

Maplewell Hall School



Admissions Policy

Governing Body Committee	Full Governing Body
Date Reviewed by Governing Body	Autumn 2026
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2027

Maplewell Hall Special School

Admissions Policy

Policy Overview

Admission to Maplewell Hall School is applicable for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Parents may make representations for a placement at a special school. The local authority responsible for the EHCP retains responsibility for deciding whether to name the special school in the EHCP, based on the individual needs of the child and any representations made by parents.

Under Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014, a local authority is required to consult with the special school before naming it in a child's EHCP. Once the special school is named in the EHCP, the school is under a statutory duty to admit the child.

There is a commissioning arrangement between the special school (provider) and local authorities (commissioners) intending to make placements at the special school regarding the number of places required. Funding arrangements will be made between the school and the commissioning LA in accordance with the local authority's funding arrangements for special schools.

Maplewell Hall School is a Leicestershire special school. All admissions must satisfy the criteria as follows:

a) that the child being admitted has a Cognition and Learning difficulty, and: b) that the Cognition and Learning difficulty presents the main barrier to learning

Where there are other associated conditions, difficulties or differences then admission is reasonable; where those other conditions, difficulties or differences represent the main barrier to learning then admission is not reasonable.

Numbers

As stated in Annex B, the school will not agree to admission where:

admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children

This will apply in individual circumstances, following an assessment by the school of the potential impact of admission. Our assessment will consider whether our agreed and preferred maximum number of pupils in any one class would be exceeded. Those maximum numbers are determined by the classroom sizes and building dynamics of Maplewell Hall School, as well as the complexity of needs within each class.

Maplewell Hall School caters for pupils aged 11-19 years with the following preferred maximum class sizes:

Main School provision (for pupils with learning difficulties): up to 14 pupils per class

Maplewell Autism Provision (a separate resourced provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs, where autism is their primary need and who are working at least two years below age-related expectations): up to 10 pupils per class

Flexibility in class sizes:

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These maximum class sizes represent the upper limit and assume a standard staffing ratio of one teacher and two support staff per class. However, actual class sizes may need to be significantly lower depending on:

The complexity and combination of special educational needs within the class

The presence of pupils with complex medical needs requiring additional support

The level of behavioural support required

Health and safety considerations

The need to maintain appropriate adult-to-pupil ratios to ensure the safety, wellbeing and educational progress of all pupils

For example:

A class with several pupils with complex needs may have a maximum of 8-10 pupils rather than 14

A class with pupils requiring significant medical or personal care support may require reduced numbers to ensure safe staffing ratios

Classes may require additional staffing beyond the standard ratio, which may impact the number of pupils that can be safely and effectively taught

The school will assess each potential admission on an individual basis, taking into account the current composition of the class and the impact on existing pupils. The maximum number of commissioned places will be determined through negotiation between the school and the Local Authority, with these factors taken into consideration.

Only in exceptional circumstances will we admit pupils over and above these maximum numbers, as follows:

a) where an assessment is made that the nature of the child's condition, and the circumstances in which the family find themselves, are so overwhelming that admission must take place (e.g. safeguarding concerns, victims of severe trauma etc.)

b) where the school is directed by a Tribunal or by the Secretary of State

Admissions Assessment Process

When considering whether to admit a pupil, the school will assess:

1. **Current class composition** - the needs, ages and learning profiles of pupils already in the proposed class
2. **Staffing requirements** - whether current or additional staffing can safely and effectively meet the needs of all pupils
3. **Physical environment** - whether the classroom and school facilities can accommodate the pupil's needs
4. **Specialist support** - whether any specialist equipment, therapy or medical support can be provided
5. **Impact on other pupils** - whether admission would be compatible with providing efficient education for other children in the class

This assessment will inform our response to the Local Authority's consultation and our determination of whether we can meet the child's needs while maintaining high-quality provision for all pupils.

These maximum class sizes and staffing ratios will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to the school's physical capacity, staffing structure, or the complexity of needs of the pupil population

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Statement on Admissions

Maplewell Hall School will abide by the regulations as set out in Annex B below.

ANNEX B

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL GENERAL

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL GENERAL

1. This annex may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Local Authority and The Governors of Maplewell Hall School.
2. Except where paragraph 3 applies, the school may not admit a child unless an EHCP is maintained for that child under Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the school is named in the child's EHCP.
3. The school may admit a child without an EHCP if:
 - (i) they are admitted for the purposes of an assessment of their special educational needs under Section 36 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and their admission to the school is with the agreement of the local authority, the school, the child's parent and any person whose advice is to be sought in accordance with the SEND Regulations 2014;
 - (ii) they remain admitted following an assessment under Section 36 of the Children and Families Act 2014; or
 - (iii) they are admitted following a change in their circumstances, with the agreement of the local authority, the school and the child's parents.
4. If a child without an EHCP has been admitted to the school for the purpose of an assessment, in accordance with paragraph 3(i), the school may allow the child to remain admitted:
 - (i) until the local authority notifies the child's parent that they have decided not to secure an EHC needs assessment under Section 36(3) of the Children and Families Act 2014, or that following assessment they will not issue an EHCP under Section 37(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014; or
 - (ii) until an EHCP is issued under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
5. Where the local authority intend to name the school in an EHCP, and have consulted with the school in accordance with paragraph 9.79 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015, the school must respond to the local authority's proposal within 15 days.
6. The school must consent to being named, except where admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children; and where no reasonable steps may be made to secure compatibility. In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, the school must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
7. If the school determines that admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, it must, within 15 days of receipt of the local authority's consultation, notify the local authority in writing that it does not agree that the school should be named in the pupil's EHCP. Such notice must set out all the facts and matters the school relies upon in support of its contention that:
 - (a) admitting the child would be incompatible with efficiently educating other children; and
 - (b) the school cannot take reasonable steps to secure this compatibility.
8. Where a local authority maintains an EHCP for a child under Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the name of the school is specified in that EHCP, the school must

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admit that child to the school even if they consider that the school should not have been named in the child's EHCP.

9. Where the school considers that it should not have been named in a child's EHCP, they may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the local authority has acted unreasonably in naming the school and to make an order directing the authority to amend the child's EHCP by removing the name of the school. Where the Secretary of State makes an order to this effect, the school will cease to be under an obligation to admit the child from the date of the Secretary of State's Order, or from such date as the Secretary of State specifies. In specifying a date, the Secretary of State must take into account both the welfare of the child in question and the degree of difficulty caused to the school by the child's continued admission.
10. Where the Secretary of State determines that a local authority has acted reasonably in naming Maplewell Hall School in a child's EHCP, the school must continue to admit the child until the school ceases to be named in the EHCP.

THE FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY)

11. If a parent or guardian of a child in respect of whom an EHCP is maintained by a local authority appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) under Section 51 of the Children and Families Act 2014, either against the naming of the school in the child's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name the school, the Governing Body agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal even if the decision is different to that of the Secretary of State under paragraph 9 or 10 above.
12. Where the school, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) have determined that it should be named in a child's EHCP, the governing body must admit the child to the school notwithstanding any other provision of this admissions policy.