



KHS Admissions Policy

September 2026

Policy Lead: Dr K Govender

Next review by: 01/09/2027

Signed by Headteacher:



Introduction

This policy applies to: The whole school (including activities outside of normal school hours), all staff (teaching and support staff), the Chair of Governors, and volunteers working in the school.

Policy Availability: This policy is publicly available on the School website [<https://www.knowlhillschool.org.uk/topic/admissions>]

A paper copy or accessible alternative format (such as large print) may be obtained from the School Office upon request. It is provided to prospective parents and local authorities upon initial inquiry.

Monitoring and Review: This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors undertakes an annual review of this policy and the efficiency with which related duties are discharged. Reviews take place annually or earlier if required by changes in legislation, regulatory requirements, or statutory guidance.

1. Statutory & Regulatory Framework

This policy complies with and gives due regard to the following statutory instruments, regulations, and guidance:

- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (including Part 6, Paragraph 24(3)(a)).
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years** (DfE / Department of Health and Social Care).
- **Children and Families Act 2014** (specifically Section 41 for independent special schools).
- **Equality Act 2010** and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** (latest revisions).
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** (DfE).
- **Children Missing Education** (DfE guidance).
- **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**.
- **Education and Skills Act 2008** and **Childcare Act 2006**.

2. Vision and Ethos

Knowl Hill School is an independent special school registered to educate children aged 7 to 16 years (Key Stages 2 to 4). We offer a caring, nurturing, and structured environment specifically designed for pupils with specific learning difficulties and associated communication needs.

Our overarching aim is to identify applicants whose individual needs we can fully meet, ensuring they can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally. Admission decisions are made with careful consideration of whether a placement is compatible with the efficient education of existing pupils and the efficient deployment of school resources and specialist staffing.

3. Equality, Diversity, and Legal Duties

Knowl Hill School is committed to equal treatment for all applicants. No candidate will be treated less favourably during the application or assessment process on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, socio-economic background, pregnancy or maternity, or disability.

- **Reasonable Adjustments:** In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure the admissions process is accessible to applicants with disabilities. Parents and carers should provide full details of any specific accessibility or assessment requirements upon registration.
- **Right to Reside:** All candidates must have the legal right to live and study in the United Kingdom.

4. Admissions Criteria & Suitability

Knowl Hill School caters primarily for pupils with **Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)**. The criteria for entry are based on a primary diagnosis or identified difficulty in one or more of the following areas:

1. Dyslexia
2. Dyspraxia / Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
3. Dyscalculia
4. Speech, Language, and Social Communication Difficulties
5. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Exclusions & Inabilities to Meet Need:

- **Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) / Global Developmental Delay:** The school is not structured or resourced to cater for pupils with primary MLD or global developmental delay.
- **Primary Behavioural & Emotional Needs:** We do not admit pupils whose primary difficulty is social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) involving acute behavioural issues. The school does not manage primary behavioural difficulties and is not equipped or trained to administer restrictive physical intervention (restraint).
- **Acute & High-Level Needs:** Knowl Hill School is unable to offer places where the required support exceeds our specialist staff expertise or physical site capacity.
- **Physical Mobility:** While every reasonable effort is made to accommodate physical disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, pupils must have sufficient independent mobility to navigate stairs, as the physical infrastructure across all school buildings does not allow for full lift installations.
- **Year Group Entry:** It is the school's strict policy not to admit new pupils directly into Year 11. Admissions into Year 10 are considered strictly at the discretion of the Headteacher.

5. Step-by-Step Admissions Procedure

Step 1: Initial Enquiry and Document Submission

Parents, carers, or commissioning Local Authorities submit the applicant's recent educational and specialist documentation. This must include:

- Current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (if applicable).
- Educational Psychologist (EP) reports.
- Specialist Speech & Language Therapy (SaLT) or Occupational Therapy (OT) assessments.
- Recent school reports and attainment data.

Documentation is reviewed by the Admissions Panel (including senior leadership and specialist SEN staff). The panel determines whether, on paper, Knowl Hill School appears capable of meeting the child's needs. This desk review typically takes 1 to 2 weeks. If the panel determines we cannot meet need, the family or Local Authority will be notified promptly.

Step 2: Parent Information Visit

The Headteacher requires an initial visit to be undertaken by the parents/carers without the child present. This provides an open environment to discuss the child's history, specific challenges, and medical or specialist reports in detail, as well as to explain our curriculum and school ethos.

Step 3: School-Based Observation by the SENCo

Prior to or alongside the student's trial days, a key stage of our assessment involves a direct observation in the child's current educational setting.

- The **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)** (or a designated member of the specialist SEN team) will visit the applicant's current school.
- The purpose of this visit is to observe the pupil in a familiar learning and social environment, consult with their current teaching staff, and gain a holistic, real-world understanding of their working style, interaction, and support requirements.

Step 4: Trial Days

Following a successful parent visit and initial document review, the candidate is invited to complete **two consecutive trial days** in their prospective year group.

- The child shadows a peer, participating fully in standard lessons, routines, and extracurricular activities.
- During these two days, class teachers and specialist therapists evaluate academic ability, classroom engagement, and social integration.
- Where therapy needs are indicated, qualified therapists conduct brief screening evaluations (e.g., SaLT or OT).
- An administrative fee of £200.00 + VAT (£240) is charged to cover the operational and assessment costs associated with trial days.
- Accurate attendance registers are maintained for all trial students during their time on site.
- If necessary, the school reserves the right to request additional trial days before reaching a conclusion.

Step 5: Post-Trial SENCo EHCP & Provision Review Meeting

Following the completion of the trial days, a formal review meeting is conducted with the SENCo, senior team, and the parents/carers (and Local Authority representative where appropriate).

- The SENCo systematically reviews the pupil's **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** alongside the observations gathered from the trial days and the current school visit.
- The group cross-references every individual provision, therapy hour, adaptation, and objective detailed in **Section F of the EHCP** against the school's actual facilities, staffing ratios, and therapeutic streams (such as Speech & Language Therapy [LS] or Occupational Therapy [OTS] streams).
- This meeting determines definitively whether Knowl Hill School can fully deliver all statutory provisions listed in the EHCP and whether a placement is compatible with the efficient education of other pupils.

6. Offers, Decision-Making, and Acceptance

Following the post-trial SENCo meeting and consultation with the Headteacher and Admissions Panel:

- **Formal Offer:** If the school determines it can meet all needs and deliver the required EHCP provision, a formal offer (or conditional offer) will be issued in writing. Any conditions (such as specific local authority funding agreements or specialised equipment provision) will be explicitly set out in the offer letter.
- **Offer Dynamics & Places Availability:** Please note that while a formal offer letter may be issued, **places at Knowl Hill School are highly competitive**. Places are allocated strictly on a **first-come, first-served basis**

upon receipt of formal acceptance (and fulfilment of any offer conditions). Once all available places in a year group or cohort are filled, subsequent successful applicants will be placed on the school's **waiting list**.

- **Acceptance Period:** The standard deadline for accepting an offer of a place is **four weeks**. However, because places are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, parents and Local Authorities are encouraged to respond as swiftly as possible. Where families or Local Authorities are in active EHCP amendment processes, extensions to the acceptance deadline may be granted, strictly subject to place availability.
- **Assessment Places:** In certain circumstances, the school may offer a trial assessment place lasting approximately one full term. At the end of this period, a multidisciplinary review meeting is convened with all stakeholders to evaluate progress and confirm long-term suitability.
- **Decline of Place:** If the school determines it cannot meet the pupil's needs or that placement would compromise the education of others, parents and the local authority will be verbally informed of the detailed reasons, followed by written confirmation.
- **Final Authority:** Admission to Knowl Hill School remains ultimately at the discretion of the Headteacher.

7. Statutory Registers and Regulatory Notifications

In accordance with the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**:

- **Admission Register:** The school maintains an accurate electronic Admission Register (school roll) containing all required pupil details. The register is backed up electronically at least monthly, and a physical printout is produced and securely retained at least once per term. All entries are preserved for a minimum of six years.
- **Local Authority Reporting:** The school routinely notifies the relevant Local Authority when a pupil's name is added to or removed from the admission register at non-standard transition points, complying with statutory *Children Missing Education* procedures.
- **Deletions from Roll:** A pupil's name will only be deleted from the Admission Register in strict accordance with the grounds set out in the Pupil Registration Regulations 2024.

8. Data Protection, Privacy, and Confidentiality

- **Confidential Records:** A confidential admissions file is opened for every candidate. Therapy assessments and trial records are stored securely in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and retained until the individual reaches 25 years of age.
- **Information Sharing:** Personal data collected during the admissions process is handled in strict compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Data is shared with Local Authorities or statutory agencies strictly as required by law or for safeguarding purposes.