



1A: Admissions Policy for Sheiling School & Sheiling College

Rewritten as a joint school and college policy: SMT/AW/MG June-August 2025 (Every 2 years)

Ratified by Trustees: August 2025

Next Review date: Summer Term 2027

EDI Assessment: SSET does not currently identify any EDI impact of this policy; should new information come to light, this will be considered at the next review.

The purpose of The Sheiling Ringwood (TSR) Admissions Policy ensures the clear and transparent approach to admissions and assessment procedures.

1. Admission to The Sheiling Ringwood

TSR accepts referrals from families, carers, local authorities or social service departments for children and young people aged between 5-25 years. Prospective students will have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are identified as having moderate, severe and/or complex learning difficulties.

Neither Sheiling School nor Sheiling College are Section 41-approved provisions; however, the guiding principle for assessing whether a placement at TSR is suitable for the student follows the Children and Families Act 2014 (CAFA) Section 39 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

CAFA Section 39 states:

(3) The local authority must secure that the EHC plan names the school or other institution specified in the request, unless subsection (4) applies.

(4) This subsection applies where—

(a) the school or other institution requested is unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs of the child or young person concerned, or

(b) the attendance of the child or young person at the requested school or other institution would be incompatible with—

(i) the provision of efficient education for others, or

(ii) the efficient use of resources.

1.1 Informal or formal approach

- Informal - Following an enquiry from parents and carers, they will be asked to share a copy of the prospective student's EHCP. The EHCP will be reviewed by the Transitions and Referrals Officer and/or School Administrator before the parents are invited for a visit to the school or college.
- Formal - Referrals from Local Authority (LA) professionals usually arrive by way of consultation. The EHCP and supporting documents will form part of the Assessment paperwork and these will be considered by the Transitions and Referrals Officer and/or School Administrator. In the case of tendering consortiums, this may have a strict timescale attached and parents may only be invited to consider Sheiling School and College at a later stage of the process.

For all referrals, the EHCP will be reviewed to ensure the likelihood that TSR can meet the Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Section B and the Special Educational Provision (SEP) in Section F of the prospective student's EHCP.

1.2 Invitation to visit The Sheiling Ringwood

If it is likely that the EHCP 'needs' outlined in section B and 'provision' in section F can be met, the parents/carers or the LA representative will be invited for an informal visit of the school or college. If willing to pursue a placement following the visit, parents/carers will be asked to complete an application form. Further information may also be requested from the family, education setting, residential setting or social workers. This may include, but not be limited to, therapy reports, annual review report, behaviour data, medical and safeguarding information and education reports.

1.3 After receipt of a completed application form

An internal referrals meeting will be held with members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) to determine whether it is appropriate to begin the assessment process for the student. This will be dependent upon the availability of places available at TSR and the likelihood of TSR being a suitable placement to meet the prospective student's needs, as identified within the EHCP and supporting documents.

1.4 Assessment process

The decision to assess a prospective student will determine the next steps in accordance with Appendix A.

If it has been concluded that TSR cannot meet the needs of the student, they will not be offered an assessment. If this is the case, the parents/carers and/or LA will be informed in writing. The Transitions and Referrals Officer and/or School Administrator will either:

- Advise in writing that there is no current vacancy at TSR and offer to keep their name on a waiting list
or
- Advise in writing that TSR cannot meet the student's needs and therefore will not be offering an assessment.

If it has been agreed to progress to an assessment, it will be arranged for two members of staff to visit the prospective student in their current education/home setting. After this visit has taken place, SMT will decide if the student should then be invited onsite for an assessment day. Typically, assessment days span the full school/college day. For residential applicants, the aim is to include an overnight stay. However, it may be determined that this is not appropriate based on individual circumstances.

The assessment day will include students being observed/assessed by teachers, residential managers (where relevant) and therapists. Feedback will be sent to the Transitions and Referrals officer and shared with the SMT members at an internal referrals meeting. SMT will make the final decision on whether to offer a placement. Agreement must be reached unanimously between all Heads of Department.

1.5 Offer of placement

If a placement is offered, parents/carers and/or LAs will be issued with an offer letter.

Parents/carers and LAs are required to confirm in writing, by the date stated in the offer letter, their acceptance of the place. Where the placement hasn't been confirmed in writing by the date stated in the offer letter, TSR may withdraw the offer and/or require reassessment of the student, including a review of the fee level.

