

# Admissions Policy



**Approved by:** Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) **Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

**Last reviewed on:** 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**Next review due by:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how places at the school are considered, allocated and funded
- Clarify responsibilities in relation to school admissions
- Explain how to appeal a decision about a school placement

## 2. Legislation

This policy meets the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 and the School Admissions Code 2021.

## 3. Referrals to the school

On Track Education is a co-educational independent special school for pupils of any ability. A pupil can be referred to the school at any time during the academic year. Pupil places are normally commissioned and paid for by referring agencies; local authority departments and local schools. We specialise in working with pupils with a range of learning needs including social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) including Asperger's syndrome, ADHD, attachment disorders and associated challenging behaviours. Almost all of our pupils have an Educational Health Care Plan and require additional individualised support.

The school will consider referrals from commissioners for children and young people meeting any of the following criteria:

- In possession of an Education Health and Care Plan naming the school
- In possession of an Education Health and Care Plan
- Permanently excluded or at risk of exclusion
- Demonstrating social, emotional, behavioural, health and learning needs which can be met by the school

The school may have the following grounds to refuse offer of a place:

- Lack of capacity due to all places being filled
- Inability to meet the pupil's identified special educational needs
- Being unable to be able to offer suitable educational provision in response to commissioners' stated needs

- The level of risk to health, safety and wellbeing of other pupils or adults and/or level of risk to the effective operation of the school is too high

The school is approved under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The Children and Families Act places specific duties upon institutions on the approved list:

- institutions on the approved list must “have regard” to the SEN Code of Practice;
- institutions on the approved list have a reciprocal duty to co-operate with the local authority on arrangements for children and young people with SEN;
- local authorities’ published local offer must refer to the institutions on the approved list;
- specific duties and rights relating to admissions, in line with maintained schools, Academies, FE colleges and non-maintained special schools:
  - o a child or young person has a right to request that an institution on the approved list is named in their EHC Plan;
  - o if the institution is named in an EHC Plan, the local authority is under a qualified duty to secure a place; o if the institution is named in an EHC Plan, the institution must admit the pupil or young person. The list will be updated termly and

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The school will have full regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the management of admissions and will ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, any child according to the protected characteristics of the Act.

It is the responsibility of the referring agency to ensure the accurate completion of comprehensive referral documentation and relevant risk assessments and provide any further information/documentation as required.

It is the responsibility of the School Leader to ensure that the school’s procedures on referrals and admissions are followed and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective.

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil’s name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admissions register about the pupil.

#### **5. Oversubscription criteria**

In the event of the number of referrals exceeding the stated admissions capacity of the school, the following criteria in the order given will apply:

- Children in care or children previously in care
- Children with an EHCP which names the school
- Permanently excluded children and those not on a school roll
- Children requiring a full time school place
- Remaining referrals

Where a request is received and there is not a suitable place available, the referring agency can request that the pupil’s name is added to the waiting list, which will be implemented for each year group. In the event that the school has to implement a waiting list for two consecutive years, the school will consider application under the Material Change regulations to have the number of school places increased and arrange for additional accommodation if necessary.

#### **6. Appeals**

As all types of referral involve case by case scrutiny, consultation and discretion from the School Leader and Senior leadership team, the offer (or not) of a place will usually be through mutual agreement during the referral process. However, in exceptional cases where agreement cannot be reached, the commissioner should write to the School Leader outlining reasons supporting the referral with any supporting documentation. The School Leader will consider this and reply within 28 days, stating the school’s position. If a place is not granted after the process, the commissioner may make a final appeal and request a review from the Directors.

A final appeal should be put in writing and cases will then be heard by Directors within 28 days of the final appeal being received and final outcomes notified within 5 working days of the hearing.

## **7. The referral process and procedures**

On receiving an enquiry, the School Leader will:

- Respond to commissioners within 2 working days

On receiving pupil referral and risk assessment information the School Leader will:

- check that all required information is given on the referral documentation
- request and consider any other related documents from the person referring e.g. /EHCP, last PEP (for LAC), Educational Psychologist reports etc.
- arrange a meeting between the school and the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals, as appropriate
- decide on the provision and programme to meet the pupil's needs (or communicate otherwise within 10 days)
- communicate the offer of a place, and related placement costs, to the commissioner within 10 days

Once the commissioner has confirmed acceptance of the placement, including fees, terms and conditions, the School Leader will:

- send a place offer letter and a Parent Consent Form to parents
- ensure that an education package, personalised induction process, timetable and start date is agreed by all those involved

On the first day that it is agreed that the pupil will attend the school, the School Leader will:

- place the pupil on the admissions register
- place the pupil on the attendance register
- request pupil records through the common transfer file process

If a pupil does not attend on the agreed date, the School Leader should ascertain the reason to ensure that the child does not go missing in education and there are no safeguarding issues. (See Children Missing Education Policy)

## **8. Changes to provision**

A pupil's change in circumstances or change in level of need may require a change to the agreed provision of placement. In such cases, the School Leader should liaise with the commissioner to agree any changes in provision and costs. In the case of pupils with an EHCP this may require an interim review. Such changes should be confirmed in writing.

## **9. The admissions register**

It is a legal requirement for the school to have an admissions register naming every pupil who has been admitted. It is also required that the School Leader makes a copy of the electronic admissions register on a monthly basis. Paper copies should be filed in order and securely. Electronic copies should be kept securely and separately e.g. on a dedicated and protected external hard drive or secure cloud based platform.

The Admissions register should be maintained in alphabetical order of pupils on roll and should contain the following information:

- Unique number, consecutive to the last pupil admitted
- Full name (including all middle names)
- Gender
- Name and address of every parent known to the school
- An indication of which parent/carer the pupil normally lives with
- Contact details of at least 2 emergency contacts (the registration standard requires one emergency contact. KCSIE expects schools to hold more than one where reasonably possible).
- Day, month and year of birth
- School year of pupil
- Day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school
- Name and address of last school attended

- Number of learning hours per week
- Date the pupil left the provision
- Destination for pupil on leaving and date of first attendance for any pupils going on to another school if it is reasonably practical to obtain this information.

#### Name and Gender

Where name and gender are referenced in the registration regulations, these mean legal name and gender. The admissions register is not a public document. Registration does not prevent a school from addressing or treating a pupil otherwise for other purposes.

If an amendment is made on the electronic version, the copy must also be amended. Every amendment to the admissions register must include:

- the original entry
- the amended entry
- the reason for the amendment
- the date on which the amendment was made
- the name and position of the person making the amendment

Pupils should be placed on the admissions register 'from the first day on which the school has agreed or been notified that the pupil will attend the school'

Where a parent notifies that a pupil will live at another address, the following should be recorded in the admissions register:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live
- the new address
- the date from when it is expected that the pupil will live at this address

The School Leader must inform the local authority, in advance where possible, of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admissions register where:

- the school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- the School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- completion of compulsory school age
- permanent exclusion
- death of a pupil
- transfer to another school
- the pupil is withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- failure to return from an extended family holiday, after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- a medical condition prevents a pupil attending and returning to school before ending compulsory school age
- in custody for more than four months
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the school and the LA have tried to locate the pupil
- left the school, but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the LA have tried to locate the pupil

Pupils of non-compulsory school age can only be deleted where:

- they have left the school
- 20 days continuous absence without good reason
- death
- permanent exclusion

Where a pupil is to be deleted from the admissions register, the school must provide the local authority with:

- the full name of the pupil

- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live and the date they are expected to start living there, if applicable
- the name of the pupil's destination school and expected start date there, if applicable
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 of which the pupil has been deleted from the admissions register

Information regarding the removal of any pupil from the register, other than those completing their compulsory education, must be discussed with Directors.

The School Leader should highlight to the commissioner when they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parents, for example in cases where the pupil's address is unknown. It would also be appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as safeguarding concerns

As pupils leave the school, the admissions register must be amended to reflect when they left and his/her destination.

## **10. Review**

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant, if you have any comments please email [directors@ontrackededucation.com](mailto:directors@ontrackededucation.com)