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# PARKWOOD HALL CO-OPERATIVE ACADEMY

## Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy

"Growth through Personal and Social Learning"

## Statutory Policy File

### ADMISSION POLICY

Index No: 08

*Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'*

#### Our Core Values



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# ADMISSIONS POLICY

(incorporating Admission Criteria and Oversubscription Criteria)

## 1 ADMISSIONS AUTHORITY:

The Governing Body of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy (“the school”) is the Admissions Authority in accordance with UK legislation, as set out in the DfE Admissions Code of Practice.

As a member of the Co-operative Movement, the school is committed to principles of fairness and transparency and will make every effort to make sure that its policies and practice comply with those principles as well as relevant legislation.

The Governing Body delegates the routine implementation of its powers and responsibilities in respect of admissions to the **Admissions Panel**, which consists of the Principal (or his/her deputy), the Student Liaison and Inclusion Manager, and a minimum of 3 Governors (excluding elected Staff Governors). In the event of an appeal against a decision of the Admissions Panel, the Governing Body shall convene an Appeals Panel, consisting of 3 Governors who are not members of the Admissions Panel. Further details of the appeals process can be found at Appendix 1.

## 2 ADMISSIONS PANEL

The panel shall meet from time to time, as deemed necessary by its members, to consider matters of policy and principle, on which it shall make recommendations to the Curriculum and Strategy Committee, who shall in turn put forward proposals to the full Governing Body for decision and ratification. The quorum for any meeting of the Admissions Panel shall be 4. The panel will consider applications for places at the school by means of meetings or by email.

## 3 ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The criteria for admission, published on the school’s website, are as follows:

We will consider for admission any student, male or female, who:

- Has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or such a document is in process.
- Is aged between 7 and 19 (N.B. we will consider children younger than 7, where there is clear evidence that there is no other suitable provision to meet their needs and we have consent from the DfE to do so, provided that the numbers involved are no more than one or two per year. We also allow students to continue into Year 15 where there is clear evidence that a suitable place has not yet been found for them in another provider.)
- Is said to have cognitive ability in the very broad range from low average, through moderate learning difficulties, to severe or complex learning difficulties (it is very unusual for us to admit a student in the average to above average ability range, unless there are other factors, such as mental health difficulties).

- May have a diagnosis of AD/HD (with or without medication) or autistic spectrum (ASC) needs, or speech language and communication (SALT) needs/difficulties.
- May have additional medical needs, such as epilepsy, dysphagia, hemiplegia, diabetes, etc.
- May have a rare genetic condition or syndrome, such as Downs, Prader-Willi, Landau-Kleffner, Ehlers-Danlos, Fragile X, etc. which impacts upon their learning.
- May have limited mobility (e.g. hemiplegia) which requires occasional use of mobility aids (e.g. wheelchair) to ensure their safety when moving around the school.
- May have complex needs, as defined by Professor Barry Carpenter (two or more conditions which overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile requiring a highly individualised approach).
- May display some challenging behaviour which arises from their learning difficulties (e.g. ASC), where such behaviour is likely to improve as a result of provision which is a better match with their needs (e.g. TEACCH, sensory diet, etc.).
- May have a mental health condition which significantly impacts on their ability to make appropriate progress in a mainstream setting (or LA maintained special school).

Under exceptional circumstances we will consider for admission students with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), but not where they require highly specialised medical interventions (e.g. tube or button feeding) or where they are wholly reliant on a wheelchair to move around. We do not have specialist equipment (e.g. hoists) or highly specialist staff.

Under exceptional circumstances we will consider for admission students with a primary diagnosis of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties, but not where issues of emotional trauma and /or challenging behaviour predominate, especially if such students are in the broad average or above average ability range.

The “acid test” for considering potential students in exceptional circumstances is that the placement should be suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, and that their attendance at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy would be compatible with the efficient education of others, and the efficient use of resources.

#### **4 REFERRALS PROCESS:**

The Governing Body and the Admissions Panel have devolved the day-to-day management of the referrals process to the school’s Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT will keep the Admissions Panel informed by email of all decisions made concerning individual referrals, and will consult with the panel (via a meeting or email) over any decision where the issues are complex or the SLT, in their professional judgement, feel that the Admissions Panel should consider the referral and come to a decision.

The steps of the referrals process are as follows:

1. The relevant local authority (LA) should send us a formal consultation letter, including a copy of the statement or EHCP and appropriate reports etc. Because we are a state-funded school, the LA is legally obliged to do this if we are a parental preference.
2. The school's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) will consider the consultation at their next meeting (within 7 working days of receipt of the consultation letter) and will respond to the consultation within 5 working days after the date of the meeting.
3. The response will take one of 3 forms:
  - a. It is the professional opinion of the SLT that the placement would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or that their attendance at the school would be incompatible with the efficient education of others.
  - b. There is insufficient information to make a fully-informed decision and the school would like additional reports, etc.
  - c. The school's provision appears to be a good match for the child or young person's needs and we would like to arrange a PSE (see 4)
4. The school will arrange a Placement Suitability Evaluation (PSE) which consists of 2 or 3 days at the school (including 2 nights for a residential placement), during which time the suitability of the school's provision for the child's needs will be evaluated. Issues such as the need for additional resources (e.g. 1:1 support) will be evaluated at this time.
5. Following the PSE, either:
  - a. the provision required for the child's SEN will be agreed with the LA, including the cost of any additional resources and a firm offer of a place will be made, or;
  - b. in exceptional cases, the school may judge that it is unable to meet the child's needs, despite considering reasonable adaptations, and that their attendance at the school would be incompatible with the efficient education of others or an inefficient use of resources.

## **5 THE PUBLISHED ADMISSIONS NUMBER (PAN)**

For the academic year 2017 to 2018, the PAN for Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is 100.

## **6 OVER-SUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

In the event that the school has reached its agreed maximum number of students (PAN), the following criteria will apply

### **6.1 Priority 1**

A child or young person where a SENDIST Tribunal has upheld a parental appeal for a place at the school. (N.B. We are legally obliged to take students where the Tribunal has named the school, regardless of the number of students on roll)

## 6.2 Priority 2

A Looked After Child where a residential placement is indicated or being sought on the basis of the child's needs and where the authority and school have agreed in principle that the placement is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, and that their attendance at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy would be compatible with the efficient education of others, and the efficient use of resources (\*i.e. the LA agree to the top-up fee).

## 6.3 Priority 3

A Looked After Child where a day place is being sought and where the authority and school have agreed in principle that the placement is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, and that their attendance at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy would be compatible with the efficient education of others, and the efficient use of resources (\*i.e. the LA agree to the top-up fee).

## 6.4 Priority 4

A child or young person whose needs are such that they require a residential placement, either due to the complexity of their needs or the risk of family breakdown and where the authority and school have agreed in principle that the placement is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, and that their attendance at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy would be compatible with the efficient education of others, and the efficient use of resources (\*i.e. the LA agree to the top-up fee).

## 6.5 "Tie-Breaking" Criterion:

In the event of a tie-breaker being required, consideration will be given to whether or not the potential student is currently attending school. For example, if 2 applications which conform to Priority 2 have been received, and they are similar in every other respect, preference will be given to the child who is out of school.

If the above criterion does not result in a resolution of the tied situation (i.e. both students are either in or out of school) then the matter will be resolved by drawing lots.

## 7 APPEALS PROCESS – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### 7.1 An appeal against a decision by the school

You will have been sent a letter by your Local Authority concerning the decision of the school's Senior Leadership Team and Governors' Admissions Panel, not to offer your child a place at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy. The letter should tell you why a place has not been offered. If it doesn't please contact the school and ask for the reason(s) why a place was not offered.

You can appeal against the decision by the school not to offer a place. You must write to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o the PA to the Principal at the school, who will forward your letter to the Clerk.

### *7.1.1 Help preparing your appeal*

[Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) may be able to help you prepare your appeal.

### *7.1.2 When the hearing will be*

The Governing Body of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy must give you at least 10 school days' notice of the hearing. Appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals where the application is made in the normal admissions round or within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals if possible or within 30 school days of it being lodged for late applications.

### *7.1.3 What happens at the appeal hearing*

There's a panel of 3 people at the appeal hearing. The panel must be independent and must have had no previous involvement in the decision not to offer your child a place.

1. A member of the Admissions Panel will explain why they decided not to offer your child a place.
2. You will be able to ask questions of the member of the Admissions Panel as will the appeal panel.
3. You'll be able to give your own reasons why your child should be admitted and explain your reasons of appeal.
4. The Appeal Panel and the member of the Admissions Panel may ask you questions.
5. The member of the Admissions Panel will sum up
6. You will have an opportunity to sum up
7. The Appeal Panel will send you, the school and the Admissions Panel their decision within 5 school days.

**An Appeal Panel's decision can only be overturned by a Court. If there's a change in your circumstances which could affect the decision, you may be able to appeal again.**

## **7.2 How to complain about the appeals process**

You can complain about the way the appeal was carried out, but you can't complain about the decision itself.

You can complain to the Education Funding Agency about an appeal:

[Fill in the online complaint form](#) – sign up for an account if you want to save your form.

[Contact the Education Funding Agency](#) if you need a paper form instead.

You should get a decision on your complaint within 9 weeks (45 working days). You'll be told if it'll take longer. You'll get a letter explaining the reasons for the decision.

If the Education Funding Agency decides something went wrong with the Appeals Panel, it may either:

- ask the school to hold a new appeal hearing with a different panel
- recommend the school reviews its appeals process.

### **7.3 If your appeal is against the decision of the local authority**

If you disagree with the decision of the LA not to name Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy in your child's statement or EHCP, you can appeal against that decision. You should ask the LA for details of their appeals and mediation process. You can also appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal. More information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

#### *7.3.1 Information for Local Authorities*

Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is not an LA maintained school and cannot be named on a Statement or EHCP by an LA where the school has decided not to offer a place, provided that the school has responded within the statutory time-frame and provided clear reasons in line with the relevant codes of practice.

A local authority can appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, requesting that they direct the school to take an individual student. Information concerning this can be found in the School Admissions Code

**APPROVAL**

This policy was approved by the FGB on:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors