

## 1 Introduction

Holme Court School is an independent, co-educational day school. It provides specialist teaching and pastoral support for pupils aged 7-16yrs with dyslexia (or significant literacy difficulties) and associated specific learning difficulties (SpLD).

It is registered with the Department of Education (DfE) under the category of Cognition and Learning. While many dyslexic pupils experience co-morbid specific learning difficulties, dyslexia must be the main presenting area of need.

Holme Court School is not registered to accept pupils who's main presenting needs relate to social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, including those with ASD or hyperactivity caused by ADHD, whose behaviour will impact on the learning of others.

Pupils are not required to have a diagnosis of dyslexia, but they do need to have significant difficulties in the area of literacy.

## 2 School values and ethos

The key values underlying the School's ethos are promoted through the expectation of high standards in:

- Respectful and responsible behaviour
- Active thinking and learning
- Sensible care for health and safety
- Respect for property and the environment.

The School's ethos is promoted in all aspects of its work, beginning with the way people address and engage with each other. This is continues through assemblies, approaches to teaching which aim to raise pupils' self-esteem, promoting co-operative and inclusive activities, structures and routines, the Behaviour and Anti-bullying Charters drawn up annually by pupils through discussions with staff an the personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons.

At Holme Court School, we value:

- Each individual
- High standards
- The celebration of all personal success and achievement
- Tolerance and respect for others and the development of social responsibility and integrity
- Commitment, enthusiasm and self discipline.

### 3 Scope of policy and guidance

The procedures set out in this policy apply for all entries to the School, irrespective of the time of year and year group.

Prospective parents should also consult the School's terms and conditions, which are available on the website.

This policy should be read alongside the 'ILG Right to Study' policy, available from the School on request.

### 4 Policy statement

Holme Court School is committed to ensuring that its admissions process is honest, transparent, and respectful of individual rights.

This policy applies to all prospective pupils irrespective of whether applications are initiated by parents or by a local authority.

The School welcomes applications for self-funded placements as well as those reliant on EHCP funding.

### 5 Legislative compliance

As an independent setting, Holme Court School is responsible for deciding its own admissions criteria and process. However, when writing this policy reference has been made to:

#### DfE Guidance

- Children Missing Education (DfE September 2025)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE August 2024)
- School Admissions Code 2021

#### Legislation

- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health and Social Care, January 2015 last updated April 2020)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and skills act 2008
- Childcare act 2006
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

Immigration Rules HCE95

## 6. Publication and availability

This policy is published on the School website.

It is available in hard copy, upon request from the School office.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if requested.

## 7. Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When/frequency
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Headteacher	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy and evaluating its effectiveness	Headteacher/Business Manager	As required, and at least termly
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by GDPR	Business Manager	As required, and at least termly

## 8. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- explain how to apply for a place at the School
- describe how the School identifies and admits children who will benefit from the education and other opportunities available at the School and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our School
- set out the School's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- ensure compliance with the School's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

## 9 Equality, diversity and disability

Holme Court School promotes a positive culture towards inclusion and welcomes applicants with dyslexia and associated co-morbid specific learning difficulties.

All applicants will be treated equally, irrespective of their or their parent's race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, gender re-assignment or any disability. Applicants will also be treated equally in respect of their parents age, gender or marital/civil partnership. When considering placements at our school, we do not discriminate on the basis of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, culture or sexuality.

Holme Court School is inclusive and welcomes applicants with disabilities. The School is located within a Victorian manor house, which is a grade 11 listed building. As such, the facilities both physical and otherwise, for the disabled are limited but the school will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2020 to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

Parents of a child who has any disability should provide full details on registration.

The School serves a diverse community and is able to admit pupils who have English as an additional language. However, as a specialist setting for pupils with specific learning difficulties, it cannot cater for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language (i.e. those with little or no English) or who are at a more advanced stage of learning English but still below the level of competence expected within their age group, as this requires a different approach and is not considered a learning difficulty.

## 10 Definitions

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.

Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children/young people living permanently at the same address.

## 11 Admissions procedure

The admission process is as follows:

Prospective parents can contact the School via email [admin@holmecourt.co.uk](mailto:admin@holmecourt.co.uk) or via telephone 01223 778030.

On receiving an enquiry about the School, a record is made of the enquirer's name, contact details and brief information such as the age and nature of the child's difficulties.

The School Business Manager will contact the enquirer. At this time general questions about the School will be answered and more detailed information about the child and his/her needs will be sought. At this point parents/ guardians of children/ young people who do not meet our profile criteria will be informed of this fact.

If initial discussion indicates that the prospective pupil's needs may be compatible with the structure and teaching strategies employed at Holme Court, the prospective parents/guardians are invited to visit the School. Parents/ guardians will be shown around the School and informed of the School's provision. A more in-depth discussion will take place regarding the prospective pupil's needs and relevant reports will be requested, if not already provided.

If both parties wish to proceed in the admissions process, all relevant reports (eg educational psychology, speech & language, occupational therapy, CAMHS etc) and the most recent EHCP if relevant, must be provided to the School for consideration. The contents of these documents will be discussed with the professionals in School in relation to the identified needs and suitability of the prospective pupil.

