



Admission of Pupils Policy

Policy Updated: September 2025
Date of Next Review: September 2026
To be reviewed by: Headteacher

Introduction

The policy supports the school's 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 may have a secondary diagnosis of Autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with Autism. All admissions will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Pupils may arrive out of difficult life experiences (ACES) and or having been out of education for a substantial period of time. Some of the pupils have a long history of disturbed, difficult or challenging behaviour which can sometimes be of a serious nature which may include violence towards peers and/or adults. Therefore, the school acknowledges that our pupils may, from time to time, exhibit some challenging behaviours that vary both in intensity and duration.

The range and nature of both the difficulties and needs that 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 be met effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of their development. This is with the intention to maintain placement and to prevent further educations disruption for them.

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 young person and representatives of Local Authority's (LA's), social service departments and other interested professionals have a clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at the school.
- Parents/Carers, each young person and representatives of Local Authorities, Social Services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at Wetheringsett Manor School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement.

Admission Criteria

Wetheringsett Manor School is an independent specialist co-educational day school for pupils aged 7-18 years old.

- The young person will have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)
- The EHCP will specify that the young person has social, emotional and mental health difficulties as a primary diagnosis.
- The young person will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning or slightly below. (In some cases, young person'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 young person may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The young person may have one or more specific learning difficulties.
- The young person will express a commitment to the placement.
- The young person's Parents/Carers/Social Worker will express a commitment to the placement.
- For all "Children in Care" / "Looked after Children", there must be permanently named carers and a permanent home base for the young person. The school cannot be the main residence for any child.

Admissions process

Stage 1

Referrals made to Wetheringsett Manor School will normally be made by Local Authority's. A range of detailed information concerning that young person should accompany these referrals. Where this is not the case, the school will seek access to such information from schools, Social Workers and Parents/Cares. Louise Double, SENCO together with Mark Jeffries, Head teacher will analyse all available information on the young person to assess whether the young person meets the admission criteria for the school.

The SENCO, in conjunction with Clinical lead, Issie Cant, where appropriate will assess if it is likely that the young person's needs could be met in the setting and decide if a visit to the school (Stage 2) is appropriate.

Stage 2

The Parents/Carers and young person will be invited to the school. Parents/Carers will be informed that the visit to the school does not mean that a placement is agreed. In exceptional cases where a young person may be distressed by a visit or may not understand that a placement is not guaranteed, all parties may agree that Parents/Carers attend alone to protect the young person. In the majority of cases, the young person will need to attend the school to complete assessment.

The visit will include an assessment which is conducted during the visit as well as: -

- A tour of the school with a senior member of staff.
- An introduction to key staff including clinical staff.
- A discussion with senior staff around specific areas such as: -
 - The school curriculum.
 - The content of key school policies, including the school expectations around positive behaviour and attitudes and the physical management of young persons including PBS planning.
 - A discussion around the use of de-escalation techniques and physical interventions, where this may prove to be necessary.
 - An opportunity for each visitor to ask any questions they may have.

In cases where because of financial constraints or mobility issues Parents/Carers cannot visit the school, the school will look to arrange alternate transport to facilitate a visit.

The school does not conduct any academic tests during the admissions process.

Stage 3

The school will arrange a meeting with the team to determine if the young person is suitable and if there is an appropriate class which they can join.

Considerations include: -

- The profiles and needs of the young people already placed in the group.
- The ability of the school to meet all aspects of the EHCP requirements.
- The suitability of the environment for the young person including the appropriateness of the peer group.
- How clinical needs would be addressed by the setting.
- What additional resources is the young person likely to need beyond the universal offer at the school.

Stage 4

If, following these visits, all parties agree that: -

- *the young person's needs can be met by the school; and*
- *the young person can be adequately managed with the planned resources available; and*
- *the young person and Parents/Carers are committed to the placement*

the school admissions manager, Louisa Barton, will write to the Local Authority and offer a placement. At this stage, the decision lies with The Local Authority, and therefore placement is not guaranteed.

In cases where admission is only partially suitable but where additional resourcing from the local authority could allow the school to admit the young person, this information will be provided in the response to the Local Authority.

Communication about an offer of a placement to Parents/Carers and social workers will come directly from the Local Authority. The school does not commonly communicate decisions directly to interested parties.

Decision making timescales

The school will respond to the Local Authority within 7 working days of the assessment being completed. Delays can occur if the school is awaiting information from other services, schools or the outside agencies. If visits are delayed this can also create a delay in a decision. In these cases, the school will communicate why responses have not met their own deadlines or those set out in the SEN code of practice.

Once placement has been agreed, *the LA will:* -

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the young person
- Name Wetheringsett Manor School in the EHCP if the decision is made at panel.
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the young person 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)

A significant aspect of the referral process is to ascertain that the school can address the outcomes as described in Section F 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 that visits are coordinated, information is gathered and arrangements for admission are undertaken.

The school does not receive referrals directly to the site. All admissions go through the Admissions Manager, Louisa Barton. The Admissions Manager can be contacted by emailing: Louisa.Barton1@ofgl.uk