Placement Criteria and Approach for Vocational Training

Overview

This document outlines the placement criteria and approach adopted by Darjeeling Children's Trust. Our primary objective is to ensure that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported to access vocational training in a way that is appropriate and fair. All placements are guided by community engagement and safeguarding principles.

1. Assessment of Financial Need (Below Poverty Line)

The first key criterion is ensuring that support is directed to young people who are genuinely below the poverty line. This assessment is carried out through a multi-stage community-led process:

1. Recommendation letter from the community head &/or from the appropriate teacher or institute.
   The community head/teacher provides a recommendation based on their knowledge of the family's circumstances, income, and living conditions.
2. Verification interview with the community head/teacher
   A follow-up interview is conducted with the community head/teacher to confirm the young person's eligibility. This interview helps ensure transparency, consistency, and accountability in the selection process.
3. The prospective student will produce proof of residence in the area, a brief letter of introduction & recent school report.

   Only young people who meet the criteria of financial need through this process are considered for placement and support.

2. Priority of Locality

Priority will be given to young people based in the Darjeeling Area

3. Academic Qualifications

These will be assessed to ensure that the prospective candidate meets the requirements for the vocational training course. The candidate will also need to meet all the institute-specific requirements (e.g. health, appearance) and interview successfully at the institute.

4. Demonstration of student interest.

Every student should be able to demonstrate a keen interest in their chosen course. This could show by a previous visit to the vocational institute, a review of the prospectus or website, or attending a counselling session with the institute staff. For our existing sponsored students or those at the children's home, we will have already conducted career guidance sessions, which will support them in understanding the institutes and courses available.

Our Commitment

Through this placement criteria and approach, we are committed to:

- Prioritising the young person's best interests
- Working in partnership with local communities
- Ensuring fairness, transparency, and dignity in selection
- Supporting vocational training that is accessible, appropriate, and sustainable.

March 2026