



Admissions Policy

Vision Statement

We aim to create a safe, happy and nurturing environment for all our children!

Mission Statement

The Orchard School strives to provide the best quality teaching and learning with an inclusive and personalised curriculum, where all achievements are celebrated.



Approved by Governors: 26/5/26

Signed by Chair of Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. P. Hill', written over a white background.

Head Teacher: Elizabeth Hopewell

Date for review January 2027

Rationale

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to Admissions at The Orchard School and should be read in conjunction with the LA's policy and procedures and any relevant DfE Policies, Statements and Guidelines.

Introduction

The Orchard School educates pupils aged 4 - 11 (Reception to year 6) with complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties, associated communication and language difficulties and challenging behaviours. A proportion of pupils also have physical disabilities.

The school is committed to providing a nurturing, challenging, high quality teaching and learning environment in a supportive multi-cultural setting. Our curriculum is highly differentiated and personalised to individual children to provide for their needs. This is supported by a team of multi-agency workers which includes, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, teachers of the visual and hearing impaired, educational psychologists and the community nursing team.

We provide education for pupils deemed to have the following:

- Complex, Profound Learning Difficulties
- Profound and Multiple learning Difficulties
- Profound/Severe Learning Difficulties and Autism
- Severe Learning Difficulties with Physical and / or Sensory Disabilities
- Severe Learning Difficulties

Principles

- The Admissions Authority for The Orchard School is Sandwell Local Authority.
- Pupils are accepted if they meet the following criteria:
 - They have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) agreed by Sandwell LA which specifies severe, complex or profound and multiple learning difficulties, or autism spectrum conditions, with or without physical disabilities.
 - The needs of the pupil can be met within the school's resources without compromising the efficient education of others
 - The needs of the pupil are significant and affect most areas of learning
 - The school has a vacancy according to planned PAN (Pupil Admission Numbers)
- Prospective pupils will normally have the opportunity to visit the school with their families prior to them being admitted. Pupils can be enrolled at The Orchard School at any point within the year.
- Looked after children (or those previously looked after) can be admitted to the school at any time (providing the needs and provision outlined in the EHCP can be met), even if this means the school exceeds its planned place number.

Procedures

- Children are referred to the school in conjunction with the LA. The views and opinions of those agencies and professionals who know the child will be sought during this consultation.
- Any independent approach or consultations received directly from out of borough to the school will be referred to Sandwell SEN team.
- The Orchard School Published admission number (PAN) is 173 (September 2025). The local authority and Governing Body must take into consideration the PAN when allocating and accepting places to ensure resources are deployed appropriately.
- As part of the consultation process The Orchard will review all consultation documentation to assess if need can be met or not and send a response to the Local Authority.

The school leadership team is empowered to make the decisions regarding admissions that are right for the school and to consider the following factors:

- Health and Safety
- Class group sizes and capacity within Key Stages
- Staff to pupil ratios based on their Educational Needs
- Resources and Expertise
- Wellbeing of Staff and Pupils

The school will be able to reject a request for a school placement based on the following grounds:

- The placement would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child
- The attendance of the child there would be incompatible with either
 - The efficient education of others (or)
 - The efficient use of resources.

The Local Authority will make the final decision relating to the placement of the child. If a child is offered a place at The Orchard, then the Local Authority will issue a draft EHCP naming The Orchard School.

For further information, please see Sandwell LA Admissions

For further information you could contact the following:

Sandwell School Admissions: <http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service:

<https://www.sandwellsendiass.co.uk/>