

Admission Policy

2025-2026



Pride
Passion
Partnership
Professionalism
Positivity

The Purpose of this Policy:

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

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to The Bridge Easton Headteacher and senior leadership; governing bodies; commissioners; referring schools; pupils; prospective pupils; parents; and carers.

The Bridge Easton School Overview

The Bridge Easton School is a specialist complex needs school for children and young people aged 4-16 who hold an Educational Health Care plan (EHCP). In agreement with the admissions authority (Norfolk County Council Children's Services), the school is commissioned to accommodate 170 pupils.

From September 2026, TBES will be opening their sixth form and over a period of three years, classes in Year 12, 13 and 14 will open with a leaving age of 19. Pupils in the main school will not be automatically given a place in the sixth form. It will be application only via the referral process outlined in this policy.

Our overall aim is to develop independence, teach our core values of responsibility, respect and resilience and give our pupils the knowledge and skills to build an aspirational future.

Admission to TBES is through the referral process outlined in this policy. Referrals can be made at any time throughout the year and will be processed at termly Admissions meetings with Norfolk County Council.

Number of Places Available

Due to the significant demand of places for complex needs, The Bridge Easton School has condensed its growth plan from 5 years to 2.5 years. As a result of this, the school has not followed its commissioning of classes of 10 pupils with 10 children per year group. The school currently comprises of 72% primary and 28% secondary places and our cohort does not currently have any year groups at leaving age which means places are very limited.

Admission Criteria

- All pupils must have a current Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Our primary admission criteria is children within the 1st percentile for cognition and learning or below 60 in standardised scores. This equates to 4 years behind academically if the child was in Year 6 and are at early developmental milestones. Their learning need is severe, profound and multiple difficulties as described by the SEND Code of Practice.
- Many children may have an associated secondary need which presents as being pre-verbal, need support with toileting, personal care and struggle with social interaction and communication or have sensory or physical difficulties.
- Our admission criteria is also for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) where they require a very high level of assistance with all aspects of school life and have a significant learning difficulty.
- All children currently in a mainstream setting are graded against the Individual Needs Descriptors in Educational Establishments (INDES) which is Norfolk's approach to standardised needs profiling of SEND in the mainstream system. For a placement at TBES, a child must score a 6 across four domains including cognition and learning (CL), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and social communication and interaction (SCI).

Admissions processes will evaluate the appropriateness of the placement at The Bridge Easton based on the following criteria:

1. Availability of space in the applicant's year group.
2. Availability of space within suitable groups/classes; based on the applicant's individual needs, and the collective needs of the group/class.
3. A current EHCP with an annual review held within the last 12 months and accurately describe the needs of the pupil being referred. This is required for the school to ensure that the needs of the pupil can be met through the provision available.
4. Evidence from a range of agencies and professionals such as Educational Psychologist or school reports which details the cognition and learning aspect of the child and has been written within the last 24 months.
5. The child's travel distance/time traveling to school does not exceed local authority guidelines and will not negatively affect the child.

Please note, that children can be placed at The Bridge Easton School in accordance with parental wishes provided that the school is suitable to the child's age, ability and special educational needs and placement of the child is compatible with the efficient education of the other pupils and is considered to be an efficient use of public resources.

Priority

Priority will be given to children who:

- Are missing education (CME)
- Children who are looked after by the Local Authority (LAC) and children who have previously been looked after

Referral/Admission Arrangements

To acquire a place at the school, a young person must be referred through the SEND placements team at Norfolk County Council, the local authority. Referrals made directly to the school will not be accepted. This includes applications from neighbouring local authorities, which must also go through the agreed Norfolk referrals process to ensure fair access.

Please note, the school does not hold any data or documents of any child being considered through the admission agenda. The data controller is Norfolk County Council and the school accesses their documents for consultation.

Point of Contact for Norfolk Admission

The point of contact for Norfolk Admissions is: The Norfolk SEND Placements Team

Contact Number: 0333 313 7165 (lines open Monday – Friday 9am-5pm)

Email Address: senplacements@norfolk.gov.uk

The Admissions Process

Norfolk County Council has agreed to fund 170 places at the school. They work collaboratively with the school leadership team, holding termly admissions meetings where they ask if school believe a child is suitable and if the school can meet need based on their review of all paperwork submitted and observations made of the young person in their current setting.

Offers

All referrals will go through Admissions meetings with the Norfolk County Council SEND Placements Team, who will write to parent/carers to formally offer the place at The Bridge Easton School stating an agreed start date.

Induction Process

Following acceptance of a place, pre-admissions paperwork, under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, will be completed by parents/carers before any pupil is formally admitted and this paperwork will be sent home to you via email. This must be completed and returned to school prior to the proposed start date.

Parents will be invited to a Welcome Evening where they will meet the teacher and hear an introductory speech by the Senior Leadership Team.

We are able to arrange a tour and visit of the school prior to starting for the parents/carers and the child if this is requested in advance. Parents/carers will be responsible for transportation for transition visit ahead of the start date. This is the local authority policy.

Once provision commences and for the first two days of school, the child will be asked to spend 60-90 minutes each day in class. Pupils will be supported by the class team to ensure they settle into the environment and class group.

A separate meeting on one of the two days will be scheduled for the parents/carers to meet with the teacher to discuss how the transitional visits have been and to ask any questions.

From the third day, the expectation is that the child is in school full time from 8.45-2.45. Under exceptional circumstances, a transitional timetable can be put in place for a maximum of six weeks. However, transport would not be available for this period of time and drop offs/collection would be the responsibility of the parent/carer.

Refusal

The school will only refuse a place on the following grounds:

1. The school is at or above capacity and therefore there are no available places and to admit further would prejudice the efficient education of others already attending.
2. There is insufficient funding available to fund a place for the young person's needs
3. No availability of space in the applicant's year group and within suitable groups/classes based on the applicant's individual needs, and the collective needs of the group/class.

Should the school be unable to accept a referral, this will be discussed during the termly admissions consultations with the SEND placement team at Norfolk County Council.

Complaints

Any objections to this policy or its application should be raised with The Bridge Easton, The Bridge MAT through its normal complaints process. See the Trust's Complaints Policy for further detail. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, you are able to complain to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) at: academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk

Policy Owner and Contact Details

Natalie Does, Headteacher
For further information on the Policy, please contact via email natalie.dores@thebridgetrust.academy or phone 01603 652313
Next Review Date: September 2026