



Sherwood Foundation School
Sherwood Park Campus
Sherwood Hill Campus
Sherwood Manor Campus

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Policy Name	Admissions Policy
Date of Issue	September 2025
DFE Guidance (statutory or recommended)	Statutory
Description Content	Covers admissions to Sherwood Foundation School
Reviewing Body	Reviewing body - Full Governing Body Responsibility for review - Senior Leader with responsibility for admissions
Assigned Reviewing Period	Annually
Date of Next Review	September 2026 <i>(Note: This policy will remain in force until an updated policy has been approved)</i>

Version Number	Review Date	Amendment Details
1.1	November 2021	Simon Vines, minimal updates
1:2	July 2022	Anna Richardson - Full review & updates
1.3	September 2023	Anna Richardson - Minor updates based on the admissions code
1.4	September 2024	Anna Richardson - No changes
1.5	September 2025	Anna Richardson

SHERWOOD FOUNDATION SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

Overview

The Admissions Policy must be published and circulated to parents and staff at least once a year. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Sherwood Foundation School Local Offer

Sherwood Foundation School is a Foundation Special School located in the London Borough of Sutton and made up of three campuses:

Sherwood Park Campus: This is a specialist school for learners aged 3 - 19 years who have severe, multiple and complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes learners who have highly complex access needs resulting from their physical and/or health conditions. All learners require high levels of adult support to access learning.

Sherwood Hill Campus: This is a specialist school for autistic learners aged 3 - 19 years who have multiple and complex barriers to learning, requiring high levels of support to access education and learning around their peers. Many of our learners may also have severe learning difficulties and /or struggle to maintain a regulated state for learning.

Sherwood Manor Campus: This is a specialist school primarily for Autistic learners aged 11 - 19 years who have moderate to severe barriers to learning. Most of our pupils can access a highly adapted formal learning environment with high levels of adult support. Some of our learners struggle to deal with the demands of an adult led learning environment so may need a highly individualised learning offer to meet their academic potential.

The whole school PAN is 205, this PAN is shared across all three sites, with the number on each site fluctuating due to the presenting needs of the pupils each academic year.

All pupils attending Sherwood Foundation School have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and all pupils have needs and provision identified in all four areas (cognition & learning, communication & interaction, social, emotional & mental health, and physical & sensory). Having an EHCP is a key criteria for being offered a placement. The exception to

this is a child who is in the process of assessment but on the expectation that they will receive an EHCP at the end of this period. All pupils must require an integrated teaching and therapeutic approach to learning and must fit the criteria outlined in at least one of our Pathways for Learning (specific to Hill, Park and Manor Campuses).

Sherwood Foundation School will consider all applications for admission in accordance with national and local policies and will base its decisions solely on the criteria of eligibility, capacity and appropriateness in terms of existing cohort. Any placement at Sherwood Foundation School will be as a result of careful consideration of that child / young person's needs, how effectively those needs can be met at our school (considering the offer at all three campuses) and whether they can be met without detriment to other pupils already at the school. The Admissions Lead, Executive Headteacher and Governing body apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend the school.

Admissions

The Sherwood Foundation School admissions officer will maintain clear and up to date information about the School through its website and its Local Offer statement. The School welcomes interest from parents and guardians and ensures there are opportunities for parents and guardians of prospective students to visit and to attend scheduled Open Events (these take place half termly on each campus and are advertised on our website). Any parent or professional interested in a child attending our school is welcome to visit and to discuss individual needs with the leadership team. Tours of the school are offered to all interested parties, whether there are spaces available or not. Parents can then express their preference to their caseworker from their Local Authority (LA). It should be noted that there can be no binding commitment about the pupil's suitability, or an offer of a place, before the LA has sent a formal consultation requesting a placement and the application process below has been completed.

Admissions Process

The School follows and supports Sutton's process for admission to special schools. All admissions to Sherwood Foundation School are through the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities team at Cognus, acting on behalf of Sutton LA, as the LA retains the legal responsibility to place pupils with special needs appropriately. We do not accept any direct consultations from other Local Authorities or schools. Instead, please direct all consultations to the Sutton dedicated email address: suttonconsult@cognus.org.uk

All children/young people with an EHCP are allocated a LA Case Officer who is responsible for sending formal papers to the school for consultation (via Sutton LA at the email above if from other local authorities) to the school admissions email address admissions@sherwoodfoundationschool.org.uk Consultations will usually indicate which campus (Sherwood Park, Sherwood Hill or Sherwood Manor) is being sought but if not the admissions officer will determine which campus is deemed most appropriate given the child/young person's presenting needs.

The School admissions officer will operate an effective tracker system to ensure all applications are treated fairly and addressed thoroughly. All pupils between the ages of 4 and 19 years will be welcomed, provided that we can meet their needs and that there is an appropriate space within the given age range. Nursery age children with complex physical and

medical needs will be considered for our Sherwood Park Campus in exceptional circumstances.

The admission numbers at our school vary depending on the number of leavers in any given year. Key year groups for admission at Sherwood Foundation School are at the following times:

- Reception - Sherwood Park & Hill Campuses
- Secondary Transition (Year 7) - Sherwood Park, Hill and Manor Campuses

Places are offered outside of these transition times when a place becomes available. The admissions officer actively engages in all LA admissions panels where possible. Sutton LA holds an admissions panel between January - March every year for all children in the borough who require placement in reception in a Sutton specialist school setting. Children for all reception places at Sherwood Foundation School (Park & Hill Campuses) will be considered as part of this process. Other LAs consulting on a reception place at our school, should send consults to Sutton Local Authority between January and March in order for their consults to be given equal consideration as part of this process.

Our admissions process centres around the presenting strengths and barriers for learning outlined in the EHCP of the child / young person and whether we are the most appropriate provision to enable the young person to overcome these barriers. Decisions regarding the placement of children and young people at our school therefore involve a number of stakeholders, including the view of the child or young person, parent/guardian preference, commissioners and the views of experienced staff within the school. Where the school is potentially able to offer a place we will arrange for a formal visit either to observe the child / young person in their current educational setting or at home if out of school. This enables us to complete a brief assessment as to their suitability for the school and the existing cohort where the space is available. If a pupil has complex physical and/or medical needs, the school nurse and onsite NHS therapy team will be involved in the admissions process, in order to assess whether these needs can be met at our school and to plan for their implementation. If the school has no spaces in the cohort we will generally respond according to the paperwork only, as an assessment would raise potential hopes.

The following priority system is used to allocate places following assessment when a place is oversubscribed and when a number of pupils are suitable for the same space:

- The highest priority is given to looked after children and previously looked after children.
- The child is out of education
- The child has a sibling attending our school
- The child is the best fit for the cohort in the class where the space is available
- Strong parental preference

We respond to the Area Office in writing as to whether we can meet the child or young person's Special Educational Needs. Admissions for each year group are determined using the same criteria, namely:

- Whether one of the Sherwood Foundation School's campuses would be suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEND of the young person.

- Whether the attendance of the young person at Sherwood Foundation School would be compatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.
- If there is a space in a compatible class, meaning there must both be a space in the relevant Key Stage and a space in a suitable class to meet the young person's needs (this will be linked to the availability of a space in a class on the appropriate pathway for learning on each campus).

If a decision is taken not to offer a place, clear reasons using the criteria above will be given. Reasonable adjustments will be considered carefully and outlined in the response. Where a place is offered, this will be offered at one of three funding levels and with the agreement that the therapy requirements outlined in the EHCP will be funded through Cognus therapies. It is then the Local Authority, not the school that offers the place to the child / young person's parents / guardians.

Once placement has been agreed, clear and planned transition arrangements are put in place to manage the move. These will be tailored to the individual needs of the child / young person. Sherwood Foundation School has strong links with all of its feeder schools and nurseries and develops effective transitions for new students. Early Years pupils are admitted on a part time basis, building towards full time education by the age of 5 years.

Parents/guardians must make a separate application to transfer from nursery to primary, from primary to secondary and from secondary to post 16. Existing students will be offered an automatic place on transition if we continue to be able to meet the child/young person's needs. Pupils may be offered places on a different campus to the one they are attending, if it is felt that another of our campuses is better suited to the pupil's presenting needs.

Exit criteria

A young person will be referred to the LA SEN panel if:

- It is considered that he/she has progressed and developed such that it is the view of the school that he/she may be able to access a less complex provision
- Other changing needs of the young person indicate that an alternative provision may be more appropriate, including a different type of specialist provision

Where an existing pupil's needs can no longer be fully met by Sherwood Foundation School, the school will follow the SEN process and work with parents and other professionals to seek a more suitable placement.

Offers & Appeals

Sherwood Foundation School supports pupils with a wide range of learning needs but there will be occasions when we identify that the School is not a suitable provision. On such occasions the School will make their reasons clear for not offering a place and, if appropriate, will make suggestions to parents and the SEND team as to what type of school might be a suitable alternative. Reasons for not offering a place will take into account security of the School site in meeting a student's needs, levels of challenge that exceed the School's capabilities and compatibility with the existing cohort.

Parents and guardians who are unable to obtain a place or, conversely, who do not wish their child to attend Sherwood Foundation School, should contact the SEND team at Sutton (Cognus) and enquire about the appeals process. Sherwood Foundation School will proactively engage in all forms of positive mediation to resolve appeal situations before they

reach Tribunal stage. If a parent or guardian of a child /young person 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 school in the young person's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name the school, the school agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal. Where the school, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) has determined that it should be named in a young person's EHCP, the school must admit the learner to the school.

Legal Duties and Relevant Guidance

DoE guidance - see below

Children's Act (2002, 2011)

Equality Act (2010)

Human Rights Act (1998)

References & Related reading

School admissions code (2021)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf

Special Educational needs and disability code of practice

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf