Admissions Policy

St Vincent's School, A Specialist School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Last reviewed on:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2028

School Aim

St Vincent's is a non-maintained independent special school (NMISS) administered by the Catholic Blind Institute (CBI). It is officially approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) as a specialist centre of excellence in the North of England for the education of sensory impaired children and young people. We offer day, extended day and residential provision for pupils aged 4 -19.

St Vincent's is a Roman Catholic school which embraces all faiths. Provision is made for those of non-Christian beliefs to practice their faith in an appropriate manner.

Legislation and statutory requirements

As a NMISS, school is not required to follow the Schools Admissions Code, but is required to have an admissions policy. This is set out in the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (see part 6, paragraph 32(1) (b) and 32(3) (a)).

St Vincent's School is listed in section 38(3) of the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014 and therefore, parents and young people once they are 16 years old, can request that St Vincent's is named in section I of the EHC plan and the local authority has to consider your request

Application for Admission

Application for admission to the school is made to the Headteacher by the placing Local Authority (LA). This normally follows, or is part of, the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Procedure. LA's are responsible for the fees. The below points are examples of the procedures that may be taken by a placing LA:

- Local authorities consult with the Headteacher of St Vincent's School by sharing with them the EHC plan, advice and review if one has taken place
- If the approach has not been made by the LA, school will inform the host local authority
- In many cases, initial contact to the school will be made by parents, LA or an interested party on behalf of the child or young person. All enquiries are directed to the Family Liaison Officer
- St Vincent's will review the paperwork and share an initial decision with the local authority about the suitability of the provision, and offer an assessment visit to meet the child or young person
- If an assessment visit is arranged, St Vincent's will carry out a 2-day assessment to fully understand the child or young person's needs and then respond to the consultation formally to the LA
- The response from St Vincent's is often considered by a panel, which is a group of managers in the local authority who make decisions about placements and provision
- The local authority would consider if the placement at St Vincent's is unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs (SEN) of your child or young person; the attendance of your child or young person would be incompatible with the provision of the efficient education for others, or the attendance of your child or young person would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources
- If the local authority agrees to fund the placement, then St Vincent's School provides a transition plan and start date
- If the local authority decided not to agree to the placement at St Vincent's School, your rights of appeal would be shared with you alongside the decision
- Parents and young people have a right to mediation if they only want to appeal section I of an EHC plan which includes the name of the school or other institution to be attended by the child or young person, and the type of that institution (or just the type if no specific institution is named). However, if the appeal is only about Section I of an EHCP, and the rest of the EHCP is not disputed, the parent/carer or young person does not need to contact a mediation adviser get a mediation certificate in order to submit an appeal to the tribunal.
- St Vincent's may be asked by the local authority or parent or young person to provide more evidence during the tribunal appeals process or be invited to be a witness during the tribunal hearing

All pupils have an EHCP, and have a sensory impairment and/or other needs – this includes visual and hearing impairments. The EHCP will identify a visual impairment as the primary requirement for special education, but pupils may have, in addition, other needs.

Day Pupils

Pupils' may attend the school on a daily basis. Transport costs and arrangements to and from school are generally made and are paid for by the placing LA.

Residential Pupils

Residential accommodation is provided on a part-time or weekly basis (Monday-Friday), term-time only. A facility is also available for pupils to benefit from an 'extended day' arrangement which can be discussed on an individual pupil's basis with school, family and the placing local authority.

Admission

Information is sent out to parent/carer and child/young person. This may include:

- Residential Pupil Guide (available on school website)
- Home-School Agreement.
- Uniform list
- Check list for clothes and toiletries (if resident).
- Pupil Medication Consent Form (Prescribed and Home Remedy)
- Information sheet for emergencies – parental and GP contact details.
- Consent forms

Open communications with the family/carer are maintained through regular contact links with the FLO and residential care staff.

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