

The ArtsXchange

Part of the T4 Trust

Admissions Policy

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Background

The ArtsXchange provides alternative education for 14 – 19-year-olds, delivered through a creative curriculum of performing arts and creative media production. The college has consolidated over fifteen years' experience of using arts and media education to turn disengaged young people's lives around. Based in a newly refurbished building in Islington, we work with young people who have been excluded from college or school, or who have left statutory education with few or no qualifications and have failed to move on to further education, training or employment.

The driving belief behind The ArtsXchange College is that every young person has a talent and it is our job to find it. The College cultivates the energy, curiosity and resistance of these young people through our creative curriculum so they are able to succeed in all areas of their lives.

Our ethos is founded on a number of principles, which we have embedded over 30 years of practice in non-statutory arts and media education for those aged 5-25, specifically that excellence and engagement through the arts:

- unlocks individual talents;
- fosters aspiration and achievement;
- empowers young people to acknowledge and celebrate their heritage;
- develops transferable skills for employability such as communication, problem solving, team work, entrepreneurship, leadership.

We believe passionately that learning can – and should be – enjoyable, and that, particularly for those who have been alienated from or excluded by 'traditional' and 'mainstream' statutory education, the creative curriculum puts pleasure back into learning. Often, behaviour such as avoiding and resisting learning in college can in fact be signs of imagination and creativity and many young people in alternative provision are most suited for a career in the creative industries. The ArtsXchange provides alternative education for 14 – 19-year-olds. A large part of the curriculum is delivered through performing arts and creative media production classes with life skills, literacy and numeracy embedded in these and bespoke teaching sessions. The creative curriculum is varied and innovative, giving equal status to non-western art forms and starts with the subjects that young people connect with, such as popular music, street dance and TV production.

- The ArtsXchange is a publicly funded Alternative Provision education establishment and is part of the T4 Trust, a small multi academy Trust focussed on meeting the needs of students not able to sustain or suited to main stream education,
- Responsibility for the admission of students rests with the Governing Body
- All applications for places at The ArtsXchange College will be considered in accordance with the referral arrangements outlined below

The ArtsXchange College aims to widen the reach of its innovative and creative programmes to some of the most vulnerable children in our community. The College was established to provide alternative education, using performing arts and creative media production to re-engage young people of compulsory school age (years 10 and 11) who, for a variety of reasons, are failing to thrive in mainstream education. The admissions process in an alternative provision context has to be flexible to accommodate the varying circumstances young people outside of mainstream education find themselves in.

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Some students are referred by agencies and local authorities and may become fully registered at the college. This may be following a permanent exclusion. However, many students are referred directly by other schools and academies and may be dual registered, depending on the circumstances

Direct referrals can be made by schools or academies taking on the role of 'commissioner' and working with the ArtsXchange College to ensure the best outcomes for individual students. Transition arrangements are designed to encourage incoming students to settle into the College confidently and quickly and to ensure their needs are identified and comprehensively met from the outset.

The College also admits external post 16 students. These students may self-refer or be referred by an agency specialising in post 16 placements, through a discussion with their predecessor college/school, or their college/school if it feels they are failing to cope.

This will include young people with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) plan including behavioural and emotional needs, as well as those who have had disrupted education due to family circumstances.

Some post 16 students will have been referred previously during KS4 and have progressed to post 16 as a natural continuum; however, progression from pre to post 16 is not guaranteed but assessed on a need's basis & on levels of engagement.

Admissions Profile

The ArtsXchange College can accommodate up to 105 pupils.

Referrals to the college will be processed using the eligibility criteria and referral processes set out below.

Pre-16 Eligibility Criteria

In order to be considered for a place, applicants must meet criterion 1 and at least one of criteria 2-6:

1. Demonstrate a passion for the performing arts and/or creative media
2. Show a level of disengagement or underachievement from mainstream provision which is resulting in non-attendance
3. Show a level of disengagement from mainstream provision which is placing them at risk of permanent exclusion
4. Have a fixed period exclusion or their behaviour needs improving to prevent permanent exclusion
5. Have been permanently excluded from mainstream provision
6. Have difficulty in securing a college/school place

Pre-16 Referral Process

Children aged 14-16 can only be admitted to our Alternative Provision through being referred by Local Authorities, Colleges and Academies using their existing referral powers or duties.

Parents cannot choose to send their child to The ArtsXchange College although they can express an interest in a place.

Local authorities, colleges and academies act as 'commissioners' - the Commissioner is responsible for referring the pupil where the following conditions apply:

- Local Authority – For a young person permanently excluded or who is not on the roll of a mainstream school
- Academy or school – For a young person who is failing or unlikely to complete formal education.

Pre-16 Admission Arrangements

To acquire a place at The ArtsXchange College, applicants in KS4 have to be referred by an educational establishment or local authority (commissioners).

Once a commissioner makes contact with the College Business Manager (or nominated representative) arranges for a meeting/interview with the prospective student, an appropriate commissioning representative and a parent/carer.

A student referral form must be completed at this stage and prior attainment data must be provided by the referring college or LA. The referral form will include a commitment by the college or local authority to fund the placement if the application is successful.

The student will attend a taster day and/or trial period (two-three weeks).

Referral Processes

The ArtsXchange Head of College (or nominated representative) will maintain direct and regular contact with Local Authorities, colleges and academies. If possible, we will begin discussions with Commissioners to identify students in year 9, who would benefit from a managed transfer for Key Stage 4. Individual colleges and academies can also make direct referrals.

All referrals lead to an annually reviewed Service Level Agreement between the ArtsXchange College and the Commissioner.

Under normal circumstances there are two points in the college year when new referrals can begin - September & January – however, we are willing to meet with prospective students throughout the year and will consider each referral on the merits and circumstances of the student. If it is

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considered that it is in the best interests of the student to start outside of this cycle, this will be discussed with the Commissioning Authority.

In addition, referrals can be made through Managed Transfer, Fair Access Panel or other similar formal referral routes already in place in each of the Local Authorities.

Although some students will be dual registered in KS4, The ArtsXchange College will take responsibility for the progress of each student referred, including entry to formal examinations where appropriate. A fixed top-up fee is charged per student and is invoiced and paid termly. There may also be additional fees charged for students with EHCPs or additional SEN needs. This depends on the level of need and is also paid termly. All additional funding (for example free school meals and pupil premium where applicable) must follow individual students. This is agreed through discussions with the Head of College on a case-by-case basis.

In some special cases (and where places are available), informal referrals (usually more short-term and part-time) can be made and support can be provided to respond specifically to an individual student's circumstances and specific needs at the time of the referral. Students referred this way cannot be guaranteed entry to formal examinations with the college. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis through discussions with the College Leadership Team.

In some cases (e.g. Managed Transfer) local transfer arrangements may allow for trial periods of up to 12 weeks. Before any new students begins, the college must have received all the required prior attainment & attendance data, behaviour logs, SEN information etc. as set out in our SLA.

Post 16 Referrals Arrangements

The ArtsXchange offers post-16 provision for young people who have demonstrated a passion for the performing arts & creative media production.

Self-referrals can be received directly from young people but in some instances from parent/carers, local authorities, schools, colleges, SENCOS, YOS, hostels & Connexion's advisers. Applications are not restricted by location.

Once a prospective student or commissioner makes contact with the ArtsXchange, the Assistant Head of College (or nominated representative) arranges for a meeting/interview with the prospective student, an appropriate commissioning representative and a parent/carer.

A student application form must be completed at this stage and prior attainment data must be provided by the referring college or LA. If the student has an EHCP outlining additional needs applications will be made to the relevant local authority to provide element 3 funding.

The student will attend a taster day and/or trial period (two weeks).

Post-16 Eligibility Criteria

In order to be considered for a place, post 16 applicants must meet criterion 1 and at least one of criteria 2 to 5.

1. Demonstrate a passion for the performing arts and/or creative media production
2. Unable to achieve level 2 qualifications
3. Have an EHC plan
4. Are care leavers, ex-offenders, homeless and/or young parents
5. Have difficulty learning within large environments such as mainstream colleges

Note: all young people will be required to show proof of residence (i.e. parents' utility bill) and an original or certified copy of a birth certificate or a passport. Students born outside the UK will be required to present their passport and proof of appropriate visa. The Governing Body reserves the right to seek verification from the local authority in which the applicant resides.

Oversubscription

The ArtsXchange will support a maximum of 105 students aged 14-19 at any one time.

Referrals for pre-16 places are accepted throughout the year. Applications for in-year post-16 places are accepted until the end of the autumn term; applications for the next academic year are accepted throughout the year. If at any time referrals and applications for either pre 16 or post 16 places exceed the number of places available at The ArtsXchange College, priority will be given to:

1. Looked After Children who meet the essential admission criteria
2. Students with EHC plans that name The ArtsXchange College
3. Exceptional social/medical needs
4. Students living nearest to the college

If places remain at the beginning of an academic year or become available during, they will be allocated to students that meet the essential criteria (see sections 3 and 8) in the order that their applications are received by the College.

Definitions

Looked After Child & Previously Looked After Child

A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their Social Services functions (under section

22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A Previously Looked After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

Exceptional Social/Medical Need

The term 'exceptional social/medical need' means that the child's and/or parent's or carer's health and/or welfare would be best served if they attended The ArtsXchange College. Parents/carers would need to provide evidence in the form of a letter or report from a doctor, social worker or other professional in the area of children's health or welfare to support their case. Parents/carers would have to establish that The ArtsXchange College is the best or only college to serve the child's and/or parent's needs. Parents/carers would also need to state why other colleges could not provide the appropriate support. The Governing Body of the College will consider applications under these criteria and where necessary seek independent advice from professionals concerned with children's health and welfare.

Distance

Proximity to the college is measured on a computerised mapping system of the area, measured in a straight line ('as the crow flies') between the property address to the centre of the college, with those living closer to the college receiving higher priority.

Objections

As all types of referrals involve case by case scrutiny, consultation and discretion from the Head of College, 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 Head of College outlining reasons supporting the referral and any supporting documentation. The Head of College will consider this and reply within 28 days, stating the College's position. If a place is not granted after that process, the commissioner may make a final appeal and request a review from the Governing Body. A final appeal should be put in writing to the Chair of Governors. Cases will then be heard by at least three governors (including the Chair) within 28 days of the final appeal being received and final outcomes notified within five working days of the hearing. Further objections will be referred to the ESFA.

In cases of SEN referrals where The ArtsXchange College is named as the preferred school, the statutory processes set out in Annex C of the Funding Agreement will be adhered to.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Head of College will report the effectiveness of all policies as a regular feature of the termly updates to governors. It is expected that governors will challenge the College to ensure policies are relevant, up to date and implemented appropriately and consistently. This reporting will be informed through monitoring and evaluation on a regular basis by the College and/or Extended Leadership Team. Views of stakeholders will also be sought through on-going consultation events, questionnaires, team meetings, training and informal discussion. The review of policies will be

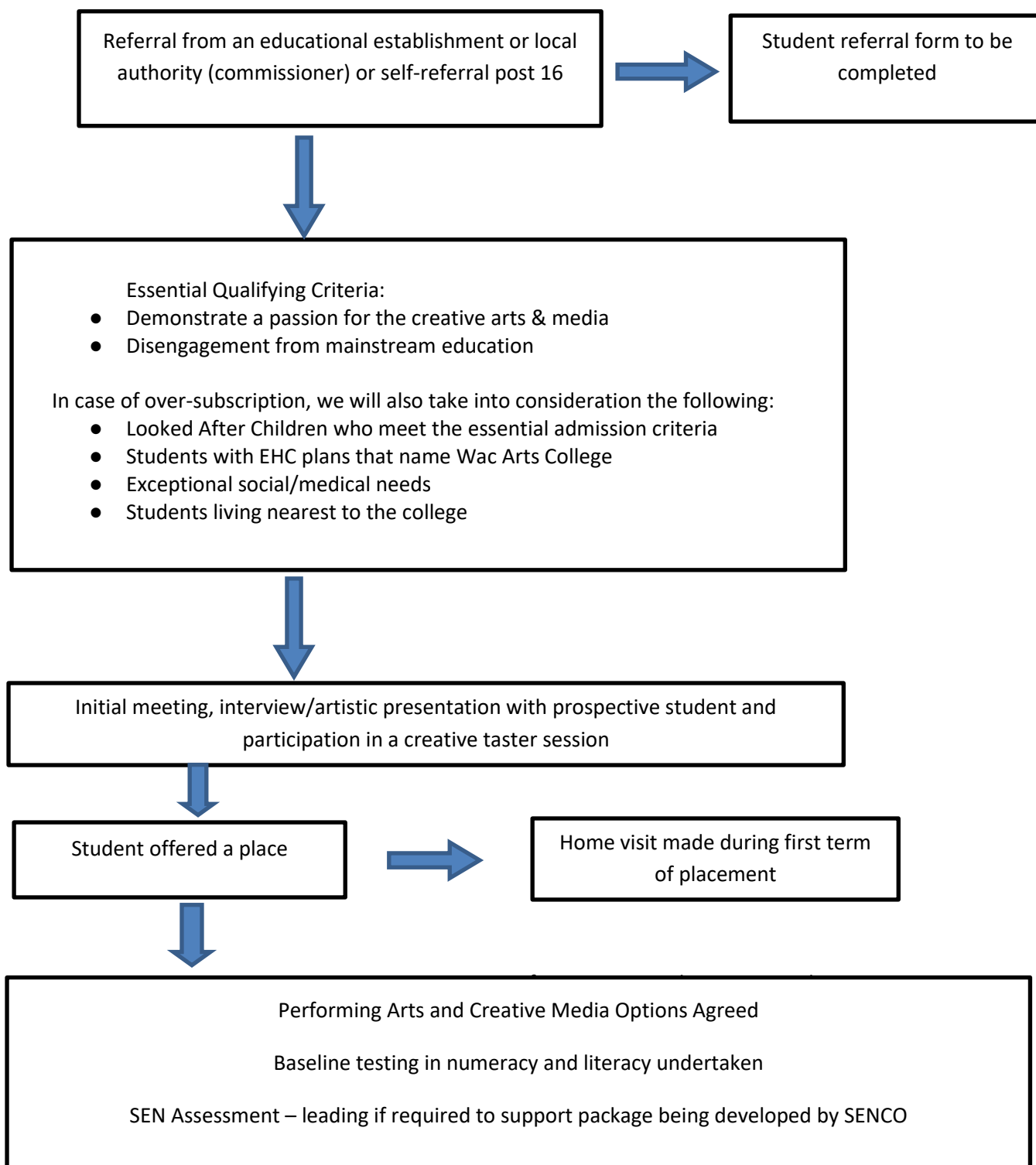
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embedded within the College's self-evaluation process and will be related to the strategic development plans of the College.

The review cycle will ensure that every policy is checked at least once in a two-year period. The effective monitoring of policies will involve each member of the College Leadership Team being allocated specific responsibility for reporting back the monitoring, evaluation and review of certain policies to the Governing Body. This policy is allocated to The Principal.

Flow Diagrams

Pre & Post 16 Application Process



Complaints/Objections

The commissioner should write to the Head of College outlining reasons supporting the referral and any supporting documentation.



The Head of College will consider this and reply within 28 days, stating the College's position.



If a place is not granted after that process, the commissioner may make a final appeal and request a review from the Governing Body. A final appeal should be put in writing to the Chair of Governors.



Cases will then be heard by at least 3 Governors (including the Chair) within 28 days of the final appeal being received and final outcomes notified within 5 working days of the hearing. Further objections will be referred to the EFA.



In cases of SEN referrals where The ArtsXchange College is named as the preferred College, the statutory processes set out in Annex C of the Funding Agreement will be adhered to.

Places at the ArtsXchange College are subject to on-going review. In exceptional circumstances, placements may be withdrawn.

The views and wishes of students and their families are an integral part of the referral process.