



Admissions Policy



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1. Introduction

The Keystone Academy is a specialist school for children aged 4-16 with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs and difficulties. It brings together the vision of The YES Trust with that of Shropshire Local Authority, aiming to provide an excellent specialist school for students with SEMH, including those with neurodivergent needs.

Pupils who attend the Academy have an Education, Health and care Plan (EHCP), requiring adherence to the admission arrangements specified within the [SEND Code of Practice](#).

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all school places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way. The policy aims to:

- explain **how to apply** for a place at The Keystone Academy
- set out the Academy's **arrangements for allocating places to learners** who apply

2. Guidance and legislation

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

- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes and also 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.

This policy takes into account the following legislation:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Regulations 2014

3. Admission requirements

A pupil will be admitted to The Keystone Academy:

- If he or she falls within the terms of the current approval for a place within the school. This is currently when a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) identifying a need for a specialist provision, and has a social, emotional and / or mental health need or diagnosis.
AND
- When Shropshire Local Authority, or a neighbouring one, following consultation with parents, school and any relevant professionals who are involved in the assessment, agree that the child's needs are most suitably met at Keystone Academy.

3. Consultation with parents and schools before naming a school

Before specifying the name of a particular school in an EHCP, the Local Authority (LA) will consult with the parents of the child concerned and may also consult with the school on an informal basis.

Where the parent has a preference, the LA will name the school, unless:

- The school is unsuitable to the child's age, ability or aptitude or to his or her special educational needs; or
- The attendance of the child at the school would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he or she would be educated.

The LA will give due consideration to the views expressed by those consulted but the final decision lies with the LA. Once a school has been named in an Education Health and Care Plan, that school has a statutory duty to admit the child.

When considering admission, the Headteacher, or those with delegated responsibilities will aim to meet the child, invite parents to visit the school if they have not already done so, will review their needs with due consideration of the provision required, including the curriculum offer and the accreditation pathway available (if relevant) ensuring that there is a progression route for each pupil.

As part of its consideration the LA will consider the grounds listed above. In so doing it will be mindful of:

- the terms of the approval noted by Keystone Academy during the formal consultation process,
- the number in the particular year or teaching group and classroom arrangements in the school.

Legal note: if a school refuses to admit a child, the LA has the right to complain to the Secretary of State, noting the governing body have failed to meet their statutory duty. However, the governing body can also raise a complaint to the Secretary of State if they strongly believe the LA has acted unreasonably. Therefore, it is in the best interests of all parties to act within the law and in transparent collaboration, to ensure best outcomes for children during the admissions process.

The use of admission panels:

If there is a high pressure on school places, or a high volume of admissions to be considered for a certain part of the year, such as for Year 7 places to enrol in September, the school operates an admissions panel. Its purpose will be to enable the school, having been consulted by the Local Authority, to come to a decision as to whether or not the admission of a child is compatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom they would be educated or the efficient use of resources. The discussion at the panel will inform the response of the governing body to the LA. The final decision lies with the Local Authority.

Oversubscription/allocating limited places between children/waiting lists:

The academy does not operate a waiting list. The academy works closely with the Local Authority SEND and Inclusion team and meets regularly with the EHCP Team for

consultation meetings, the purpose of which is to inform the school of pupils who require places in the locality.

Admission Arrangements:

Once a place has been agreed, the following operational arrangements will be made:

- SEN Transport team will organise transport, if required and the pupil is eligible for it.
- School Office staff will arrange for a welcome/admission pack to be given to parents/carers.
- A start date will be proposed, and transition/taster sessions will be arranged.
- A pre-admission meeting will be held, or in the case of a large intake such as for Year 7 – parent transition meetings will be held as an alternative.
- Parents, school and the multi-disciplinary team will liaise, to ensure appropriate plans are in place to ensure the Health & Safety of a child. If a child's needs are such that specialist training or equipment are required, this can delay admission. Occasionally pupils require specifically trained and appointed staff. Recruitment to such a post can also delay admission. In some circumstances it is mutually beneficial to have a phased transition into school. This will be considered at the pre-admissions meeting.

4. Allocation of Places

The Academy has an agreed admission number of 120, which has grown gradually over the first three years. Below is the expected breakdown of year groups during academic year 2024-25.

| 2024/25 | Student numbers |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Reception | 2 |
| Year 1 | 6 |
| Year 2 | 4 |
| Year 3 | 4 |
| Year 4 | 5 |
| Year 5 | 4 |
| Year 6 | 10 |
| Year 7 | 17 |
| Year 8 | 22 |
| Year 9 | 16 |
| Year 10 | 15 |
| Year 11 | 15 |

5. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Support Board on an annual basis. Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where

the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Trust Board will publicly consult on these changes.