

Admissions Arrangements Policy



Approved on:	26th February 2026
---------------------	--------------------

Approved by:	Trustees
---------------------	----------

Last reviewed on:	
--------------------------	--

Reviewed by:	Andy Millard
---------------------	--------------

Next review due by:	February 2027
----------------------------	---------------

Contents

Special Schools and Academies

1. Legislation and statutory requirements
2. Definitions
3. How to apply
4. Requests for admission outside the normal age group
5. Admissions
 - 5.1 Admission number
 - 5.2 Eligibility criteria
 - 5.3 In-year admissions
 - 5.4 Access prior to entry
6. Appeals
7. Monitoring Arrangements

Alternative Provision

1. Criteria
2. Admission numbers
3. Commissioners
4. Oversubscription criteria
5. Definitions: Looked After Child & Previously Looked After Child
6. Appeals

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the special schools and academies in our Trust
- Set out the Trust's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to access a place in one of our Alternative Provisions

Special Schools and Academies

1. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code
- School Admission Appeals Code.

As an academy, our Schools are required by our funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The member schools of The Beckmead Trust will have a designated number of pupils on roll. These pupil numbers may be made up with a number of children from other boroughs who may have needed a school place when one was available at a Trust School. Member schools of the Trust in partnership with LA's will recoup monies directly for these placements. It is important that all the schools are as near to capacity as possible at all times to mitigate any possible reduction in funding.

2. Definitions

For our Special Schools - The annual review process is where the transition review supports the choice of the parents/ carers in admission to a school that can meet the needs of the child as outlined in their EHCP.

Looked After Children are children who, at the time of making an application to a School, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or

- Became subject to a special guardianship order.

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

A child reaches compulsory School age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

3. How to apply

You must work with the support of the SEN team within your Local Authority and you will receive an offer for a school place directly from that authority.

Please note, pupils already attending one of our schools will not transfer automatically into another. A separate application via the annual review process needs to take place.

4. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents/carers are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group although in a special school, pupils are regularly put into mixed year groups in order to better meet their needs..

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents/carers' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
 - Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The Headteacher's views.

5. Admissions

Admissions Principles

*The Trust recognises that successful placements begin with positive relationships. Consistent with the relational practice model used within Trust provisions such as **Ian Mikardo High School**, admissions are viewed as the beginning of a partnership with the pupil and family rather than solely an administrative process.*

5.1 Admission number

The School has an agreed admission number of pupils which is determined by the agreed number on roll. The school will occasionally exceed this number if it is possible to do so whilst maintaining an outstanding level of education and care for all children and staff.

5.2 Eligibility criteria

*The Trust acknowledges that effective admissions transcend mere administrative procedures or placement availability. Drawing upon the relational practice model successful at provisions such as **Ian Mikardo High School**, we view the admissions process as the foundation of a lasting partnership. This approach prioritises understanding each young person's unique strengths, aspirations, and lived experiences alongside their specific needs. By engaging meaningfully with pupils, families, and professionals, the Trust seeks to foster a sense of belonging and establish trust from the outset, ensuring that bespoke support and transition arrangements are implemented to reduce anxiety and promote engagement.*

Adopting the relational practice and trauma-informed ethos successful within Trust provisions like Ian Mikardo High School, the Trust views admissions as the foundation of a lasting partnership. Beyond evaluating statutory or educational needs, our process prioritises understanding each young person's unique strengths, aspirations, and lived experiences. By engaging meaningfully from the outset, we seek to foster a sense of belonging and establish trust, ensuring bespoke support is implemented to reduce anxiety and promote successful engagement within our school community.

- The school can meet the pupil's SEND
- The pupil's placement is not incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated
- The placement is an efficient use of resources
- The Local Authority has named the school in a pupil's EHCP

5.3 In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time - all children whose EHC plan names the School will be admitted as long as an appropriate vacancy exists.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place as long as the school is able to meet the needs as specified on the EHCP.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name could be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest and will be decided by the school and the SEN team.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the SEN team at the relevant Local Authority

5.4. Access prior to entry

- The commissioning LA will consult with the Headteacher before naming the school in an EHCP and will determine placement following consultation with the school
- Professionals wishing to visit the school should contact the school
- Staff from school may visit the pupil in their current setting
- A visit by the pupil and parents / carers would also be considered appropriate; guardians should contact the school to arrange this.

6. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the School is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the relevant SEN team

The SEN Code of Practice entitles parents to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal if their LA refuses to name their preferred school in the EHCP.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Board of Trustees will publicly consult on these changes.

Alternative Provision

Our Alternative Provisions provide places for students who are outside of mainstream education, currently our APs can take children from KS2 to KS4, depending on the location. We are only able to accept referrals from schools or local authorities who commission placements from us. Each site has a defined number of places. Some pupils will be dual registered with us and others will be sole registered, depending on individual circumstances.

We help some of the most disadvantaged and hard to reach young people to engage with education, training or employment and play a positive role in their communities. Our Alternative Provisions follow a normal school year combining academic, vocational and life skills qualifications with sports.

1. Criteria

Pupils arrive with us through many different routes. The admissions process in an alternative provision context has to be flexible to accommodate the varying circumstances within which young people who have struggled with mainstream education find themselves. Pupils will undergo an assessment process for reintegration and will either be reintegrated successfully, or will remain with us for a longer period of time and be receiving some services such as tuition or careers advice provided by the parent school.

- Who are showing a level of disengagement from mainstream provision which is placing them at risk of low attainment or permanent exclusion - a full and complete referral form is required from the placing school prior to admission
- Who have been permanently excluded from mainstream provision
OR
- Who do not have a school place

2. Admission numbers

Each of our APs have an agreed number of places and pupils can be admitted at any time, depending on places available. Our aim is always to facilitate the re-engagement of students into mainstream education.

3. Commissioners

To acquire a place at one of our APs, students have to be referred by an educational establishment or local authority (commissioners). Referrals for individual support will only be accepted using the official referral form and must be with the full consent of parents or carers although we cannot accept applications direct from parents. Commissioners should identify the areas that are causing concern and complete the referral form with contact details, parental information, details on FSM, high needs assessment, reasons for referral of student, attendance at previous school, previous interventions, external agency involvement,

previous areas of study and current levels and risk assessment.

We do take some SEN referrals and these must be confirmed at an annual review by the local authority that issued the EHCP. Top up fees vary across the Trust.

4. Oversubscription criteria

If at any time referrals exceed the number of places available, and after the admission of any student with an education health and care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.
2. Other children.

5. Definitions: Looked After Child & Previously Looked After Child

- 5.1 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).
- 5.2 A previously Looked After Child is a child who is no longer a looked after child because, immediately after being looked-after he or she became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 Commissioners have the right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the Academy. Commissioners wishing to appeal must follow the procedure contained within the Academy's complaints procedure which is available on the school website or by request.
- 6.2 The Commissioner of any child who is refused a place at the Academy has a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. The panel consists of three people who are independent of the Academy Body and the Local Authority. The panel will consider the circumstances of the case put before them and reach a decision on whether the appeal should be upheld. If it is, the school will admit the student.