



Admissions Policy

Full-time school admission and part-time alternative provision

Document Control

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POLICY SCOPE This policy explains how Fable House considers enquiries, statutory consultations and referrals for its full-time school and part-time alternative provision streams. It should be read alongside the relevant placement or commissioning agreement.

1. Purpose and scope

Fable House is an independent specialist school and education provider in Huddersfield. We provide highly personalised education for students whose special educational needs and disabilities have not been successfully met within mainstream or traditional specialist settings.

This policy applies to prospective students seeking:

- a full-time place on the admission register of the independent special school (the School route);
- a part-time placement commissioned as alternative provision while the student remains on the roll of another school, is receiving education otherwise than at school, or has education arranged by a local authority (the AP route); or
- information about either route following an enquiry made by a parent, carer or young person.

All students admitted or commissioned under this policy must have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP).

2. Our admissions principles

Fable House will:

- consider each prospective student individually and in the context of the provision being requested;
- listen to the views, wishes and feelings of the student and their parent or carer;
- make decisions through a fair, evidence-informed and transparent process;
- consider reasonable adjustments during both the assessment and transition process;
- be honest about what it can and cannot safely and appropriately provide;
- protect the welfare, education and safety of current and prospective students; and
- distinguish clearly between an enquiry, an assessment response, consent to a placement and final confirmation of admission.

3. Equality and reasonable adjustments

Fable House welcomes enquiries and referrals concerning students from all backgrounds. No prospective student will be unlawfully discriminated against because of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Fable House will consider reasonable adjustments so that disabled prospective students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage during the admissions process.

Placement decisions are based on an individual assessment of whether Fable House can safely and appropriately meet the student's identified needs within its registered provision, available staffing, environment, peer group, resources and capacity. A decision that Fable House cannot meet need will not be made solely because a student is disabled or has a particular diagnosis.

4. Roles and decision-making authority

The CEO / Headteacher, acting for the proprietor, has final authority to decide whether Fable House will offer or agree to a placement. The decision may be informed by the SENDCo, safeguarding leaders, curriculum leads, relevant staff and external professional advice.

Only the CEO / Headteacher, or a person expressly authorised in writing by the proprietor, may:

- issue a formal offer of a place;
- give Fable House's consent to being named in Section I of an EHCP;
- agree a commissioning or placement contract; or
- confirm a student's admission and start date.

Other staff may discuss the provision, gather information, arrange visits and explain possible packages. Those activities do not amount to an offer or commitment.

5. Who may enquire, refer or consult

An initial enquiry may be made by a parent or carer, a young person, a school, a local authority or another professional with appropriate authority to share information.

A parent or young person may express a preference for Fable House and may ask their local authority to consult the school. However, where a placement is to be funded or arranged by a school or local authority, an initial enquiry must progress to a formal consultation, referral or commissioning request from that body.

The party sending personal information must have a lawful basis for doing so and, where required, must obtain appropriate consent. Fable House will process information in accordance with its Data Protection Policy and privacy information.

6. Information required

Fable House will normally require sufficient, current information to understand the proposed placement and assess need. This may include:

- the current final or draft EHCP, including appendices and professional advice;
- the most recent annual review and any proposed amendments;
- current and previous educational placements, attendance information and reasons for any placement breakdown;
- current attainment, curriculum, qualification pathway and examination arrangements;
- communication, sensory, regulation, personal care, mobility and medical information;
- safeguarding information relevant to safe planning, including any child in need, child protection, care or personal education plan;
- risk assessments, positive behaviour or support plans and details of any restrictive interventions;
- reports from education, health and social care professionals;
- the student's and parent or carer's views, aspirations and desired outcomes;
- the proposed timetable, staffing ratio, transport arrangements, intended duration and purpose of the placement; and
- for AP, the identity of the commissioner, named school or responsible local authority and named operational contacts.

INCOMPLETE INFORMATION Fable House may pause assessment, request clarification, seek a meeting or decline to reach a conclusion where information is incomplete, contradictory, outdated or insufficient to assess need and risk safely.

7. Suitability assessment

Assessment is proportionate to the proposed placement and may include a paper review, discussions with the student and parent or carer, liaison with the current setting and professionals, a visit to Fable House, observations, a home or current-setting visit, and one or more assessment or transition sessions.

Fable House will consider whether:

- the student falls within the age range, registration and character of the relevant Fable House provision;
- the student's special educational, health, medical, social care and safeguarding needs can be met safely and appropriately;
- the curriculum and qualification offer can provide a suitable, ambitious and meaningful pathway;
- the proposed staffing, expertise, facilities, timetable and transition arrangements are reasonably available;
- reasonable adjustments would enable access without fundamentally altering the nature of the provision or creating disproportionate difficulty;
- the placement would be compatible with the safe and effective education and welfare of the prospective student and others;
- the proposed cohort, groupings and environment are suitable at the time admission is proposed;
- transport and arrival/departure arrangements can be managed safely;
- the requested package is deliverable within Fable House's current capacity; and
- the intended outcomes, review arrangements and responsibilities are sufficiently clear.

The assessment is not a diagnostic assessment and does not replace the local authority's statutory assessment or review duties. Fable House may identify additional information or provision it considers necessary before it could agree to a placement.

8. Assessment and transition sessions

Any visit, taster, assessment or transition session is undertaken for a stated purpose and does not constitute admission, a trial placement or a guarantee that a place will be offered. The arrangements, supervision, emergency contacts, funding and status of the student during the session must be agreed in advance.

Fable House will make reasonable adjustments to support participation and will not draw adverse conclusions solely from presentation associated with anxiety, unfamiliarity or disability. Information will be considered holistically.

9. Possible assessment outcomes

Following assessment, Fable House may decide that:

- it can meet need and is willing to progress to a formal placement offer, subject to stated conditions;
- it may be able to meet need if specified information, provision, resources, staffing, environmental changes or contractual arrangements are secured;

- further assessment or professional information is required before a decision can be made;
- the requested package is unsuitable, but an alternative Fable House package may be considered; or
- it cannot safely or appropriately meet need and will not offer or consent to the placement.

Fable House will communicate its decision in writing to the relevant applicant or consulting body. Where appropriate and lawful, it will provide a clear summary of the principal reasons. It will not disclose confidential information about existing students or staff.

10. Status of correspondence and availability

IMPORTANT Statements such as “may be suitable”, “could meet need”, “appears able to meet need” or “willing to progress” are assessment responses only unless the correspondence expressly states that it is a formal offer or Fable House’s written consent to placement or naming.

A positive assessment does not:

- reserve a place or staffing resource;
- give consent to Fable House being named in an EHCP;
- confirm funding or fees;
- create a contractual commitment; or
- confirm an admission or start date.

Capacity and cohort circumstances may change. Unless a formal written offer states otherwise, availability will be checked again when funding and contractual arrangements are ready to be finalised. Offers may be time-limited and may contain conditions that must be met by a specified date.

11. Consent to being named in an EHCP

Fable House is an independent special school and is not approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A parent or young person may ask a local authority to consider Fable House, but the local authority should establish that Fable House is willing to admit the student before naming it in Section I of the EHCP.

The proposed naming of Fable House, or the appearance of its name in a draft or final EHCP, does not by itself constitute an offer, acceptance or reservation of a place. Fable House’s consent must be express, written, student-specific and issued by an authorised decision-maker.

Where Fable House gives consent, that consent will identify any essential assumptions or conditions, including the agreed package, resources, intended admission window and the need for funding and contractual arrangements to be completed. If the local authority proposes provision materially different from that assessed or agreed, Fable House may require a fresh assessment and written agreement before admission.

If Fable House is named without its prior agreement, or if the EHCP or proposed package materially changes, Fable House will contact the local authority promptly. No start date will be arranged until the position has been clarified and the required written agreements are in place.

12. Fees, funding and contractual confirmation

For a local authority- or school-funded placement, Fable House will normally send the proposed package and costs directly to the proposed commissioner. Costs will be shared with a parent or young person where they are the proposed payer, where they request them and sharing is appropriate, or where the commissioner authorises this.

No placement is finally confirmed and no start date is guaranteed until Fable House has received and accepted:

- written confirmation of the commissioner and the legal basis on which the placement is arranged;
- written approval of the full package and fees;
- an agreed contract, service level agreement, purchase order or other document acceptable to Fable House;
- agreed invoicing, payment, notice, review and termination arrangements;
- all information and documents identified as essential to safe admission; and
- confirmation of responsibilities for transport, safeguarding, attendance, examinations, therapies, medical support and any provision delivered by another party.

Where a parent or young person proposes to fund provision privately, Fable House will first establish whether the arrangement is lawful, how the student's EHCP and compulsory-school-age education will be managed, and whether any local authority or other named school must remain involved. A private contract and cleared initial payment or other agreed payment security will be required before the placement begins.

13. Full-time School route

The School route is for a student who would be admitted to Fable House's admission register as a full-time pupil. Admission remains subject to the school's registered age range, capacity and any other registration limitations.

The usual process is:

- Enquiry or statutory consultation received and route confirmed.
- Required documents obtained and checked.
- Individual suitability, safeguarding, curriculum and capacity assessment completed.
- Student and parent or carer views gathered through accessible arrangements.
- CEO / Headteacher makes the placement decision.
- Fable House issues its formal consultation response and, where appropriate, express written consent to placement or naming.
- Local authority finalises the EHCP where required and all funding and contractual arrangements are agreed.
- Fable House issues written confirmation of admission and agrees the start date.
- A bespoke transition and induction plan is implemented.

14. Part-time Alternative Provision route

The AP route is normally a commissioned, part-time placement intended to meet specified educational and support outcomes. It does not ordinarily transfer the student onto Fable House's school admission register. The commissioner remains responsible for the placement duties that apply to it, including

oversight, safeguarding assurance and ensuring the student receives suitable education across their complete timetable.

Before the placement starts, Fable House and the commissioner will agree in writing:

- the legal and commissioning basis for the placement and the student's registration status;
- the purpose, intended outcomes, timetable, location, start date and anticipated duration;
- the curriculum, qualification and examination responsibilities;
- how the EHCP provision and other identified needs will be secured across the student's timetable;
- staffing, risk management, medical and safeguarding arrangements;
- daily attendance notification and escalation arrangements;
- information-sharing and named contacts, including out-of-hours or emergency contacts where relevant;
- transport responsibility;
- progress reporting and review arrangements; and
- fees, payment, notice, suspension and termination terms.

Where the student remains registered at a different school, that school remains responsible for maintaining the admission and attendance registers and for the responsibilities retained by a commissioning school. Fable House will provide prompt attendance information in accordance with the placement agreement.

15. Parent, carer and self-referrer route

Parents, carers and young people are welcome to contact Fable House directly. Fable House will explain the two provision streams, gather proportionate initial information and indicate whether a formal assessment may be appropriate.

If public funding is sought, the enquirer will normally need to ask the responsible local authority or school to consult, refer or commission. Fable House may provide general information to support that discussion but cannot approve public funding or direct another body to commission a placement.

Fable House will not present an exploratory conversation or visit as a confirmed placement. If private funding is proposed, section 12 applies.

16. Transition, induction and baselining

Once a placement has been formally confirmed, Fable House will agree a bespoke transition plan. Depending on need, this may include:

- accessible information about the building, routines, staff and students;
- one or more transition visits, with a gradual increase where appropriate;
- getting-to-know-you activities with identified staff;
- a personalised timetable and communication arrangements;
- an individual risk assessment, healthcare plan and support information;
- an agreed educational and qualification pathway;
- transfer of safeguarding, attendance, examination and educational records; and
- baseline assessment once the student is sufficiently settled, using methods and timing appropriate to their needs.

Transition arrangements may be adjusted in response to the student's presentation and views. A transition visit remains part of preparation and does not change the formal confirmation requirements in this policy.

17. Deferring, varying or withdrawing an offer

Before admission, Fable House may defer, vary or withdraw an offer where:

- material information was unavailable, inaccurate or not disclosed during assessment;
- the student's needs, proposed package or relevant risks materially change;
- essential staffing, resources, adaptations or external services are not secured;
- the offer's conditions or deadline are not met;
- funding, payment security or contractual arrangements are not completed;
- the proposed admission would fall outside Fable House's registration or lawful operating arrangements; or
- an unforeseen safeguarding or capacity issue means the placement cannot begin safely.

Fable House will act reasonably, consider relevant equality duties and communicate the decision and principal reasons in writing. After admission, any proposal to end or materially change a placement will be managed under the placement agreement and relevant Fable House policies, not by treating the student as a new applicant.

18. Records, confidentiality and data protection

Fable House will keep an appropriate record of enquiries, consultations, information considered, assessment activity, decisions, reasons, correspondence and contractual confirmation. Access will be limited to those who need the information for their role.

Admissions information may be shared with the student, parent or carer, local authority, named school, commissioner and relevant professionals where there is a lawful basis and sharing is necessary and proportionate. Safeguarding information may be shared without consent where required to protect a child or another person.

19. Concerns and complaints

A parent, young person or referring body may ask Fable House to clarify the process followed or correct factual information. Complaints about Fable House's administration of the admissions process will be considered under the Complaints Policy.

The complaints process cannot require Fable House to offer a placement where it has concluded that it cannot safely or appropriately meet need, lacks capacity, or has not agreed the necessary funding and contractual arrangements. Complaints about a local authority's EHCP, placement or funding decision must be directed to the local authority and may carry separate statutory rights of mediation or appeal.

20. Monitoring and review

The CEO / Headteacher will monitor the operation of this policy, including consistency of decision-making, equality considerations, reasons for declined placements and any complaints. The proprietor will approve the policy and review it at least annually, and sooner following significant legal, regulatory or operational change.

21. Related policies and documents

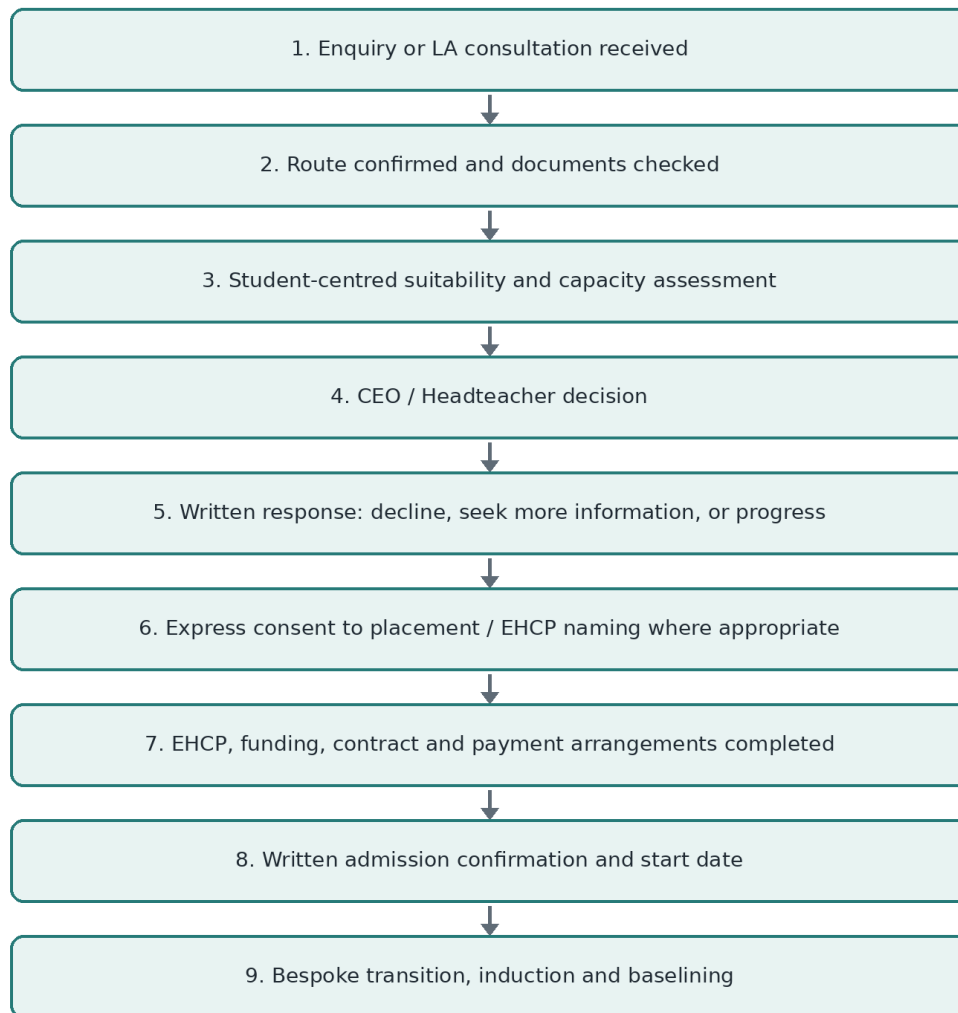
- Accessibility Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy and privacy information
- Equality Policy
- First Aid and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Terms and Conditions / Placement Agreement
- Transition procedures and individual risk-assessment arrangements

22. Legislative and guidance framework

This policy has been drafted with regard to the following, as amended or replaced from time to time:

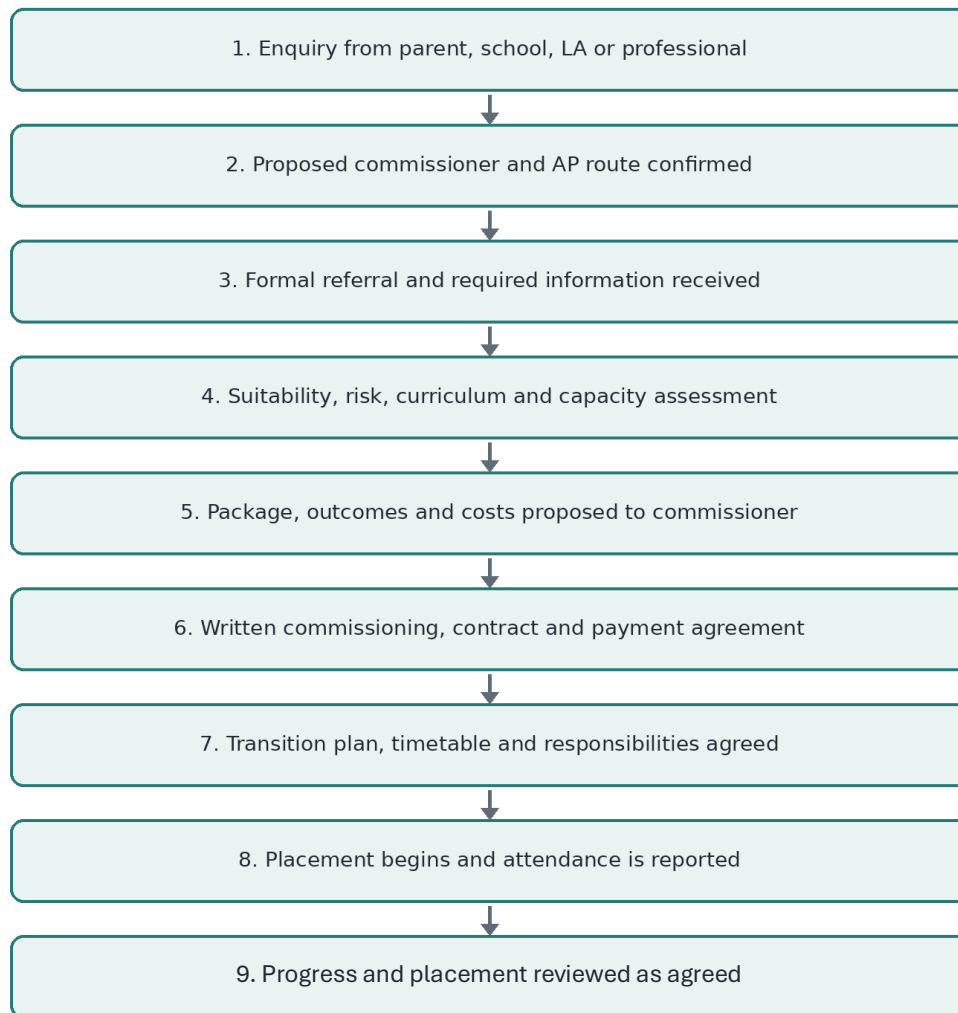
- Children and Families Act 2014, particularly sections 38 to 43;
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years, particularly paragraphs 9.78 to 9.85;
- Equality Act 2010 and Department for Education advice, The Equality Act 2010 and schools;
- Department for Education, Arranging Alternative Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools;
- Education Act 1996, including sections 7, 9 and 19 where relevant;
- Independent School Standards and current statutory safeguarding guidance; and
- UK data-protection legislation.

Appendix 1: Full-time School admissions flowchart



REMEMBER A positive assessment or consultation response is not, by itself, an offer, consent to naming, reservation of a place or confirmation of admission.

Appendix 2: Part-time Alternative Provision flowchart



PARENT OR SELF-REFERRER You may enquire directly. If a school or local authority will fund the placement, they must then formally refer, consult or commission and complete the written funding and contractual arrangements.