Admissions Policy

November 2026

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Policy Owner	Head

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1 Aims

1.1 The policy applies to all pupils attending Holme Court Derby.

1.2 The aims of this policy are to:

1.2.1 provide a clear and transparent admissions process;

1.2.2 ensure placements are considered fairly and consistently;

1.2.3 ensure that all pupils admitted to the School can have their needs appropriately met;

1.2.4 support effective partnership working with families, local authorities and professionals;

1.2.5 ensure admissions decisions are based upon the best interests of the child or young person and the School's ability to meet need;

1.2.6 comply with relevant legislation relating to SEND, safeguarding, equality and independent schools

2 Our Provision

2.1 Holme Court Derby is an independent specialist school for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

2.2 All pupils attending Holme Court Derby have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

2.3 The School provides specialist support for pupils whose needs can be appropriately met through the School's provision, staffing, resources, therapeutic approaches and educational offer.

2.4 Placements are typically commissioned and funded by Local Authorities. However, in some circumstances, parents/carers may choose to fund a placement independently.

2.5 Regardless of the funding route, the School will only admit pupils where it is satisfied that:

2.5.1 the School can appropriately meet the pupil's needs;

2.5.2 the placement is compatible with the efficient education of existing pupils;

2.5.3 appropriate staffing, resources and support can be provided;

2.5.4 health, safety and safeguarding considerations can be appropriately managed.

3 Regulatory Framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared with regard to:

3.1.1 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.2 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended);

3.1.3 Children and Families Act 2014;

3.1.4 Equality Act 2010;

3.1.5 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

3.1.6 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years;

3.1.7 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;

3.1.8 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;

3.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

4 Equality and Inclusion

4.1 Holme Court Derby is committed to equality of opportunity.

4.2 The School welcomes enquiries from all families whose child has an EHCP, regardless of:

4.2.1 disability;

4.2.2 race;

4.2.3 religion or belief;

4.2.4 sex;

4.2.5 sexual orientation;

4.2.6 gender reassignment;

4.2.7 family circumstances.

4.3 The School will make reasonable adjustments throughout the admissions process wherever appropriate.

4.4 Admissions decisions will not be based upon a child's protected characteristics. Admissions decisions will be based upon whether the School can appropriately meet the young person's identified needs.

5 Admissions Principles

5.1 Admissions decisions will be guided by:

5.1.1 the best interests of the child or young person;

5.1.2 the needs identified within the EHCP;

5.1.3 safeguarding considerations;

5.1.4 the School's ability to provide an appropriate educational placement;

5.1.5 compatibility with the education and welfare of existing pupils;

5.1.6 the views, wishes and aspirations of the child or young person where appropriate;

5.1.7 information provided by parents/carers and professionals.

5.2 Admission to Holme Court Derby is not automatic as a result of parental preference, Local Authority consultation or the existence of an EHCP.

5.3 Each referral is considered individually.

6 Admissions Routes

6.1 Local Authority Commissioned Placements

6.2 The majority of admissions to Holme Court Derby arise through Local Authority consultation as part of an EHCP process.

6.3 This may include:

6.3.1 initial EHCP placement consultations;

6.3.2 annual review recommendations;

6.3.3 changes of placement;

6.3.4 placement breakdowns;

6.3.5 specialist placement requests.

6.4 The School will review all available information before determining whether a placement can be offered.

6.5 Parent-Funded Placements

6.5.1 In some circumstances, parents/carers may choose to fund a placement independently.

6.5.2 This may arise where:

(a) a Local Authority has not agreed to commission a placement;

(b) parents/carers wish to exercise their own educational choice;

(c) interim arrangements are required whilst wider placement issues are resolved.

(d) The School will consider such requests using the same admissions principles and assessment process applied to Local Authority consultations.

6.5.3 The existence of an EHCP remains a condition of admission and the School must be satisfied that it can appropriately meet the young person's needs before a placement can be offered.

7 Admissions Process

7.1 Stage 1: Initial Enquiry or Consultation

7.1.1 An enquiry or consultation may be received from:

(a) a Local Authority;

(b) a parent/carer;

(c) a professional involved with the young person.

7.2 Stage 2: Review of Documentation

7.2.1 The School will normally review:

(a) the EHCP;

(b) Educational Psychologist reports;

(c) professional assessments;

(d) educational reports;

(e) attendance information;

(f) safeguarding information;

(g) risk assessments;

(h) behaviour support plans;

(i) medical information.

7.2.2 Additional information may be requested where required.

7.3 Stage 3: Visit and Information Gathering

7.3.1 Parents/carers and professionals may be invited to visit the School.

7.3.2 The School may also seek additional information from:

(a) current educational settings;

(b) local authorities;

(c) medical professionals;

(d) therapists;

(e) social care professionals where appropriate.

7.4 Stage 4: Assessment and Transition Activity

7.4.1 Where appropriate, the School may arrange:

(a) observation visits;

(b) assessment visits;

(c) transition visits;

(d) phased introductions;

(e) meetings with key staff.

7.4.2 The purpose is to determine whether Holme Court Derby can appropriately meet the young person's needs and facilitate a successful placement.

7.4.3 Participation in visits, assessment activities or transition arrangements does not guarantee that a placement will be offered.

7.5 Stage 5: Decision

7.5.1 Following consideration of all available information, the School will communicate its decision.

7.5.2 The School may:

(a) offer a placement;

(b) request further information;

(c) decline admission where it believes it cannot appropriately meet the young person's needs.

8 Admissions Criteria

8.1 When considering an application, the School may take account of:

8.1.1 SEND needs identified within the EHCP;

8.1.2 communication and interaction needs;

8.1.3 cognition and learning needs;

8.1.4 social, emotional and mental health needs;

8.1.5 sensory needs;

8.1.6 medical needs;

8.1.7 risk management considerations;

8.1.8 safeguarding considerations;

8.1.9 staffing requirements;

8.1.10 available resources;

8.1.11 the impact on existing pupils.

9 The School reserves the right to decline admission where it determines that it cannot safely or effectively meet a young person's needs, or where admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of existing pupils and available resources.

10 Transition Arrangements

10.1 Where a placement is agreed, Holme Court Derby will work collaboratively with:

10.1.1 parents/carers;

10.1.2 the placing Local Authority;

10.1.3 healthcare professionals where appropriate;

10.1.4 the previous educational setting;

10.1.5 other involved professionals.

10.2 Transition arrangements may include:

10.2.1 visits to the School;

10.2.2 transition plans;

10.2.3 information sharing;

10.2.4 phased admissions;

10.2.5 support from key staff.

10.3 Transition arrangements will be tailored to individual need.

11 Admission Register

11.1 Holme Court Derby will maintain an admission register in accordance with statutory requirements.

11.2 The School will ensure that:

11.2.1 admissions are recorded accurately;

11.2.2 records are maintained securely;

11.2.3 information is shared with Local Authorities where required;

11.2.4 pupil data is managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

12 Appeals, Concerns and Complaints

12.1 Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss any admissions concerns directly with the School.

12.2 Where a decision relates to the contents of an EHCP, parents/carers retain the rights available through SEND legislation and associated appeal processes.

12.3 Complaints regarding admissions procedures may be addressed through the School's Complaints Policy.

13 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

13.1 Admissions information will be treated confidentially and handled in accordance with:

13.1.1 Data Protection Act 2018;

13.1.2 UK GDPR;

13.1.3 School record retention procedures.

13.2 Information will only be shared where there is a legitimate educational, safeguarding or legal reason for doing so.

14 Monitoring and Review

14.1 Admissions arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain:

14.1.1 fair;

14.1.2 transparent;

14.1.3 compliant with legislation;

14.1.4 responsive to changes within the School's provision and pupil profile.

14.2 Admissions decisions and processes may be reviewed by the Head, Proprietor and Advisory Board as part of the School's quality assurance arrangements.

15 Linked Policies

15.1 This policy should be read alongside:

15.1.1 SEND Policy

15.1.2 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

15.1.3 Attendance Policy

15.1.4 Behaviour and Discipline Policy

15.1.5 Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

15.1.6 Accessibility Plan

15.1.7 Complaints Policy

15.1.8 Data Protection Policy

16 Version Control

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