



# PACE Education

## Admissions Policy

Version	Date	Updated by
1.0	July 2020	Clare Harper, Headteacher
2.0	July 2021	Caroline Bell, Interim Headteacher

# Admissions Policy

## 1. Introduction

Pace Education is an independent specialist provision for children and young people who have been diagnosed with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) as their main presenting need and meet the criteria listed below. The school offers co-educational placements for up to 30 students aged 13-16. Pace Education is part of a wider group of specialist schools operated by Edison Education for young people who have found it difficult to achieve within mainstream schools. Staff working within Edison schools are committed to helping young people overcome adversity and giving them a brighter future through high quality education and pastoral support.

Student class sizes are managed to ensure small groups (generally no more than 6 students) per class, which provides students with an appropriate peer group, according to key stage and ability levels. Where possible, placements will commence at the beginning of an academic term, although consideration will be given to individual circumstances. Where appropriate a gradual transition will be planned, involving multi-agency liaison and school visits.

As a registered independent school (not listed by the Secretary of State under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014), those with parental responsibility and the young person concerned may request that Pace Education be named in the young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and the local authority will consider this request. However, the local authority is not under a specific duty to secure a place, and nor is Pace Education under a (section 43) duty to admit a particular student. However, we follow the spirit of the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Code of Practice 2015, and Admissions Code (December 2014) when considering placements.

## 2. Criteria for admission

All referrals are considered on an individual basis. Where students meet the eligibility criteria, a place will only not be offered if, after assessment, it is considered that Pace Education would not have suitable provision to meet the student's needs.

### 2.1 Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for students seeking a placement, before a referral will be taken forward, include:

- Pace Education having space in an appropriate class/peer group.
- The student must have a proposed draft, or final Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The student is showing readiness to learn and agrees to the learner contract.
- That all those with parental responsibility are in support of the placement and in agreement with the strategies and ethos of the school. Continued support of those with parental responsibility and partnership with Pace Education is essential for the success and viability of any placement.

- That the student may be private (including international) fee paying or local authority funded. Referral circumstances of private fee-paying students will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

## 2.2 Assessment of whether Pace Education is a suitable provision for the student

All referrals are considered on an individual basis and Pace will only decide *not* to offer a place, to a student that meets the eligibility criteria, if:

- it considers Pace to be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs of the student;
- and/or that the placement would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for others, and/or the efficient use of resources.

The Equality Act 2010 applies to all schools and school admissions, and we do not discriminate on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Pace Education will take reasonable steps to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a student with disability under the Equality Act 2010. We will use our best endeavours to make reasonable adjustments, where possible, to ensure equality of outcomes.

Pace Education provides a broad and balanced curriculum of education for all of its students which meets the Independent School Standards and our statutory obligations (including RSE) and which prepares young people to achieve recognised qualifications (GCSES and Functional Skills) and Awards (e.g. ASDAN and Duke of Edinburgh). Drawing on the Statutory Inclusion Statement (2000) we follow the three guiding principles by 'setting suitable learning challenges'; 'responding to pupils' diverse learning needs'; and 'overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils'. Admissions into Key Stage 4 will also take into account current programmes of study, to ensure the effective delivery of accredited qualifications which relate to desired destinations and outcomes.

Edison makes a point of stating that 'the fee is the fee', inclusive of our curriculum offer including learning support and enrichment activities. However, we recognise that there may be circumstances where the assessment process indicates that a student will require a higher level of support and resources to meet their additional complex needs. On these occasions Pace Education would require complex needs funding in addition to the standard school fee. This would then be subject to review as part of the annual EHCP review process, with a view to reducing the cost to the placing authority.

## 3. Admission Procedure

Our Admission Procedure has five stages: enquiry; application; assessment; and if applicable offer and transition stages. These stages are outlined below.

### 3.1 Enquiry Stage

We warmly encourage parents, carers and SEN Officers to visit our school for a tour as we believe that meeting the team and getting a sense of the place is really important in helping decide if we are the right place.

Appointments are available on request and will reflect any local or national restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please contact the school on 01782 61660 or by email: [cbell@edison-yp.co.uk](mailto:cbell@edison-yp.co.uk) to arrange a visit.

### 3.2 Application Stage

Local Authority teams submit a consultation to Pace Education, consisting of a letter of consultation and an EHCP, together with any other information e.g. an Educational Psychology report.

Pace Education will review the documentation and where possible, respond to the Local Authority within 15 days to:

- confirm receipt and consideration of the documents
- request further information if required
- make a provisional offer, based on the paperwork considered OR advise that Pace Education is unable to meet the needs of the student at this time
- encourage the young person and their parents or carers to visit the school, if this has not already taken place

### 3.3 Assessment Stage

Where a provisional offer has been made, an assessment visit will be arranged.

This should not be daunting for the young person but we do believe that it is important that we meet the young person prior to confirming that we are the appropriate placement. We are acutely conscious that many young people considering Pace have already had negative experiences of school. We want to ensure that we are the right placement for them *and* that they are right for our existing young people.

Ideally we prefer the young person to come and visit Pace Education for a tour and so that they can meet some of the staff. However, if necessary, a member of the staff team can also come to their existing school or conduct a home visit. Discussion will take place with parents and carers about what will best meet the needs of the young person.

### 3.4 Confirmed offer with proposed start date (if applicable)

Where an offer is made after the assessment, we will propose a start date from which a place will be available. Parents, carers and the local authority will all receive written confirmation of this.

We will hold the offer open for a maximum of two months, after which we would need to reconsider the placement. We are a small school and it is important to use that we have the right mix of young people.

If the Local Authority decline the offer and those with parental responsibility choose to appeal the LA decision not to place with us, the offer will be held open until the outcome of the tribunal has been determined.

### 3.5 Transition

Once the Local Authority accept the offer, we will work with all parties to agree a transition plan working towards commencing full-time attendance as soon as possible.

Parents and carers will be asked to complete a detailed questionnaire to help us gather additional information, including emergency contact details. These must be returned to the school prior to the young person starting.

The Local Authority will issue an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) which sets out of the terms and conditions of the student's placement with us.