



## ADMISSIONS POLICY

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### Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. THE REFERRAL AND ADMISSIONS PROCESS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Stage 1: Initial Enquiry .....	2
Stage 2: Visit to the School .....	3
Stage 3: Assessment and Familiarisation Visits .....	3
<b>3. ADMISSION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Terms of Admission .....	4
Emergency Admissions .....	5
Contact and arrangements .....	5
Pre Admissions Check list .....	5
<b>4. WHAT THE SCHOOL CAN OFFER.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Specific Provision.....	6
Care and Support.....	8
<b>5. EXCLUSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Introduction.....	8
Head Teachers' power to exclude .....	9
Exclusion Procedure .....	9
Withdrawal.....	10
Duties following exclusion.....	10
Procedure for Appeal .....	10
<b>6. THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT SHEILING SCHOOL .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>APPENDIX A .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sheiling School has been in operation since 1952 as an Independent Residential Special School providing therapeutic education and care for children and young people with

special educational needs. In 2016, the residential provision was registered as a Children's Home with Ofsted.

Sheiling School is an activity of Thornleigh Camphill Communities Limited, which is a registered charity (No 307104) and a non-profit making limited company (No 497029).

Thornleigh Camphill Communities Limited is made up of the Sheiling School, Orchard Leigh Community and The Hatch Community, which are for adults with special needs.

Sheiling School is a member of the [National Association of Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools](#).

Sheiling School offers a unique therapeutic, educational and social school community to children and young people, aged from six to nineteen years old, based on the therapeutic principles of Rudolf Steiner.

Sheiling School offers a variety of provision, depending on individual young people's need, from day placements, weekly and full boarding both 38 and 52-week placements.

Sheiling School is a school approved by the Secretary of State (under section 41 of the Children and Families Act) for Education as a day and residential school for boys and girls aged 6 – 19 years, who have either moderate or severe learning difficulties. The current admission criteria is for young people who require a medium to long term placement and who have a range of needs including Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, Social Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties

We will not provide for:

- Children and Young people with severe physical or sensory disabilities
- Children and Young people who may have serious mental health issues, or those requiring specialist psychiatric interventions, those with alcohol or drug dependency

The school is divided into age appropriate classes as described in the Waldorf curriculum. Sheiling School is a non-denominational school and welcomes children and young people from all religious and cultural backgrounds. We celebrate all festivals and work with parents / carers and placing authorities to ensure the cultural and spiritual needs of the young people are met.

## **2. THE REFERRAL AND ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

The processing of enquiries and applications is co-ordinated by the Head of Development with the support of the Admissions Administrator. The Admissions Team meet weekly and membership comprises of the CEO, Head Teacher, Head of Care and Head of Finance.

### **Stage 1: Initial Enquiry**

Most referrals begin with a telephone call from a family or from a professional involved in placing a child/young person. They usually ask to know what the school has to offer and are asked to describe the child/young person's background and needs.

Before a visit can be arranged, families or local authorities are asked to send a copy of the most recent Annual Review report, the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and/or any other information. The admissions group meets every week, initial enquiries are discussed and approved based on our admission criteria, an impact assessment and the number of vacancies.

If we feel that the child/young person may be suitably placed with us we will arrange for an initial to visit the school.

We welcome requests for visits, either with or without the child or young person to tour the site and see our facilities, meet our staff, and talk to us about any concerns or questions.

More information specifically for the child/ young person is available on our website, which is packed with helpful information about the school, daily life there and our facilities.

### **Stage 2: Visit to the School**

The initial visit by the families and other interested parties is usually conducted by the Head of Development or another senior staff member, who will answer any questions that arise and will explain in more detail the provision and curriculum of the school and home. The visit has most value if it takes place during term time when it is possible to see the school at work and to meet the pupils and staff.

Staff from Sheiling School may also visit, if appropriate, or telephone the prospective pupil's present school to confer with the staff there in order to gain a deeper insight into the prospective pupil's needs. If requested, school staff may also visit the home if it is felt to be inappropriate for the prospective pupil to visit at this early, initial stage.

