

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

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All pupils are referred to the School by the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Department from the two geographical listed below. The school then reads all information provided with the consultation pack and then makes a decision as to whether they are able to meet the child's needs. The SEN Area offices are responsible for liaising between parents and the School and share the Local Authority agreed Admission Guidance document with all concerned. (see attached)

South Kent	(Dover, Shepway & Ashford) Kroner House, Ashford <a href="mailto:SENDPlacements@kent.gov.uk">SENDPlacements@kent.gov.uk</a>
East Kent	(Swale, Canterbury & Thanet) Brook House, Whitstable <a href="mailto:SENDPlacements@kent.gov.uk">SENDPlacements@kent.gov.uk</a>

All pupils referred to the school have an Education, Health Care Plan which provides details of their main special educational needs. The SEN Code of Practice describes children who have social, emotional and mental health needs as:

“Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder”

Most students will present with some or all of the following behaviours:

- distractibility that inhibits the progress of the young person even with significant adult support and increasingly individualised curriculum
- unpredictably and intensity of the pattern of behaviour which significantly affects the learning of peers
- behaviour which is bizarre and/or self injurious and/or endangers others and leads to a significant level of rejection by peers increasing the social isolation of the young person.
- significant unhappiness, stress and/or disaffection over a sustained period often accompanied by prolonged periods of absence associated with an increasing awareness by the young person of their situation, which has led to a negative attitude towards education.

Students may also be on the Autistic continuum but respond well to Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs provision.

Students often require an intensive multi-agency approach and appropriate out of hours support.

Wherever possible students will be given opportunities to access mainstream inclusion with the percentage of inclusion being determined by the students' individual level of need and readiness for adjusting to a different learning environment. The amount of inclusion may well begin at a low level and for some students this may remain appropriate.

In considering the parental request for placement at Portal House School the Local Authority must have regard to the following admission criteria:

The young person will benefit from a placement at a school committed to reversing patterns of failure associated with school and learning. These patterns of failure usually manifest themselves in emotional, social and mental health difficulties as described in their Education, Health and Care Plan. They will include students whose present needs are the result of deep-seated and long-term emotional, behaviour and social needs but have the potential to achieve as well as most pupils in mainstream of similar age i.e. national average or above.

All pupils will need to live within reasonable travelling distance from school. Transport is provided by the Local Authority.

#### The 'Five Step' Admission Process

1. A child is referred to the Special Education Needs Department, KCC, identified as likely to benefit from specialist provision.
2. A named SEN Caseworker sends sets of relevant paperwork on that child to the Headteacher, and requests a response within 2 weeks.
3. The Headteacher responds to the SEN Caseworker and states clearly whether she feels that the child's educational needs could be met at Portal House and if the school has a vacancy in their year group.
4. If the response is positive, the school invites the parents/carers and child to visit the school. The purpose of this meeting is to enable the child and parents/carers to tour the school, meet pupils and staff and ask any questions they may have about the provision on offer. This meeting also enables the school to explain the schools aims, policies and procedures. At the end of the meeting, the school will make the final decision as to whether the school can meet the child's needs and a start date agreed if appropriate. The school and parents/carers will then contact the named SEN Caseworker who referred the child to the school and confirm that a place has been offered and accepted.
5. The SEN Caseworker will then inform KCC transport and send the parents/carers transport forms to complete to receive home to school transport.

**PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL**  
**KENT SPECIAL SCHOOLS: ADMISSION GUIDANCE**

Name of school	PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL
Address:	Sea Street, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Dover, Kent CT15 6SS
Tel:	01304 853033
Email:	<a href="mailto:office@portal-house.kent.sch.uk">office@portal-house.kent.sch.uk</a>
School Type:	Community Special School
Designation:	Secondary School for 80 SEMH students
Primary Need:	SEMH
Class Structure:	Year group classes
District served:	East and South
Area:	South Kent
Age range:	11 – 16-year-old
Maximum Capacity	80

- Portal House School is a secondary school for up to 80 children who experience significant Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs. Many have in addition, diagnosed health conditions such as Attachment Disorder, Autism, ADHD, ADH, ODD and OCD.
- The school offers a fresh start in modern fit for purpose facilities and is committed to reversing patterns of failure associated with school and learning.
- All students have broadly national average/above average academic potential according to recent formal assessments and/or have attained national average expectations for their age (potential to achieve 5 or more high grade GCSE including English and Maths). Year 7 students have attained scaled scores of 90+ in their KS2 SATS and age-related expectations at KS1.
- Our main curriculum offer is broad, balanced and academic. Students follow a secondary school timetable that leads to securing qualifications and life skills that will enable them to progress to their chosen pathways at 16+. In KS3 (Year 7, 8 and 9) students are taught the National curriculum programmes of study and sit Entry level qualifications. KS4 students follow a timetable that leads to 7 GCSE's- English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Physics and from the following option subjects- Art and Design, ICT, Geography and P.E. Additional GCSE's such as Chemistry, Computer Science and Statistics may be offered on request. Biology and English Literature GCSE's are sat in Year 10. Other subjects can be sat early if appropriate. In addition, all classes have weekly PSHE, RE/World views, cooking lessons and a 2 hours enrichment session. In Year 10 students undertake work experience preparation for college and life skills lessons. Year 7's and any student who is not yet a confident swimmer have the opportunity to have swimming lessons at Whitfield swimming pool. We offer a bespoke curriculum with different learning pathways to those, who due to their current needs/circumstances are unable to access our main curriculum offer.
- At 16+ our students go to either 6<sup>th</sup> form, College, Apprenticeships or work after achieving on average 8-9 subject accreditations (GCSE, Btecs and Entry level).
- Students are taught in small year group classes by qualified staff and supported by class T.A.'s. Class sizes vary depending on need (4 – 7 per class).
- Behavior is their biggest barrier to accessing education.
- A high proportion of students are eligible for pupil premium.

**Portal House School  
Sea Street  
St. Margaret's at Cliffe  
Dover  
Kent CT15 6SS**

Policy: Admission Policy March 2025

This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body of Portal House School

Signed: ..... (Chair of Governors)

Date: .....

Signed: ..... (Headteacher)

Date: .....

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_