

Richard Cloudesley School – Admissions Policy

School specialism

Richard Cloudesley School is a school for pupils aged between 2 - 19 years.

We are a specialist setting for children and young people who require alternative strategies to communicate. Therefore, communication is central to our approach, and key to our provision at Richard Cloudesley School. We offer regional provision and provide education to pupils within Islington and across the London area.

All staff are trained to help pupils to use Alternative & Augmentative Communication (AAC) systems, including Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD). This is supplemented by other communication systems and technologies, such as iPads and eye gaze technology.

Admissions criteria

Prospective pupils must be between 2 - 19 years of age.

In order to come to Richard Cloudesley School, pupils must have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan or be in the process of getting one.

Many pupils will express themselves through non-verbal means and benefit from the aided language environment at Richard Cloudesley School. Pupils will have additional physical disabilities, sensory impairment, complex health needs or mental health difficulties. All pupils admitted to the school will have learning difficulties, many of these will be severe to profound

Some pupils will also require invasive procedures, such as supported nutrition, assisted ventilation and rescue medication. Many pupils will require adult support to meet their personal care needs.

The pupil's needs will be such that several different agencies are already involved in supporting the pupil and their family. Pupils will require a significant lead professional role to manage and integrate all the different sources of support.

Admissions process

Before admission, an initial assessment of the pupil's learning, medical and therapeutic needs is carried out. Parents and carers play an important role in this process and are invited to visit the school, talk to the headteacher, see the class into which their child may be admitted, and talk to the appropriate staff.

Considerable thought, planning and preparation goes into utilising our support staff to ensure pupils achieve the best outcomes, gain independence, and are prepared for adulthood from the earliest possible age.

We welcome the full involvement of parents in the admissions process and the parents of early years children are welcome to spend time in school during the first weeks. Visits and phone calls from parents are always welcome.

The process for a parent applying is as follows:

1. Make an appointment with the headteacher to view the school with the child.
2. Parents should register their interest in Richard Cloudesley School with their home local authority.
3. The local authority should request a place for the child or young person with the school by sending formal consultation papers to the headteacher and Islington Local Authority.
4. The headteacher will review the EHC Plan with the home local health authority to assess need and establish whether the appropriate level of support can be provided.

5. A visit to see the child in their current educational or home context will be arranged to support the headteacher's decision as part of the consultation process.
6. If the school has a place and can meet the child's needs effectively and efficiently, then an offer subject to agreement over place costs for education and health provision, will be made. The headteacher must notify the home local authority of their decision within 15 calendar days of receiving formal consultation papers.
7. The school will negotiate and agree the level of education funding with the home local authority.
8. The Whittington Health team leader will negotiate and agree the level of health funding with the local authority.
9. It is expected that the local authority will respond to formally accept the place and name Richard Cloudesley School on the EHC Plan within 15 calendar days of a place being offered by the school.
10. A place is offered and a transition programme for the child or young person is developed.
11. The school will arrange a multi-disciplinary transition meeting that will include the head of department, medical staff, therapists, the new class teams, and the family.
12. A start date will then be set. If transport has been agreed this may affect the start date.
13. A multi-disciplinary review meeting will take place no later than six weeks after the child or young person has started.

Over-subscription criteria

If the school is oversubscribed, the headteacher will operate a planning list and inform interested parents and/or the local authority as and when a suitable vacancy may arise. The headteacher and chair of governors will consider each of the following criteria with respect to pupils:

- ☐ who are, or have previously been, in care or looked-after
- ☐ who reside in the London Borough of Islington
- ☐ who are not currently in education, and are of school age (over 5 years old)
- ☐ who have degenerative or life limiting conditions
- ☐ Who are siblings of existing Richard Cloudesley School pupils
- ☐ Who are siblings of existing Prior Weston School pupils
- ☐ whose needs can best be matched at that time by the specialism of the school.

Review process

This policy was updated following consultation with local authority, parents, staff, leaders, and governors in May 2023. It was further amended in April 2024 as part of the expansion of the primary department. It was ratified by governors in November 2024.

The next consultation will be in May 2031, as per the DfE statutory seven-year cycle of review.