



Admissions Policy

Updated	September 2025
Owner	Headteacher

The School Admissions Policy

Introduction

The policy supports the school statement of intent that every pupil should achieve their potential and develop an understanding of and respect for themselves and others

Rationale

The School will be admitting pupils who have a range of social, emotional and mental health needs and also pupils who have been diagnosed with autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism. These pupils will have an EHC Plan which notes the nature of these difficulties. Such difficulties are often the cause or the result of other special educational needs. They may arrive out of difficult life experiences or be the result of some medical condition. Some of the pupils have a long history of disturbed, difficult or delinquent behaviour of a serious kind that may include violence towards peers and/or adults. Therefore, the school acknowledges that our pupils may, from time to time, exhibit challenging behaviours that vary both in intensity and duration.

The range and nature of both the difficulties and needs our pupils' exhibit, have and continue to become more complex as does the assessment of these. Thus, it is important that the school seeks to ensure that the admission process accurately identifies the needs of pupils and whether it is possible for the school to meet these both effectively and efficiently.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the school admits, as far as is possible, those pupils whose special educational needs can meet effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of their development.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are that:

- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of a placement for individual pupils at the School;
- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement;
- Parents/carers, each pupil and representatives of Local Authority, social service departments and other interested professionals have clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at the School;
- Parents/Carers, each pupil and representatives of Local Authority, social services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at the School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement.

Admission Criteria

- The pupil will admit students aged between 5 and 18 years of age;
- The pupil will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- The EHCP will specify that the pupil has social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) or a diagnosis of autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism (ASC);
- The pupil will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning. (In some cases, pupil's levels of ability as measured using psychometric tests may prove difficult. In these cases the school will base its judgements on its ability to meet needs);
- The pupil may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their SEMH/ASC needs;
- The pupil may have one or more specific learning difficulties;
- The pupil will express a commitment to the placement;
- The pupil's parents/carers will express a commitment to the placement;
- For all "Children in Care", there must be permanently named carers and a permanent home base for the pupil, available at any time throughout the year. The school cannot be the main residence for any child.

The LA will:

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the pupil;
- Nominate the School in Section IV of their EHCP;
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school;
- Make any arrangements for transporting the pupil to and from school.
- Email confirmation agreeing Core funding and additional funding if specified in the assessment.
- Also provide a signed IPA (Individual Placement Agreement)

Admissions Process

Heath Farm School is an Independent school for pupils from ages 5 – 18 with special educational needs. All pupils admitted to Heath Farm School will have been initially referred by their Local Authority.

A significant aspect of the referral process is to ascertain that the school can address the *Outcomes* as described in Section E of the EHCP. This may relate to all four areas of need:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health;
- Communication and Interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Sensory and/or Physical.

In doing so, this should be without negatively impacting upon the efficient education for others.

The school has an Admissions Manager who is responsible for overseeing the referral process. It is through this staff member initial information is gathered and arrangements for admission are undertaken.

An admission will only be undertaken when the approval for funding is granted by the appropriate person who holds this authority, within the funding LA.

Heath Farm School applies the statutory reviewing process (for EHCPs, as set out within the SEND code of practice) and will use this to inform the funding authority of any changes to provision. These changes can relate to the provision provided by Heath Farm School and/or identify the type of provision that would better meet need. The reviewing process will also be used to identify the next phase of education placement (this could be, but not exclusively, a transfer to a maintained mainstream school, a different special needs settings, college of further education or employment).

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school only admits pupils who's Special Educational Needs can be met. To summarise, in all cases, pupils will only be considered for admission if:

- They have a current EHCP;
- Funding has been formally agreed with the respective Local Authority and an Individual Placement Agreement has been completed and signed by relevant parties;
- The special needs of the pupil, can be met by the school;
- The provision, described in Section F of the EHCP, is such as can be met by the school;
- All up to date information concerning the pupil, including the most recent reviews, reports and the EHCP will be provided by the funding authority;
- There is a place available in the appropriate class / year group;
- It is compatible with the provision of efficient education for others;
- The child / young person's attendance does not jeopardise the safety of others.

Transition Process into School

To ensure that we have a successful start for any new starter, we have a very structured transition process for all new students. In our experience this transition is so important to get right so that when they enter the school, they can succeed immediately. If we get the start right and they feel safe and secure, then generally they will settle more quickly and have immediate success. The initial transition process takes four weeks from the date they start on role.

The transition process will be structured as follows:

Week 1: In this week, we will be ensuring that we have all the relevant paperwork from the local authority and previous school. We will read through this in detail to begin to inform our understanding of the new student

Week 2: Our Senco and department lead will contact parents to arrange a meeting in the home to begin the seven stages of engagement. This will involve speaking to parents or carers of new starter as well as the student themselves. This will include discussion about their likes and dislikes and will allow us to understand the best way that to transition them into the school. They will also receive a social story pack with photos and information about the school to help them with their transition.

Week 3 & 4: Based on the discussions and information shared, a series of taster sessions will be set up to help the new student get familiar with their classroom space, teaching staff and peers. This may involve a mixture of half days and full days. Following these taster sessions, we will decide and inform parents of what the timetable will be. Our intention will always be to move to a full timetable for the new student, but we may decide that they will need an extended transitional plan to gradually move to full time.