Holme Court School Cambridge

Admissions Policy 2026

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). We have a small offer for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). However, we are not in a position to offer places to pupils whose behaviour will impact on the learning of others, is dangerous or to pupils whom are a flight risk, including those with their main need as ASD or hyperactivity caused by ADHD,

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

2 Scope of policy and guidance

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

3 Policy statement

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

Holme Court School promotes a positive culture towards inclusion and welcome applicants with specific learning difficulties.

All applicants will be treated equally, irrespective or 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 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 responsibility sunder the Equality Act 2020.

4 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

- School Admissions Code 2021

Legislation

- the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

This policy is fully compliant with the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010

5 Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- explain how to apply for a place at the School
- set out the School's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply

6 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.

7 Admissions procedure

The admission process is as follows:

- 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 admin or appropriate staff member 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. Copies of EHCP and /or relevant assessment reports will be requested.

- Once the reports have been received, these will be reviewed by the Headteacher/SLT. At this point parents/ guardians of children/ young people who do not meet our profile criteria will be informed of this fact.

- If initial review/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.

- 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 may be invited to attend the School for a taster week if the placement is being considered for the Dyslexia Pathway. This may be achieved through a gradual process if children are anxious or may be booked as a block. All prospective pupils must attend for at least three full days to be considered.

- 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 the taster week is required at the end of the these 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 be 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 £100. This is not applicable in the SEMH/EBSA Pathway.

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

8 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 or does not meet the presenting needs of the pupil in school. In this circumstance usually a six-week notice would be given on the placement.

9 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.

10 Allocation of places

The DfE has agreed an admission number of 73 pupils. These are shared between the Dyslexia and SEMH provision.

Classes are arranged according to year groups with a maximum of ten pupils in each class within the Dyspexia pathway, and six in the SEMH/EBSA Pathway. The exception being KS2 which generally consists of a mixture of pupils in year 5 and 6.

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.

11 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.

12 Funding

Holme Court Dyslexia accepts pupils who are both local authority and privately funded.

If parents are able to self-fund their child's placement, the child can join the school at a date agreed by the School and parents.

For pupils with an EHCP, parents will need to request an annual review to request a change of placement. Holme Court School will support this request by providing a written response to a Consultation when requested by the relevant LA. The

information will need to be presented and agreed by the LA panel before placement can be accepted.

In the event that placement is not agreed by the LA, the School will support parents by providing a detailed witness statement and attending tribunal as required.

13 Acceptance

When a placement at Holme Court school has been agreed, an offer letter will be issued to parents/ guardians and the local authority of relevant. A joining pack is also issued. This contains:

- the school enrollment 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 Enrollment 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

1. Proof of the child's legal name and date of birth

Any one of the documents listed:

- UK birth certificate – short or long versions; schools will not accept non-UK birth certificates, as they may be in a language other than English
- Valid current passport (your child may be included on your passport, if that passport is valid and current then you can use that)
- Official documents from the National Asylum Seeker Service showing that they support your family, so for example an ARC application registration card.

Note: adoption or deed poll papers are only proof that a child's name has changed, not of his or her identity.

2. Proof of your child's main address

Any one of the documents listed:

- Council tax bill for your home for this financial year
- Current housing benefit entitlement letter (the school will delete financial details while you are there at the meeting)
- Tenancy agreement for your council housing or housing association property
- Tenancy agreement for your housing privately rented from a landlord accredited by us (for tenancies which started before 1 January 2013) or
- Tenancy agreement from a landlord licensed by us (for tenancies which started from 1 January 2013)
- Letter from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) telling you of your housing address
- Letter from Adult or Children's Services Asylum Team, telling you of your housing address.

3. Utility bill

Take one current utility bill from the list (note you will need this if your family is supported by NASS or a Social Care Asylum Team):

- Gas bill, payment schedule or reminder
- Electricity bill, payment schedule or reminder
- Water bill, payment schedule or reminder
- Telephone bill or reminder
- Mobile phone bill or reminder.

4. Medical contact information

The name, address and telephone number of the doctor's surgery your child goes to. You may include the name of the GP too if you wish.

And

The name, address and telephone number of the dentist's surgery your child goes to. You may include the name of the dentist too if you wish.

5. Emergency contact information

You need to give information about three people (aged 18 or over) who the school can contact in case of an emergency. (If possible, at least one of the contacts should be able speak English). Give:

- Full name
- Address
- Language
- Relationship to the child
- Home telephone number

- Mobile number.

6. Proof of parental responsibility

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.

14 Data protection

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.

All records created for the purposes of the procedures set out in this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retentions and retention of records.

15 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.

16 Links to other policies

This policy links to the School's
- Equality policy

17 Monitoring and review of policy

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Chair of Governors from time to time.

18 Version control

Version	Comments	Reviewer
Date of adoption of this policy	May 2016	Head
Date of last review	September 2026	Head

Date for next review	Spring 2028	Head
Policy owner		Holme Court School
Implementation owner		Head