### **Stage 3: Assessment and Familiarisation Visits**

If, following the initial enquiry and visits, it is thought that the child/young person could be appropriately placed at Sheiling School, a period of residential or day familiarisation may be arranged.

Before this, we require the agreement of the local authority or other agencies and to have received relevant information relating to the child/young person's educational, social and emotional needs from the authority, family and the present or previous school.

To enable the school to be aware of the child/young person's specific needs the family are asked to complete a detailed questionnaire and return it prior to the assessment.

Following the familiarisation, the observations of teachers, therapists and care staff are collated in order to support the decision that Sheiling School can meet their child/young person's needs.

### 3. ADMISSION

Once an admission date has been agreed preparatory work is needed in order to minimise anxiety or confusion on the part of the new pupil and the family; as before these resources will be prepared by the Admissions Group. Pupils can be invited to initially spend shorter days at Sheiling School prior to full admission in order for the new pupil to get to know the staff and other pupils.

Every pupil is admitted on the understanding that the first three months at School is seen as a trial and assessment period. An Assessment Review, chaired by the Head of Development, will then be held at the end of the assessment period.

The School reserves the right to postpone or cancel the process of admissions of a child/young person if circumstances change, for example, the child/young person's needs or behaviour change or if there is no longer space or appropriate facility for that particular pupil.

The School complies with the terms and conditions of the National School Contract (NASS) or other specific contracts with the Local Authority.

Admission will only take place once contracts and Individual Placement Agreements (IPA) have been signed by both parties, a Purchase order number has been given and the Positive Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment (PBSPRA) has been signed and approved by all parties.

#### Terms of Admission

1. Once a place has been offered to a pupil and is accepted by the parents and/or funding Authority, the full fee for one term is due, even though circumstances may delay the actual date of arrival.
2. Prior to admission, parents or guardians must return all requested documents providing detailed information concerning the pupil to the Head of Development.
3. Every pupil has a three month assessment period.
4. At the end of the assessment period the fee level may need to be increased to reflect the extra resources required to meet the needs of the pupil.
5. Fees are payable termly, in advance.
6. If a pupil is withdrawn by parents or authorities, prior written notice of a minimum of six weeks will be required or six weeks of the fee will be payable in lieu of such notice.
7. The School reserves the right to temporarily exclude or dismiss a pupil at short notice, which will only occur in extreme circumstances such as, for example, serious threatening behaviour, serious aggression or self-injury, or destruction of property.
8. In the event of a temporary exclusion, a Plan of Action for seeking support from other agencies, for example, Psychiatric assessment must be agreed in writing

between the School and the Placing Authority. This should include a projected timescale for the necessary steps towards re-integration. If a place is kept open for the pupil full fees will be payable.

9. Payment terms are strictly 30 days from receipt of invoice. Overdue accounts are subject to monthly interest in line with the National Schools Contract.

## Emergency Admissions

Sheiling School will always endeavour to admit a young person in a planned way however this is not always possible.

The School will consider emergency admissions to our residential provision for young people already placed at Sheiling School (as day pupils) and may consider a referral for a former pupil to the School. In exceptional circumstances, the School will consider referrals for emergency admission for children and young people not previously known to the School.

In these circumstances, the following procedure will apply:

- Contact is normally made through the Head of Development by phone. At this stage as much information as possible regarding the young person is required. Any emergency admission to the school would only be agreed after the signed agreement by the Head of Development and the CEO. The school's normal admissions contractual procedure, including the signing off by IPA would thereon follow.
- If it is possible to offer an appropriate service the young person will be brought to Sheiling School to visit if they have not already done so and a meeting will be held to agree the short-term aims.

A formal admission meeting will be held prior to or within 72 hours of the placement where the criteria will be the same as for a planned admission but will also include the formulation of the placement plan.

## Contact and arrangements

Initial contact: Syl Edgeley-Head of Development- [syl.edgeley@sheilingschool.org.uk](mailto:syl.edgeley@sheilingschool.org.uk)

Anita Kane-Admissions Administrator- [admissions@sheilingschool.org.uk](mailto:admissions@sheilingschool.org.uk)

By phone: 01454 412194

email: [admissions@sheilingschool.org.uk](mailto:admissions@sheilingschool.org.uk)

Or letter sent to: Admissions, Sheiling School, Thornbury Park, and Bristol, BS35 1HP.

Informal Visit: Prospective parents, carer or Authorities to visit the School (can be with or without prospective pupils). If initial visit and interview is requested at the same time, documents listed below must be received a minimum of one week prior to visit.

## Pre Admissions Check list

### ➤ Requesting Reports:

All relevant documents to be received at least one week prior to visit.

Current EHCP
Latest school report
Psychiatrist/ Psychologist reports

Consultant reports, or any medical reports
Behaviour Support/Management Plans from previous school
Risk Assessment
Care Plan
Health Care Plan
Incident reports. Charts of Significant Incidents
OT / Physio / SALT reports

- **Pre Admission Form:** (Appendix A)  
To be completed by parents or carer. Date of assessment meeting is confirmed once this and all relevant documents from check list are received.  
To be followed by further visits, trial school days and overnight stays as appropriate.
- **Offer of Placement:**  
Letter to LA (to confirm placement, Terms of Agreement, Fees and request for IPA)
- **Confirmation letter to authority:**  
Acknowledge receipt of all pre-admissions info, invitation to Placement finalisation:
- **Placement Finalisation Meeting:** (Authority, parents & school)  
To Confirm: Transport, Transition, Provisional Start Date, Staffing, Consent, IPA and PO where applicable,
- **Welcome to Sheiling School:**  
Social Story pack sent to young person and the parents will receive final details in the Welcome Pack including introduction to the class / teacher etc. and any transition information.

**Start date:** Start date will be confirmed once the Positive Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment (PBSPRA) has been signed and approved by all parties, all paperwork has been completed, the IPA signed and purchase order number provided

#### 4. WHAT THE SCHOOL CAN OFFER

##### Specific Provision

Sheiling School offers the following therapies are part of the provision. This provision is available to all pupils/young people, but the obtaining and participation is considered in consultation with the ECHP our Consultative Advisor and staff at the School.

- Speech and language Therapy
- Eurythmy Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Rhythmical Massage
- Drama Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Sensory Integration
- Therapeutic swimming lessons
- Equine Therapy

Most, although not all, pupils admitted with wide-ranging learning difficulties also experience communication and sensory processing difficulties. These vary from pupil to pupil and call for individual assessment and intervention.

Our Speech and Language Therapists (S&LT) and Occupational Therapists are expert in helping teaching and support staff improve their technical ability to understand the feedback from the assessments and to translate this in to work in the classroom/home.

We have the highest expectations for progress and development for our pupils, making certain that therapies on offer are embedded in the fabric of every interaction (not just in a therapy room or assessment) and ensuring that the pupils experience a more outcomes focussed learning experience. Our S&LT will undertake discrete sessions with pupils but will also work in the classroom, sports hall, outdoor curriculum and the homes, embedding the very best practice in Speech and Language Therapy throughout the school and residential provision. We aim to provide a total communication environment.

Our Occupational Therapist has specific expertise and training in sensory integration and works in the same way as the S&LT.

### **Outdoor Education**

Pupils make good use of the large outdoor areas we have available. The activities available, the Outdoor Education and the natural environment/playground will support fluidity of movement, motor skills development and use of excess energy, which can be channelled towards more constructive activities rather than aggressive outbursts or challenging behaviour.

### **Medical support**

The school can offer routine support to minimise and stabilise the effects of conditions such as asthma, diabetes and epilepsy. We have a registered nurse who trains staff and oversees the pupils' health and welfare.

### **Social Emotional & Mental Health difficulties and the Promotion of Positive Behaviour**

A number of pupils with learning difficulties experience emotional problems and exhibit challenging behaviour.

All staff working are fully trained in accredited Positive Behaviour Support through the provider Team-Teach. This is monitored by ongoing training / practice sessions with our in-house advanced tutors. The Positive Behaviour Support forms part of their placement plan.

Any issues surrounding the managing of pupils challenging behaviour and the development of appropriate responses will be discussed in regular internal reviews as well as formal reviews with the parents, and representatives from the funding authorities. In the event of a concern in the escalation of challenging behaviour, review meetings will be more frequent.

The majority of our pupils are staffed 1:1 both during school hours and in the residential setting. A comprehensive Positive Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment (PBSPRA) will be drawn up by school, parents and LEA as part of the admissions process. The parents and Authority of any pupil are involved in ensuring this document contains all the important and relevant information. The PBSPRA is reviewed regularly as well as reviewed and agreed at each Annual Review.

## **Delayed Social Development**

The difficulties in this area may take many forms but the school is well provided to aid the development of practical and interpersonal social skills leading to greater independence.

## **Care and Support**

The ethos of Sheiling School is based on the social, therapeutic and educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. Essential to the school is the recognition and belief that behind every disability, each young person's human integrity and spiritual wholeness are preserved. For the Sheiling School, this means that every child/young person, both because of and despite their disabilities, has something to give and something to learn in all of their relationships, with other young people, staff, teachers, carers, friends and family.

We believe that mutual recognition and acceptance, within a distinct school community setting, enable both the individual independence and social connectedness that form the basis of growth and change. We believe that recognising each young person's human and spiritual integrity means to educate and care for the whole person; intellectually, morally, spiritually and physically. The Sheiling School seeks to broaden each child and young person's horizons along with their confidence and ability to access the wider community beyond the school and home's boundaries in keeping with what is appropriate for their age and ability.

Sheiling School encourages young people to:

- Build and maintain positive family links/relationships by encouraging and supporting the reunification process where needed and possible; remaining aware of the social and geographical factors
- Minimise the number of moves experienced by the young person
- Support a programme of work to encourage independence
- Provide longer-term continuity of education, care, support and guidance
- Promote a positive approach to childhood care and experiences, incorporating and encouraging community activities and wider activities/hobbies
- Complete individual and direct work with young people to support them in coming to terms with past experiences and supporting them in the development of positive strategies for coping.

## **5. EXCLUSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Sheiling School is committed to providing high quality care and education for all our pupils and young people.

This Exclusion Policy applies to all pupils and young people and complies with the National Schools and Colleges Contract. The aim of this policy is to support the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and to set out a fair procedure to follow when a pupil/young person is required to leave Sheiling School.

## Head Teachers' power to exclude

In normal circumstances, the decision as to when a pupil/young person leaves the Sheiling School will be agreed upon through the annual review process at least one term before the scheduled date of leaving. Sheiling School will inform the placing authority at an early stage of any situation likely to lead to an exclusion in order to give the placing authority the opportunity to seek to resolve matters. If a pupil/young person placement suddenly breaks down we will, where possible, arrange an emergency review to determine the best way forward for the pupil/young person. The placing authority will be notified and will be expected to send a representative. It may, however, be necessary to make decisions in the absence of a representative if they cannot attend.

In certain circumstances, the Head Teacher may exclude a pupil/young person from the Sheiling School on disciplinary grounds for one or more fixed periods (of up to 45 term time days in an academic year) or permanently.

Exclusion may be used in a number of circumstances including for:

- Harm to others;
- Actual or threatened violence;
- Disruptive and/or unmanageable behaviour;
- Severe Damage to property;
- Sexual abuse;
- Unsafe behaviours that compromise safety of others;
- Behaviours of concern that through their frequency and type or severity cannot be safely managed through the school's positive behaviour support.

These are non-exhaustive examples and the Head Teacher will consider the appropriate action following each incident. The behaviour of a pupil/young person outside of the Sheiling School can be considered grounds for exclusion.

## Exclusion Procedure

A permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort where there has been a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Sheiling School's Positive Behaviour Policy and where allowing the pupil/young person to remain in the school would harm the education or welfare of the pupil/young person or others.