If, after the initial visit by parents/guardians and consideration of the documentation, it is considered that Holme Court School can meet the therapeutic and educational needs of the child/ young person, the prospective pupil will be invited to attend the School for at least five full days. This may be achieved through a gradual process if children are anxious or may be booked as a block.

During the taster days, prospective pupils will get to experience the workings of the School and get to know their potential peers. Staff will be able to observe staff/child and peer interactions. They will also be able to observe the prospective pupil's behaviour, attitude, and standard of work. Informal assessments will be carried out- although no formal testing will take place as such information will have already been provided by parents/guardian prior to the visit.

If at the end of the five days, the offer of a placement at Holme Court School is a possibility, the School will request permission to contact the prospective pupil's current school.

At the end of this process, the School will consider all of the information provided. An offer of a placement will be made if the School believes that it can meet the prospective pupil's needs and that entry to the School will not be detrimental to the learning of the pupils already attending.

Upon an offer of placement parents are required to complete a registration form and pay the appropriate registration non-refundable fee of £200.

When the registration form and fee is received by the School the place will be held until the end of the term. The fee is non-refundable, should the placement not be taken. It applies to all prospective pupils irrespective of how their placement is funded.

All placements are costed on an individual basis-according to the individual needs of the prospective pupil and any specific interventions/ therapies which are indicated on an EHCP.

In instances where additional resources are required which are above the School's core provision for example Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language, parents / funding local authorities would be advised that an additional cost will be charged.

## 12 Admission criteria

The admissions criteria is as follows:

- satisfactory interview
- successful taster week;
- verification of the child's immigration status and nationality if applicable
- commitment to the School's ethos as described in the School's aims
- ability to meet the needs of the child.

All candidates must have the legal right to live and study in the UK.

## 13 Rights of the School

All places are offered on a termly review basis.

During this period Holme Court School reserves the right to withdraw the place if the placement proves unsuccessful/inappropriate.

Holme Court School reserves the right to refuse placements and if relevant to take the decision that a placement is no longer appropriate.

Placements may also be terminated if it comes to light that information about the pupil has been withheld.

## 14 Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. This must be mentioned to the School at the time of initial enquiry- and before taster days are organised.

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 prospective pupil concerned.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' 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 have been absent from school for a long period of time eg as a school refuser
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The availability of a place in the relevant year group
- The headteacher's views

Requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the general admission. For pupils with an EHCP, this must also be agreed by the issuing local authority. Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a prospective pupil should be admitted to. Parents/ guardians do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the School but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 15 Allocation of places

The DfE has agreed an admission number of 55 pupils.

Classes are arranged according to year groups with a maximum of ten pupils in each class- the exception being a mixed age KS2.

In the event that the School receives more applications than the number of places it has available, either within the School itself or in a particular year group or class; places will be offered to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the School.

Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed above.

Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

## 16 In year admissions

Holme Court School does not limit admissions to the beginning of the academic year and pupils may join the School at any time provided a place is available.

## 17 Acceptance

When a placement at Holme Court school has been agreed, an offer letter will be issued to parents/ guardians and the local authority if relevant.

A joining pack is also issued. This contains:

- the school enrolment form
- term dates
- uniform details
- home school agreement
- behaviour policy
- acceptable use agreement
- child protection/safeguarding policy
- peer on peer abuse policy
- prejudice related incident policy
- Safeguarding statement
- British values statement

The School Enrolment Form provides the School with the following vital information;

- Name, home address and date of birth of the child
- Contact details of parents/guardians
- Start date of Holme court School placement and details of previous educational placements
- Emergency contact details
- Medical information including GP details and consent for emergency procedures
- Allergy and dietary information
- Special educational needs information
- Information on therapy or additional external provision/ agency involvement
- Sensory profile and any developmental information
- Permission for therapy staff to work with the child
- Permission for photographs
- Any further information relevant to the care of the child

When accepting the placement the following documentation is required:

- Proof of the child's legal name and date of birth
- Proof of your child's main address

You will need papers to prove that you live with your child and show that you have parental responsibility. You must also include details of any other person who has parental responsibility for your child.

## 18 Transition

At Holme court School we are aware that for many pupils transition to a new school may cause anxiety or distress- especially when it has been a significant time between the taster days and final admission.

At the end of the summer term a 'move up' day is held for the whole school when pupils spend the morning with their next class and the afternoon engaged in whole school activities.

Pupils who will be joining the school in September are invited to attend.

We are very aware that the needs of children/ young people are very individual and they may vary on the level of support required to transition successfully. The School is highly flexible and will work with parents and their current school and will endeavour to meet the child's needs and ensure a successful transition.

## 19 The School Admission Register

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 for pupils admitted to the School, the School will:

- maintain an admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll)
- inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points

The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which explain how the School will use personal data about pupils and parents. The privacy notices are published on the School's website. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's Data Protection Policy and Information Security Policy.

## 20 Links to other policies

This policy links to the School's

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Information Security Policy

## 21 Monitoring and review of policy

This policy will be reviewed.

## 22 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	August 2022 (ILG)
Date of last review of this policy	September 2025 (HCS)
Date for next review of this policy	Spring 2026
Policy owner (School)	Headteacher