



# ADMISSIONS POLICY

<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Head of Centre</b>
<b>Next review</b>	<b>September 2025</b>

# Admissions Policy

## Introduction

This policy is in line with Independent School Standards (Revised January 2015)

The Alternative centre of Education (ACE) is an alternative provision school for pupils aged 7-16 who would benefit from a placement away from their mainstream setting or require specialist education on a longer-term basis.

The aim of the school is to promote inclusion and raise standards of behaviour and achievement by proactive early intervention. This will support schools in reducing fixed term and permanent exclusions.

Pupils are likely, but not exclusively, to have experienced school attendance issues, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Pupils who will benefit from a placement at ACE are likely to fall into the following categories:

- Pupils who have had, or are at risk of having a fixed term exclusion
- Pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion
- Pupils who are disaffected with mainstream education to such an extent that continuation of a full-time placement in their setting is no longer a positive option
- Pupils who have social and emotional issues which are impacting on their education. This may manifest itself through negative and challenging behaviours or withdrawal from education and school life
- Pupils who have been bullied, or have bullied others
- Pupils who have had patterns of poor school attendance and cannot re-establish consistent attendance at their mainstream setting
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and vulnerable due to a range of social circumstances (e.g. families experiencing risks such as poverty, substance misuse, mental health issues)

The purpose of this document is to set out the school's admission policy and to demonstrate that pupil admissions will be fair, open and transparent. The admissions policy will:

- Offer schools and academies early intervention placements to meet the needs of disaffected and vulnerable pupils and those who are at risk of permanent exclusion
- Enable ACE to provide a structured, stable environment which will ensure that we are able to meet the individual needs of each pupil

- Provide a rapid response to schools and academies within 48 hours of emergency referral
- Support the aims of ACE which is to re-engage pupils with their learning and return where possible and return them to a mainstream education.

We work closely with a wide range of academies, maintained schools and local authorities. We have a robust admissions process which referring organisations must follow before a young person starts their education with us. We are determined for the school to continue to be seen as a partner in fulfilling the education needs of schools and the local community. We are an equal opportunities non-discriminatory school and we therefore welcome applications for admission of young people from diverse backgrounds and with varying needs. Each admission is considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the pupils we admit are ones which will benefit from the education provision we offer. ACE operates a fair, objective and transparent admissions system that includes a complaints procedure.

### **Pre – Admission**

Alternative Centre of Education will publish a copy of our latest Prospectus on our website for reference by parents/carers and other stakeholders; and make paper copies of the information available on request.

Alternative Centre of Education works in partnership with local authorities and schools and requires that all necessary documentation is provided in a timely manner, in order to ensure an informed decision can be made about meeting the needs of a young person. The documents required are:

1. Current Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
2. Most recent annual review/educational progress
3. A chronology of young person's education to date
4. Most recent care plan or Personal Education Plan (PEP)
5. Any additional professional reports
6. Any additional assessments

We will ensure that an individual risk assessment and behaviour management plan is generated prior to admission. If we feel that a young person may need additional resources, we will ensure that these resources can be reasonably provided by the centre. We will ensure that a post admission review takes place within 6 and 12 weeks. This meeting will endorse the placement and agree the details of individual support plans. This admission review will ensure that all parents/carers and professionals are informed of up to date detailed baseline assessment and information related to both the child's education and care.

### **Admission Arrangements**

The primary aim of ACE is to provide early intervention for schools and pupils and help re-engage pupils with their learning in a mainstream setting. Full time or longer-term placements will be available where it is clear an early return to mainstream school would not be appropriate. All placements at ACE are on a dual registered basis, with the exception of those referred from SEN.

ACE will only admit pupils in accordance with DFE guidelines:

'Children of compulsory age can only be admitted to an alternative provision by being referred from local authorities, schools and Academies using their existing referral powers or duties'.

ACE will be run in accordance with all equalities law. It will admit pupils aged between 7 and 16 years who have been referred to the school through one of the referral routes set out below:

1. Referred by a Local Authority Maintained school or by an Academy which may send pupils off-site to an alternative provision Academy as part of early intervention measures to address behaviour
2. Named pupils on application from the local authority, in accordance with a School Attendance Order<sup>1</sup> after consultation with the Secretary of State

The Alternative Centre of Education does not accept applications from parents/carers or self-referrals from potential pupils.

### **Admission Procedures**

Successful referral to The Alternative Centre of Education are most likely where the following conditions are met for a particular student:

1. That full-time mainstream education whilst currently not deemed appropriate, is the long-term aim of school, students and parents
2. That a personalised education and behaviour programme will stabilise mainstream school circumstances and aid progress and achievement
3. That there is a clear need for the type of provision on offer and that this provision is not available in the mainstream setting
4. That the referral is not a direct substitute for provision already identified in an Education Health Care Plan. If specific support is mentioned in a EHC plan then the school/LA referring the student to ACE needs to continue to fulfil specific tasks or by negotiation and agreement, devolve the task(s) to ACE. This will also involve devolvement of funding
5. That the support available to the young person from other agencies prior to placement continues
6. That the interests of the young person are the priority

**Prospective students and parents are welcome to visit ACE prior to the formal referral process**

The referral procedure is as follows,

1. Applications for a placement must be made on the ACE referral form and have the consent of parents or carers. All referral forms need to be accompanied with the pupil's most recent IEP or behaviour plan
2. We discuss potential referrals both with commissioners and the pupil's parents/carers, where a pupil is not already known to ACE. In cases where a higher level of difficulty leads to consideration of longer term support at ACE, commissioners will be asked to set up a planning meeting to explore in greater detail the needs and capabilities of the learner and the nature of the provision required. Where there is some doubt about whether ACE is the correct provision to meet a pupil's needs, an assessment place/probationary period may be offered.
3. Referrals may be made at any time throughout the year
4. Placements will be offered to all pupils whose needs can be met by the Alternative Centre of Education, subject to published admission numbers.
5. Within 48 hours of an emergency placement request the head teacher of the ACE will contact the commissioner to set up a meeting with parents/carers, SENCO and any other relevant agency.
6. All placements will be reviewed at termly intervals to determine their feasibility. The Headteacher will make decisions regarding appropriateness of placement after consultation with all concerned parties. It is always our aim to enable students to return to the mainstream setting and the vast majority of our students follow this route. In all cases we work closely with the referring school or provider to ensure that the provision made for the young person is absolutely in his or her best interests and provides the greatest opportunity for achieving positive outcomes.
7. ACE endeavours to offer successful personalised education to all young people who are admitted. Sometimes, however valid the placement seems, it may become evident that a young person's stay at ACE will not work in their best interests. We aim to tailor each young person's provision to suit their individual requirements. If, however, we are unable to meet their needs we will review each case on its merits to agree (for the student's best interests) a more appropriate option for all concerned.

### **Pupil registration and information sharing**

The Alternative Centre of Education will make sure that all pupils are registered accordingly in line with section 434 of the Education Act 1996. All part-time and full-time pupils or those attending on early intervention or on fixed term exclusion will remain on the register at the original school and with the Alternative Centre of Education (dual registration).

Complaints Process Criteria Admission Appeals arrangements are not statutory regarding AP schools, however at Alternative Centre of Education we want to be as fair, objective and transparent as we can with all stakeholders regarding our admissions procedures.