

The Rise School Admissions Policy for Admission September 2023

1. Introduction

This policy applies to The Rise School which is a special free school and is part of the Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST). AaAST is a multi-academy trust that runs and supports the development of special schools to enable autistic children and young people to learn, thrive and achieve. AaAST schools are funded through Local Authority fees and voluntary income. Within the trust our collective vision is a future where every autistic child and young person can be themselves and realise their ambitions. Our mission is that we stand with autistic children and young people, champion their rights and create opportunities.

The school is located within Hounslow and has relationships with Local Authorities across London and the Home Counties. The Rise School has a campus site for sixth form pupils located within West Thames College Campus.

The school has a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 130 pupils.

Our admissions processes consider applications in light of duties arising under the Children and Families Act 2014¹, SEND Code of Practice 2015², the Equality Act, the School Admissions Code (September 2021)³ along with any subsequent amendments thereof.

Admission to The Rise Free School will be by way of the school being named within an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) following the processes set out below in this policy

2. Admissions Criteria

The Rise School will admit autistic children and young people from age 4 to 19 with a primary diagnosis of autism spectrum condition (ASC). Any additional diagnoses of either learning disabilities or medical conditions must be assessed on an individual basis, to determine whether or not the school will be able to meet the child's or young person's needs.

Funded Places in 2023-2024 (reception to sixth form) is up to the Published Admissions Number detailed below.

Pupil Admission Number (PAN):	130	
Primary maximum class group:	10	Reception (EYFS ⁴) Years 1-6 (Key stage 1-2)

¹ Abbreviated to C and F Act

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

³ School Admissions Code (December 2014 – DFE-00728-2014) applies to all maintained schools, Academies and Free Schools in England.

⁴

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

Secondary maximum class group:	10	Years 7-11 (Key stage 3-4)
Sixth Form maximum class group	10	Years 12-14 (Key stage 5)
Oversubscription places:	0	

Places are usually taken up at the start of the academic year. By arrangement with the Head, School places may be accessed at any time of the year where space is available and depending upon the application of the admissions criteria and needs of the child/young person.

As part of the process of finalising an EHC Plan, parents/carers have the right to request the Local Authority that maintains the plan to name their preferred choice of school (s 38 (2)(b) (ii) C and F Act). Where The Rise School is given as a preference, the Local Authority will be required to consult with the Head Teacher (s 39 (2) C and F Act). The Local Authority is required to name the parent/carers preference unless it can show one of the following apply (s 39 (4) C and F Act):

- that the proposed placement is unsuitable to the age, ability, aptitude and SEN of the child/young person;
- naming the proposed placement is incompatible with i) the efficient education of other children, and or ii) an efficient use of resources

Each application to The Rise School is considered on an individual basis. In every case our admissions process evaluates the needs of the individual child or young person, and determines whether the school can meet the special educational needs (SEN), provide the special education provision (SEP) and meet the outcomes in their EHC Plan with reference to the factors set out above in s 39 (4) of the C and F Act.

Additionally, the following factors will be considered:

- Whether the school may need to provide additional support for a child or young person whose safety or that of others is unusually at risk. This would not necessarily prevent admission. The additional support would be determined by assessment with the cost of the placement adjusted accordingly;
- The distance from the school and the time of travel to school will be considered during the admissions process and any concerns reported.

3. Admissions Process

Parents/carers must be asked by their Local Authority to give their school preferences at the time a draft EHC plan is issued. Occasionally there may be other circumstances - whether parent/carer or Local Authority driven - when a new school place is sought. We encourage parents/carers to visit the school prior to making a request for a place at The Rise School to their Local Authority.

Where The Rise School is given as a preference by a parent/carer thereby initiating a consultation process, or where a consultation process is initiated by a Local Authority itself without parental knowledge, we will communicate the decision to the Local Authority and in most instances to the parent/carer unless otherwise advised.

The Local Authority will consult with the school in line with their legal obligations. The school will respond within 15 days after receiving the consultation from the Local Authority.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

i) The School Admissions Panel

Applications to the school are processed by the Admissions Team and considered by our School Admissions Panel. The panel comprises:

- Assistant Head Teacher/s
- Admissions Manager/members of the admissions team
- Any other professional staff required to support the admissions process

Responses to consultations for a school place are determined by:

- Consideration of the documentation received (i.e. draft or final EHC Plan, Annual Review reports, professional reports)
- Observing the child/young person in some instances where a decision cannot be made on the documentation alone
- Offering an assessment at The Rise School for a child/young person in some instances where a decision cannot be made on documentation and observations

Our observations and assessments are conducted in the child's or young person's at The Rise School.

