



# **ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

June 2012

*Reviewed September 2013, July 2014, July 2015*

*Revised July 2016*

## **Context**

Ian Mikardo High School is a centre of excellence for students with SEMH. As well as providing good core provision, the school provides additional services to support children and families who have multiple and complex needs. Additional services are identified and commissioned by the placing local authorities. All students have a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan or are in the process of gaining one.

Our ethos relies on respect and care and, in keeping with this, we begin to build a relationship with students and think about them before they arrive in the school. This is done through a period of assessment that enables staff to learn about their individual social, emotional and behavioural needs. Parents/carers are involved as much as possible and once a student has been offered a place, seminars take place to ensure that the school's staff understand the student's needs.

This policy outlines the criteria necessary for a student to gain a place at Ian Mikardo High School. Our aim is to:

- Ensure that the process of deciding on a placement at the school involves open discussion and reflection
- Ensure equality of opportunity for vulnerable young people in Tower Hamlets
- Raise issues of funding implications for some placements, eg young people who may otherwise be placed in residential accommodation, or who have been in residential, or those assessed as having severe and complex social, emotional and mental health issues.

## **Status**

All students must have a statement for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) or an Education, Health and Care Plan or be in the process of gaining one. They may be looked after children (LAC).

## **Number**

There are currently 40 places at the school spread between year groups.

## **Age**

The school admits year 7 to year 13 students. By agreement with Tower Hamlets Borough Council, year 6 students are sometimes admitted to ease the transitional process. Students can be admitted into any year group.

## **Gender**

The School's current designation is as a boys' school. The school community and Governing Body have considered becoming a co-educational facility on a number of occasions; this would enable Ian Mikardo to support girls with emotional, social and behavioural problems. Currently there is no such facility in London/Tower Hamlets although there appears to be considerable demand. At the time of this policy's revision, Tower Hamlets SEN is reviewing whether to consider a proposal for Ian Mikardo to become co-educational. We will consider referrals of girls on a case by case basis.

## **Funding**

We prioritise looked after children.

## **Assessment period**

Assessment is made over half a term prior to a permanent offer of a placement.

## **Procedure for prospective students**

1. A school, parent/carer, student or other professional makes a referral to the SEN panel.
2. If the placement is thought to be appropriate, the panel forwards the paperwork to Ian Mikardo High School.
3. The Admissions Officer reports on the referral papers to the Head Teacher, and if the placement is regarded as appropriate, the Admissions Officer will contact the referring panel within 10 days and invite the student and his/her parents/carers to visit the school. If the parents/carers confirm that they want a place, the assessment process will begin. The referring panel will be kept informed throughout the process.
4. The assessment will involve the school's assessorst who will meet with the child; with the parent/carers; with the child and parent/carers together; and consult with other relevant professionals. It will also involve academic and behaviour assessments carried out by senior members of staff.
5. The school's SLT will discuss the assessment's findings and decide whether to offer a place.
6. The decision will be made within one term of the beginning of the assessment process. The Admissions Officer will inform the parent/carers and the panel of the decision immediately. If the placement is declined, she will outline the reasons for the decision.
7. If a placement is offered, the school's assessors will lead a seminar on the student for all the school's staff. An integration package tailored to the student's needs will be put in place.

Tower Hamlets is obliged to comply with parental preference unless:

- The school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs.
- The attendance of the child at the school would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the students with whom s/he would be educated.
- The attendance of the student at the school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

It is important to appreciate that while Ian Mikardo is a special school for SEMH students, we specialise in supporting students whose primary need is for behavioural support; their learning difficulties are secondary to their behavioural problems. We are not a pupil referral unit and we do not offer part-time placements; this is a full time provision.

## **SEN**

All our students have statements of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan before they come to the school, or are in the process of getting one. If at any point

we feel that a statement needs to be updated, we involve Tower Hamlets' Educational Psychologist, or the Special Educational Needs Panel of the relevant borough council. Should we feel that the school cannot meet the needs of a student, we arrange an urgent annual review, which involves the student's parents/carers and external professionals involved with the student. We also revisit the statement. Once we have established the student's needs, we set up a plan to ensure that these can best be met.