



Admissions Policy

Date policy last reviewed: June 2021

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. B. ...', positioned above the Headteacher's name.

Headteacher

Date:
21/06/21

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. G. ...', positioned above the Chair of governors' name.

Chair of governors

Date:
24/06/21

Review Date: June 2022

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1. Introduction

Inscape House School a publicly funded special school providing educational day places for autistic students in Year 1 to Year 14. The school works in partnership with local authorities and parents/carers to assess the suitability of pupils for a place at a school. All pupils must have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP, formerly a Statement of Special Educational Needs) that refers to a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition. Autism is a spectrum condition which requires a continuum of provision. The school caters for this continuum through four learning pathways. The school provides an education for pupils who require autism specific provision which is tailored to meet their social, sensory and communication needs, as well as providing support to enable them to manage levels of anxiety. These pupils are those identified as requiring a modified yet structured national curriculum content, with support from specialist staff within a specialist environment. This support includes a structured environment and high levels of targeted intervention and differentiation throughout the school day. Curriculum & Therapy offers plus our Funding Bands and Provision Maps for further information on categories of provision.

2. Aims

To ensure there are robust and transparent systems in place to support a fair and consistent approach to admissions.

3. Scope

This policy is relevant to all governors, staff, parents & carers, pupils and local authority representatives who are involved in the admission of a pupil.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor this policy's implementation in school.
- Ensure local procedures are in place to effectively implement this policy within the school.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and advise board of any necessary changes.

The Head of Service will:

- Ensure all relevant staff are aware of this policy and that procedures are followed.
- Ensure appropriate information is available for parents throughout the process.
- Allocate a member of the leadership team to process each referral and ensure both the school and the family receive all relevant information prior to the pupil starting at the school.
- The leadership team will organise monthly open mornings for prospective parents at and provide opportunities for parental/guardian visits for pupils referred by the local authority.

5. Typical Profile of Admissions (Admissions Criteria)

The school is designated for pupils with a diagnosis of autism and its provision is designed accordingly as follows:

1. The school accepts local authority referrals on behalf of students who have an autism spectrum diagnosis (or are awaiting diagnosis and are recognised by professionals as having social communication difficulties that cause a major barrier to learning) in accordance with the admissions procedure set out below.
2. It is necessary for pupils to have an existing or proposed Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) which makes clear reference to a diagnosis of autism (but not with a Severe Learning Difficulty specified). In addition to an autism spectrum diagnosis, the EHC plan may include similar presenting features such as language, sensory, behaviour or communication difficulties.
3. Students may also have additional needs, for example obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Pupils may also have associated needs in the areas of emotional, social and communication and interaction development and/or psychological or mental health difficulties. In addition, pupils may have sensory, or physical/motor difficulties.
5. We strongly encourage places for students who have a diagnosis of autism and who are 'Looked After Child' (LAC) by their Local Authority. We prioritise these children in our application of over subscription criteria.

6. Where possible, an identified and agreed number of pupil placements will be available within each key stage. This is to facilitate age appropriate peer groups, progression and organisation of timetable.

7. Inscape House Schools is unable to offer places to families who wish to privately fund the placement.

8. There is compatibility between pupils. The school will carefully consider (through the referral process) the vulnerability that is likely to be felt by any pupil within the school. If a pupil admission is deemed to have a potentially negative impact, for reasons of safety and wellbeing, a placement may not be suitable.

9. There is a specified Admissions Priority Area (APA) for each school that is usually within 30 miles or 45 minutes travel time (based on Google maps) from the School.

10. However, where it is in the best interests of the pupil, consideration will be given to pupils living further away, subject to suitability and impact on an individual's welfare. This will be determined on a need led individual basis.

Admissions Code

All applications for places will be in accordance with The Together Trust's funding agreement, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015 and the School Admissions Code 2015.

Planned Admissions Number (PAN)

Inscape House School has a planned admission number of 105.

The admission authority will notify the DfE of any intention to increase the school's PAN and reference the changes on the school's website. The admission authority will consult on any proposal to decrease the school's PAN – consultation will not occur where it is proposed to increase or keep the same PAN. If the admission authority can accept more pupils than the PAN, it will notify the DfE in good time so that the LAs can deliver their coordination responsibilities effectively.