School (age 5-19) – For school, the offer letter will detail the level of support and curriculum that the student will access. Mid-year admissions can be agreed as necessary based on the individual circumstances of the student.

College (post-19, up to age 25) – For college, a Proposed Placement Plan will be written and submitted to the relevant LA representative. Sheiling College runs three-year programmes, subject to agreement at EHCP annual reviews. Mid-year admissions during the academic year may be possible based on individual circumstances.

All offers are issued on the basis that those who receive the funding first, will secure the placements. When all placements are filled, the parents/carers and LA will be informed of this at the earliest opportunity.

TSR will comply with the terms and conditions of the National Contract (NC), Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and any other specific contracts with the LA once funding has been agreed.

If a placement is not being offered, the parents/carers and/or LA will be informed in writing explaining the reasons why the placement is not being offered. This will be communicated at the earliest opportunity following assessment.

TSR reserves the right to postpone or cancel the process of admission of a student if circumstances change, e.g. if the student's needs or behaviour profile changes or if there is no longer a space and appropriate provision for them.

1.6 Transition In

Once funding has been agreed, planning can begin for the student's start date at school or college. No later than two weeks prior to their start date, the parents/carers will be sent an information pack. This will include details of the student's teacher and residential house (where relevant), along with consent forms and packing list for residential students.

Every student is admitted on the understanding that the first 12 weeks of the placement is seen as a transitional period. A review will be held within the first term. Where possible and appropriate, this will be combined with the EHCP Annual Review. In exceptional cases, it may be necessary to extend the assessment period and to request additional support for the student if additional information or support needs emerge during the assessment period. This could involve material changes being requested to the levels of educational or non-educational provision within the student's EHCP and/or changes to the student's support level or fees. In all cases, TSR will seek to advocate for our students and ensure that needs identified have suitable provision included for them within their contract and fee.

2. Terms of Admission

2.1 Fee Structure

Once a place has been offered and it is accepted by the funding authority, an invoice will be sent out and fees become due within 30 days of receipt. Charges may apply for late payment.

Fees are payable termly in advance unless otherwise agreed.

We provide a bespoke quote for fees which is calculated on an individual basis and tailored to the specific, individual needs of each student.

Fees will be reviewed and adjusted annually to reflect additional costs including (for example) inflation, changes in regulatory requirements and staff costs

- Accounts will be due on presentation of three termly invoices.
- Fees are based on an individually priced package of education, care and health provision.
- If any sum payable under a contract is not paid within the 30-day period, then a charge may be applied. The sum will bear interest at the applicable rate under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, accruing on a daily basis.
- Fees generally exclude personal expenses, personal allowance and transport costs (other than included off site visits which will be charged as extra, when appropriate).
- LAs will be notified of increases well in advance and in line with the NASS or current mutually agreed national contract.

- It is our policy to make it clear at the Assessment Review whether the initial fee quoted in our offer letter is confirmed and that all relevant parties are aware of the current fee level. The LA will also be informed in writing.

After initial assessments, Individual Education Plans/Study Programmes are formalised in consultation with teachers and house staff working directly with the student, according to the Code of Practice. All pupils have an Annual Review of their EHCP. Parents of privately funded pupils are encouraged to follow the same procedure. Summary reports are sent out to all parties two weeks prior to the Annual Review.

Every child admitted to the school is offered a place on the understanding that this will cease in the July after the statutory school leaving age is reached (for Upper School Programme students this will be the July after turning 19 years of age).

In line with the Code of Practice, the student's Transition Review will take place during Year 9 and all subsequent Annual Reviews will take account of the need to update the student's transition plan/arrangements. The review will consider the suitability of ongoing placement in Sheiling School's Upper School Programme (Years 12 to 14). Transition reviews take place to identify the next steps of the student in conjunction with key stakeholders.