Any decision to exclude a pupil/young person must be lawful, reasonable, fair and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The Head Teacher must carry out a sufficient investigation of the facts to justify the decision whether or not to exclude. The Head Teacher will apply the civil standard of proof "on the balance of probabilities" when establishing the facts in relation to an exclusion decision. A pupil/young person and their parent/guardian should be told the nature of the allegation that is being made against them. The Head Teacher will, where practical, give the pupil/young person and their parent/guardian an opportunity to present their case before making a decision to exclude. If the Head Teacher decides to exclude a pupil/young person, this must be a proportionate decision taking into account the seriousness of the conduct.

For proposed permanent exclusions, the Head Teacher must notify the placing authority by telephone immediately and provide written confirmation within 3 working days. The Head Teacher must give the parents and the placing authority an opportunity to attend a meeting to discuss the matter within 15 working days. The Head Teacher may take a further 5 working days to consider any representations and to determine whether to implement a permanent exclusion.

Sheiling School will not discriminate against pupils/young people on the grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment. The Head Teacher recognises that all pupils/young people at Sheiling School have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Where there are concerns about a pupil/young person behaviour, Sheiling School will try to intervene early to reduce the need for exclusion and will make any reasonable adjustments to manage behaviour related to their disability. The Head Teacher will also take into account any contributing factors, for example, where a pupil/young person has been subject to bullying.

When the Head Teacher excludes a pupil/young person for a fixed period they will, without delay, notify parents and the placing authority of the period of exclusion and the reasons for it. Sheiling School will specifically provide notification to the placing authority by telephone at the earliest opportunity and confirm this in writing within 24 hours.

If the pupil/young person's behaviour could be construed as criminal, the Head Teacher may contact the police without giving notice to the parents.

### **Withdrawal**

If a pupil/young person is withdrawn by parents or the placing authority, prior written notice of a minimum of six weeks will be required or six weeks of the fee will be payable in lieu of such notice. Sheiling School reserves the right to charge interest in line with the National Schools Contract.

### **Duties following exclusion**

For a fixed period exclusion, where the pupil/young person has a residential placement, the pupil/young person shall be returned home or to the placing authority. Sheiling School must ensure that work is either provided for the pupil/young person to undertake and/or guidance is given with regard to activities during the exclusion period. Sheiling School will convene a meeting at the earliest opportunity and in all cases within 5 working days with the placing authority to agree a strategy plan for the pupil/young person's return. If the pupil/young person is a 'looked after child', then Sheiling School must convene an urgent review meeting to agree the next steps.

For permanent exclusions, the local authority must arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil/young person.

### **Procedure for Appeal**

If parents wish to appeal against the decision to exclude, the matter will be dealt with as a complaint. Please refer to the Schools' Complaints Policy.

## 6. THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT SHEILING SCHOOL

### Our Safeguarding Team:

**Noah Black** – Head of Therapeutic Support-**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

**Jordan Bool** - Assistant Head Teacher-**Deputy DSL for Education**

**Richard Tiplady** - Head of Care and Registered Manager-**Deputy DSL for Care**

**Syl Edgeley** - Head of Development - **Deputy DSL**

## APPENDIX A



## PRE ADMISSION INFORMATION FORM

**Full Name of Child:**

**Male / Female:**

**Date of Birth:**

**NHS No:**

### **Parental Responsibility Declaration:**

**Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s) with whom the child lives:**

1/

2/

**Does this/these parent(s) have parental responsibility?**

Yes / No / Non Parent-Carer (circle applicable choice)

**Parent/Carer Address (inc postcode):**

Home Tel No:

Mobile No:

1/

2/

Email Address:

Happy to receive information by email Yes/No

**Name of parent with whom the child DOES NOT live:**

**Does this parent have parental responsibility?**

Yes / No (circle applicable choice)

**Does this parent have legal access to the child?**

Yes / No (circle applicable choice)

**Parent Address (inc postcode):**

Tel No (inc mobile):

Email Address:

**Parents Religion:**

1/

2/

**Contact Restrictions:**

**Provision under which pupil is provided with accommodation (if residential):**

LAC or other?

