Amberleigh Care

Specialist Therapeutic Care & Education

Polisi Mynediad

Admissions Policy

September 2026

Policy Owner: Sioned Davies, Headteacher
Reviewed by: Kevin Gallagher, Proprietor
Review Date: Annually

1. Legislative Framework and Guidance

This policy outlines the admissions, referral and placement procedures for pupils attending the Independent Specialist School. It aims to ensure that all placements are appropriate, safe, person-centred and capable of meeting the individual needs of each child or young person.

The school operates in accordance with:

- Education Act 1996
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Equality Act 2010
- The Children's Act 1989 and associated guidance
- Welsh Government guidance for independent schools

The school also takes account of the following regulations and standards:

- Standard 14: Suitability of the Service
- Regulation 7: Requirements Relating to the Statement of Purpose
- Regulation 15: Personal Plan
- Regulation 16: Review of Personal Plan
- Regulation 18: Provider Assessment
- Regulation 19: Information About the Service
- Regulation 20: Service Agreement

Admissions decisions will be based solely on the school's ability to meet the child's identified needs safely and effectively.

Throughout the admissions process, the school will have due regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Welsh Government expectations regarding participation in decision-making.

2. Admissions Criteria

The school provides specialist education and support for children and young people whose needs can be appropriately met within our educational, therapeutic and care provision.

Admission decisions are based on a thorough assessment of need, compatibility with the existing school community and our ability to safely meet the pupil's educational, health, emotional and behavioural needs.

General Admission Principles

All pupils admitted should:

- Demonstrate the potential to engage with education and therapeutic support.
- Be able to benefit from the specialist provision available.
- Have needs that can be safely managed within the resources and expertise available.
- Be placed through an agreed local authority, parental or other recognised referral pathway.

Admissions May Not Be Offered Where

The school determines that it cannot safely meet the child's needs, including:

- Where the school determines that it does not have the resources, staffing, therapeutic provision, specialist expertise, facilities, or environmental adaptations necessary to safely and effectively meet the child's identified educational, social, emotional, behavioural, medical, therapeutic, communication, or care needs.
- Where the provision specified within the child's Individual Development Plan (IDP), Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), medical plan, or other statutory documentation cannot reasonably be delivered by the school.

All referrals will be considered individually and decisions will be based upon professional assessment rather than diagnosis alone.

Admission decisions will not be based solely on diagnosis, disability, Additional Learning Need (ALN), neurodivergence, or care status. Decisions will be based upon an assessment of whether the school can safely and appropriately meet the child's needs and maintain the welfare and education of all pupils.

Admissions may also be declined where the school is operating at its assessed safe capacity and admission would adversely affect the education, welfare, therapeutic support, or safety of existing pupils.

3. Pre-Referral Responsibilities of the Placing Authority

Prior to referral, the placing authority should ensure that consultation has taken place with relevant individuals and agencies.

Consultation

The views of the following should be sought whenever appropriate:

- The child or young person.
- Parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), where applicable.

- The Local Authority Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Team, ALN Case Officer, or relevant ALN Coordinator, where applicable.
- Current carers.
- Significant family members.
- Current educational placement.
- Relevant health professionals.
- Youth Offending Services where involved.
- Other professionals involved with the child.

Care and Planning Documentation

The placing authority should provide relevant documentation including:

- Education, Health and Care information or Individual Development Plan (IDP).
- Care Plan.
- Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Professional assessments.
- Therapy reports.
- Risk assessments.
- Behaviour support plans.
- Health information.

The placing authority must ensure the proposed placement is consistent with the child's assessed needs and long-term outcomes.

4. Referral, Assessment and Planned Placement Process

Referral Process

Referrals may be received from:

- Local Authorities.
- Regional commissioning teams.
- Parents and carers where appropriate.
- Other recognised agencies.

The final admission decision rests with the Headteacher and Proprietor following consideration of all available evidence and professional advice.

Assessment

The following information will be considered:

- Referral documentation.

- Educational history.
- Behaviour and risk assessments.
- Additional Learning Needs assessments.
- Health and medical reports.
- Attendance information.
- Previous placement history.
- Safeguarding information.

Pre-Admission Visit

A member of the Senior Leadership Team, usually the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, or another designated senior leader, will undertake a pre-admission visit to the child's home or current placement. This visit provides an opportunity to meet the child and family in a familiar environment, gather additional information about the child's strengths and needs, discuss support arrangements, and help facilitate a positive transition into the school.

- A transition meeting will be arranged.
- Information regarding routines, expectations and support provision will be shared.
- The child's views and wishes will be sought.

Where possible:

- The child and family will be invited to visit the school.

Planned Placement

Before admission:

- Compatibility and impact assessments will be completed.
- Risks to the individual and school community will be assessed.
- Funding and placement agreements must be confirmed.
- Required documents must be received or scheduled for receipt.

Emergency or Fast-Track Admissions

The school recognises that exceptional circumstances may require an expedited admission process.

In such circumstances:

- An initial assessment will still be undertaken.
- Risks will be considered before admission.
- Required documents will be obtained as soon as practicable.
- A review meeting will be convened within a specified timeframe following admission.
- Additional support arrangements may be implemented during transition.

The school does not ordinarily provide short-term respite placements.

5. Information for Children, Young People and Families

Prior to admission, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, pupils and families will receive:

- School prospectus.
- Statement of Purpose.
- Behaviour and safeguarding information.
- Attendance expectations.
- Complaints procedure.
- Health and medication procedures.
- Information regarding support services.

Children and young people will be supported to understand:

- The school environment.
- Daily routines.
- Key staff members.
- Learning arrangements.
- Safeguarding procedures.
- How to raise concerns or complaints.

6. Health Care and Medical Information

Prior to admission, all relevant health information must be shared with the school.

Where required, information relating to prescribed emergency medication, asthma inhalers, adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs), controlled medication, allergies and Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) must be provided before admission so that appropriate healthcare arrangements can be established. Appropriate staff training will be identified and completed where necessary prior to admission or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

This includes:

- Medical diagnoses.
- Medication requirements.
- Mental health assessments.
- Risk assessments.
- Specialist professional reports.

Where required, the school will establish:

- Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs).

- Risk management plans.
- Medication management plans.
- Emergency response procedures.

The school will work collaboratively with:

- Parents and carers.
- General Practitioners.
- Community health teams.
- Mental health services.
- Local authority professionals.

Reasonable adjustments will be implemented where required to support attendance, inclusion and participation.

7. Monitoring, Review and Ending Placements

Following admission, placements will be monitored through:

- Academic progress reviews.
- Personal Plan reviews.
- Attendance monitoring.
- Safeguarding oversight.
- Behaviour and wellbeing tracking.
- Multi-agency meetings.

The school will work closely with placing authorities and families to ensure placements continue to meet the child's needs.

Ending a Placement

Except where immediate health and safety concerns require otherwise, no placement will be ended without consultation with the placing authority, relevant professionals, parents or carers (where appropriate), and consideration of alternative support strategies, reasonable adjustments, and transition arrangements.

A placement may end when:

- Educational outcomes have been achieved and transition arrangements are in place.
- There is persistent non-engagement with education, therapeutic interventions, or agreed support programmes, despite appropriate support, reasonable adjustments, multi-agency involvement, and sustained efforts by the school to re-engage the child or young person.

- A multi-agency review concludes that the current placement can no longer appropriately meet the child's educational, social, emotional, behavioural, therapeutic, medical, or Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and that alternative provision is required.
- Following consultation with the child, family, placing authority, and relevant professionals, a planned transition to a more appropriate educational setting is agreed.
- Funding arrangements cease.
- Risks significantly exceed the school's capacity to maintain a safe environment despite agreed interventions.
- The placing authority determines a change of placement is necessary.

Transition planning will be undertaken to minimise disruption and ensure continuity of support.

Complaints and Appeals

Parents, carers, placing authorities and young people may raise concerns regarding admissions decisions through the school's Complaints Policy.

A request for further explanation of an admissions decision should normally be made in writing to the Headteacher within 20 working days of the decision being communicated.

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the school's published Complaints Procedure.

Where complainants remain dissatisfied following completion of the school's complaints process, they may contact Estyn or the Welsh Government Independent Schools Branch regarding concerns about compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.