ED04 - ADMISSIONS POLICY

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Person Responsible for Updating:	James Eagle

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POLICY STATEMENT

Amberley Court School (ACS) is approved by the Secretary of State for Education as an independent special school for pupils with SEMH. The school operates admissions processes to maximize the speed and efficiency of an admission to the school roll from formal referral or 'expression of interest' by a parent or Local Authority placement officer via the DPS portal.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

ACS will admit pupils restricted to the prime category of admission approved by the Secretary of State for the individual school and registered with the Government's EDUBASE2 public database.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to consider and prioritise referrals with reference to the statutory requirements in the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 38, 39 and 42. These sections refer to the individual's EHCPs and considers:

- The parents/carers right to name the school of their choice.
- The requirement for the Local Authority to consult the Headteacher to ***ensure the individuals particular needs can be met***.
- The compatibility of the individual with the pupils currently on roll of the school.
- The compatibility of the efficient use of school resources (such as exceeding the number of pupils within age groups).
- The Local Authority's duty to secure special educational provision and health care provision in accordance with the EHCP.

Adhering to the above admission criteria is essential especially when there are an excess number of referrals for limited places available within the school.

WAITING LIST

In situations where there is an excess of referrals compared to the number of places available, referred admissions are offered the opportunity to be placed on a school waiting list.

When places become available all referred admissions on the waiting are prioritised according to the criteria above. In cases where the numbers of referrals who meet the criteria exceed the places available; each school is required to implement a documented oversubscription process to be considered by an ad-hoc Admissions Appeals Committee.

APPEALS

Where a Local Authority seeks a placement and where the Headteacher is not able to accept the referral both the Local Authority and the parents of the pupil will be given an opportunity to appeal to a School Admissions/Referrals Manager.

Should a parent/carer be dissatisfied with the decision of a School Admission/Referral Manager in relation to offering a place to a child; an appeal may be made in writing to the Governors of Amberley Court School stating the grounds for the appeal.

FUNDING

The Local Authority in which the individual resides funds the majority of placements. Privately funded pupils are considered on an individual basis; however Local Authority placements are required to take priority over privately funded requests.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

The Local Authority SENAT Department in which the individual student resides funds the majority of placements, although some may be supported through social care. Privately funded students are considered on an individual basis; however Local Authority placements are required to take priority over

ACS admits pupils ranging from Years 1 to 11 -age 6-16yrs old). Pupils may start at any time throughout the course of the school year providing their place is suitable and there is space available.

ACS is open to pupils 38 weeks a year, in line with West Sussex Local Authority term-times where possible.

ACS provides education and support for the following:

- Moderate Social, Emotional or Mental Health difficulties (SEMH);
- Moderate Autistic Spectrum Condition / Disorder (ASC), including Aspergers;
- Moderate Social/communication difficulties and/or SPLD;
- Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) and associated difficulties; Conditions such as ADHD, ADD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia.

It is the school's policy that pupils admitted have an EHCP/ SEN Statement in conjunction with the areas described above. However, decisions as to each pupil's suitability to the school will be made on an individual basis.

When there is an enquiry about pupil placement, the initial application process may be as follows:

- arrangements for the family/carers to attend an informal visit to the school – usually without the child;
- invitation, from the Local Authority, for the Headteacher to 'express an interest' in offering a place;
- interview / visit process from the Headteacher with the parent and prospective pupil;
- Pupil assessment within the classroom environment – this may be once or multiple times followed by communication of the outcome of the assessment, with the Local Authority and parent/carer;
- offer paperwork, if accepted, is forwarded to the authority;
- arrangements for familiarisation by the families; admission record and agreements completed including consent forms, diet requirements, risk assessment, PBS plan etc;
- upon agreed start date, procedures will include entering a record in *the Pupils Admission and attainment history*, with records being requested from the transition school if available;
- assessment begins, by the allocated class teacher.

In the first few weeks following admission:

- RA, PBS and Case Study will be extended and shared with parent/carer
- Baseline testing where applicable will be undertaken
- Therapeutic intervention will be timetabled where required

The first term:

- The first 3 months on roll at ACS, or the first full term, whichever is longer, will be considered as a 'probationary period'. This will enable the school to terminate placement in extreme instances
- In rare cases, the probationary period may be extended indefinitely, with review meetings, in order to better cater for the pupil
- Termination of placement is very infrequent and the reasons behind termination will be discussed in depth with both the parent / carer and the Local Authority

**For Local Authority enquiries, Amberley Court School is required to obtain permission to make initial contact with the family.*

TRIBUNAL

On those occasions when parents/carers appeal to an SEN Tribunal over the issue of placement; Amberley Court School will endeavour to assess the child at the request of parents/carers who can provide evidence of the formal appeal being in place. This will be done at no cost to the parents/carers or to the LA, and wherever possible will be done before the date of the Tribunal hearing to advise if a placement would be offered.

COMMUNICATION

ACS is required to respond to all enquiries in a timely manner and to follow up with parents/carers or Local Authorities when awaiting responses/decisions.

ACS is required to record all communication with Local Authorities or parents/carers in the internal school system. The school will issue written confirmation (email or post) of all verbal conversations.

Any staff involved in communications with parents/carers and/or pupils should recognise the importance of promoting the school's provision and facilities.

COLLABORATION

If it is determined that the school where the initial enquiry was received would not be suitable for the pupil; ACS will consider if another local school setting may be more appropriate and will assist the parent/carer in organising an enquiry with the Local Authority SEN Team.

GOVERNING BODY

Amberley Court School expects their Governors' oversight to be secured through the operation of a role which ensures validation that the management, and administrative systems, are operational and effective.

POSITION	Headteacher	**NAME**	**James Eagle**	**SIGNATURE**	***J Eagle***	**DATE**	**01/09/2026**
POSITION	Governor	**NAME**	**Dave Johns**	**SIGNATURE**	***D Johns***	**DATE**	**01/09/2026**
POSITION		**NAME**		**SIGNATURE**		**DATE**	