3. Exclusion and Withdrawal Policy

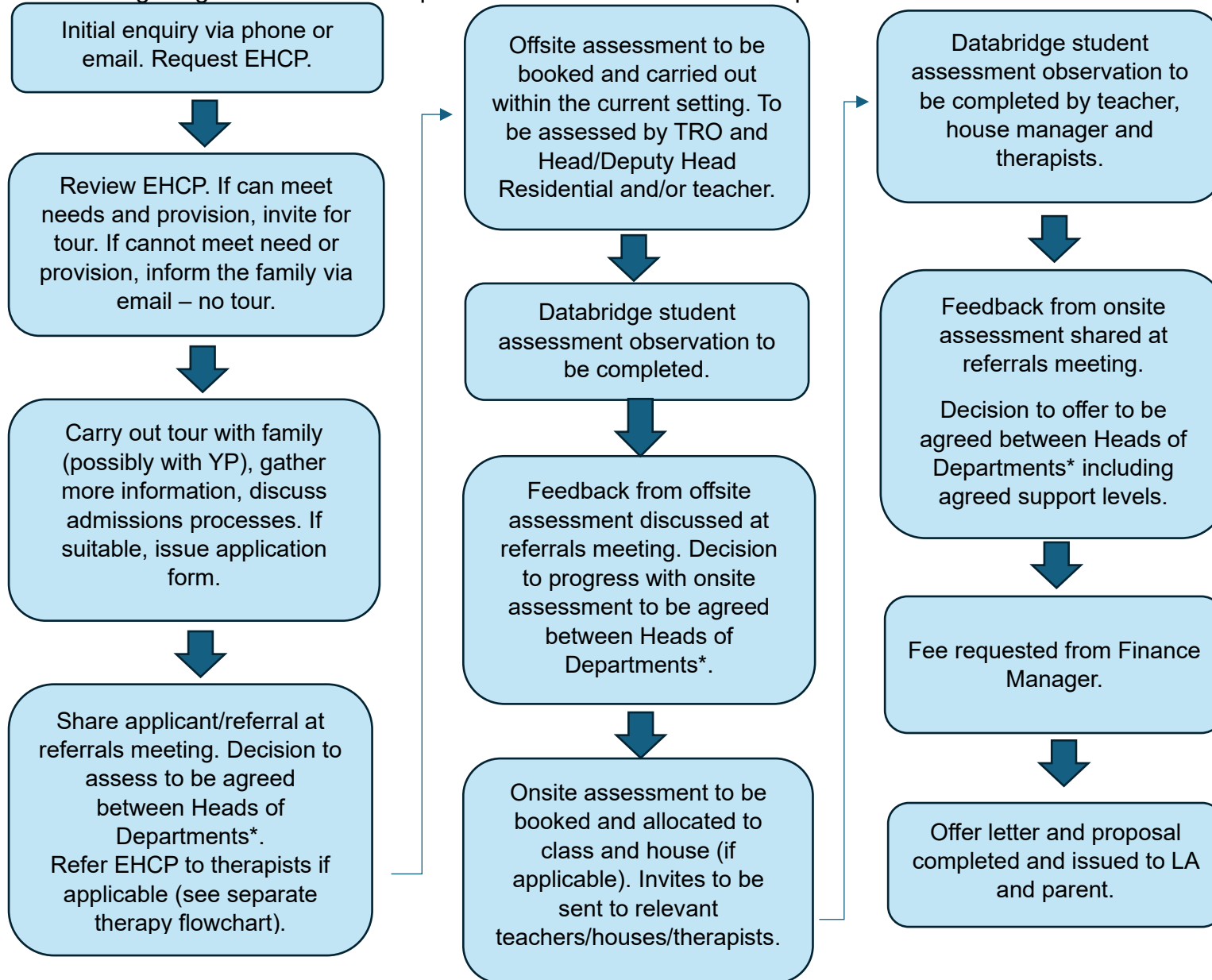
Exclusion:

Please refer to our separate Sheiling Exclusion Policy which can be accessed via our website.

Withdrawal:

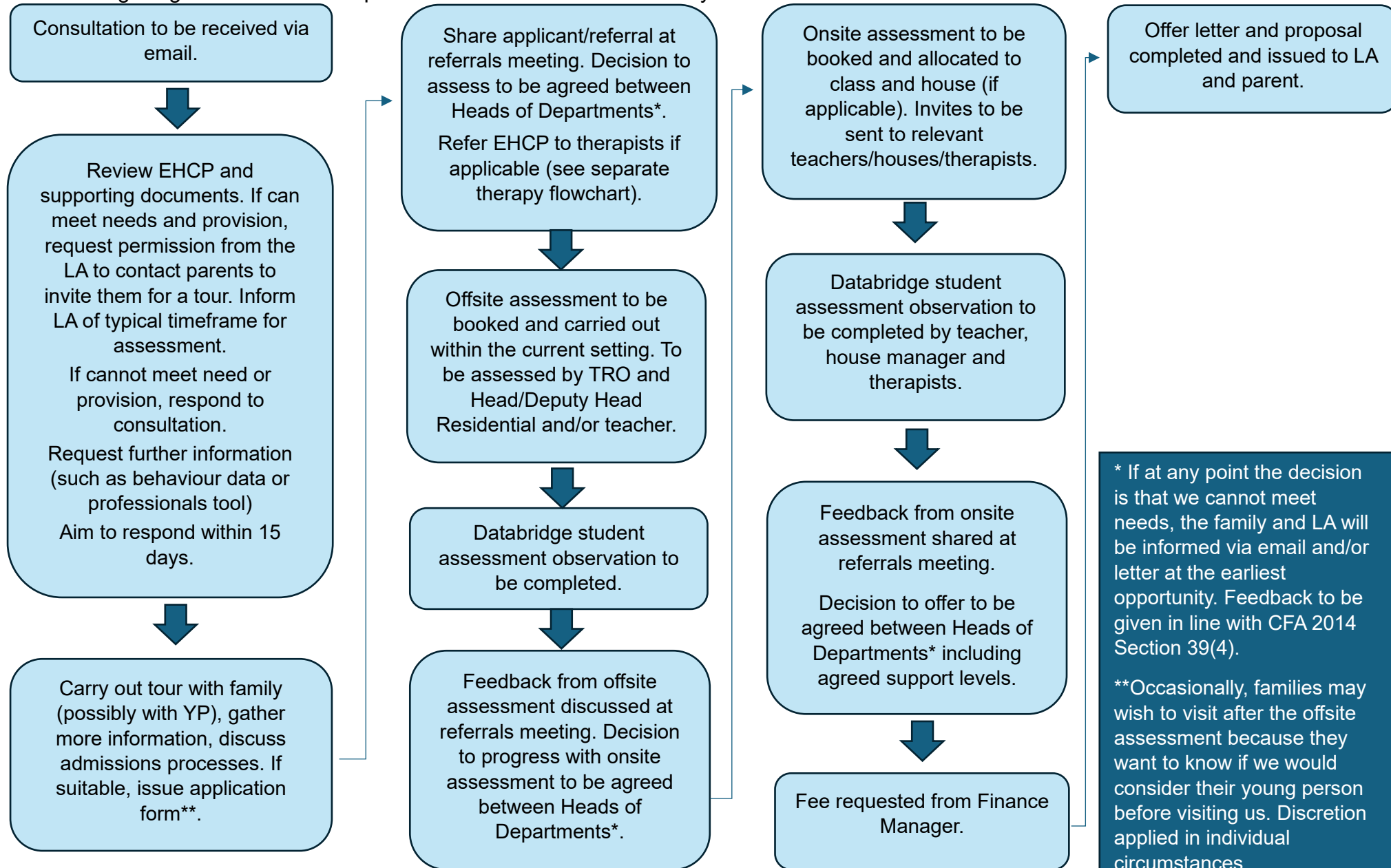
If a student is withdrawn by parents/carers or the placing authority, 6 weeks' notice is typically required in writing, or equivalent fees are expected to be paid in lieu of notice. The notice period may vary depending on the terms and conditions of the agreed contract. TSR reserves the right to charge interest at the applicable rate under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, accruing on a daily basis on accounts overdue by more than two months.

The Sheiling Ringwood assessment process flow chart – Parental Enquiries.



* If at any point the decision is that we cannot meet needs, the family and LA will be informed via email and/or letter at the earliest opportunity. Feedback to be given in line with CFA 2014 Section 39(4).

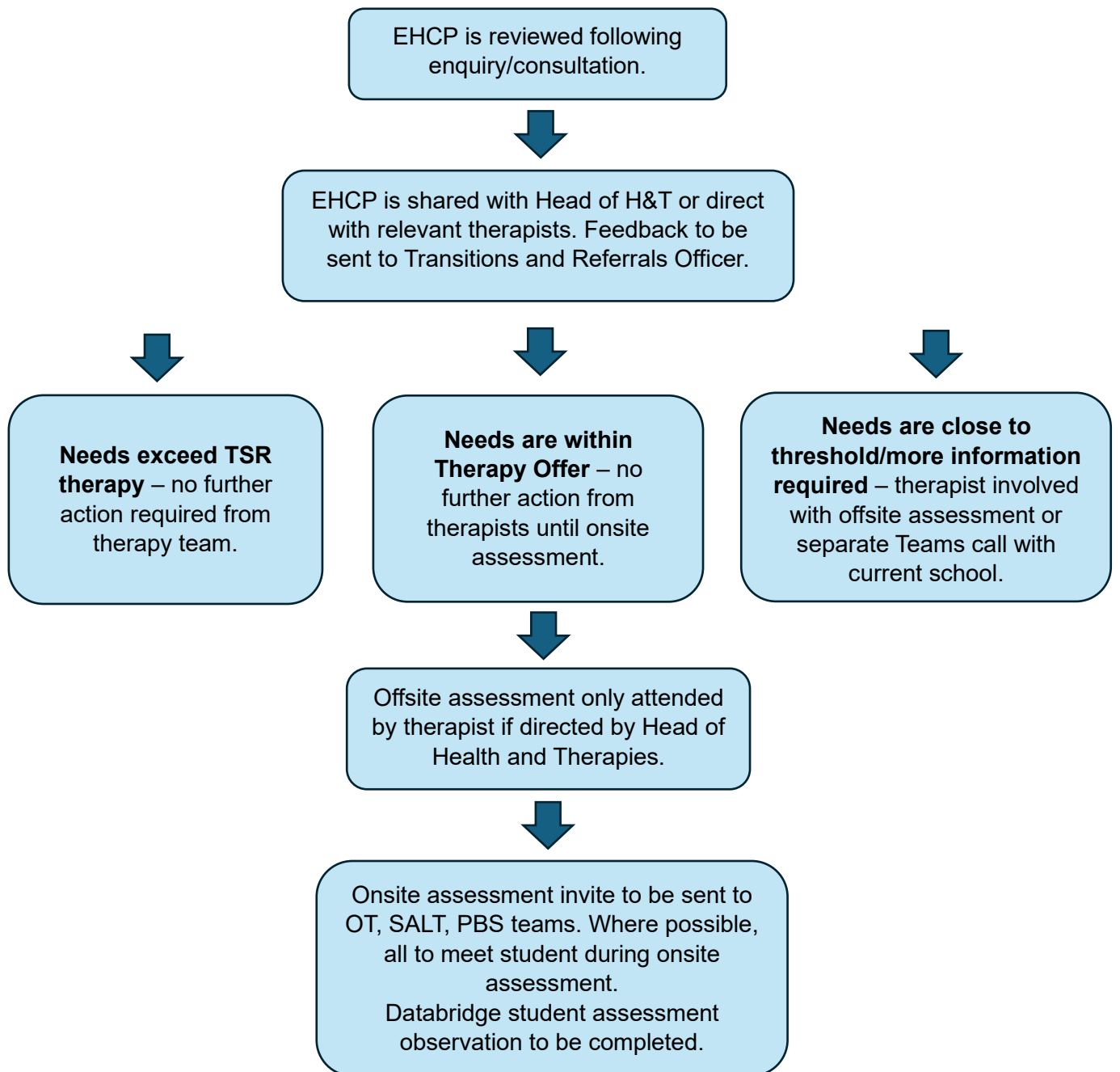
The Sheiling Ringwood assessment process flow chart – Local Authority consultations.



* If at any point the decision is that we cannot meet needs, the family and LA will be informed via email and/or letter at the earliest opportunity. Feedback to be given in line with CFA 2014 Section 39(4).

**Occasionally, families may wish to visit after the offsite assessment because they want to know if we would consider their young person before visiting us. Discretion applied in individual circumstances.

The Sheiling Ringwood assessment process – Therapy involvement



* If at any point the therapist has concerns around the provision or suitability/compatibility of the placement, this should be shared with Transitions and Referrals Officer to present at referrals meetings.

*Therapists should also refer to their line manager if they have concerns relating to an assessment student.

End of document.