

# Requesting a place and admissions process for parents and carers

## Admission to our school

TreeHouse is a non-maintained special day school for children and young people aged 3-19, with a primary diagnosis of complex autism or a related communication disorder. The school is based at the Pears National Centre for Autism Education in Muswell Hill, North London and we have pupils on roll from across London and the Home Counties.

We can admit children and young people who require specialist provision, when TreeHouse School is named on their local authority Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) plan.

All places at TreeHouse are funded by local authorities, except in exceptional circumstances, for example if a family is in the UK temporarily.

## Who can request a place?

You have the right to request a place at TreeHouse School when you receive a draft EHC plan or a notice amending an existing EHC plan. An example is, when a child or young person's first EHC plan is drafted, or is being redrafted or amended when they move from primary to secondary school. The local authority must then apply to us in line with your preference. We strongly recommend that you talk to your local authority if you decide to request a place, we are happy to help you do this.

Read our blog for more information on [how to request a place at a specialist school or college and knowing your rights](#).

## If you decide to request a place

You can inform the local authority that you wish to request a place by telling the SENCO at your son or daughter's current school, this may be during an Annual Review, or by contacting your local authority named SEN officer. This should result in an application for placement being sent to the Head of School by the local authority.

## When we receive an application

The school Admissions Panel convenes every week during term time to consider the applications received. Places are usually taken up in September, but we will consider admission for a child or young person at other times during the academic year, with the agreement of the Head of School. We must respond to the local authority within 15 days.

## Assessment

The school Admissions Panel's decision is made on the basis of the papers we get from the local authority and by an assessment at the current school and at TreeHouse School.

We are currently not always able to carry out face-to-face assessment, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so we may request additional documents and contact professionals at the current school to help the Admissions Panel to make a decision.

## Decisions

The school Admissions Panel decides on who will need assessment, if a place is available in the appropriate class, and makes decisions on those already assessed.

## What the Panel considers

- Is the school suitable for the child or young person's age, ability and Special Educational Needs?
- Is the school able to deliver all the special educational provision in Section F of the child or young person's EHC Plan?
- Have parents or carers expressed a preference for the school? (Or in cases of dispute does the local authority intend to name TreeHouse School on the EHC Plan?)
- Would the child or young person's attendance be incompatible with the education of other pupils at the school that they would come into contact with on a regular day-to-day basis, or with the use of school resources?
- Is there a place available in the appropriate class for the child or young person?

## Making an offer

If an offer is made to the local authority, we will usually inform the parents or carers. The offer will be conditional until local authority funding is approved and subject to the place being available at that time.

If an offer is not made we will always explain our reasons, and there is a right of appeal to the school in line with our [Admissions Policy](#) and the [school admissions appeals code](#).

## Appealing to the SEND Tribunal

Parents and carers are allowed to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal if their local authority refuses to name the school in their child or young person's EHC Plan. You can find out more about this process on the GOV.UK website [How to appeal a special educational needs decision](#).

