



ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

2023/2024



Criteria

Unified Academy is a special academy which provides 84 places for students from years 5-11 (aged 9-16) with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as their primary identified need.

For a child to be admitted, the Academy must be named by a Local Authority (LA) in the child's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). This generally follows extensive consultation with the Academy. Students will be considered for the Academy when it is clear that they will benefit from the provision and that they meet the following criteria:

- a) Applicants will have an EHCP. However, in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to make an emergency placement. Examples of exceptional cases when it may be necessary to make an emergency placement include:
 - i. the child's medical circumstances have changed suddenly, causing a rapid and serious deterioration in the child's health or development
 - ii. where a child arriving unexpectedly in the LA exhibits such significant learning difficulties as would normally warrant an EHCP.

- b) Applicants will have a range of special educational needs and disabilities, some of which may be complex. This may include one, or a combination of the following:
 - i. Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs
 - ii. Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - iii. Speech, Language and Social Communication needs
 - iv. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - v. Oppositional Defiant Disorder
 - vi. Conduct disorder

Parents/carers wishing their child to attend Unified Academy should ask their LA to name the Academy in their child's EHCP.

Oversubscription Criteria

A student cannot be refused admission on the basis of 'oversubscription' when the academy is named in their EHCP.

Visits

In cases where the Academy is a possible placement for a student, the family will be encouraged to visit. However, there can be no binding comment about the student's suitability, nor an offer of a place, before the LA has made a recommendation about placement. If parents/carers request a place at the Academy prior to any formal contact by the LA with the Academy, they should be referred to the LA SEN Team.

Referral

To acquire a place in the Academy, children must be referred by a Local Authority. The LA must attach the child's EHCP, their most recent Annual Review and any appended reports about the child from the professionals involved. The Principal will review the referral papers and request any additional reports required in order to make a decision.

The Academy will consider all referrals and respond in writing within the time limit set by the LA. If a decision is taken by the Academy not to offer a place, the Academy will give the reasons for that decision according to the Code of Practice. The reasons should be expressed in terms of the needs of the student, whether a place is available at the school within the appropriate provision (e.g. year group or key stage) and/or the efficient education of other students already at the Academy, so that it is clear why the Academy considers that the student does not meet the published Admissions Criteria.

Offers

If the Academy can accept a referral, the Principal will write to the LA accepting the referral, including details of financial requirements, the support to be offered, a start date, the date by which the offer should be accepted and the address to which to respond.

If the LA fails to accept the place by the date set out in the letter, it will be assumed that the LA no longer wants the place and the offer will be withdrawn.

Transition

When placement has been agreed, staff from the Academy will make contact with the pupil/student's current placement to arrange a transition programme with exchange of information and reciprocal visits where practical and appropriate.

Usual transition at Unified Academy consists of an 'integration timetable' for three weeks. This can include reduced hours or alternate days to allow for accurate and appropriate assessments to take place. This is under constant review.

Exit Criteria

A student will be referred to the Annual Review / SEN Panel if:

- a) It is considered that he has progressed and developed such that it is the view of the Academy that he may be able to access a differentiated mainstream curriculum.
- b) Other changing needs of the student indicate that alternative provision may be more appropriate, including more specialised provision.

Appeals (The First-Tier Tribunal – Special Educational Needs and Disability)

If a parent or guardian of a child in respect of whom an EHCP is maintained by a Local Authority appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), either against the naming of the Academy in the child's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name the Academy, the Academy agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal.

Where the Academy, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) has determined that it should be named in a child's EHCP, the Academy must admit the child to the Academy.