

Consideration of placements at The Chatten Free School

Thank you for expressing an interest in The Chatten Free School (The School). All admissions to the school are determined by Essex County Council's SEND Operations Service working in conjunction with the School. Should you wish your child to attend the School you should, in the first instance, contact your relevant SEND Operations Team as per the contact details below. Your relevant SEND Operations Team is determined by your child or young person's home address:

- **Mid Essex** (Braintree, Chelmsford, Halstead and Maldon): 0333 013 9949
- **North East Essex** (Colchester and Tendring): 0333 013 7667
- **South Essex** (Basildon, Billericay, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford and Wickford): 0333 013 4736
- **West Essex** (Epping, Harlow and Uttlesford): 0333 013 9911

If you are a parent/carer or professional seeking a placement for a child who is not currently resident in the Essex County Council area please contact the Lead Admissions Officer (LAO) for the school, Alison Williams, either by telephone on 0333 013 9949 or by e-mail on Alison.Williams@essex.gov.uk

All children and young people who attend the School will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) due to their significant difficulties with social communication. Students will, for large parts of the day, struggle to follow an adult-led agenda and may present with behaviours that challenge as a result of this. It is anticipated that all students will have a diagnosis of Autism or will be awaiting an assessment for Autism but exceptionally, this may not be the case. Students' social communication difficulties will have a severe impact on their ability to meet typical developmental milestones and/or engage with learning activities typically aimed at similar aged peers. Students will require an individualised curriculum specifically tailored to meet their individual needs and will be largely reliant on adults to support their engagement with learning throughout the school day.

Parents/carers can express a preference for their child or young person to attend the School either at the conclusion of an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) or following an Annual Review (AR) of their child or young person's EHCP. Similarly, if a child or young person is moving to Essex from another Local Authority (LA) area, a request for placement can also be made.

All expressions of interest/preference for the school **MUST** be made through the relevant SEND Operations Team (dependent on where the child or young person lives) who will then commence the statutory consultation process by sharing this with the LAO for the school. Contact should not be made directly with the school unless a parent/carer is making a general enquiry. Upon receipt of an expression of interest/preference, the Lead Admissions Officer of the school will make contact with the Headteacher and share relevant information with them. A monthly admissions meeting will take place involving key professionals involved in placement decisions

including LA and school staff. During this meeting, decisions will be made about whether a child or young person meets the criteria for admission into the School and, if so, whether a place can be offered in line with the relevant legislative requirements.

Decisions will then be communicated by the Lead Admissions Officer to the relevant SEND Operations staff to share with interested parties as soon as reasonably possible.