



Admissions Policy

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An academy within:



“Learning together, to be the best we can be”

1. Context

- 1.1. Hilltop School has an agreed admission number of 181 pupils/students and will admit a pupil who has been formally assessed as having a severe or complex learning difficulty and where the school is named in their Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The age range of pupils is 2 – 19 years, with places available as follows (please note these numbers are indicative, and actual students may increase slightly as the academic year progresses):

Key stage	Numbers agreed with Local Authority	Actual number of pupils September 2026
EYFS (2-3yrs)	1	
Reception (3-4yrs)	3	1
KS1 (5 -7yrs)	10	16
KS2 (7-11yrs)	50	69
KS3 (11-14yrs)	25	48
KS4 (14 -16yrs)	7	24
KS5 (post 16)	17	32
Total	181	190

- 1.2. Prior to naming the school in the EHCP, the Local Authority will have fully consulted with the school in line with its statutory obligations.
- 1.3. Places at Hilltop are funded in line with the High Needs Block Operational Guidance. This brings place funding of £10,000 per place per annum, with additional base “top up” funding of £17,330 for children from Rotherham out of area children is given on consultation. Where children have additional needs, this will be reflected in a higher “top up” funding amount, as defined by the school and agreed by the commissioning Local Authority.
- 1.4. The school will provide the Local Authority with the school profile, outlining the needs for pupils they are best positioned to meet and details about the organisation of the school and curriculum offered.

2. Admission criteria and arrangements

- 2.1. Places will usually be taken up at the start of the school year, though by agreement with the Headteacher, places can be accessed at any time of the year. Admissions are generally only agreed if an EHCP has been completed and the needs of the child have been clearly defined in line with the school’s



designation. Usually, the school will visit the student in their present setting and at home before offering a placement.

2.2. In exceptional circumstances, and in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015), the school may consider assessment placements in order to support a Statutory Assessment.

2.3. Consideration will always need to be given to the numbers in, and profile of each year group.

2.1. All decisions relating to admissions are made in accordance with:

- the Equality Act 2010,
- the SEND Code of Practice,
- the Children and Families Act 2014,
- and duties relating to reasonable adjustments.

3. Referral routes

3.1. Parents who wish to consider a place at the school for their child should contact their Local Authority SEND Assessment Team for guidance on relevant procedures.

2.2. All EHC plans should incorporate clear and accurate description of needs together with appropriate funding to meet those needs. Whilst any refusal must meet the statutory tests not linked to funding, when this does not occur the school will negotiate, with the commissioning Local Authority, for the appropriate level of bespoke funding for the placement to be viable and sustainable. A formal review of the EHCP will be requested if needed. Consultation documentation should be submitted via the route specified by the school and agreed with the Local Authority. Consultations should have the latest EHCP and supporting professionals reports relevant to the child as they present currently.

4. Admission eligibility criteria

- The school is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude, disability and assessed special educational needs;
- The child has an EHCP indicating severe, or profound and multiple, learning difficulties as a primary special educational need;
- Parents and/or the child have expressed a preference for the school or in cases



of dispute, the local authority has agreed with the school to name it in the EHCP;

- The child's placement in the school is compatible with the efficient education of others and the efficient use of resources as per section 29 of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- The placement is funded in line with the assessed needs of the child's educational, behavioural (including any additional supervisory requirements), medical and care needs and is relative to the cost to the school for delivering a support package which enables at least good provision to be in place;

The appropriateness of the resource required for children with extremely challenging behaviour or very complex medical needs have been considered alongside the needs of the existing year group and within the overall context for the school.

5. Admissions criteria/priorities for when placements are limited

- The placement allows for efficient use of school resources;
- Severity of need for a placement in a severe learning difficulties setting;
- An EHCP is in place which fully assesses the child and quantifies required provision.

6. Admissions procedure including 6th Form (Post 16 places)

- Parents, SEND assessment teams or Educational Psychologists from Local Authorities, Heads/Teachers from other schools, or Alternative Provision/Resource Heads may contact the school directly to arrange a visit; however, it is Local Authorities who assess needs and commission places at the school, therefore
- Parents wishing their child to be considered for a place are advised to contact their Local Authority SEND service;
- The commissioning Local Authority will consult with the Headteacher (on behalf of the Multi Academy Trust) regarding each pupil /student they consider potentially suitable to request a place for;
- The Headteacher will consider the suitability of the school's provision in addressing the needs of the child and also give consideration to the needs of



existing pupils/students on roll;

- The Local Authority and the Headteacher will come to a decision about placement and any reasonable steps necessary to ensure the admissions criteria can be met;
- Admission into our 6th Form follows the same process as for all students;
- Once a placement has been agreed new pupils/students have a home visit from the class teacher/phase leader to plan a transition into school;
- It is parents' responsibility to organise transportation to school. For most of our learners this is online through the Rotherham website.
- <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/xfp/form/363>

7. Appeal arrangements

- 7.1. The SEND Code of Practice entitles parents to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal if their home LA refuses to name their school of choice in the EHCP or the named school refuses to offer a place.
- 7.2. Hilltop School, as part of Nexus Multi Academy Trust, will always ensure that parents and the commissioning Local Authority are kept informed as necessary when the school is considering placement consultation. The school will be clear with both parents and the Local Authority about the reasons underpinning any potential refusal which, in line with section 39 of the Children and Families Act 2014, must relate directly to the suitability of the placement for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or to concerns that the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.
- 7.3. Where a parent is unhappy with the position taken, the school, Trust and Local Authority will consider any reasonable steps that could be taken to address identified concerns. Parents must be informed of the route to appeal placement decisions made by the Local Authority.

8. Funding of places

- 8.1. Local Authorities commission and fund places for pupils at the school based upon identified needs established through a Multi-Agency Statutory Assessment that are costed and recorded in an EHCP.



8.2. The Education and Skills Funding Agency provides some core funding for an agreed number of planned places, but it is the commissioning Local Authorities that are responsible for ensuring that funding is appropriately matched to needs identified in EHCPs.