

Admissions Policy

Approved By	Chief Executive Officer	Date:	20/03/2026
Author	Director of Education	Date:	01/11/2025
Board Ratification	Trust Board	Date:	12/06/2026
Joint Negotiating Council (JNC) consultation (where applicable)	N/A		N/A
Last reviewed on:	20/03/2026		
Next review due by:	30/03/2027		

1. Legal Framework

This policy is written in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 1996
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)
- *School Admissions Code* (DfE, 2021)
- *School Admission Appeals Code* (DfE, 2023)
- *SEND Code of Practice 0–25* (DfE, 2015)

This policy should be read alongside:

- Respect Collaboration Trust SEND Policy
- Respect Collaboration Trust Data Protection Policy
- Respect Collaboration Trust Complaints Policy

2. Scope

This overarching policy applies to all schools and educational settings within Respect Collaboration Trust (RCT).

It sets the principles and mandatory requirements that all Trust schools and provisions must follow when developing and enacting their local admissions arrangements.

Local arrangements must:

- Align fully with this Trust wide policy
- Comply with relevant statutory guidance
- Be approved by Internal Assurance Panel

3. Core Admissions Principles

Respect Collaboration Trust is committed to ensuring that:

- Admissions are fair, transparent, inclusive, and compliant with statutory requirements.
- Decisions place the child's best interests and individual needs at the centre.
- No child is refused admission on unlawful or discriminatory grounds.
- Vulnerable children and those at risk of missing education are prioritised appropriately in line with statutory duties.
- The Trust works in constructive partnership with Local Authorities, health agencies, and other stakeholders.

4. Trust-wide Admissions Routes

Admissions into any RCT school or setting will only be accepted through authorised and statutory channels, including:

- Local Authority (LA) coordinated admissions
- In Year Fair Access processes
- Health Needs Panels for pupils medically unable to attend school
- SEND processes, including EHCP consultations
- Alternative Provision (AP) referral pathways agreed with LAs
- Managed moves or supported transitions (where applicable and in accordance with local protocols that the Trust/schools subscribe to).
- Junction 16 referral

The Trust does not accept:

- Direct parental approaches seeking specialist, AP or health needs placements (this must be processed via a referring school)
- Private referrals from external agencies without LA involvement.

5. Admissions to Specialist, Alternative, or Health-Needs Settings

A pupil may be admitted to a Trust specialist or alternative provision setting where one or more of the following criteria apply:

- The pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school
- The pupil is undergoing statutory EHCP assessment and the Trust can offer appropriate interim provision
- The pupil's current placement has broken down, and the LA identifies urgent need for alternative provision
- The pupil is unable to attend mainstream education due to verified health needs (e.g. hospitalisation, CAMHS involvement)
- The pupil is referred to AP through an appropriate RCT process following consultation with stakeholders.

Placement decisions must always consider:

- Suitability of provision
- Capacity and resourcing
- Health, safeguarding, and welfare needs.

6. Application, Referral and Decision-Making Processes

All referrals must be submitted via the appropriate LA or Trust-approved route.

Schools within the Trust will:

- Respond to SEND and AP (via Junction16) referrals within 15 working days
- Provide a structured induction for all new pupils, which may include short phased entry where appropriate
- Conduct an initial assessment period for specialist, AP or health needs settings

- Clearly document arrangements for dual registration, where used in accordance with LA commissioning or statutory processes
- Ensure parents/carers receive clear communication regarding decisions and next steps.

7. Placement Management (Specialist, AP and Health Needs Settings)

- Placement suitability will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The Trust reserves the right to determine the most appropriate school or setting for a pupil within the Trust.
- Regular reviews of placement effectiveness will be undertaken, with LA involvement where required.
- For time-limited placements (e.g. AP or health), exit planning must be clear, documented and timely.

8. Hospital Education

Where the Trust manages hospital-based education:

- Pupils will be taught by suitably qualified staff working in partnership with the home school and relevant professionals.
- Pupils must remain on roll at a named base school and are dual registered while receiving hospital education.
- Upon discharge, the home school retains responsibility for the child's education.
- A new referral route must be followed if further education support is needed outside of hospital.

9. Local Admissions Protocols

Headteachers of Trust schools are delegated responsibility to maintain a Local Admissions Protocol that:

- Reflects this Trust wide policy and all statutory guidance
- Is context appropriate for mainstream, specialist, AP or health needs provision
- Provides operational clarity regarding referrals, transitions, panel processes, capacity management and partnership working
- Is reviewed annually and submitted to the Internal Assurance Panel for approval.

10. Equality, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

Respect Collaboration Trust does not discriminate in admissions on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

- Pregnancy or maternity
- Socioeconomic status
- Prior educational background

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure equality of access for pupils with disabilities and/or additional needs.

11. Appeals and Complaints

- Appeals relating to decisions about EHCP based placements must be directed to the relevant Local Authority SEND Team.
- Appeals for mainstream admissions follow the statutory appeals process administered by the Local Authority.
- Concerns or complaints about the Trust's conduct in admissions should be raised through the Trust's Complaints Policy.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board.

The Director of Education is responsible for ensuring local protocols remain compliant with this policy and statutory guidance.

13. GDPR

Data will be processed to be in line with our requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.