where Tutors will support the applicant to complete a vocational course baseline assessment in their particular department. Information gathered is then handed to the management team for analysis
8. The performance, personal preferences and overall suitability of each learner for the provision available is discussed by The Director of Student Services, Curriculum Manager, Quality Manager, and all Course Tutors during the weekly staff meeting

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9. The final decision on whether the learner has been successful or not in gaining a place at Petty Pool for the subsequent academic year will then be made by The Director of Student Services, and a letter will be sent to the individual as soon as possible informing them of that decision and outlining the individualised provision offered