The school's Admissions Panel will thoroughly consider each application for a school place prior to making a response, and in all cases will comply with the 15-day requirement unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority.

ii) Outcome of Panel decision

If the School Admissions Panel agrees that The Rise School can meet the special educational needs and provision of the child or young person, a school place is offered, and the costing provided to the Local Authority. The offer may contain other conditions which will need to be considered by the Local Authority concerned.

The offer of a place is conditional upon funding being approved and confirmed by the relevant Local Authority. Where The Rise School is named on an EHC Plan, The Rise School will assume that the Local Authority has agreed to fund the place.

If after carefully considering an application, the School Admissions Panel feels it cannot meet the special educational needs and provision of the child/young person, or if admitting the child/young person would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, the parent/carer and local authority will be advised of the outcome. There is a right to appeal this decision with our Independent Appeals Panel. Please see Section 7 below.

Places are **not reserved** where offers of a school place are made (this only happens when funding is agreed by the Local Authority and where space is available). Conditional offers will **automatically lapse** after 3 months. To request that place does not lapse, either the relevant Local Authority or parents will need to contact the Admissions Team to ask for the conditional offer to remain open and must provide the reasons why. Prompt consideration will be given to this request. Once an offer is over 3 months old, the School Admissions Panel reserve the right to carry out a new assessment to confirm the conditional offer of a place.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

The school reserves the right to delay commencement of a new placement where funding decisions are made by Local Authority after the statutory deadline set out in Regulation 18 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2015.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

The oversubscription criteria complies with the School Admissions Code (September 2021) specifically paragraph 1.7 and 1.8.

If the school is oversubscribed, the priority for admission will be given to those children or young people who meet the criteria below:

Priority Category	Criteria
1	Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children including those children/young people who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (as defined in paragraph 1.7 of the School Admissions Code (September 2021))
2	And thereafter, the natural, fostered, adopted, or step siblings who are twins or children from a multiple birth of existing pupils, living permanently at the same address.
3	And thereafter, the natural, fostered, adopted, or step siblings of existing pupils living permanently at the same address.
4	And thereafter, the qualifying children of staff who work at the school and have sufficient service under paragraph 1.39a of the School Admissions Code (September 2021).
5	And thereafter, the qualifying children of staff who are recruited under paragraph 1.39b of the School Admissions Code (September 2021).
6	And thereafter children of UK service personnel and crown servants in accordance with paragraph 2.21 of the School Admissions Code (September 2021).
7	And thereafter children as defined, under paragraph 1.39A of the School Admissions Code (September 2021), who are eligible for pupil premium.
8	And thereafter children, as defined under paragraph 1.39A of the School Admissions Code (September 2021), who are eligible for service premium.
9	And thereafter children who are twins or children from a multiple birth,
10	Lastly, distance from school as defined by time using route planner software from home postcode to school postcode. Where parents have shared parental responsibility, we will use the furthest address postcode.

Where two applications are equally ranked within an individual category (categories 1 to 9 above), a tie-break situation will occur. The tie-break priority will be decided on a combination of the individual category 1 to 9 and category 10, where the least distance will have the higher priority.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

Where the distance between the two children's or young person's home and the school is the same, a random allocation will be used as a tie break. This process will be independently verified.

5. Reserve List

If The Rise School becomes oversubscribed, we will consider establishing a reserve list. Should we do so, the list will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. For a child or young person to be added to our reserve list, the Local Authority must first have agreed to fund a place at the School.

A reserve list would be established if:

- During the school year, where the Published Admissions Number (PAN) has not been reached but the maximum class sizes have been reached within an area of the School;
- During the school year, where the PAN has not been reached and the maximum class sizes have not been reached within an area of the school, as detailed above, but the introduction of an additional pupil would be incompatible with the efficient education of others;
- During each school year, where the school has reached PAN plus the oversubscription number.

To meet the special educational needs of each individual pupil, class sizes at the School will not exceed the numbers stated above. Waiting lists will therefore operate in class groupings.

When a place becomes available in a class operating a waiting list, the relevant Local Authority will be notified.

6. Appeal Arrangements

Appeals

Admission appeals will be considered by the AaAST Independent Appeals Panel and conducted in accordance with the School Admissions Appeals Code⁵ (February 2021) and any subsequent amendments thereof.

7. Funding and Contracting

i) Funding

Our school receives funding from the Department for Education (DfE) through the allocation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

ESFA funding is allocated based on the date that funding was agreed by the Local Authority and the admission date for the child or young person.

The level of funding required is detailed in the offer letter sent to the Local Authority. The school will negotiate the additional (top-up) funding from the Local Authority commissioning a place and these fees are paid by the Local Authority.

⁵ School Admission Appeals Code Reference: DFE-57508-2012

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

ii) Contracting

Our school uses the 'National Schools and College Contract' with the Schedule 2 (short form version) and the Schedule 6 for a variation due to General Data Protection Regulation for the contracting of placements together with the Schedule 1 (Arrangements for the Provision of Education, Health and Care in Schools)

In accordance with the ESFA requirements, a contract signed by all parties must be in place prior to the commencement of the placement.

8. Further information

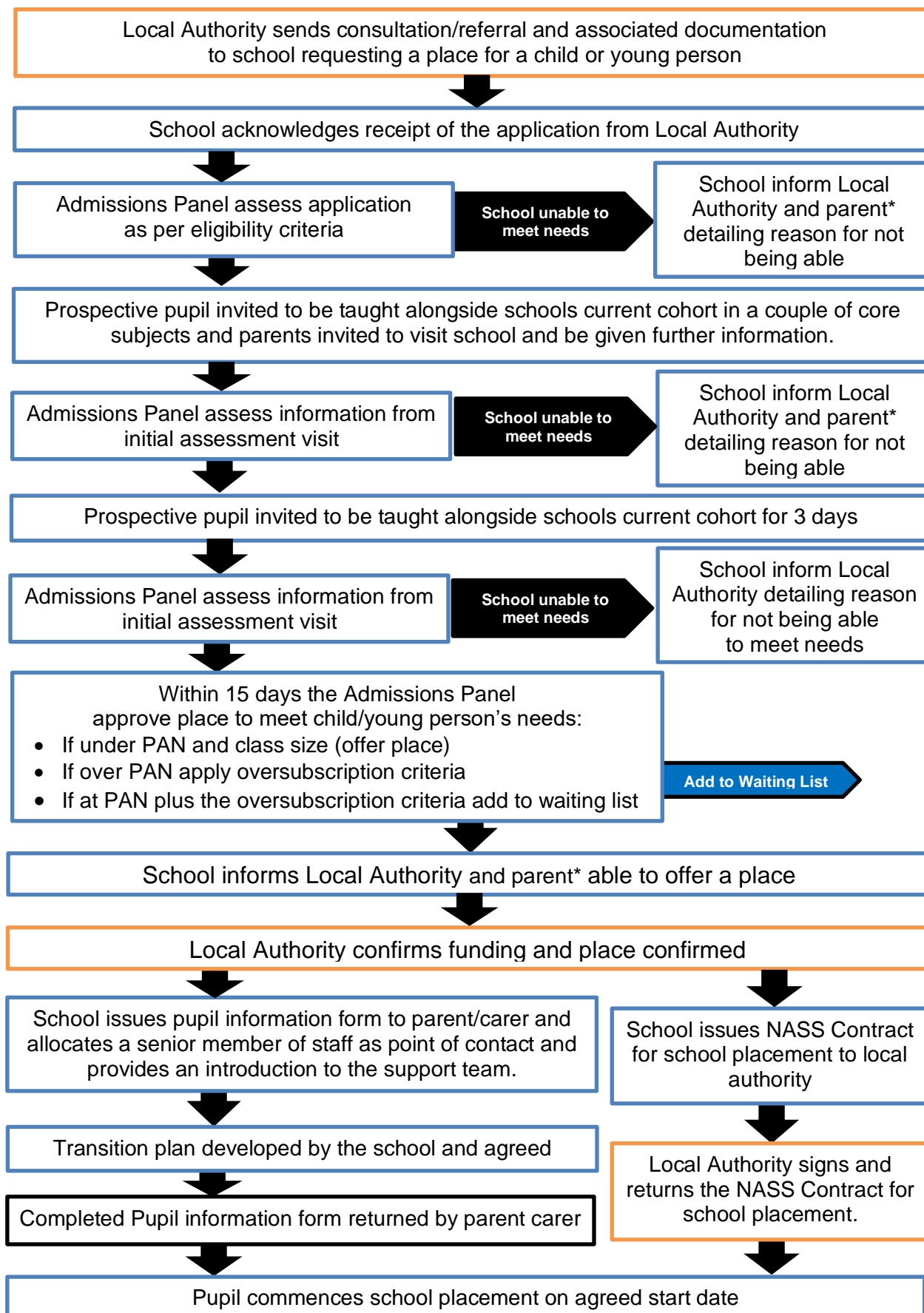
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Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5

Appendix A: Application Process (Local Authority initiated)



* Where directed by the Local Authority a parent would not be informed.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Review Date:	March 2023
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	5