

Policy/Procedure	Admissions Policy		
Type	Operational		
Applies to project(s)	Watermelon Independent Schools	Policy No	OP/02
Created by(owner)	Z Jonah		
Status	Released		
Date	Jan 2026		
Next review date:	Jan 2027		

Change History

Version	Description	Date issued	Reason	Approved by
1.0	New policy	18/07/2024	New policy	ZJ
1.1	Review	July 2025	Review	ZJ
1.2	Review	Jan 2026	Review	HL

Related policies

Policy Ref No.	Policy Name	Policy Ref No.	Policy Name
S/01	Child Protection and Safeguarding	OP/20	Special Educational Needs and Disability
OP/09	Complaints Policy and Procedure		
OP/10	Curriculum		
OP/11	Data Protection		
OP/14	Equal Opportunities		
OP/13	Equality and Diversity		

Admissions Policy Contents

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Admissions Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies (not an exhaustive list):

- i. Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- ii. Complaints Policy and Procedure
- iii. Curriculum Policy
- iv. Data Protection Policy
- v. Equal Opportunities Policy
- vi. Equality and Diversity Policy
- vii. Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- viii. Statement of Purpose

1 Statement of intent

- 1.1 This policy has been written in line with government legislation and the Independent School Standards (2014) and is designed to:
 - i. ensure there is a fair admissions procedure for all applicants.
 - ii. help guide parents and their children through the application process.
- 1.2 The admissions process is designed to produce accurate, and relevant information, for all stakeholders: parents and guardians, pupils, professionals, and the school, to allow an informed assessment of the school's capability of meeting the academic and pastoral needs of each child.
- 1.3 Thorough consideration of documentation, informal assessment, and open dialogue between parents or guardians and the school's staff, will allow the school to make an informed, and fair decision, about its suitability in meeting the individual needs of each prospective pupil.
- 1.4 The admissions process will allow successful applicants to make the best possible academic and social progress, whilst also ensuring that those pupils whose needs cannot be met by the school, are supported to obtain appropriate placements in more suitable settings.
- 1.5 In the interest of all children, the school's admissions process will be applied fairly and will be adhered to without exception.
- 1.6 The key aims of the admissions policy is to ensure that Watermelon Independent Schools:
 - i. can meet the special educational and social, emotional, and behavioural needs of referred children and young people at point of admission.
 - ii. admits children who would benefit from, and would fit into, our evolving community.
 - iii. manages each individual potential placement fairly and efficiently.
 - iv. provides a clear, structured, and supportive admission and induction procedure for new children and young people.

- 1.7 This policy serves to:
- i. Explain the admissions criteria.
 - ii. Explain the admissions process.
 - iii. Explain the induction process.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Watermelon Independent Schools caters for all children including children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). The young person's main area of need is social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH), communication and interaction and/or complex needs associated with autistic spectrum disorder.
- 2.2 Watermelon Independent Schools has a strongly inclusive ethos and welcomes all pupils who meet the admissions criteria regardless of race, gender, or disability.
- 2.3 Watermelon Independent Schools considers applications for admittance in strict order of receipt and is dependent upon whether a place is available.
- 2.5 Admission and entry will be subject to the availability of a place and the student satisfying the admissions requirements.
- 2.5 The school operates an Equal Opportunities Policy and adheres to the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 2.6 Watermelon Independent Schools will maintain its record keeping in line with current legislation. All relevant documentation (contracts, permissions, medical information, and consent etc.) will be signed by the appropriate parent/carer/local authority representative prior to admission of the child or young person.
- 2.7 Contractual arrangements between the setting and the placing authority including National Schools Contracts and a funding agreement letter must be approved before the admission of any child/young person.
- 2.8 The school will consider what it can do to ensure that a disabled pupil is not placed at a substantial disadvantage to his peers. This will be achieved by applying a reasonableness test to any possible adjustments that the pupil may require. Consideration will include whether the adjustment would overcome the substantial disadvantage; the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; the financial resources available; the cost of taking a particular step; the extent to which it is practicable to do so; health and safety requirements; the impact on others in the school community and the interests of other pupils.
- 2.9 All places at the school are always subject to the school being able to continue to meet the individual student's needs.

3 Admissions Criteria

- 3.1 A place will only be offered where there is a space within the appropriate year group and where the pupil meets the criteria set out below:
- i. Pupils will be between 11 and 18 years old.
 - ii. Pupils will have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)
Pupils are likely to have a range of needs, including cognitive, specific, and moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and speech, language, and communication needs, and those of pupils with an autism spectrum disorder
 - iii. Pupils may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their social, emotional, and mental health and/or communication and interaction need.
 - iv. Pupils will normally be assessed as being within the low average to above average ability range.

