



New Horizon Education

Admissions & Referral (AP) Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy governs the admission and referral of pupils to New Horizon Education, serving children of compulsory school age who require alternative provision (AP) due to exclusion, illness, behavioural needs, or other barriers to mainstream attendance. It applies to pupils dual-registered, on-roll elsewhere, or referred by local authorities or schools.

2. Statutory Foundations

- Commissioned in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance on Alternative Provision (DfE, last updated 5 February 2025).
- Upholds the duty under **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996** for local authorities to provide suitable AP for children unable to attend mainstream school.
- Informs provision according to guidance on arranging AP, including suitability to age, ability, aptitude, and SEN.
- Incorporates dual registration requirements from the Free School pre-opening guide when applicable.

3. Referral & Admissions Process

- **Referral Sources:** Pupils may be referred by:
 - Local authorities (in line with s.19 duty),
 - Mainstream schools (e.g., following suspension or where behaviour or health prevents effective attendance),
 - Health services or other partners (where appropriate).
- **Provision and Registration**

The school will operate as a full-time alternative provision setting, delivering a structured and high-quality educational programme in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance. The provision is designed to meet the needs of pupils who require an alternative or specialist educational environment to support their learning and personal development. Where appropriate, and where it is considered to be in the best interests of the pupil, the school may facilitate dual registration with the pupil's mainstream school. Dual registration will enable pupils to maintain a connection with their mainstream education while benefiting from the targeted support offered within the alternative provision. All



decisions regarding dual registration will be made collaboratively with the referring local authority, the mainstream school, parents or carers, and other relevant agencies, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, and the principles set out in *Alternative Provision: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (DfE)*.

- **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Compulsory school age.
- Demonstrable need due to exclusion, illness, behavioural challenges, anxiety, or similar obstacles.
- Provision must be age-appropriate, sensitive to any SEND, delivered by staff with appropriate training and safeguarding checks.

- **Admissions Committee:** A panel including leadership, SENCo, and commissioners will review referrals. Decisions will be made promptly and communicated with supporting evidence of need.

4. Named Practitioners & Responsibilities

- **Local Authority:** Must designate a named officer responsible for arranging education for children with health or attendance needs; parents should know who this is.
- **School Liaison:** New Horizon will appoint a named internal contact for incoming referrals and ongoing coordination with local authorities, schools, health services, and parents.

5. Priority & Oversubscription

In cases where demand exceeds capacity, the following priorities will apply:

1. Pupils facing imminent permanent exclusion.
2. Pupils currently suspended long-term with ongoing need.
3. Pupils unable to attend mainstream due to health or emotional barriers.
4. Pupils referred for reintegration planning from illness or SEND-led absence.
Additional discretionary factors may include proximity measured objectively or by use of nodal admissions points—ensuring compliance with **Greenwich Judgment**, meaning no geographic bias for or against local/non-local applicants.

6. Age and Legal Points of Admission

- The school will accept **compulsory school age** pupils. Admission requests for summer-born children to start outside their typical age group (e.g., reception start) will be considered per DfE guidance; decisions made in the child's best interests and in line with the School Admissions Code.
- Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) should be placed in settings that meet their needs; New Horizon will liaise with local authorities where referrals from EHCP-managed pupils are proposed.

7. Appeals & Transparency

- Although formal appeals processes (as per the School Admissions Appeals Code) typically apply to mainstream oversubscription, New Horizon commits to transparent decision-making.
- Parents and schools may request a review of admission decisions; the school will share summary rationales and offer meetings or mediation as needed.

8. Safeguarding & Suitability

- All placements will be monitored to ensure suitability—aligned with **Keeping Children Safe in Education** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children** guidance.
- Should any safeguarding concern arise post-admission, the placement will be reviewed immediately and, if unresolved, terminated until safe conditions are restored.

9. Referral Appeals & Exit Planning

- Decisions to start, continue, or end placements will include:
 - Regular reviews.
 - Re-integration strategies to return pupils to mainstream or other appropriate provision as soon as appropriate.
 - Coordination with referring bodies and families.

10. Publication & Review

- This policy will be published online and distributed to all relevant stakeholders, including families, local authorities, and schools.
 - The policy will be reviewed annually or whenever statutory guidance changes (e.g., updates in AP guidance as of 5 February 2025).
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Summary Table

Section	Key Responsibility or Principle
Referral	Via Local Authorities, Schools, Health Services
Eligibility	Compulsory school age; barriers to mainstream attendance
Registration	Full time or dual registration accepted
Decision-making	- Admissions panel with transparent criteria
Oversubscription	Priorities defined, no geographic bias.
Safeguarding	Ongoing monitoring, immediate action on concerns
Age Flexibility	Handle summer-born cases per guidance
Appeals	Review process available; transparency emphasized
Publication	Policy widely available; annual statutory review

Final Thoughts

This policy aims to reflect current statutory requirements while ensuring that **New Horizon Education** provides inclusive, fair, and effective alternative provision. It emphasizes coordination, transparency, safeguarding, and responsiveness to pupil needs and legal obligations.