



Outcomes
First Group



**Kestrel House
School**

Admissions Policy

Document History

Version	Comments/ amendments	Name	Date
1	Updated version issued 2026	A.McMillan	06.08.2026
2			

Introduction

This policy supports Kestrel House School's commitment to ensuring that every learner is enabled to reach their full potential within a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment. Our vision of *thinking and learning differently*, underpinned by our values of Pride, Play and Preparation, ensures that every learner is supported to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need for adulthood while fostering respect for themselves and others.

Rationale

Kestrel House School admits pupils with a primary diagnosis of autism (ASC), or associated traits. They may have additional needs including; sensory processing, speech, language and communication, social, emotional and mental health, anxiety, severe and/or moderate learning difficulties and/or specific learning difficulties. All of our pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan that notes the nature of these difficulties. 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 safely, 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.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of the criteria used to determine whether Kestrel House School is an appropriate placement for a prospective learner.
- Ensure that all parties understand the admissions process and how placement decisions are made.
- Ensure that parents/carers, prospective pupils (where appropriate), Local Authorities and other relevant professionals have a clear understanding of Kestrel House School's specialist provision, ethos and the opportunities available to learners.
- Support informed placement decisions through effective partnership and open communication between the school, families, Local Authorities and other professionals throughout the admissions process.

Admissions process

Stage 1

Referrals made to Kestrel House School will normally be made by Local Authorities (LA) and Parent/Carers. A range of detailed information concerning that pupil should accompany these referrals. Where this is not the case, the school will seek access to such information as soon as possible including information regarding the individual's Education, Health and Social background. Senior staff will analyse all available information on the pupil to assess whether the pupil meets the admission criteria for the school. The Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team/ Admissions Coordinator will assess whether or not the school can meet the pupils needs and if so, arrange for a initial assessment at Kestrel House. In some cases, we may offer to do an initial assessment at the pupils current school.

Stage 2

For the initial assessment at Kestrel House, potential pupils will be invited onsite for an assessment either in an appropriate class or 1:1 with therapists/ and or Senior Staff. Assessments range from 30 minutes to 2 hours according to potential pupils' needs and current school status.

During the initial assessment, following will be included:

- A discussion around the successes and challenges experienced by the child to date
- A discussion with parents and carers regarding their hopes and expected outcomes from the proposed school placement
- A discussion with the young person (where relevant) regarding their hopes and expected outcomes from the proposed school placement
- A tour of the school
- A discussion with senior staff concerning such issues as:
 - School curriculum
 - The content of key School policies, including the school expectations for good behaviour and discipline and the physical management of pupils
 - An opportunity for each visitor to ask any questions they may have

Stage 3

If, following these visits, all concerned are agreed that the pupil's needs can be met at Kestrel House School and that the young person can be adequately supported with the planned resources available and that the pupil and parents/carers are committed to the placement, the school's admissions manager will write to the LA offering a place and arrangements will be made for admission *if placement is agreed* by the LA. Pupils will then have 6-week assessment period after which the school will decide if the admission can move to permanent placement.

Decisions will be made in line with the SEND Code of Practice:

- Special Needs: Can the school fully meet the child's needs?
- Resources: Would the placement be an efficient use of resources?
- Current pupils: Would the placement be compatible with the efficient education of the other pupils with whom the child will be educated?
- Peer Group: would the child/young person have an appropriate peer group?

Admission Criteria

- The pupil will be aged between 5 and 16 years of age
- The pupil will usually have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- The EHCP will highlight that the pupil has a primary diagnosis of autism (ASC), or associated traits. It may also highlight additional complex needs such as; sensory processing, speech, language and communication, social, emotional and mental health, anxiety, severe and/or moderate learning difficulties and/or specific learning difficulties.
- The pupil may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with the needs highlighted on their statement or EHCP. The pupil may have one or more specific learning difficulties.

- Where possible, the pupil will express a commitment to the placement. The pupil's parents/carers will express commitment to the placement. For all "Looked After Children", there must be permanently named carers and a permanent home base for the pupil, available at any time throughout the year.
- Pupils can be admitted into Kestrel House School at any time of the academic year. Pupils can only be admitted to Kestrel House when there is a vacancy, and the school can offer an appropriate peer group and curriculum and the admittance of the new pupil will not negatively impact on the education of pupils already placed here.

The Local Authority will

- Provide the School with all current advice and information concerning the pupil.
- If the placement is agreed Kestrel House School will be named in Part 4 of their Statement, or Section A of the EHC plan, with the support of the parent / carers and the LA where the young person lives.
- Inform parents that the placement has been agreed.

Placement start

Admissions meeting

Once the Local Authority confirms they have accepted the offer/costings of placement, Kestrel House School will write to parents/carers to confirm admission details and the agreed start date. Parents/Carers will be sent admissions documents prior to the start date to complete and return. This will include providing 3 emergency contacts and details of any Medical Needs/Allergies alongside other key information.

Transition and Induction

Kestrel House School recognises that successful transitions are essential in supporting pupils to feel safe, confident and ready to learn. Many of our pupils have experienced disrupted education or find change particularly challenging. We therefore plan transitions carefully and individually for every pupil.

Following confirmation of a placement, the school will work closely with parents/carers, the Local Authority, the pupil's current educational setting (where appropriate) and any relevant professionals to develop a personalised transition plan.

The transition process may include:

- Information sharing with parents/carers and professionals to develop a detailed understanding of the pupil's strengths, interests, communication style and support needs.
- Visits by school staff to the pupil's current educational setting where appropriate.
- Opportunities for the pupil and their family to visit the school.
- Individual or phased transition visits tailored to the pupil's needs.
- The provision of visual supports, photographs, social stories or other personalised transition resources where appropriate.
- Planning for transport, therapeutic support, communication systems, medical needs and any reasonable adjustments required.
- Collaboration with therapists and other professionals to ensure continuity of support wherever possible.

The number, length and format of transition activities will be determined according to each pupil's individual needs. Some pupils may require only a small number of visits, whilst others may benefit from a more gradual, extended transition programme.

The school will review the effectiveness of the transition throughout the induction period and will continue to work closely with families and professionals to ensure pupils settle successfully into school life.

Transition timetable

Kestrel House School may propose a staggered start, with a reduced timetable which gradually increases, with the aim of achieving best outcomes for the pupil. Details of this plan will be agreed with parents/carers at the admission meeting and shared in writing prior to the start date with parents and Local Authority, including sharing any visual timetables/resources required to support the child/young person.

Transition plans are reviewed regularly by leaders. Pupils' engagement in lessons, attendance and behaviour will be closely monitored, including in class observation and data review. Kestrel House School aim for transitions to be completed within 6 weeks/ one half term of a placement commencing. The decision to extend a transition plan could be made by Kestrel House School, in discussion with parents/carers and the Local Authority, should this be evidenced to be in the best interests of the child/young person. Any extension to a reduced timetable will be reviewed regularly by leaders, with the aim of increasing full-time as soon as is reasonably practicable, to achieve best outcomes for the child/young person.

Parents are responsible for making transition arrangements with the SEN transport teams relevant to their boroughs. Please inform the school accordingly.



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