

Midstream (West Lancs) Ltd

Admissions Policy

Introduction

Midstream (West Lancs) Ltd is a Registered Charity and Social enterprise which provides work activity, vocational training and day care in a 'real live' working environment for young people and adults of working age who have learning difficulties. We also offer services to schools & colleges who wish to arrange alternative curriculum activities, work experience programmes or to attain vocational qualifications for special needs students (aged 14yrs +). Midstream is committed to welcoming individuals regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation providing Midstream feels it can meet their support needs. Funding must be agreed by their Local Authority or NHS Trust through Health & Social Care budgets or their place funded by other means i.e. privately or by their school. All applications are considered on an individual basis in accordance with our Admissions Policy, safeguarding reviews, risk assessments and our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Our aim is to prepare clients for adulthood or for employment, by developing for example, their employability and independent living skills. All individuals have an opportunity to work towards nationally recognised vocational qualifications, e.g. City and Guilds Certificate in Skills for Working Life units at Entry Levels 2 and 3. Everyone participates in meaningful work activity onsite at Midstream each day. Midstream operates in a real 'live' business environment providing services to other businesses, organisations and to the general public. Clients may be taken offsite to visit other organisations or they might take part in work experience with an external employer as part of their development. For these reasons we may be unable to meet the needs of some applicants. We also reserve the right to terminate a place at any time on grounds of safeguarding, inappropriate behaviour, misconduct or if we can no longer meet a persons needs.

Enquiries

Anyone is welcome to make enquiries about a potential place at Midstream. We accept referrals from individuals, parents / guardians and carers in addition to Social Workers, other Health & Social Care Professionals and Schools. We will invite a potential applicant (accompanied by their parents/guardians/carers and/or their Social Worker or other professional) to attend for a short visit during which we will include a tour of Midstream. The visit & tour will help you decide if you could benefit from Midstream's services and assist you to choose the right programme. We will ask all applicants to complete an Application Form and a Safeguarding Questionnaire. If you are a young person (16 – 24 yrs) you may also be required to provide your to date Statement of Special Educational Need, Learning Disability Assessment or your Education Health & Care Plan before we can process your application.

Application Form

The information provided on an Application Form, Safeguarding Questionnaire and your Education Health & Care Plan will help us to decide if Midstream can meet your needs. Further information and additional Safeguarding Questionnaires will be sought as required from other agencies to support an application e.g. from an applicants parents/guardians/carers, Social Worker, School Transitions Worker, Head Teacher, College Tutor, managers of supported accommodation, etc., Applicants will be required to provide details of all the relevant contacts and give their consent to a safeguarding review.

Safeguarding Review

Midstream is committed to the safeguarding of all its clients, staff, customers and visitors to Midstream. The contacts you provide on the Application Form will be asked to complete Safeguarding Questionnaires. A disclosure of a safeguarding risk may not necessarily result in an individual being unable to join Midstream but will help us to put an Action Plan in place to help keep you and others at Midstream safe. Incomplete or undisclosed safeguarding issues or the withholding of any information could subsequently place an applicant or others in danger and may lead to a place being refused or terminated. The Safeguarding Review and any subsequent Risk Assessment & Action Plan must be completed before a start date can be confirmed. This includes the commencement of taster day assessment sessions.

Assessment and taster days

The applicant may then be invited to attend up to five free taster days. Taster days enable prospective clients to participate in at least one of our work areas of their own choice to decide if they wish to proceed with their application. Some applicants may be required to attend a classroom session. Taster days also enable us to continue with our assessment as to whether we may be able to meet the prospective learner's needs and what level of support they might need at Midstream. If an unexpected safeguarding risk or behavioural issue presents itself during taster days, we will consider whether or not the applicant can continue.

The information Midstream receives from a client's pre application visit, application form, safeguarding questionnaires / review and taster days are all part of a thorough application & assessment process. In some circumstances, Midstream may arrange to observe an applicant in their present setting e.g. school, college, supported accommodation or other familiar setting where we are able to talk to those who have been supporting an individual. This will also help Midstream decide if we can meet an individual's needs.

How we consider if we can meet your needs

When considering an application we will make a decision based on the following criteria (which is not exhaustive) :

- Can we meet the prospective applicant's learning and support needs (including medical support needs)?
- Can the applicant actively engage (with support) in the work & training activities and make reasonable progress / achieve vocational qualifications?
- Will the prospective applicant be able to progress and achieve in terms of their employability and independent living skills?
- If an outcome of the Safeguarding Review identifies that extra support is required can we manage, as far as is reasonable to expect, any safeguarding issues relating to the prospective applicant whilst the applicant is taking part in a programme at Midstream?

Provisional Offer / Decline

Once an applicant has completed pre-offer taster days and the assessment process is complete a decision will be made as to whether or not Midstream can provisionally meet an

applicants needs. Applicants, their parents / guardian / main carer will be informed in writing. If applicable the applicants Social Worker will also be informed. Any offers are provisional as they are subject to funding being confirmed by the applicants Local Authority (Adult Social Care) or NHS Trust. Direct Payment accounts, if applicable, must be live and in funds. Offers are subject to confirmation. Offers are also subject to availability of places - It may be necessary to place successful applicants on a waiting list until a place is available or transport arrangements can be confirmed.

Service Level Agreement

Once a start date can be agreed Midstream will forward a Service Level Agreement to the Local Authority, NHS Trust or Direct Payment recipient (whichever is applicable, i.e. the person or organisation who is contractually responsible for purchasing a place) for signature. Service Level Agreements will clearly set out the terms of service, the applicants support needs, associated costs, invoicing and payment arrangements. The Service Level Agreement **must** be signed and returned back to Midstream before a service can commence.

Unsuccessful Applications

We reserve the right to decline an application on the following grounds (the list is not exhaustive) :

- If, on information received in the application form, we do not think we can meet the applicant's needs.
- If, on information received in the Safeguarding Questionnaire/s, we consider the safeguarding risk to the applicant or others cannot be managed by Midstream.
- If, based on assessments made at the taster days, we consider that we cannot meet the applicant's needs or the applicant will not be able to take part sufficiently in the work & training activities or make reasonable progress.

If Midstream considers that it is unable to meet the needs of the applicant or learner we will inform them and their parents giving our reasons. Applicants may appeal against a decision by following Midstream's Complaints and Appeals Procedure.