Admissions Procedure

Places will be allocated to pupils in accordance with the procedure set out below. Parents are welcome to attend and Open Morning at the school and to request information about the school (including the admission process). Parents should inform their Local Authority of their preference for a place at the school and may ask their Local Authority to name the school in their pupil's EHC Plan. On some occasions, Local Authority professionals who are involved in a pupil's placement or who have a significant professional interest in their wellbeing, may recommend that the school may meet their needs and inform parents. The school can only proceed to the admissions stage with Local Authority support. We therefore encourage parents to engage in a dialogue with their Local Authority to express a preference for the school.

Student with an EHC plan where the local authority intends to name the school

1. Where the local authority intends to name the school in an EHC plan, the school will consider the proposal and will consent to being named, except where admitting the pupil 'would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other pupil, and where no reasonable steps can be made to secure compatibility' OR 'the setting is unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational need of the child and where no reasonable adjustment can be made.'
2. In deciding whether a pupil's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of existing pupils, OR the setting is unsuitable, the school will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015.
3. If the school determines that admitting the pupil would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, OR the setting is unsuitable, it will, within 15 days of the local authority's notice, notify the Local Authority that it does not agree that the school should be named in the EHC Plan. The school will set out the facts and matters it relies upon in support of its contention that admitting that pupil would be incompatible with efficiently educating other pupil OR the setting is unsuitable; and the school cannot take reasonable steps to secure compatibility.
4. Where The school considers that it should not have been named in the EHC Plan, the School may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the Local Authority has acted unreasonably in naming it and to make an order directing the Local Authority to amend the pupil's EHC Plan by removing the name of the school.

The school will always provide the Local Authority with views to help with the decision making process. In order to do this, the school can undertake further assessments of prospective pupils to establish whether the school can meet their needs. At the request of the Local Authority (and having received appropriate paperwork), the school assessment team will observe/assess the pupil at their home or current school. Where possible, the school will meet parents and analyse reports from previous school placements in order to understand how best to meet the pupil's needs. It is expected that recent (within 6 months prior to referral initiation) and relevant (based upon current pupil placement situation and individual and identified need) professional reports will be provided by those working directly with the pupil, or by the Local Authority lead. Where reports are not available and/or further information is required, the school will arrange a more detailed assessment route and report findings to confirm for admission.

Oversubscription Criteria

The school will seek to work collaboratively with all neighbouring Local Authorities to manage referrals. Where there are more applicants than vacancies, places will be prioritised according to the Admissions Criteria, which also acts as the Oversubscription Criteria.

In-year admissions

The school will follow the same process for in-year admissions as for admissions at the start of the academic year.

In cases where less than the PAN have applied, the school retains the right to refuse admission to applicants who do not satisfy the criteria listed above.

Waiting list

In the event that the school has a full complement of pupils as determined by the PAN, the DfE registration and the structure of class groups, a waiting list will be maintained. A young person's name is entered onto the list upon receipt of a written request from the placing authority. The list is subdivided according to Key Stage. Within this framework, the young person's names appear on the list in order of date of application made by the local authority. However, students on the waiting list are also considered based on their needs rather than solely on their position on the waiting list.

Appeals

Should a placement be considered unsuitable for a pupil (following the admissions procedure) feedback to parents/carers will be provided by the Local Authority as to the grounds for the decision. If the Local Authority decides not to name the school in a pupil's EHC Plan the parents have the right to appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and should refer directly to the Local Authority for contact details and their intention to appeal a decision.

Communication and Confidentiality

All decisions relating to the proposed placement of any individual are confidential. There will be open and regular communication with parents/carers and advocates, which acknowledges and respects the needs of each young person. The school will liaise with the Local Authority to ensure they are kept up to date.

Success Criteria for Admitted Pupils

- All pupils are appropriately placed.
- All pupils experience a smooth transition to our schools.
- Parents are clear and happy on the process and no decisions are regarded as unfair.

Decisions on continued placement of pupils within the school:

- The suitability of a young person's long-term placement is considered at an Initial Placement Review, usually held towards the end of the first term of attendance at the school and at subsequent Annual Reviews. In some instances, additional case conferences or Interim Reviews may also consider this matter. Where it is felt that there are concerns about the child's placement it is discussed by the Head of Service, members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Director of Educational Services, prior to contact with the family and/or the local authority. Factors to be taken into

consideration in transferring students to other educational provision include not only the ability of Inscape House School to continue to meet the student's needs but also the probability of another provision meeting the young person's needs more adequately. It should be clear to all concerned that responsibility for decisions regarding placement outside the school ultimately rests with the local authority and the child's family.

References

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2014) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board on an annual basis. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is June 2022.

