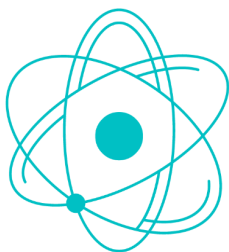


ADMISSIONS POLICY



HARDWICK HOUSE SCHOOL

Date: September 2023

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: September 2024

Hardwick House School is part of Newcome Education, which is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Hardwick House School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

The school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- LRB (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- SchoolPro (data protection)
- Marsh Commercial (insurance)

Hardwick House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Hardwick House School.

The policy documents of Hardwick House School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment

1 Statement of Intent

This Policy applies to all staff, volunteers, therapists, and anyone working on behalf of Hardwick House School, pupils, parents/carers, external agencies and members of the public.

2 Introduction and Aim

Hardwick House School is an Independent Special School approved by the Secretary of State for Education under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Admission to Hardwick House School will be by way of the school being named within an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The School Admission Code 2021

and the Equality Act 2010 underpin the approach taken in this policy and Hardwick House School seeks to comply with both to the extent required by law and in order to ensure best practice in our admission arrangements.

This policy will be published on the Hardwick House School website.
All statutory references below are to the Children and Families Act 2014.

As part of the EHCP, the parents/carers will have the right to request the Local Authority that maintains the Plan to name the school of their choice (section 38 (2) (b) (ii)). The local authority will be required to consult with Hardwick House School (section 39 (2)) and to determine if the proposed placement is:

1. a) suitable for the particular needs of the child (section 39(4)(a));
2. b) incompatible with the efficient education of other children (section 39(4)(b)(i)) and
3. c) an efficient use of resources (section 39(4)(b)(ii)).

The Headteacher or their representative will respond to requests to name Hardwick House School within 15 days.

3 Legislation and Guidance

All statutory references below are to the Children and Families Act 2014 and to the The School Admission Code 2021.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010.

4 Referrals

On receiving a referral, the Headteacher or their representative will request from the Local Authority, the following documents:

- The most recent Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Review notes from the educational establishment most recently attended by the child
- LAC (Looked After Children) Review for young people in care
- Any psychiatric, psychologist, social worker or any other professional reports that might be relevant.

Parents of the prospective learner will also be invited into school to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

5 Admissions Criteria

Essential Criteria

To determine if a place at Hardwick House School is suitable within the meaning of section 39, the School has agreed the following essential criteria must be satisfied.

The child or young person must:

- Be between 7 and 19 years of age
- Have a diagnosis of autism or a related communication disorder within the triad of impairments
- Have an EHCP
- Have the appropriate age, skills and behaviour for the vacancy that exists.

Additional Factors of Consideration

The following factors will further inform whether Hardwick House School is suitable for the child or young person and whether their admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other learners:

- Whether other children attend Hardwick House School with a similar level of ability and range of skills
- The dynamic of the class group anticipated for the particular child
- For Children and Young People with a physical disability whether accessible places are available or whether it would be possible to make reasonable adjustments within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.
- If there is a secondary diagnosis, including but not limited to Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment and Mental Health Needs, whether these needs can also be met within the school.
- Whether medical needs can be accommodated within current staffing arrangements. Medical needs requiring on site nursing care cannot usually be accommodated.

In addition, the commuting distance for the prospective learner is also considered. A feasible distance is defined as a journey time of no more than 75 minutes in accordance with Google Maps.

Funding

All learners at Hardwick House School are funded by the Local Authority in which they reside, and it is therefore essential to have agreement (in writing) from the Local Authority.

6 The Admissions Process

There are many ways to start the process of referral.

If a local authority recognises that a child's needs will best be met by our expertise they will make a referral to us. Alternatively, parents can contact the school directly to book a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to view the school.

If parents are interested in a place for their child, Hardwick House School will request to see the EHCP and any relevant professional reports.

Where a child is currently attending a different school or educational provision, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will visit that setting to observe the child. This is to aid in the assessment of whether Hardwick House School is able to meet the needs of the child.

The child or young person may be invited into Hardwick House School for further informal assessment. This informal assessment will usually include attending for a minimum of half a day and joining in classes with prospective peers.

The aim of the informal assessments is to establish an understanding for how the child or young person reacts to the environment. Occasionally the placement may not be suitable if a learner does not have an appropriate peer group.

Following an informal assessment, Hardwick House School will give feedback to parents to inform if the school feels able to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the EHCP.

7 Admission Numbers

Hardwick House School will resist admission where it is considered such admission would be incompatible with the efficient education for other children (section 39 (4) (b) (i)).

Following an assessment by the school of the potential impact of admission, applications will be considered on a case by case basis. Where the school's agreed

and preferred maximum number of learners in any one year group is exceeded Hardwick House School will not accept further admissions for that year group.

On occasion, this may mean that children of certain age groups cannot be admitted even when there are vacancies in other parts of the school.

Hardwick House School is currently able to admit 40 learners, by permission of the Department for Education and Ofsted.

8 Naming Hardwick House School in an EHCP

Where a local authority intends to name Hardwick House School in an EHCP and have notified Hardwick House School of this, the Directors, or Head of School will respond to this request within 15 days.

In considering incompatibility, the Headteacher or their representative will have regard to whether any reasonable steps might be taken to avoid incompatibility, relevant statutory guidance and the health and safety of other learners and staff.

Where the considered view is that the naming of Hardwick House School is not appropriate, the decision and reasons will be sent in writing to the relevant local authority.

Should a parent or guardian of a child appeal to the SEND Tribunal to request that Hardwick House School is named in the EHCP, Hardwick House School agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal.