

The Willows School Academy Trust



Admissions Policy

Reviewed: September 2025
Next Review: September 2026

The Willows School Academy Trust is a primary school, age range 6 to 11 years, for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, who are in receipt of an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The DfES declared number on roll is 80

- A maximum of 80 pupils on roll in the school (6 – 11 years).

1. The School

- The school maintains classes of no more than 15:1 pupil - teacher ratio as this ensures the pupil's entitlement to staff time as described in the DES Circular 11/90.
- The admission procedures for special schools do not conform to enrolment procedures which apply to mainstream schools.
- There is an expectation that pupils admitted to The Willows School Academy Trust will have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and will be in receipt of an Education and Health Care Plan, except in exceptional circumstances when a pupil may be admitted on an emergency/assessment placement.
- The Willows School Academy Trust is named in Section I of the EHCP's document and this would have the support of the parents and the Local Education Authority (LEA).
- Pupils can be admitted to the school at any time throughout the academic year and at any time in their primary school phase.
- Local Education Authorities have the responsibility to request placement for a pupil in a special school. The procedures they are required to follow are detailed in the DfES "Special Educational Needs Code of Practice" issued in November 2001, Ref: DfES/581/2001 (related documents: The Education Act 1996).
- The Governing Body has delegated responsibility for admissions to the Head Teacher, with recommendations that decisions regarding acceptance for placement should consider the following:
The placement must be:
 1. appropriate to the child's age, ability and special educational need;
 2. compatible with the interests of other children already within the school; (The school has concerns regarding pupils whose behaviour is violent and leads to others being hurt.)
 3. an efficient use of resources

The admissions process follows certain steps:

1. The LEA sends a copy of the proposed statement, together with the supporting advice, to the school.
2. The Head Teacher reads the paperwork and:
 - notes queries or areas requiring further clarification
 - identifies any concerns
 - decides whether the school would be able to meet the pupil's needs
 - taking into account the existing school community, decides whether placement would be compatible with the interests of other children already within the school
3. The Head Teacher discusses the child at the next Admissions Meeting, which meets monthly. The Admissions Meeting is attended by:
 - Head Teacher;
 - Governing Body Representative
 - Leadership Team
 - Transitions Officer

4. A decision is made at the meeting as to whether The Willows School Academy Trust would be an appropriate placement and is able to make provision to meet the needs of the child, as identified on the Education and Health Care Plan. Any admission appeals should be made through the LEA.

5. If it is agreed that placement would be appropriate, the LEA asks parents to make arrangements to visit the school prior to making a decision about their child's placement at The Willows School Academy Trust. This initial visit is to provide parents with an opportunity to find out about the school, address any concerns or queries and consequently make an informed decision regarding the placement. This visit may take place any time after the child has been discussed at the Admissions Meeting.

6. If parents accept the offer of placement, the Final Education and Health Care Plan is issued naming The Willows School Academy Trust and a start date is agreed between the school and parents.

7. The LEA is notified of the admission date and requested to arrange the transport.

8. The school does not arrange home to school transport – this is a responsibility of parent/carer.

9. The placement **is not** determined based on transport being provided by the pupil's local authority.

• The LEA may also request "Assessment and emergency placements" (Code of Practice – 8:23 – 8:28)

Aims of an assessment placement:

- to provide an educational setting for assessment of a child (prior to statutory assessment being initiated);
- to allow time to be taken to assess carefully the needs of a child, before decisions are taken about long term placement;
- to provide the opportunity for parents and professionals to work together to identify the child's strengths, needs and the appropriate future provision.

Criteria for a placement on assessment:

- there is a degree of uncertainty about the nature of the child's special needs and clarification is required;
- the child will benefit from an assessment over time in an educational setting that offers staff expertise and enhanced resources, together with input from appropriate agencies;
- the child has special educational needs which will include behavioural/emotional/social difficulties, which may or may not require permanent placement at a day SEMH school;
- statutory assessment has not been initiated, but there is general agreement that it will be required;
- the child falls within the primary age range.

In the event of an assessment placement being requested by an LEA:

(a) The LEA will provide as much background information regarding the child, as is available, to the school.

(b) The same admissions procedures apply as above, except:

- Point 6 is omitted because the child does not have a statement;
- When an assessment or emergency placement is made the LEA should immediately initiate a statutory assessment.

In the event of over subscription to the school the following criteria will be applied:

In order to make the most efficient and effective use of resources selection will be based on the following order of criteria:

1. Children whose parents will commit to working in partnership with the school, in support of their child's needs
2. Children who live in the London Borough of Hillingdon
3. Children who have an Education and Health Care Plan
4. Children who are the year group where there is a vacancy, in order to maintain an even balance of pupils in each class group.
5. Female pupils, in order to secure and maintain a reasonable gender balance.

Date: September 2025

Signed: Malcolm Shaw, Headteacher

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