

Admissions Policy

Category of Policy: Central Education Policy

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Reviewed by:	School Business Manager	Issue Date:	January 2026
Approval Status:	Approved	Date of Review:	September 2026
Approved by:	Governors	Date of Next Review:	September 2027

Statement of Intent

This admissions policy applies to all schools operated by Bright Futures Care Ltd and references to "the school" throughout this document refers to the specific school to which a student is applying.

At Bright Futures, we welcome all students who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the schools admit, as far as is practicable, those students whose special educational needs can be met effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of their development.

The table below sets out who the admission authority is and other responsible bodies in each school.

Type of school	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at the school?
Non-Association Independent School	The Local Authority	The Local Authority	The Local Authority

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- DfE 'School Admissions Code' (as updated)
- DfE 'School Admission Appeals Code' (as updated)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (as updated)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following company/school policies:

- Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- SEN Information Report

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Equal opportunities

The school will not establish admissions criteria that excludes individuals with a particular protected characteristic.

The admissions criteria will not exclude a greater proportion of students with protected characteristics, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means achieving a legitimate aim.

The admissions criteria will not discriminate against disabled applicants, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The admission authority will comply with any request for information to help parents/carers prepare their case for an appeals hearing. The presenting officer will be responsible for relaying to the attendees the decision not to admit the child, and answer questions where necessary.

Roles and responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance in relation to the admittance of students.
- Overseeing, and determining annually, admissions arrangements that clearly set out how students will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applicants than places available.
- Ensuring that the practices and criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair and clear.
- Approving variations to admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

The Proprietor is responsible for:

- Determining the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for each school and which is agreed by the DfE

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to admissions.
- Working with the Proprietor when determining the school's capacity.
- Publishing the admissions arrangements on the school website

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- Making final decisions on student admissions based on the school's ability to meet individual needs
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a student to the Local Authority
- Making arrangements for students to start as soon as possible once authorisation from the local authority has been agreed and processed.
- Liaising with the admission authority where relevant regarding student admissions.

Published Admissions Number

The number of places available in each school is called the agreed Published Admissions Number (PAN). This number will be determined by the capacity of the school and shall not be exceeded.

If the school is at or approaching its PAN, the Head Teacher will:

- Continue to assess each referral individually based on the admissions criteria
- Consider whether the school can meet the student's needs effectively within the current capacity and resources
- Evaluate the compatibility of the student's needs with the existing cohort
- Take into account the timing of potential place availability (e.g. due to planned transitions or leavers)
- Work with the referring local authority to determine whether the school is the most appropriate placement

Where it is determined that a place cannot be offered due to capacity constraints for example, the Head Teacher will:

- Provide clear reasons to the local authority

The PAN for each school is shown at Appendix 1.

Admissions criteria

The school is permitted to select students with reference to general or special ability or aptitude, provided that the way in which the ability or aptitude is assessed is not discriminatory.

To be considered for admission, the following requirements must be met:

- Students will have a confirmed diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition or a co-occurring condition, and their associated needs will be formalised in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

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- Students will have a range of learning abilities and may display atypical learning styles and uneven profiles of cognitive strengths and difficulties.
- Students may display a range of behaviours, including those resulting from inflexible thinking, social communication difficulties, emotional dysregulation and sensory processing difficulties.
- Students will have needs and ability profiles that are compatible with those of the students who already attend the school.
- Students may present with additional medical conditions or factors, including mental health issues and stereotypical behaviours but the school reserves the right to decide whether these can be managed effectively and safely within its existing resources.

When it has been determined that there is a high probability that the school can meet a student's needs, the following capacity criteria will be considered:

- Availability of places
 - Availability of a suitable peer group or class
 - Availability of physical space and facilities

Catchment areas

As an independent special school, we do not have a defined catchment area. Students are accepted from any local authority, provided:

- Our admissions criteria are met
- The distance and travel time are manageable for the student and family
- Appropriate transport arrangements can be made

Admissions procedure

We recognise that many students referred to us are experiencing significant difficulties in their current educational setting and we approach each referral with sensitivity and care. The procedure followed is largely the same for all students irrespective of age and urgency of placement, although a degree of flexibility is maintained.

Assessments and admissions take place continuously throughout the year - we do not operate fixed intake dates.

Prospective students follow a three-stage process, though the timescale and specific arrangements are tailored to individual circumstances.

Stage 1: Referral and Initial Review

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- A referral is made via the student's local authority or parents/carers in consultation with their local authority SEND team.
- The referral documentation is reviewed by the School Admissions Team, who may seek clarification and/or request additional information from professionals involved with the student
- An initial assessment of whether the student's needs align with the admissions criteria is made

Stage 2: Assessment

Where the initial review suggests the admissions criteria is likely to be met, the school may assess its ability to meet the prospective student's needs through any combination of the following:

- Inviting the applicant to attend the school for a visit
- Visiting the applicant's home
- Visiting the applicant's current education setting

The assessment period and approach will differ depending on the needs of the individual student and may consist of several visits.

Students are encouraged to give their views on the school during any visit via a method that suits their communication needs e.g. verbal, symbols, Makaton, Augmentative Device.

The school will work with parents and external agencies to ensure that decisions on whether to offer an assessment are based on complete, accurate, reliable, and up-to-date information.

Stage 3: Decision

Following the assessment stage, the School Admissions Team meets to review all available information and determine whether the school is likely to be able to meet the student's needs effectively and safely in the context of the school's capacity e.g. suitable peer group, staffing, etc.

The local authority will be notified of the decision as soon as possible, typically within one week of completing the assessment but no later than fifteen working days from receipt of the application.

Where a place is offered and subsequently agreed by the local authority, the school will work with the local authority to finalise contractual arrangements.

Induction and transition

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Once confirmation of the placement offer has been received, the school will liaise with the local authority and family to agree a start date.

An Admissions Booklet is provided to parents/carers for completion prior to the student's start date to help ensure a smooth transition into school.

All new students are supported by a designated, appropriately experienced Teacher and Learning Mentor. All relevant staff who will be working with the student will review the student's EHCP and any associated documents, such as Occupational Therapy reports, Speech and Language Therapy reports, and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) plans, prior to the student's start date.

During the induction period, which usually lasts for 12 weeks, additional baseline assessment information will be collected. Student Profile, Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment information is also updated during the first six weeks after admission and will be reviewed at appropriate intervals throughout the year to ensure staff fully understand the needs of each student there by supporting them to be safe, flourish and thrive.

Parents/carers are invited to six weekly review meetings to discuss how the transition has worked and discuss student progress.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the timelines stipulated within the Education Policy Governance Framework, unless there are significant updates or changes to legislation and guidance.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to staff and other key stakeholders.

Policy Revision Log

Revision Number	Date of Revision	Nature of Revision(s)
1.	27/09/2026	- Rationalisation of content to remove unnecessary duplication and procedural information - References to legislation and statutory guidance updated for longevity - Inclusion of responsibilities for all roles for completeness - Clarification of PAN and age ranges within new Appendix
2.		
3.		
4.		

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Appendix 1 – Published Admission Number (PAN) by School

School	PAN	Age ranges the school is legally allowed to make provision for
Ash Meadow	89	5-19
Quayside	30	5-19
Willow Tree Park	80	4-25

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