




Courtlands Special School  
Transforming Futures Multi Academy Trust

# Referral and Admissions Policy

Issue	Date adopted by Trustees	Policy Author/Reviewer	Comments	Signed by Chair of Trustees
1	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	Chris Humphries (Director of School Improvement)	First Issue	 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023	Amii Medway	Updated	

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Courtlands Special School Academy caters for primary aged children (4 –11yr olds) who have Moderate Learning Difficulties, Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH), and other complex needs. Within this there is a wide range of needs, such as children with mild medical issues, developmental disorders such as ADHD and Dyspraxia, Autism and speech and language difficulties.

## 2. Mission Statement

2.2 Courtlands is committed to providing our children with an outstanding educational experience regardless of their individual learning, behavioural, development or social challenges. We will provide a sanctuary in which individuality, independence and the joy of learning are celebrated. Learning the skills for a happy and prosperous life is at the heart of all we do. We teach our children the value of the relationships between all members of the school family, the wider community and our environment and provide them with a truly special curriculum. We support all our children to build bridges over any barriers, and overcome their difficulties in learning through innovation and application of industry best practice. Most of all, we will put everyone at the centre of their own 'Learning Journey' which will prepare them for an independent life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 3. Principles

3.1 Courtlands can provide education for pupils aged 4 to 11.

3.2 Pupils can be admitted at any Key Stage at Primary providing there is space in the appropriate classes.

3.3 The needs of each pupil will be considered alongside the needs of the whole School population, the skills of the staff and the ability of Courtlands to meet the pupils' needs.

3.4 The School would expect that all pupils referred to them for admission would have Cognition and Learning Needs identified in their EHCP which are in the Moderate Learning Difficulties range and Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs. In addition to this learning difficulty the child may also present with other difficulties including: mild medical issues, developmental disorders such as ADHD and Dyspraxia, Autism and speech and language difficulties.

3.5 Prior to the naming of the School in the EHCP, a Local Authority will have consulted fully with the School in line with their statutory obligations.

## 4. General

4.1 Courtlands has capacity for 100 pupils as detailed in its Supplemental Funding Agreement from the DFE. 75 of these places are requested through the Plymouth LA Single Multi Agency (SMAP) Panel and the additional 25 places are available for either EHC Assessment places or for non-Plymouth allocated Local Authority places for pupils with a named EHC Plan.

4.2 This policy may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Secretary of State and the Academy Trust.

## 5. Funding for different types of places

5.1 Plymouth LA places (75) – Courtlands will receive formal requests for placements from Plymouth LA SMAP and allocate packages at agreed banding levels between Courtlands and SMAP. Courtlands will consider each case on individual merits to ensure the pupil's needs will be best met within Courtlands and that the School has the space, staffing and resources to accommodate the pupil within its existing operational organisation.

5.2 Assessment places for pupils with no EHC – these will be costed at full cost recovery as these are additional to the allocated 75 places and will be provided upon agreement with a Local Authority commissioner for an individual assessment package price for each child including base funding and top up. During the assessment the pupil will remain on the role of their previous school. This will be for a maximum twenty week placement and is subject to review in line with availability of places and resources, as well as the efficient and safe operation of the School.

5.3 Assessment places will be offered within the following legislative considerations:

5.3.1 Pupils are admitted for the purposes of an assessment of their educational needs under section 323 of the Education Act 1996 and their admission to the School is with the agreement of a referring local authority, the Academy Trust, the child's parent and any person whose advice is to be sought in accordance with regulation 7 of the Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001.

5.3.2 The pupil remains admitted following an assessment under section 323 of the Education Act 1996; or they are admitted following a change in his circumstances, with the agreement of the local authority, the Academy Trust and the child's parents.

5.3.3 If a pupil without an EHC Plan has been admitted to the school for the purpose of an assessment the Academy Trust may allow the pupil to remain at the school: until the expiry of ten school days after the local authority serve a notice under section 325 of the Education Act 1996 that they do not propose to make a EHCP, or until a EHCP is made.

5.4 Additional SEND places for non-Plymouth LA placements – these will be costed to include base funding and either appropriate top up or as a bespoke package according

to the needs of the pupil. In this instance Courtlands will consider applications using the following criteria:

5.4.1 Courtlands School is named in the child's EHCP.

5.4.2 Vacancies within the school's planned places.

5.4.3 Whether or not the pupil's needs can be met by the school (subject to funding).

5.4.4 If the school is oversubscribed, we cannot guarantee consideration of applications.

5.4.5 The School is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs.

5.4.6 The child's placement in the School is not incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated.

5.4.7 The placement is an efficient use of resources.

5.4.8 Parents have expressed a preference for the School (or in cases of dispute between parents and the LA, the LA intends to name the School on the EHCP).

5.4.9 The child has a EHCP Indicating Cognition and Learning (Moderate Learning Difficulty) as an identified need.

5.4.10 The child may have the academic potential to work towards age related national benchmarks, expectations and accreditations, in some subjects.

5.4.11 The appropriateness of the resource for children with extremely challenging behaviour will be considered within the context of the overall needs of the year group.

5.4.12 Additional supervision might be required for children, whose safety or that of others is unusually at risk. Bespoke Top up funding would support such resources.

## 6. Access/Travel

6.1 Transport is provided and funded by the pupil's LA if deemed necessary in all admissions.

## 7. Compliance statement

7.1 Where a Local Authority intend to name the school in an EHCP, and have served a copy of the proposed EHCP (or amended EHCP) on Courtlands School, the School will respond to the Local Authority's proposal within 15 days.

7.2 Courtlands will consent to being named, except where admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children; and where no reasonable steps may be made to secure compatibility. In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, Courtlands will have regard to the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State to maintained schools.

7.3 If Courtlands determines that admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, it will, within 15 days of receipt of the local authority's notice, notify the local authority in writing that it does not agree that Courtlands should be named in the pupil's EHCP. Such notice must set out all the facts and matters the School relies upon in support of its contention that: (a) admitting the child would be incompatible with efficiently educating other children; and (b) the School cannot take reasonable steps to secure this compatibility.

7.4 Where a local authority maintains a EHCP for a child under section 324 of the Education Act 1996 and the name of the school is specified in that EHCP, Courtlands will admit that child to the School even if they consider that they should not have been named in the child's EHCP.

7.5 Where Courtlands considers that the School should not have been named in a child's EHCP, they may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the local authority has acted unreasonably in naming the School and to make an order directing the authority to amend the child's EHCP by removing the name of the School. Where the Secretary of State makes an order to this effect, the School will cease to be under an obligation to admit the child from the date of the Secretary of State's Order, or from such date as the Secretary of State specifies. In specifying a date, the Secretary of State must take into account both the welfare of the child in question and the degree of difficulty caused to the School by the child's continued admission.

7.6 Where the Secretary of State determines that a local authority has acted reasonably in naming Courtlands in a child's EHCP, the School will continue to admit the child until the School ceases to be named in the EHCP.

7.7 Where Courtlands considers that there is a need to increase the planned capacity of the School, they will seek approval of the Secretary of State and the requirements of the Funding Agreement may be amended accordingly by agreement between the Secretary of State and the ACE Schools Academy Trust.

## 8. The first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability)

8.1 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 School, Courtlands agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal even if the decision is different to that of the Secretary of State.

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

## 9. Application for place

9.1 Courtlands School will need to be named in a review of your child's EHCP as the preferred provision. At this point the local authority will consider the suitability of the School's provision to meet your child's needs.

9.2 Applications for admission cannot be made directly by parents however the criteria set out in the SEN Code of Practice, paragraph 9.79 of the Special Needs Code of Practice states that: *"If a child's parent or a young person makes a request for a particular nursery, school or post-16 institution in these groups the local authority **must** comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless:*

- a) *It would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or*
- b) *The attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources"*

9.3 The local authority will send a written request (enclosing appropriate information – including the EHCP) to the school for consultation after recommendation at the Single Multi Agency (SMAP) Panel or direct to Courtlands if from outside Plymouth LA area. At this point the Head teacher will respond to the consultation and the Local Authority will then award a place or suggest alternative provision. If your child is successful in being offered a place, the transition process will start.

9.4 If the Local Authority's decision does not meet your expectations, you have the right to appeal.

## 10. Preliminary visits to the school

10.1 Visits to the school are welcomed to help you make an informed decision about the choice of the school for your child.

10.2 Visits can be arranged by contacting the administrator on the school telephone number: 01752 776848.