4 Admissions process

Stage 1 – Pre-admission

- 4.1 A copy of our latest Prospectus/Vision and Values/Aims will be published on our website; paper copies of the information will be made available on request without charge to parents/carers.
- 4.2 **Initial enquiry / referral** – Pupils will typically be nominated by a commissioner (the Local Authority). An initial enquiry regarding a possible placement for a pupil in the school will be managed by the Head teacher and SENCO, most usually by telephone or electronic mail. The purpose of this initial communication is to gain an overview of the pupil's academic, cognitive, and social profile. Parents are also welcome to make speculative visits to the school.
- 4.3 Referral forms will be assessed by key staff (head teacher and SENCO).
- 4.4 **Pupil and parents/carers visit-** should the school be deemed a suitable match for the pupil, an appointment for the pupil and parents/carers to visit the school and to meet with the head teacher shall be arranged by the admission officer. The purpose of the visit is to provide more detailed information about the school's provision and ethos. It will also offer an opportunity to obtain information from the parents or guardians about how the pupil presents within an educational setting, academically and socially, and about the pupil's needs. This initial meeting gives pupils and parents/carers an opportunity to tour the school observing the facilities and the school in action.
- 4.5 Should the information obtained during the initial enquiry suggest a possible match between the pupil's needs and the school's provision; the admission officer will obtain all relevant documentation to assist in making an informed decision.
- 4.6 Watermelon Independent Schools works in partnership with local authority personnel and requires that all necessary documentation be provided in a timely manner in order to ensure an informed decision can be made about meeting the needs of a child/young person. The documents required include:

- i. a current Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)/ Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)
- ii. the most recent annual review/key educational progress data
- iii. referral document
 - a chronology of the child's life to date, to include information on exclusions and periods out of education
- iv. a current/most recent care plan/ Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- v. the current/most recent behaviour management plan(s) and risk assessment(s)
- vi. any additional assessments
- vii. any additional professional reports (e.g., psychology, psychiatry, paediatrics, occupational therapy, YOS, CAMHS etc.)
- viii. parental/ guardian submissions
- ix. information on any previous Pupil Premium spend.

4.7 The head teacher / SENCO will collate the information received and determine whether the school is capable of meeting the special educational needs outlined in the child/young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)/Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN.)

4.8 The head teacher will decide whether a formal offer of a place will be made, subject to sufficient funding. If an offer is made, the parents or guardians will be asked to respond in writing confirming their acceptance or otherwise of the placement and will be asked to provide additional information prior to the pupil's starting in the school.

4.9 A risk assessment (where required) will be created and sent with the placement offer to evidence how Watermelon Independent Schools would meet the child's needs.

Stage 2 Induction

4.10 Once an offer has been accepted in writing by the parents/guardians, and all paperwork has been received from the referring local authority, a home visit may be undertaken by the Pastoral Lead and/or pupil's key worker.

4.11 Induction week – the pupil will attend school, either on a part-time or full-time basis, and partake in all school activities and lessons except for offsite trips as they will not be risk assessed for this.

4.12 Students will complete baseline assessments.

Stage 3 Post admission

4.13 An admissions review meeting will take place usually within six weeks, but no later than eight weeks. This meeting will agree the details of an Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Management Plan, if required. Baseline assessments: academic, social, emotional, and behavioural, will be made available to all parents/carers and professionals at this meeting.

4.14 During the initial admissions review process, Watermelon Independent Schools will:

- i. identify additional special educational needs that the school is able to cater for

- ii. conduct and collate baseline assessments and share this information at the post-admission review meeting.
- iii. create an Individual Education Plan identifying the resources needed to meet the pupil's current and ongoing needs.
- iv. implement an induction programme.

5 Changes to admission arrangements

- 5.1 The admission arrangements for the school will change in accordance with national legislation and policy review. Parents/carers will be informed of any changes being made.
- 5.2 Parents/carers must notify the school immediately if there are any changes that may affect their child's application. Where the child has multiple addresses, the address given to the school should be the one where the child spends the majority of the school week. If it is an equal split, the parents can decide which address to give.

6 Appeals

- 6.1 Should an application for a place at the school be unsuccessful, parents/carers will be informed as to why the admission was refused and provide information about the process for hearing appeals. Should parents/carers wish to appeal, they should set out the grounds for the appeal in writing and send it via post or email to:

Husein@watermelonschools.com or:

FAO Husein Ladha
Watermelon Independent Schools
Manor House
Redfern Road
Birmingham
B11 2BE

7 Monitoring arrangements

- 7.1 The policy will be reviewed and approved by the Head teacher annually.

Appendix 1 Parental Declaration

I/we certify that I/we am/are the person/s with parental responsibility for the student and that the information given is true to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

I/we also understand that any false or deliberately misleading information given on my/our application and/or supporting paperwork, or any relevant information withheld may render this application invalid and could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of a school place.

I/we will provide additional information or documentary evidence in connection with this application if requested.

I/we understand that Watermelon Independent Schools will thoroughly check all details I/we have provided against records held by the Local Authority and other agencies. Additional information may be requested. If it is discovered that a place has been offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application or supporting documents that offer may be withdrawn and could lead to legal action if necessary.

I/we understand that the information collected by the Local Authority (LA) from my/our application will only be used to help arrange admission to school in line with the LA and schools' admissions criteria and processes in accordance with the Department for Education School Admissions Code and that my/our information will be processed in accordance with the **Data Protection Act**.

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2 WATERMELON INDEPENDANT SCHOOLS

Enjoy, Aspire, Achieve

REFERRAL FORM

Pupil details

Surname (capitals)		Forename(s)	
Date of birth		Current NCY	
Current educational setting			

Pupil details

UPN		Gender	
Address (where currently living)			
Postcode		Home tel no.	
Home language 1		Ethnicity	Ethnicity.
Home language 2			

Child in Care (If applicable)

Child in Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a Child in Care, name of Authority	
Child in Care status	
Response service manager	
Social worker	

SEND stage.

SEN support	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Education Health Care (EHC) Needs Assessment requested	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education Health Care (EHC) Needs Assessment started	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

Social Care

Child in Need	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child Protection 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child in Care 0-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	Court of Protection 18+	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaving Care 16+	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult and Community Services 18+	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Help 0-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disabled Children and Young People 18+	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional information

Free School Meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil Premium	<input type="checkbox"/>
High Needs Funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Needs Funding Band	

In the context of current education setting:

Pupil's strengths

Areas of need (select only one primary need)	Primary	Additional
Communication and interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cognition and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social, emotional, and mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sensory / Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Provide a summary of the pupil's barriers to learning.

What is being sought through this referral that is additional to or different from the resources currently available to this pupil?

What will success look like for the pupil?

Pupil's views Parent/carer views

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Description of progress with regards to learning and development

EYFS data	
KS1 data	
KS2 data	
KS3 data	
GCSE predictions & options	

Detail the current education setting's internal actions, interventions and/or preventative strategies, including to support attendance (most recent first)

Dates(s)	Need	What strategy or approach was implemented?	Impact achieved

Detail external (e.g., AP, CAMHS) actions, interventions and/or preventative strategies, including to support attendance (most recent first)

Date(s)	Provider	What strategy or approach was implemented?	Impact achieved

Please list any Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusion history details (most recent first)

Date(s)	School setting	Primary reason for exclusion	Comments

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State if any other agencies are actively involved or have been in the last 6 months with this pupil and/or family and provide details of each agency's key worker and telephone number.

Agency	Key worker name	Contact details	Date of last contact
Dyslexia Outreach Team			
Multi Agency Assessment Programme (MAAP)			
Alternative Tuition Service (ATS) / Online learning			
Social Care (Please specify team)			
Early Help (Please specify team)			
Health (Please specify)			
CAMHS			
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Academy Trust (SENDAT)			
Sensory and Communication (Please specify)			
Specialist Learning Support Assistant			
Other(s):			

Additional information

Any other information you wish to add (e.g., any child protection concerns and/or relevant family background information, if the learner has drug or alcohol problems, if there are concerns about behaviour or honesty, if the learner is recently bereaved, any other issues which may affect this learner's progress at an off-site placement) or any further additional comments you wish to make

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Please describe any interventions, 1:1 work and any triggers that may affect the pupil from engaging.

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Referrer details

Forename(s)		Surname	
Designation		Telephone	
School or service			
Address			
Email			
Signature		Date	

This referral **must** be supported by additional evidence as follows:

1	Risk Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Attendance Data – Registration Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Parent/Carer and School View	<input type="checkbox"/>
And one or more of:		
2	SEN Support Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	EHC Plan (With Assessment Advice or Annual Review including most recent Professionals’ report)	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Pastoral/ Behaviour Support Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Specialist Education Service Report	<input type="checkbox"/>

All information contained within this referral form must be shared with the parent/carer and a signature obtained. The exception to this is where the form is completed following a permanent exclusion. Forms will be returned and not processed until a signature is obtained.

Parent / Carer details

Full name(s) of all persons with legal parental responsibility / carers (with addresses if different) and relationship to the pupil

Title		Relationship to child	
Address (if different from pupil’s)		Parental responsibility?	Choose an item.
		Telephone	
		Mobile	
Postcode		Email	

Surname		Forename(s)	
Title		Relationship to child	

Surname		Forename(s)	
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Address (if different from pupil's)		Parental responsibility?	Choose an item.
		Telephone	
		Mobile	
Postcode		Email	

Parent/carer signature - Not required for a permanent exclusion notification.

I confirm that I have read all the information on this form			
Signature		Date	
Signature		Date	