

Admissions Policy

Aurora Hanley School

Policy Reference:	HAN4
Version Number:	8
Applies to:	Aurora Hanley School
Associated documents:	Attendance policy
Approved by:	Principal
Implementation date:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027
<i>This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups</i>	

0. Summary of changes since previous version of policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

Provide guidance on the admission process for parents, carers and prospective students.

Aurora Hanley is an independent specialist school for young people aged 6 to 19, who may face difficulties as a result of complex communication needs typically associated with Autism Spectrum Conditions. We offer specialist teaching and integrated therapeutic support, small classes and a nurturing approach, we give students a framework for breaking down barriers to learning.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

We aim to provide a clear and supportive process for Young People and Parents/Carers that includes access to relevant school policies and paperwork to ensure a successful admission.

3. Scope

This policy aims to provide guidance on the Aurora Hanley Admission process for parents, carers and prospective students. The policy will also be used as a reference guide for all staff involved in the admissions process, as well as those providing information to parents, carers and prospective students.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Principal, SENCo and Pupil Administrator are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The Pupil Administrator manages referrals and arranges agreed visits to the school. The school is supported by the Placements and Business Development Managers.

5. Admissions Process

5.1 Enquiries and Referrals

New referrals are usually made through the Local Authority as part of their consultation process. New referrals can be submitted via the school website, by making enquiries directly with the School, or through the central Aurora commissioning team.

The school hosts open events throughout the year, and these may be advertised online, Via Aurora Face book or locally. These events are informal and allow parents and prospective young people to visit the school site.

Booking for these events is required. These opportunities allow visitors to view the school in a managed way with little student impact. From these events parents can make informed choices about the provision and support offered, and may have an opportunity to meet the senior leaders' teachers or support staff. We would encourage prospective parents/carers, advocates, or Social Workers to attend. We are on some occasions able to support an independent visit after 3 pm for any parent and child who has an EHCP. There may not always

be an opportunity to speak with any of the SLT at this time but available staff know the school well. There is a virtual tour also available via the school website.

As the school has reached capacity there is a waiting list for school placements from 2026

5.2 Consultation Process

If you would like to have a formal consultation of a place this is usually, but not always, carried out with the support of your Local Authority.

Initial Placement Consultation will involve a meeting with the Principal and SENCo/Head of School in a relaxed and informal setting, sharing information about barriers to education, personal interests, skills and challenges, as well as clarifying best management of health conditions, anxieties and associated behaviours. It is a requirement that the student attends the consultation with their parents/carers. This is to ensure that key staff are introduced and that the student has a voice as to the suitability of the school. The process does include some questions regarding safeguarding/ specific health issues and ASC management strategies and if preferable this can be requested to be discussed away from any young person.

If time allows, a walk a round the school may be completed if there has been no prior visit to the school site, however this cannot be guaranteed.

We require all up-to-date information, including relevant documents such as the most recent Health and Care Plan (EHCP), previous school reports including any academic information, medical information, any previous support plans including behaviour management plans, risk assessments, care plans (if applicable), psychology, OT, SaLT assessments and other clinical assessments to assist in our initial consultation and ensure we can meet needs.

Information regarding the child's likes and dislikes and interests are helpful too. The more information we have the better prepared we can be and the better able we are to match the young people in our classes.

We cannot support a placement at Aurora Hanley/Summerfields unless we have identified that we can meet need.

5.3 Following Consultation

We use all the available information to decide whether we can appropriately meet the needs of the student and which class the prospective young person would fit in to. There is no guarantee of a place as we carefully match to our cohort.

We liaise with the relevant Local Authority and funding bodies throughout the referral and consultation process. In order for us to offer a place, there will need to be a formal application and written agreement of funding from the funding authorities (usually from education, social care and/or health). We can then send a formal offer letter to the funding authorities, with a copy to parents/carers. Contracts issued by the funding authority must be signed before the placement starts.

Should any parent wish their child to be 'age retained' that is 'to repeat an academic year due to missing school' possibly due to health, anxiety or mental health needs etc, the local authority must be made aware of this request. They must then agree to cover the cost of the extra funding that this decision will incur. It is up to parents to approach LAs for this financial agreement and provide evidence of this agreement to the school.

5.4 Admission/Transition

Following agreement of the place with the relevant commissioners within the Local Authority, parents and the young person will be invited in for a transition meeting.

Parents/carers will have been sent consent letters relevant to the school, and these must be signed and received before any young person can attend the school site.

During this meeting we will check that all past information shared is still relevant e.g. allergies etc. And seek clarity regarding key information and provision in the EHCP e.g. any Occupational Therapy, dyslexia, sensory needs or equipment requirements. Where the EHCP states 1:1 support is required in class and the child has previously attended a mainstream setting, this may not be the requirement in a specialist provision due the low-class sizes, the appropriate teaching strategies being applied, the adaptations made to the curriculum and the high staffing level.

All transitions are carefully planned and personalised, with the student's needs and wishes taken into consideration to ensure anxiety is reduced. This might include a managed slow transition over a short period of time to build relationships, trust etc, from entry to full time. Students usually will start with a choice of a Morning (start time 9am) or afternoon (start time 12.30) on whatever day they wish. Although the transition may be at a pace to suit the student, the weekly plan must demonstrate an increase in time spent on site and in class to full time. Support is available on site from our dedicated clinical support team and Pastoral lead. If attendance has not increase during this time (we generally monitor over a half term or 6 weeks) then the suitability of the placement may be questioned, (please also read attendance policy).

At Hanley we can support more anxious students with agreed options e.g. meet and greet, alternative entrance, safe space on entry etc. On rare occasions we would support with a temporary 1:1 for a fixed period e.g. 3 months, with funding agreed prior to starting.

At Summerfields School, for pupils who are more complex or who have been out of education for a long period of time there is an Extended Transition Timetable (ETT), available with LA agreement. This may include support from the clinical team and or the Pastoral lead. They will be able to provide bespoke attendance support to prepare transitions and devise support strategies to reduce anxiety and manage behaviours appropriately.

We do not aim to replace CAMHs and do not undertake Clinical 1: 1 work for lengthy periods without a further funding agreement.

6. Support, Advice and Communication

Anybody requiring further information or clarity can contact the school on 01782 973737.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually or where significant changes to the process occur.