

Admissions Policy

February 2019

Version Number: 3.0



1.0 Purpose

Hardwick House School is an Independent Special School approved by the Secretary of State for Education under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Admission to Hardwick House School will be by way of the school being named within an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The School Admission Code December 2014 and the Equality Act 2010 underpin the approach taken in this policy and Hardwick House School seeks to comply with both to the extent required by law and in order to ensure best practice in our admission arrangements.

This policy will be published on the Hardwick House School website.

All statutory references below are to the Children and Families Act 2014.

As part of the EHCP, the parents/carers will have the right to request the Local Authority that maintains the Plan to name the school of their choice (section 38 (2) (b) (ii)). The local authority will be required to consult with the Directors of Hardwick House School (section 39 (2)) and to determine if the proposed placement is:

1. a) suitable for the particular needs of the child (section 39(4)(a));
2. b) incompatible with the efficient education of other children (section 39(4)(b)(i)) and
3. c) an efficient use of resources (section 39(4)(b)(ii)).

The Directors or Head will respond to requests to name Hardwick House School within 15 days.

2.0 Referrals

On receiving a referral, School Directors, or Head will request from the Local Authority, the following documents:

- The most recent Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Review notes from the educational establishment most recently attended by the child
- LAC (Looked After Children) Review for young people in care
- Any psychiatric, psychologist, social worker or any other professional reports that might be relevant.

Parents of the prospective learner will also be invited into school to meet with the Directors.

3.0 Admission Criteria

3.1 Essential Criteria

To determine if a place at Hardwick House School is suitable within the meaning of section 39, the Directors have agreed the following essential criteria must be satisfied.

The child or young person must:

- Be between 7 and 19 years of age
- Have a diagnosis of autism or a related communication disorder within the triad of impairments

- Have an EHCP
- Have the appropriate age, skills and behaviour for the vacancy that exists.

3.2 Additional Factors of Consideration

The following factors will further inform whether Hardwick House School is suitable for the child or young person and whether their admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other learners:

- Whether other children attend Hardwick House School with a similar level of ability and range of skills
- The dynamic of the class group anticipated for the particular child
- For Children and Young People with a physical disability whether accessible places are available or whether it would be possible to make reasonable adjustments within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.
- If there is a secondary diagnosis, including but not limited to Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment and Mental Health Needs whether these needs can also be met within the school.
- Whether medical needs can be accommodated within current staffing arrangements. Medical needs requiring on site nursing care cannot usually be accommodated.

In addition, the commuting distance for the prospective learner is also considered. A feasible distance is defined as a journey time of no more than 75 minutes in accordance with Google Maps.

3.2 Funding

All learners at Hardwick House School are funded by the Local Authority in which they reside, and it is therefore essential to have agreement (in writing) from the Local Authority.

4.0 The Admissions Process

There are many ways to start the process of referral.

If a local authority recognises that a child's needs will best be met by our expertise they will make a referral to us.

Alternatively, parents can contact the school directly to book a meeting with a Director or Head of School to view the school.

If parents are interested in a place for their child, Hardwick House School will request to see the EHCP and any relevant professional reports.

Where a child is currently attending a different school or educational provision, a Director or member of the Senior Leadership Team will visit that setting to observe the child. This is to aid in the assessment of whether Hardwick House School is able to meet the needs of the child.

The child or young person may be invited into Hardwick House School for further informal assessment. This informal assessment will usually include attending for a minimum of half a day and joining in classes with prospective peers.

The aim of the informal assessments is to establish an understanding for how the child or young person reacts to the environment. Occasionally the placement may not be suitable if a learner does not have an appropriate peer group.

Following an informal assessment, Hardwick House School will feedback to parents to inform if the school feels able to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the EHCP.

5.0 Admission Numbers

Hardwick House School will resist admission where it is considered such admission would be incompatible with the efficient education for other children (section 39 (4) (b) (i)).

Following an assessment by the school of the potential impact of admission, applications will be considered on a case by case basis. Where the school's agreed and preferred maximum number of learners in any one year group is exceeded Hardwick House School will not accept further admissions for that year group.

On occasion, this may mean that children of certain age groups cannot be admitted even when there are vacancies in other parts of the school.

Hardwick House School is currently able to admit 33 learners, by permission of Ofsted.

6.0 Naming Hardwick House School in an EHCP

Where a local authority intends to name Hardwick House School in an EHCP and have notified Hardwick House School of this, the Directors, or Head of School will respond to this request within 15 days.

In considering incompatibility, the Directors or Head of School will have regard to, whether any reasonable steps might be taken to avoid incompatibility, relevant statutory guidance and the health and safety of other learners and staff.

Where the considered view is that the naming of Hardwick House School is not appropriate, the decision and reasons will be sent in writing to the relevant local authority.

Should a parent or guardian of a child appeal to the SEND Tribunal to request that Hardwick House School is named in the EHCP, Hardwick House School agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal.