



Orange Tree School

Admissions Policy

Orange Tree School (Main Site) and Ridgeway Hospital Provision

This policy supports the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including relevant requirements concerning pupil welfare, information for parents, complaints handling, admission and attendance records, and leadership and management.



DOCUMENT DETAILS	
Applies To:	• All Staff • External suppliers or visitors • Regulatory / Legal bodies/LEAs • Other (e.g. Parents) • Hospital Staff
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Policy Summary

Purpose

This policy explains how Orange Tree School manages admissions to both the Main Site and the Ridgeway Hospital Provision. It outlines the school's admissions principles, criteria, assessment process and decision-making arrangements to ensure placements are appropriate, equitable and in the best interests of each young person.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

- prospective pupils;
- parents and carers;
- Local Authorities;
- placing authorities;
- staff involved in admissions;
- Advisory Board members; and
- external professionals involved in the admissions process.

Our Principles

Orange Tree School is committed to ensuring that admissions decisions are:

- child-centred;
- fair and transparent;
- based on individual assessment;
- made in partnership with families and Local Authorities;
- consistent with the school's therapeutic approach; and
- informed by the school's ability to meet a young person's educational, social, emotional and therapeutic needs.

Admissions decisions are made with careful consideration of the needs of the individual pupil, the needs of existing pupils and the school's capacity to provide an appropriate educational placement. Successful placements rely on effective partnership between the school, parents or carers and the commissioning Local Authority.

Our Provision

Orange Tree School provides education across two distinct provisions:

- **Orange Tree School (Main Site)** – providing specialist therapeutic education for pupils whose needs cannot currently be met within mainstream education.
- **Ridgeway Hospital Provision** – providing education for young people receiving inpatient care, in partnership with the hospital multidisciplinary team.

Each provision has its own admissions considerations, which are outlined within this policy.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or the school's admissions arrangements.

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1. Introduction

Orange Tree School is an independent specialist school providing therapeutic education for children and young people whose needs cannot currently be met within mainstream educational settings.

Orange Tree School comprises two specialist educational provisions:

- Orange Tree School (Main Site), which provides specialist education for pupils aged 11 to 19 with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and associated special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); and
- Ridgeway Hospital Provision, which provides education for children and young people aged 8 to 18 years receiving inpatient treatment within a hospital setting, ensuring continuity of education during admission.

Orange Tree School is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive education within a therapeutic environment that supports each pupil's educational, emotional and personal development. We recognise that every child has unique strengths, needs and aspirations, and that successful placements are founded on careful assessment, collaborative planning and a shared commitment between the school, families, Local Authorities and other professionals.

The purpose of this policy is to explain how admissions are managed across both provisions, ensuring that decisions are fair, transparent and consistent. It sets out the criteria for admission, the admissions process, the responsibilities of those involved and the principles that underpin placement decisions.

Admissions decisions are based on a thorough assessment of whether the school can meet a prospective pupil's needs, whilst also considering the needs of existing pupils, the efficient use of resources and the school's ability to maintain a safe, supportive and therapeutic learning environment. Every application is considered on its individual merits, taking account of the information available at the time of the referral.

Orange Tree School welcomes referrals from Local Authorities and works closely with families, professionals and commissioning bodies throughout the admissions process. The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and will consider reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. However, admission can only be offered where the school is satisfied that it is able to meet the young person's needs safely and effectively within its registered provision.

2. Admissions Principles

Orange Tree School is committed to operating a fair, transparent and consistent admissions process that places the needs of the child or young person at the centre of decision-making. Every referral is considered individually, taking account of the information available at the time of the application and the school's ability to provide an appropriate educational placement.

Admissions decisions are guided by the following principles:

Child-Centred Decision Making

Every application is considered on its individual merits. Decisions are based on whether the school can meet the prospective pupil's educational, social, emotional, therapeutic and, where appropriate, medical needs within its registered provision.

Equality of Opportunity

Orange Tree School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and does not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of disability or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate. However, admission can only be offered where the school is satisfied that it can safely and effectively meet the pupil's needs without compromising the education, wellbeing or safety of others.

Partnership Working

The school works collaboratively with Local Authorities, parents and carers, current educational settings, healthcare professionals and other relevant agencies throughout the admissions process. Open communication and the sharing of accurate, up-to-date information are essential to ensuring informed admissions decisions.

Commitment to School Policies

Orange Tree School operates a specialist therapeutic model that relies upon consistent expectations, positive relationships and partnership with parents and carers.

By accepting a placement at Orange Tree School, parents and carers agree to work in partnership with the school and to support its policies, procedures and therapeutic approach. This includes policies that are fundamental to the safe and effective operation of the school, including the Relationship and Behaviour Policy, Mobile Phones, Personal Electronic Devices and Digital Safety Policy, Attendance Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and other policies designed to safeguard pupils and promote their wellbeing.

Where a pupil is unable or unwilling to sign an agreement because of their age, understanding, SEND, anxiety or other individual needs, the relevant School policy will

nevertheless continue to apply as part of the expectations of the placement. The school will work therapeutically with the pupil to support understanding and compliance.

Suitability of Placement

A placement will only be offered where the school is satisfied that:

- it can meet the young person's identified needs;
- the placement is appropriate for the young person's age, ability and aptitude;
- the placement is compatible with the efficient education and wellbeing of existing pupils;
- appropriate staffing, therapeutic support and resources are available; and
- the placement can be delivered safely within the school's registered provision.

Evidence-Based Assessment

Admissions decisions are informed by a range of evidence, which may include Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), professional reports, risk assessments, school records, discussions with parents, Local Authorities and current educational settings, together with observations made during visits or taster sessions where these form part of the admissions process.

Transparent Decision Making

Where the School is unable to offer a placement, the reasons for the decision will be clearly communicated to the referring Local Authority or other commissioning body. Decisions are made fairly, consistently and in accordance with this policy.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation, statutory guidance and regulatory requirements:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0–25 Years
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

- Human Rights Act 1998

Orange Tree School also has regard to guidance issued by the Department for Education and other relevant statutory bodies relating to admissions, safeguarding, equality, special educational needs and disability, and independent school standards.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Proprietor and Advisory Board

The Proprietor and Advisory Board are responsible for:

- ensuring that the school has a fair, transparent and legally compliant admissions process;
- monitoring the effectiveness of admissions arrangements through governance and quality assurance;
- ensuring that admissions arrangements reflect the school's registered provision, ethos and strategic objectives;
- reviewing this policy annually and approving any significant amendments; and
- ensuring that sufficient resources are available to support the effective implementation of this policy.

4.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that admissions decisions are made fairly, consistently and in the best interests of pupils.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- overseeing the admissions process across both the Main Site and the Ridgeway Hospital Provision;
- ensuring that admissions decisions are based on robust evidence and professional judgement;
- chairing or delegating Admissions Panel meetings where appropriate;
- ensuring that safeguarding considerations form part of all admissions decisions;
- communicating admissions decisions to referring Local Authorities and other commissioning bodies; and
- ensuring that appropriate transition arrangements are in place for new pupils.

4.3 Admissions Lead

The Admissions Lead is the school's primary point of contact for all admissions enquiries and is responsible for coordinating the admissions process from initial enquiry through to admission or closure of the referral.

The Admissions Lead works closely with Local Authorities, parents and carers, the Headteacher and the wider multidisciplinary team to ensure that the admissions process is managed professionally, efficiently and in accordance with this policy.

The Admissions Lead is responsible for:

- acting as the first point of contact for Local Authorities, parents, carers and external professionals regarding admissions;
- managing all admissions enquiries and referrals in a timely and professional manner;
- coordinating the collection and review of relevant documentation, including Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), professional reports and supporting evidence;
- arranging visits, taster placements, assessments and Admissions Panel meetings, where appropriate;
- liaising with internal colleagues and external agencies throughout the admissions process;
- ensuring that applicants and commissioning bodies are kept informed of progress and decisions;
- maintaining accurate admissions records in accordance with data protection requirements; and
- supporting effective transition planning following the offer and acceptance of a placement.

4.4 SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for advising on whether the school can appropriately meet a prospective pupil's special educational needs.

This includes:

- reviewing Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and professional reports;
- identifying any reasonable adjustments that may be required;
- advising the Admissions Panel on the educational provision required;
- contributing to assessments of suitability; and
- supporting transition planning where a placement is agreed.

4.5 Therapy Team

The Therapy Team contributes specialist advice to support admissions decisions where appropriate.

Responsibilities include:

- reviewing therapeutic information and reports;
- advising on therapeutic needs and interventions;

- identifying any therapeutic risks or support requirements;
- contributing to multidisciplinary discussions regarding suitability for placement; and
- supporting transition planning where required.

4.6 Business Manager

The Business Manager is responsible for supporting the operational aspects of admissions.

Responsibilities include:

- supporting contractual and commissioning arrangements;
- confirming that funding agreements are in place prior to admission;
- ensuring that admissions records are maintained appropriately;
- supporting the coordination of transport, facilities and operational requirements where necessary; and
- ensuring that health and safety considerations associated with new admissions are addressed.

4.7 Admissions Panel

The Admissions Panel considers each referral on its individual merits and makes recommendations regarding whether a placement can be offered.

In reaching its decision, the Panel considers:

- the young person's identified needs;
- the information provided by the referring Local Authority and other professionals;
- the school's ability to meet those needs;
- safeguarding and risk considerations;
- the impact on existing pupils and staff; and
- the availability of appropriate educational, therapeutic and staffing resources.

The Panel may request additional information or assessments before reaching a final decision.

4.8 Local Authorities and Other Commissioning Bodies

Local Authorities and other commissioning bodies are responsible for:

- providing accurate and up-to-date information to support the admissions process;
- sharing relevant educational, safeguarding and professional documentation;
- participating in discussions regarding suitability for placement;
- ensuring that funding arrangements are agreed where a placement is offered; and
- working collaboratively with the school to support successful transition arrangements.

4.9 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in the admissions process and are expected to:

- provide accurate information regarding their child's needs and circumstances;
- engage openly with the school throughout the admissions process;
- attend visits and meetings where appropriate;
- contribute to transition planning; and
- work in partnership with the school to support a successful placement.

5. Admissions Criteria – Orange Tree School (Main Site)

5.1 Overview

Orange Tree School (Main Site) is a specialist independent school providing therapeutic education for young people aged 11 to 19 years whose primary need is Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). Pupils admitted to the Main Site will normally have an Education, Health and Care Plan and their placement must be commissioned by a Local Authority.

The school provides a highly structured, nurturing and therapeutic learning environment that supports pupils whose emotional wellbeing, mental health and associated needs have significantly affected their ability to engage successfully in mainstream education or less specialised settings.

Admissions are considered on an individual basis to ensure that the School can meet each young person's educational, therapeutic and safeguarding needs whilst maintaining a safe, stable and supportive environment for the whole school community.

5.2 Pupils We Are Able to Support

Orange Tree School is designed to support young people whose primary identified need is SEMH.

Many pupils also have co-occurring needs, which may include:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC);
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);
- anxiety disorders;
- attachment and developmental trauma;
- EBSA;
- speech, language and communication needs (SLCN);
- specific learning difficulties; and
- other associated special educational needs.

These needs are supported within the context of the school's therapeutic SEMH provision and individualised curriculum. Admissions decisions are based upon the young person's overall profile of need rather than any single diagnosis or identified condition.

5.3 Individual Assessment

Every referral is considered individually. Orange Tree School recognises that no two young people present with identical strengths, needs or circumstances, and admissions decisions are therefore based upon a holistic assessment rather than predetermined criteria or diagnostic labels.

When considering whether the school is able to offer a placement, the Admissions Panel will take account of all available information, which may include:

- the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where applicable;
- professional reports and assessments;
- educational history and previous placements;
- therapeutic, medical and psychological advice;
- safeguarding and risk information;
- discussions with parents, carers, Local Authorities and other professionals;
- visits, observations and, where appropriate, assessment activities.

The purpose of the assessment is to determine whether Orange Tree School can safely and effectively meet the young person's needs within its specialist therapeutic model whilst also supporting the education, wellbeing and safety of the wider school community.

5.4 Determining Whether Orange Tree School is the Right Provision

Orange Tree School (Main Site) is a specialist therapeutic provision for children and young people whose **primary need is Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)**.

Whilst many pupils have co-occurring needs, including autism spectrum condition (ASC), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, speech, language and communication needs and specific learning difficulties, these are supported alongside the pupil's primary SEMH needs.

Admissions decisions are based upon the school's ability to meet the young person's overall profile of need within its registered provision, therapeutic model and staffing arrangements. A diagnosis, or the presence of behaviours that challenge, does not in itself indicate that Orange Tree School is the appropriate placement.

The school is committed to ensuring that every placement is appropriate for both the prospective pupil and the existing school community. In reaching an admissions decision, careful consideration is given to whether the school can safely and effectively meet the young person's needs whilst maintaining a calm, structured and therapeutic learning environment.

Accordingly, a placement is unlikely to be offered where the Admissions Panel determines that:

- the young person's primary needs fall outside the school's specialist SEMH designation;

- the educational, therapeutic, medical or personal care needs required exceed the support the school is able to provide;
- the young person presents with a significant Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) profile requiring a specialist educational approach beyond the school's therapeutic and educational model;
- the young person presents with persistent or significant behaviours requiring a level of supervision, intervention or environmental adaptation beyond the school's staffing model and resources;
- identified risks cannot be safely managed within the school environment, despite reasonable adjustments;
- the placement would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the education, emotional wellbeing, therapeutic progress or safety of the prospective pupil, existing pupils or staff; or
- the school does not have the capacity or specialist resources necessary to meet the identified needs.

Where the School concludes that it is unable to offer a placement, the reasons for that decision will be communicated clearly to the referring Local Authority or other commissioning body.

5.5 Post-16 Admissions and Progression

Orange Tree School provides post-16 education for young people whose needs remain compatible with the school's therapeutic SEMH model and who can access a programme requiring increasing levels of independence. Orange Tree School does not admit new pupils after their nineteenth birthday.

Progression into post-16 is not automatic for pupils already attending Orange Tree School. Each proposed placement is considered individually by the Admissions Panel to determine whether the school remains able to meet the young person's educational, therapeutic and preparation-for-adulthood needs.

The school may offer a repeat or consolidation year to existing pupils who:

- were unable to complete or sit GCSE examinations because of anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance, ill health or other exceptional circumstances;
- have not yet achieved the GCSE grades required for their intended next step;
- would benefit from retaking core GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics; or
- require additional time to consolidate learning and prepare successfully for further education, employment or training.

A repeat year is not an automatic entitlement. It must form part of a purposeful and agreed programme that supports the young person's identified outcomes and future progression.

5.6 Admission during Year 11

New admissions during Year 11 are considered carefully and are relatively uncommon.

A young person entering during Year 11 may have missed significant elements of GCSE courses or followed different examination boards, specifications or curricula. It may therefore be unrealistic for the school to prepare the young person for a full programme of GCSE examinations within one academic year.

Where a Year 11 placement is being considered, the Admissions Panel will assess:

- the young person's previous curriculum coverage and current attainment;
- the subjects and examination specifications previously studied;
- whether meaningful GCSE preparation can be provided within the time available;
- whether the young person may require an additional year to complete or retake qualifications; and
- whether the proposed programme represents an appropriate and achievable educational pathway.

Any likely need for an extended placement beyond the end of Year 11 must be discussed with the young person, parents or carers and the commissioning Local Authority before admission.

5.7 Suitability for Post-16 Provision

For admission or progression into post-16, the young person must be able to:

- access the agreed post-16 curriculum and timetable;
- participate in directed learning rather than engaging only with preferred subjects, topics or activities;
- work with increasing autonomy;
- manage the expectations of a more independent learning environment;
- engage with preparation-for-adulthood activities;
- attend sufficiently and consistently for the planned programme to be delivered; and
- make progress towards further education, employment, training or greater independence.

Orange Tree School's Post-16 provision is not suitable for young people who require:

- continuous individual adult support to access learning;
- a consistently high level of adult supervision throughout the school day;
- extensive learning intervention that cannot be delivered within the School's Post-16 staffing model;
- an educational programme primarily based on life skills with minimal access to formal or directed learning; or
- a level of dependency that prevents meaningful participation in a more independent post-16 environment.

Some young people may have required higher levels of support during Key Stages 3 and 4. However, by Post-16, the Admissions Panel must be satisfied that support can be reduced appropriately and that the young person is able to develop greater independence.

5.8 Attendance Expectations for Post-16

Admission to Orange Tree School's Post-16 provision is subject to the Admissions Panel being satisfied that the young person is able to engage with the proposed programme of study.

As a guide, applicants would normally be expected to demonstrate an overall attendance of at least 60% in their current or previous educational placement, together with evidence that attendance is improving or can reasonably be expected to improve with appropriate support.

The Admissions Panel may consider applications below this threshold where exceptional circumstances exist, such as prolonged illness, hospitalisation or other evidence supported by relevant medical or professional advice. In such cases, the Panel must be satisfied that a post-16 placement is likely to be viable and represent an appropriate use of Local Authority funding.

The school recognises its responsibility to ensure that publicly funded placements are capable of delivering meaningful educational outcomes. Where the Admissions Panel concludes that a young person is unlikely to engage sufficiently with the proposed post-16 programme, it may determine that the placement is not suitable.

All post-16 decisions are made individually, with consideration given to the young person's EHCP, academic profile, attendance history, therapeutic needs, independence, aspirations and proposed preparation-for-adulthood outcomes.

6. Admissions Criteria – Ridgeway Hospital Provision

6.1 Overview

Ridgeway Hospital Provision forms part of Orange Tree School and provides education for children and young people aged 8 to 18 years who are receiving inpatient care at Ridgeway Hospital.

Children and young people admitted to hospital retain their legal entitlement to a suitable education during their admission. The Ridgeway Hospital Provision works in partnership with healthcare professionals, Local Authorities, parents or carers and each pupil's home school to ensure educational continuity throughout their stay.

Educational provision is delivered flexibly and is responsive to each pupil's medical, therapeutic and educational needs, recognising that participation may vary throughout treatment.

Pupils ordinarily remain on roll at their home school and are dual registered with Orange Tree School for the period of hospital education.

6.2 Access to Educational Provision

Children and young people aged 8 to 18 years who are admitted as inpatients to Ridgeway Hospital are entitled to access education appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude and health needs during their admission.

Educational provision forms part of the young person's wider care and treatment and is delivered in accordance with statutory guidance relating to children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

During their admission:

- pupils ordinarily remain on roll at their home school;
- educational provision is commissioned by the relevant Local Authority in accordance with its statutory responsibilities;
- Orange Tree School, through the Ridgeway Hospital Provision, delivers education as alternative provision during the period of inpatient treatment; and
- close liaison is maintained with the home school to support continuity of learning and successful reintegration following discharge.

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is not required for a young person to access education within the Ridgeway Hospital Provision.

6.3 Educational Assessment and Planning

Following admission to hospital, the school works collaboratively with the multidisciplinary team to determine when and how education can begin, taking account of the young person's health, wellbeing and clinical presentation.

An individual education programme is developed to reflect the pupils:

- medical and therapeutic needs;
- prior educational experience and attainment;
- current curriculum requirements;
- examination and accreditation requirements, where applicable;
- readiness to engage in learning.

Educational provision is reviewed regularly throughout the admission to ensure it remains appropriate as the young person's needs change.

6.4 Partnership with Home Schools and Local Authorities

The Ridgeway Hospital Provision works in close partnership with the young person's home school, Local Authority, parents or carers and the multidisciplinary clinical team. Where

appropriate, the school will obtain curriculum information, schemes of work and assessment information from the home school to support continuity of education throughout the admission. The school also supports pupils undertaking public examinations and other accredited qualifications during their hospital stay, working with home schools and awarding bodies to ensure appropriate examination arrangements are made wherever possible.

6.5 Transition and Reintegration

Planning for transition begins as early as practicable and forms part of the wider discharge planning process.

The school works collaboratively with the multidisciplinary team, parents or carers, Local Authorities and the pupil's home school or receiving educational setting to support a planned return to education following discharge.

Relevant educational records, progress information and assessment outcomes are shared, where appropriate, to promote continuity of learning and successful reintegration.

7. Admissions Process

7.1 Initial Enquiries

Enquiries about placements are welcomed from Local Authorities, parents or carers, healthcare professionals and other authorised agencies.

The Admissions Lead acts as the primary point of contact for all admissions enquiries, providing information about the school's specialist provision, admissions criteria and the admissions process. Where appropriate, prospective commissioners and families may be offered an opportunity to visit the school or discuss the suitability of the provision before a formal referral is made.

7.2 Referrals

Referrals should normally be made by the commissioning Local Authority and should include all relevant documentation required to enable the school to consider whether it is able to meet the young person's needs.

This will usually include:

- the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where applicable;
- the most recent educational psychology advice;
- professional reports and assessments;
- safeguarding and risk information;
- current educational reports and attainment information;
- behaviour support or therapeutic plans, where relevant; and
- any other information necessary to support a comprehensive assessment.

Incomplete referrals may delay the admissions process until sufficient information has been received.

7.3 Assessment of Referrals

Each referral is considered through Orange Tree School's admissions process. Information provided by the referring Local Authority and other professionals is reviewed to determine whether the school is likely to be able to meet the young person's needs within its specialist therapeutic provision.

Where additional information is required, the school may request further reports, seek clarification from professionals or arrange discussions with the referring Local Authority, parents or carers and other agencies. The admissions process may therefore extend beyond the initial consultation period where further information is required to enable an informed decision to be made.

7.4 Taster Visits and Assessment

All prospective pupils for the Main Site are expected to complete **two to three taster days** before a placement is considered. At least one should be a full day.

The purpose of the taster programme is to:

- enable the young person to become familiar with the school environment;
- assess whether the school is able to meet the young person's educational, therapeutic and social needs;
- evaluate how the young person engages with the school's therapeutic model and routines; and
- support informed decision-making for the school, the young person, their family and the referring Local Authority.

The school recognises that many young people referred have experienced significant anxiety, previous placement breakdowns or prolonged periods out of education. Consequently, some pupils may require additional visits or a more gradual introduction before a meaningful assessment can be completed. The number and timing of taster days will therefore be determined according to the individual needs of the young person.

Completion of taster days does not guarantee that a placement will be offered.

7.5 Admissions Panel

Orange Tree School operates a weekly Admissions Panel to consider referrals and review prospective placements.

The Panel comprises:

- Headteacher;

- Assistant Headteacher;
- SENCO;
- Admissions Lead; and
- Business Manager.

The Panel considers all available information, including professional reports, outcomes from taster days and discussions with relevant professionals, before determining whether the school is able to offer a placement.

The Panel may decide to:

- offer a placement;
- request additional information or further assessment;
- arrange additional taster days; or
- conclude that the school is unable to meet the young person's needs within its specialist provision.

7.6 Consultation Timescales

Orange Tree School aims to respond to Local Authority consultations within the statutory timescales wherever possible.

However, where additional information is required, or where a young person's individual circumstances mean that further assessment or additional taster days are necessary, the school may require additional time before reaching a decision. In such cases, the School will maintain communication with the referring Local Authority to ensure that the reasons for any delay are clearly understood.

8. Funding and Fees

8.1 Funding Arrangements

Orange Tree School accepts placements commissioned by Local Authorities in accordance with the school's registration and agreed contractual arrangements.

All funding arrangements must be confirmed before a placement commences. Admission cannot take place until commissioning arrangements have been agreed and the necessary contractual documentation has been completed.

8.2 Local Authority Funding

Placements at Orange Tree School (Main Site) are funded by the commissioning Local Authority, ordinarily through a young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or other agreed commissioning arrangements.

Educational provision delivered through the Ridgeway Hospital Provision is commissioned by the relevant Local Authority in accordance with its statutory responsibilities for arranging suitable education for children and young people receiving inpatient hospital care.

8.3 Mixed Funding Arrangements

Orange Tree School does not accept placements funded through a combination of Local Authority funding and parental financial contributions.

Each placement must have a single commissioning body that accepts responsibility for the agreed educational fees and associated contractual arrangements.

8.4 Admissions and Attendance Registers

Orange Tree School maintains admission and attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and all other relevant statutory requirements. Records are maintained accurately, securely and in accordance with the School's Data Protection and Records Management Policies.

9. Transition Arrangements

9.1 Transition into Orange Tree School

Orange Tree School recognises that a successful transition is fundamental to a young person's wellbeing, engagement and long-term educational success.

Following the agreement of a placement, the school works collaboratively with the young person, parents or carers, the commissioning Local Authority, previous educational setting and other relevant professionals to develop an individualised transition plan.

Transition arrangements are tailored to the individual needs of each young person and may include introductory visits, phased attendance, gradually increasing time in school, additional transition visits where required and other reasonable adjustments to reduce anxiety and support successful engagement.

The school recognises that many pupils joining Orange Tree School have experienced disrupted education, previous placement breakdowns or significant anxiety about returning to school. Transition arrangements are therefore designed to build trusting relationships, reduce anxiety and promote a positive and successful start to school life.

9.2 Ongoing Transition and Attendance

Orange Tree School recognises that transition does not end once a young person starts school. Many pupils joining the school have experienced disrupted education, emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), previous placement breakdowns or significant anxiety. The school

therefore works closely with pupils, parents or carers, the commissioning Local Authority and other professionals to provide ongoing support during the early stages of a placement.

Where appropriate, pupils may initially follow an individualised transition programme, which may include a phased timetable, gradually increasing attendance, additional therapeutic support or other reasonable adjustments designed to reduce anxiety and promote successful engagement with school.

All placements are made with the expectation that attendance, participation and engagement will improve over time. Parents and carers are expected to work in partnership with the school by supporting agreed attendance strategies, maintaining regular communication and attending meetings where concerns arise. The school will provide appropriate support and make reasonable adjustments to help pupils engage successfully with education.

Where attendance or engagement does not improve despite appropriate support, the school will work with parents or carers and the commissioning Local Authority to review the effectiveness of the placement. This may include regular review meetings, consideration of additional support or, where appropriate, recommending that the Local Authority reviews whether Orange Tree School continues to be the most suitable educational provision.

The school recognises that a young person's needs may change over time. If, following admission, a pupil's presentation changes significantly and the school concludes that it is no longer able to meet their needs safely or effectively within its registered provision, staffing model or therapeutic approach, the school will work with parents or carers, the commissioning Local Authority and relevant professionals to review the suitability of the placement. This may include requesting an emergency review of the Education, Health and Care Plan and recommending that alternative provision is considered where the school is no longer able to meet the young person's needs.

As a Local Authority-funded specialist provision, Orange Tree School has a responsibility to ensure that placements remain appropriate, and that commissioned education can be delivered effectively. Ongoing concerns regarding attendance, engagement or suitability may therefore result in a review of whether the placement continues to meet the young person's needs. These concerns will be discussed openly with the commissioning Local Authority as part of the school's continuing review of each placement.

9.3 Transition from Ridgeway Hospital Provision

For pupils receiving education through the Ridgeway Hospital Provision, transition planning forms part of the wider discharge planning process.

The school works closely with the multidisciplinary clinical team, parents or carers, the commissioning Local Authority and the pupil's home school or receiving educational setting to support continuity of education following discharge.

Where appropriate, the school will share educational records, assessment information and recommendations to support successful reintegration into education.

9.4 Transition from Orange Tree School

When a pupil leaves Orange Tree School, the School works collaboratively with parents or carers, Local Authorities, post-16 providers, employers and receiving educational settings, where appropriate, to support a planned and positive transition.

Relevant educational information is shared, with appropriate consent and in accordance with data protection legislation, to support continuity of learning and promote successful future outcomes.

For pupils approaching the end of compulsory education or preparing for adulthood, transition planning forms part of the wider annual review and person-centred planning process.

10. Complaints

Any concerns or complaints relating to the admissions process should, in the first instance, be raised with the Admissions Lead.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be managed in accordance with the School's **Complaints Policy**, which is available on the school's website or on request.

Submitting a complaint does not guarantee that an admissions decision will be reconsidered. Decisions regarding admissions remain subject to the school's assessment of whether it is able to meet the prospective pupil's needs safely and appropriately within its registered provision.

11. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following School policies and documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy