MIAG

ADMISSIONS POLICY

MIAG ORGANISATIONAL POLICY

Organisation-wide

Supporting consistent, effective practice across the MIAG organisation.

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS | CREATING OPPORTUNITIES | ENRICHING COMMUNITIES

Purpose and Overview:

This policy provides the organisation-wide framework for admissions across MIAG. It sets out the principles, responsibilities and decision-making arrangements that apply when considering a child or young person for a place within a MIAG provision.

MIAG operates different types of provision, including registered independent special school provision and alternative provision. The legal route into a provision therefore varies. This policy establishes the common MIAG approach while requiring each provision to maintain local admissions arrangements that are consistent with this policy and its own registration, commissioning and regulatory requirements.

The purpose of admissions is to ensure that each placement is considered fairly, individually and on the basis of whether MIAG can safely and effectively meet the learner's identified needs within the provision available.

Admissions decisions must not be based on convenience, capacity alone or assumptions about a learner. Where MIAG cannot meet need safely or appropriately, the decision and rationale must be clearly recorded and communicated.

Scope:

- Applies organisation-wide to all MIAG provisions and to employees involved in consultation, assessment, admission, transition or placement decisions
- Applies to planned admissions, in-year consultations, short-term or intervention placements, extended placements and changes of placement
- Applies to placements commissioned by a Local Authority, school or other lawful commissioner, and to parental requests where a statutory route applies
- Does not replace provision-specific funding agreements, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) requirements or contractual commissioning arrangements.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework:

MIAG will operate admissions in accordance with the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the type of provision and placement. Key references include:

- Children and Families Act 2014, particularly section 39 (finalising EHC plans and consultation with schools/institutions) and section 61 (special educational provision otherwise than in a school, post-16 institution or other relevant setting)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, as applicable to EHC assessment, planning and review arrangements
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), including the principles governing participation, consultation, parental/young person views and EHC plan arrangements
- Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to disability and protected characteristics. Admissions and placement decisions must not unlawfully discriminate
- Independent School Standards (DfE, April 2026), including requirements relevant to the quality of education, welfare, health and safety, and the school's ability to meet the needs of its pupils
- Education Act 2002 and the statutory framework governing registration and regulation of independent schools, where applicable

- School admissions legislation and the School Admissions Code apply to state-funded schools and are not generally the statutory admissions framework for independent schools. MIAG will nevertheless use principles of fairness, transparency and consistency in its own arrangements

Where legislation, statutory guidance or the registration status of a provision changes, the policy and associated local arrangements will be reviewed and amended as required.

MIAG Admissions Principles:

Learner first	The starting point is whether the proposed placement is in the learner's best interests and can meet identified educational, SEND, safeguarding and wellbeing needs
Fair and equitable	Consultations are considered consistently, without discrimination and with reasonable adjustments where required
Individual consideration	MIAG does not use a one-size-fits-all admissions decision. Information about the learner, their needs, strengths, risks, aspirations and existing provision is considered together
Safe and suitable	A place will only be offered where MIAG can provide a safe environment and appropriate education, staffing, premises, support and risk management
Evidence informed	Decisions are based on sufficient information. Where information is incomplete, MIAG may seek clarification, further reports, professional advice or an observation before responding
Transparent	The reason for a decision, any conditions attached to an offer and any required transition arrangements should be clear and recorded
Timely	MIAG will ensure that provisions are meeting the requirement to return consultations to commissioners within 15 calendar days

Admissions Responsibilities:

- The Head Teacher/Provision Lead is responsible for ensuring that admissions arrangements are implemented and that decisions are appropriately authorised
- The SENCO, where applicable, leads or contributes to assessment of SEND need, EHCP information, provision requirements and whether the provision can meet identified needs
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead contributes where safeguarding information, contextual risk or welfare considerations may affect suitability or transition
- The commissioning Local Authority, school or other commissioner remains responsible for its own statutory decision-making and commissioning responsibilities
- The COO provides organisational oversight, particularly where admissions raise significant safeguarding, capacity, compliance, risk, registration or reputational considerations
- Administrative staff maintain the admissions record and supporting documentation in accordance with MIAG information governance and retention requirements

MIAG Admissions Process:

Stage	MIAG expectation
Consultation / Referral	Receive the consultation, referral or placement request
Information gathering	Review the available learner information, including EHCP where applicable, needs, outcomes, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding/contextual information, medical needs, risk information and current provision
Suitability assessment	Consider whether MIAG has the expertise, staffing, environment, curriculum, support and capacity to meet the learner's identified needs safely and effectively
Further information where required	Where information is insufficient, MIAG may request clarification, additional reports, professional advice or an observation. Any requested extension to a consultation response should be communicated formally
Decision	Make and record an admission decision, with clear rationale using the MIAG Consultation Data System. Any conditions, additional information required or transition arrangements must be stated. The decision must be legal as outlined in Section 39, Children & Families Act 2014

Stage	MIAG expectation
Commissioning / Confirmation	No learner should start until the appropriate commissioning/placement arrangements and required documentation are confirmed
Transition and induction	Agree a proportionate transition plan with the learner, parent/carer and relevant professionals, including safeguarding, risk, transport, medical and communication arrangements
Review	Review the placement after admission and through normal MIAG assurance arrangements. Where concerns emerge, address them early and escalate where necessary

Independent Special School Admissions:

For MIAG registered independent special school provision, admission decisions must reflect the school's registered age range, maximum number, designated provision and the school's ability to meet the learner's needs. The Independent School Standards require the proprietor to maintain an effective quality of education and safe provision; admissions therefore form part of the school's wider safeguarding, curriculum, SEND and assurance responsibilities.

