

REBUILDING CONFIDENCE
REIMAGINING EDUCATION RESTORING FUTURES
IMAGINE
"A BRIGHTER FUTURE"



Admissions Policy

Document title	Admissions Policy
School / Provision	Imagine Wellbeing School (Independent SEND Primary)
Age range	Primary (–KS2)
Admissions lead	Headteacher/Principal (supported by SENCo and Business Manager)
Safeguarding link	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Deputy DSL
Proprietary body	IW Proprietor/Proprietary Body
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1. Purpose and scope

This policy explains how Imagine Wellbeing School (IW) considers and allocates places for pupils, including pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and pupils placed by Local Authorities. It is written for parents/carers, Local Authority commissioners, professionals and partner agencies, and for IW staff.

IW is an independent SEND primary provision. Most placements are expected to be commissioned by Local Authorities, either through the EHCP consultation process or through agreed interim arrangements. IW welcomes informal enquiries, but any placement must follow an agreed, safe and lawful process.

2. IW admissions principles (SEND and trauma-informed)

Admissions at IW are guided by our mission to rebuild confidence, reimagine education and restore futures. We aim to admit pupils where we can meet needs safely and successfully, within our registration parameters, staffing model and premises suitability.

Our core principles

- Child-centred: decisions prioritise the pupil's safety, wellbeing, communication and learning needs.
- High ambition with appropriate support: we remove barriers without lowering expectations.
- Trauma-informed and relational: transitions and admissions are planned to reduce anxiety and support regulation.
- Transparent and evidence-based: decisions are recorded with a clear rationale.
- Collaborative: we work with families, Local Authorities and professionals to plan placement success.
- Fair and lawful: we do not discriminate, and we make reasonable adjustments.

3. Legal, regulatory and inspection framework (ISS/KCSIE/Ofsted)

This policy is informed by legislation and statutory/non-statutory guidance, including (as amended):

- Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice (0–25).
- Equality Act 2010 (including the duty to make reasonable adjustments).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – safeguarding and safer recruitment expectations.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – multi-agency safeguarding duties.
- Independent School Standards (ISS) – particularly Parts 3 and 8 (welfare and leadership/management).
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR – lawful sharing and secure handling of information.

IW prepares for inspection by ensuring our admissions practice is consistent with a strong safeguarding culture, effective leadership oversight, accurate record keeping, and inclusive provision that removes barriers to learning and wellbeing.

4. Who we admit: pupil profile and placements we can support

IW is designed for pupils across KS1 and KS2 who may have EHCPs or significant additional needs. Typical needs may include (but are not limited to): autism and social communication needs, speech and language needs, sensory processing differences, SEMH needs, trauma histories, anxiety/EBSA, learning needs, and developmental delay.

Placement suitability

IW will consider a placement where we can demonstrate that: (a) we can meet the pupil's identified needs; (b) the placement can be delivered safely; (c) the pupil is likely to benefit from our model of provision; and (d) the placement does not compromise the education or safety of other pupils.

Where a placement may not be suitable

- Where needs require a level of clinical or medical provision that cannot be safely delivered in our setting (e.g., constant clinical nursing support beyond our capacity).
- Where the premises or staffing model cannot be adapted safely to manage the risk profile, even with reasonable adjustments.
- Where the pupil requires a specialist designation or pathway outside our registration parameters.
- Where the school is at capacity and cannot offer a suitable class placement without compromising safety or efficient education.

5. Enquiries and referrals

Informal enquiries

Parents/carers, professionals and Local Authorities may contact IW to discuss potential placements. IW will provide information about our provision, therapeutic approach, curriculum pathways and commissioning model.

Formal referrals/consultations

The Local Authority typically makes formal placement requests through an EHCP consultation or commissioning referral. IW requests sufficient information to make an informed decision, including the EHCP (where applicable), recent reviews, professional reports and risk information.

6. Admissions process: consultation, assessment and decision-making

IW uses a staged process to ensure decisions are safe, transparent, and evidence-based. Timescales will reflect the urgency of need, the availability of information, and the Local Authority process.

Stage 1: Information gathering and initial screening

- Review of documentation: EHCP/current support plan, latest annual review, professional reports (SALT/OT/EP/CAMHS where relevant), attendance history, behaviour/incident patterns and safeguarding context.
- Initial risk screen: health, behaviour, vulnerability and safeguarding risks; transport considerations; staffing ratios likely required; environmental adjustments.
- Discussion with parents/carers and/or current placement (with consent) to understand strengths, triggers, motivators and successful strategies.

Stage 2: Pre-placement assessment and visit

- A visit to the pupil's current setting/home (where appropriate) to observe and understand needs in context.
- A planned pupil visit to IW (where appropriate), with reasonable adjustments and a familiarisation approach.
- Assessment focuses on communication, regulation, social interaction, learning readiness, sensory profile and safety needs.
- Consideration of any personal evacuation plan needs and other individual safety planning.

Stage 3: Multi-disciplinary placement planning meeting

- Internal placement panel (Headteacher/Principal, SENCo, DSL, relevant staff) reviews evidence and proposed support package.
- Where helpful, professionals and Local Authority representatives are invited to contribute.
- Decision recorded with rationale: Can we meet the need? What adjustments are required? What risks exist, and how are they mitigated?

Stage 4: Offer, commissioning agreement and start date

- If agreed, IW issues a placement offer subject to commissioning/funding agreement and completion of required documentation.
- Transition plan agreed (length and structure personalised).
- Start date confirmed once safeguarding and operational requirements are met (including transport arrangements and consent forms).

7. Transition planning and induction

Transitions are planned around the needs of the pupil and family. IW recognises that many pupils experience anxiety, disrupted education or trauma. We therefore use a gradual, predictable approach wherever possible.

What transition may include

- Photo book/social story and 'meet the team' introductions (adapted for communication needs).
- Staggered visits, reduced timetable at the start, and a clear build-up plan where appropriate.
- A named key adult and consistent staffing to build trust and regulation.
- Agreement of regulation supports: safe space, sensory tools, movement breaks, and communication aids.
- A behaviour support plan and risk assessment aligned to the pupil's needs (and any positive handling plan if required).

Induction

- Baseline assessments (academic and developmental) to inform personalised planning.
- Review of EHCP outcomes and translation into small-step targets and provision mapping.
- Initial review meeting within an agreed timescale (typically 4–6 weeks) to check placement success and adjust support.

8. Capacity, class organisation and placement offers

IW organises classes and groups to meet pupils' needs, considering their profiles, ages, communication and sensory needs, learning stages, and the need for regulation support. We maintain safe staffing ratios based on assessed need and risk. Where a pupil requires enhanced staffing or specialist provision, this is agreed with the commissioning authority as part of the placement offer.

9. Equality, reasonable adjustments and accessibility

IW is committed to inclusive practice and equality. We do not refuse admission based on protected characteristics. We make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for disabled pupils, including adjustments to communication, environment and routines.

Examples of adjustments during admissions

- Alternative communication methods (AAC, visuals, simplified language, interpreters).
- Gradual exposure visits and quiet-time appointments.
- Sensory adjustments during visits (reduced noise/light, access to regulation spaces).
- Flexible meeting formats, including remote meetings where appropriate.

10. Safeguarding and information sharing during admissions

Safeguarding is central to admissions. IW must have sufficient safeguarding and risk information to plan a safe placement. We work with families and Local Authorities to ensure that information is shared lawfully and proportionately.

Key safeguarding expectations

- Any known safeguarding concerns, child protection plans, contextual risk issues, or relevant police/social care involvement must be shared with IW as part of the referral/consultation.
- IW may consult with the DSL of the current setting (with appropriate consent and information-sharing basis) to support safe transition.
- Where there are allegations or concerns about adults working with the child, IW follows local safeguarding procedures and KCSIE expectations.

Data protection

All documentation is stored securely and shared on a need-to-know basis. IW follows UK GDPR principles, including minimisation, accuracy and retention. Parents/carers are informed about how information is used and their rights in relation to data protection.

11. Decisions, refusals and dispute resolution

IW aims to work collaboratively to secure an appropriate placement. When IW cannot offer a place, we provide clear reasons supported by evidence and safety/feasibility considerations.

Reasons a place may be refused (examples)

- IW is at capacity and cannot offer an appropriate class place without compromising safe and efficient education.
- The assessed needs and risks cannot be met safely within IW's staffing model/premises, even with reasonable adjustments.
- Essential information required to assess suitability has not been provided, despite requests.

Dispute resolution/complaints

If parents/carers or a Local Authority disagree with an admissions decision, IW encourages discussion and review of evidence. Formal complaints about the process should follow IW's Complaints Procedure. Local Authorities may also use statutory routes available to them for EHCP placement disputes.

12. Monitoring, record keeping and review

- The admissions lead maintains an admissions log including enquiries, consultations, decisions and timescales.
- Placement decisions and rationales are recorded and retained securely.
- Transitions are evaluated after start (e.g., 4–6 week review), and learning is incorporated into practice.
- This policy is reviewed annually and whenever relevant guidance changes.

Appendix A: Admissions referral checklist (LA/parents)

IW requests the following (as applicable) to make a safe and informed decision:

- EHCP and latest annual review paperwork (or draft EHCP if in process).
- Most recent professional reports (EP, SALT, OT, medical/CAMHS as relevant).
- Current attainment/learning profile and engagement information (including small-step progress measures where used).
- Behaviour support plan and risk assessments (including positive handling plan if relevant).
- Attendance record and any EBSA plans or reintegration plans.
- Safeguarding summary (including CP/Child in Need plans, contextual safeguarding risks, and key contacts).
- Medication/medical needs plan and emergency protocols (e.g., epilepsy/asthma/anaphylaxis).
- Transport needs and any supervision requirements.
- Parent/carer views, strengths, triggers, successful strategies and motivators.

Appendix B: Pre-placement assessment framework (IW)

IW's pre-placement assessment considers:

- Communication: receptive/expressive language, AAC use, interaction style, processing time.
- Regulation: triggers, early signs, coping strategies, sensory profile, and co-regulation needs.
- Learning: starting points, attention, working memory, independence, stamina, preferred learning conditions.
- Social understanding: peer interaction, boundaries, play skills, vulnerability to exploitation/peer influence.
- Safety: absconding/bolting risk, self-injury risk, aggression risk, medical risk, and intimate care needs.
- Environment: noise/light tolerance, transitions, personal space needs, access to regulation spaces.
- Family/context: routines, travel, barriers, attendance factors, professional involvement.

Appendix C: Transition plan template (IW)

Area	Plan/actions	Owner/date
Visits schedule	E.g., 2 short familiarisation visits; 1 half-day trial; reviewed weekly	
Key adult	Named key adult; consistent staffing plan; handover approach	
Communication supports	AAC/visuals/social story; meet-the-team photos; vocabulary list	
Regulation plan	Sensory toolkit; safe space; movement breaks; de-escalation script	
Learning plan	Baseline assessments; initial targets; timetable adaptations	
Risk and safety	Risk assessment; positive handling plan if needed; medical protocols	
Transport	Pick-up/drop-off arrangements; supervision; contingencies	
Family engagement	Weekly check-ins; home-school communication method; review date	
Review meeting	4–6 week placement review to adjust provision	

Appendix D: Admissions decision record (template)

Decision record fields (complete and retain securely):

- Pupil name / DOB / year group; referring authority; date received; decision date.
- Summary of needs (EHCP sections B, F and outcomes where applicable).
- Evidence reviewed (list reports and dates).
- Identified risks and mitigations; staffing ratio implications; premises/environment adjustments required.
- Proposed provision offer (including any enhanced staffing/therapy elements).
- Decision: offer/decline/defer pending info. Rationale linked to evidence.
- Sign-off: Headteacher/Principal; SENCo; DSL (where safeguarding/risk relevant); Proprietary oversight where required.