**Other family members/Guardians:**

Name	Relation	Sibling age

**Professional Contacts**

**Social worker**

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

E-mail:

**GP**

Name of GP:

Surgery:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

**SCHOOL CURRENT/ LAST ATTENDED**

Name:

Type (e.g. mainstream, Special Needs)

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

If placed in residential provision please provide details:

**CONSULTANTS**

**Paediatrician:**

**Neurologist:**

**Psychiatrist:**

**Other:**

**ANY KNOWN HEREDITARY OR CONGENITAL DISEASES FROM EITHER PARENTS' FAMILY OR OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS, E.G. EPILEPSY OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.**

**MILESTONES - AT WHAT AGE DID THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON FIRST:**

- a) Smile
- b) Reach
- c) Sit
- d) Crawl
- e) Stand
- f) Walk unaided
- g) Say first words

h) Speak on sentences

i) When did teething start?

**DOES YOUR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON SHOW AFFECTION?**

**ANY ILLNESSES, HIGH TEMPERATURE, CONVULSIONS, CHILDREN'S DISEASES, INJURIES/ACCIDENTS AND AT WHAT AGE?**

**AT WHAT AGE DID YOU FIRST NOTICE ANY DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES? WHAT WAS THE INITIAL DIAGNOSIS?**

**PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF PREVIOUS SCHOOLS**

- Name, type and location of school or centre
  
- Approximate dates of attendance
  
- Reason for leaving

**ALL ABOUT ME** (general disposition, mood swings, fears, anxieties, phobias, likes/dislikes, what makes me happy/upset, ability to play, concept of time)

**BEHAVIOUR AND EMOTIONAL STATE** (Behavioural triggers, barriers to learning and participation)

<b>TRAFFIC LIGHT: GREEN</b> <b>Baseline Behaviour</b>  <b>When I am happy and settled I am like this</b>	
<b>TRAFFIC LIGHT: AMBER</b>  <b>When things are not quite right I am like this</b>	
<b>TRAFFIC LIGHT: RED</b>  <b>When I am unhappy or cross about something I am like this</b>	

<b>Responsive strategy</b>
<b>General Strategies</b>
<b>Staff Support and Level of Supervision</b>
<b>Recovery and De-briefing process following incident</b>
Describe preferred and most helpful process for pupil. How long does the pupil usually need as recovery time? When is the best time to do the debrief with the pupil (if appropriate)? Who should do it? Etc.

**PHYSICAL ABILITY** (fine/gross motor skills, spatial awareness)

**LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION** (Description of communication including use of language, signing, visual or other aids i.e. AAC device)

**APPROACH AND ATTITUDE TO LEARNING** (Current academic levels in literacy, numeracy, IT, concentration span, use of learning aids, etc)

**PERSONAL CARE**

- Dressing/undressing
- Washing /bathing/showering
- Dental care
- Toileting (including support/advice re menstruation, shaving)

**SLEEPING (night time routine, sleeping patterns)**

**MEDICAL**

- General health
- Medical conditions incl. allergies
- Any difficulties administering medication
- Please list all current medication/supplements

**ANY HOSPITAL ADMISSION OR OUTPATIENT TREATMENT** (Please give all relevant details below, stating in each case)

1. Name and address of hospital
2. Date of admission:
3. Name of doctor or Surgeon:
4. Reason for treatment:

**HAS YOUR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON HAD ANY PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING** (educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, OT, S&LT, BIBIC, CAHMS)

**NUTRITION AND MEAL TIMES**

- Special dietary needs
- Preferences

- Support needs

**RELATIONSHIPS** (with family and others)

**INDEPENDENCE SKILLS** (road safety, use of public amenities and transport i.e. shopping, domestic tasks)

**LEISURE ACTIVITIES** (Description of interests, hobbies and leisure activities)

**RELIGION, CULTURAL PREFERENCES ETHNICITY, MOTHER TONGUE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS** (Description of how your Child/young person relates to his/her environment, sensory stimulation (noises, dogs, large groups, indoor/outdoor)

**ANY OTHER COMMENTS**

**INTERNAL USE ONLY**

DATE OF ASSESSMENT:

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

FUNDING:

STAFFING RATIO:

ASSESSMENT OUTCOME:

OTHER:

Signed:

Position:

Date: