

Admissions policy

2025/6

The Pines School



Ratified by the Full Governing Body on: 24th September 2025

Chair of Governors Signature: *Wendy Sartain*

Introduction

The Pines School is an all age provision for young people with Autism. We are an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) designated school and offer provision for 270 young people aged 4 – 16. We are a Foundation school and are part of the Birmingham Special Schools Cooperative Trust. As a heavily oversubscribed ASC provision, all of our pupils have an EHCP with a diagnosis of Autism as their primary need. Some pupils may have other individual identified needs and learning difficulties in addition to their primary need of Autism.

Pupils may enter the school from 4 and may continue until the age of 11, if the placement is appropriate. Pupils need to apply to the local authority for secondary placements in the school. Admission into the school will generally be into year groups and classes where there are spaces or if there is a space in an appropriate cohort.

Referrals are made centrally by the local authority SENAR team and will be made during the school year for any year group. Transition point referrals are made at specific times during the year in line with local authority deadlines. Transition points are reception, year 2, year 6 and year 11.

Students seeking a place at The Pines School will have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and have a formal diagnosis of Autism.

If a parent or carer feels that their child would need a Special School placement at The Pines School, this should be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) at the child's current school or setting who will be able to give more information regarding suitability and application.

The Local Authority (LA) is the Admissions Authority for all Special Schools. Once a school has been named on the EHCP paperwork, the LA will contact the school and send over the EHCP and any accompanying paperwork for the student referred. Parents can request to visit the school or access additional information about the school on the website.

Aims

To ensure that admissions to The Pines School are fair and appropriate to all pupils, including those who are already on roll.

The Pines School procedure for the admission of students

The LA send paperwork (EHCP/Statement) for pupils referred from the placement panel. Our designated need identified with the LA is for young persons with Autism. This procedure is the same for phase transfer admissions and in year admissions. The process is followed irrespective of the age of the pupils and whether they are primary or secondary age.

The headteacher reads the paperwork and assesses the suitability of placement at The Pines School (delegated by the governors). Considering the primary need of the pupil and their compatibility with the effective education of the current cohort.

If the placement is likely to be suitable and further information is required an observation of the pupil is carried out, by the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher, in their current setting.

Once a decision is made a detailed reply slip (governing body response) is sent back to the LA to say whether or not the school is able to offer a place based on

- Whether The Pines School is suitable for the child or young person's age, ability, aptitude, or SEN
- Would the pupil's attendance be incompatible with the efficient education of the other pupils with whom they would be educated?

Places are only offered if there is physical capacity within the appropriate age group, learning pathway and within commissioned numbers as agreed with the LA. Any admissions need to ensure that they are compatible with the effective education of all.

If parents haven't previously visited the school, we would invite them in to school for a visit.

The formal offer of a place will come via the LA and once school are notified, we will contact parents and carers to complete relevant paperwork and plan for any transition work that may need to take place.

Places at the school can also be given as a result of a tribunal hearing, where The Pines School is named on the EHCP, this forces the school over numbers and at times may mean that pupils are educated in classes that may not be the most appropriate.

The Pines School does not hold a waiting list and places are allocated by SENAR following consultation with the school. Places cannot be held pending referrals or information being shared.

Transport is allocated by the local authority and not the school directly.

The headteacher will ensure that:

- Admissions to the school are appropriate and not to the detriment of the pupils already on roll.
- Relevant paperwork is completed and shared.
- The required level of staffing is in place prior to the pupil's arrival.

The governing body will:

Transfer the responsibility of admissions to the headteacher.

Relationship to other policies

The policy supports, promotes and reflects the school ethos, aims and vision.

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Race Equality Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.