Where an EHCP consultation is received, MIAG will consider the information provided by the Local Authority and the child's/young person's needs. Where the statutory consultation timetable applies, MIAG will respond within the required period or formally request additional time where necessary.

Where a parent or young person requests an independent special school to be named in an EHC plan, the statutory framework in the Children and Families Act 2014 applies. Where an institution is not approved under section 41, the legal position differs from that of a section 41-approved institution; the LA and MIAG must therefore ensure that the proposed placement is lawful and appropriately commissioned.

A consultation response is not itself an admission. Admission takes effect only when the appropriate placement and commissioning arrangements have been confirmed and MIAG has completed its required pre-admission checks.

Alternative Provision and Other Commissioned Placements:

For MIAG alternative provision, admissions are normally initiated through a commissioning Local Authority, school or other lawful commissioning route. The referral must identify the purpose of the placement, expected outcomes, duration or review arrangements and the information needed for MIAG to determine suitability.

- The reason for the placement and intended educational outcomes must be clear

- Safeguarding, SEND, medical, behaviour and risk information must be available and considered before commencement
- The placement must be compatible with MIAG's capacity, expertise, staffing and premises
- Commissioning and funding arrangements must be confirmed before the placement begins
- Where the placement is temporary or intervention-based, review and exit arrangements should be agreed at the outset

When MIAG May Decline a Placement:

MIAG may decline a consultation or placement where, following appropriate consideration, it is unable to demonstrate that the provision can safely and effectively meet the learner's needs. This is in addition to the list of exceptions as per Section 39, Children & Families Act.

Reasons may include:

- The learner's needs fall outside the provision's registered age range, designated provision or lawful remit;
- MIAG cannot reasonably provide the education, specialist support, environment or staffing required
- Identified safeguarding, health and safety or risk considerations cannot be appropriately managed
- The required information is not available and a safe, informed decision cannot be made
- The placement would materially exceed safe or lawful capacity; or
- Required commissioning, contractual or legal arrangements cannot be established

A decision to decline should be evidence-based, proportionate and recorded. Where appropriate, MIAG should identify what further information or alternative arrangements may assist the commissioner or family.

Admission, Transition and Induction:

- A named member of staff will coordinate the learner's transition and act as the principal contact for the family/commissioner
- Required consent, medical, safeguarding, emergency contact, attendance and other admission documentation **must** be completed before or at the start of the placement, according to local procedure
- Where appropriate, transition should include a visit, learner voice, family meeting, staff briefing and phased start
- The learner's EHCP, support plan, risk assessment and other relevant information must be translated into day-to-day practice
- The first weeks of placement should be used to confirm that the information received accurately reflects the learner's needs and that the placement is working as intended

Changes of Placement and Ending a Placement:

Where it becomes clear that a placement may no longer be appropriate, MIAG will seek to address concerns early and work with the learner, family, commissioner and relevant professionals. The response will depend on the type of provision and legal/commissioning route.

- For learners with an EHCP, the relevant review or amendment process must be followed where the placement or provision specified in the plan may need to change
- For commissioned alternative provision, the commissioner and MIAG should review the placement against the agreed outcomes, duration and review arrangements
- Where a serious safeguarding, health and safety or other immediate risk arises, MIAG may need to take immediate protective action while the appropriate statutory and commissioning processes are followed
- Any permanent exclusion or termination of a placement must be managed in accordance with the relevant legal framework, commissioning agreement and MIAG policy, and always in consultation with the COO

Admissions Records and Information Governance:

- MIAG will retain sufficient evidence to demonstrate how an admission or decline decision was reached
- Admissions information will be stored in the designated secure MIAG system and accessed only by those with a legitimate professional need
- Personal information will be processed in accordance with UK data protection legislation and MIAG's Privacy Notice and information governance arrangements
- Records must be accurate, contemporaneous and sufficiently detailed to support safeguarding, commissioning, quality assurance and inspection requirements
- The provision must maintain the required admission and attendance registers where statutory requirements apply

Quality Assurance and Monitoring:

Admissions are part of MIAG's wider organisational assurance framework. Provision leaders should be able to demonstrate that admissions are fair, safe, evidence-informed and consistent with the provision's purpose and capacity.

- Admissions decisions and supporting evidence may be sampled through MIAG quality assurance and compliance activity
- Themes arising from admissions, including repeated reasons for decline, transition difficulties, unmet need or capacity pressures, should inform provision development and organisational learning
- The COO will monitor organisation-wide themes and escalate significant risks or systemic issues through the MIAG governance and assurance arrangements
- This policy should be read alongside the MIAG Curriculum Policy, SEND arrangements, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Risk Management and Risk Assessment Policy, Behaviour Policy, Complaints Policy, Equality Policy and relevant provision-specific admissions arrangements

Related Guidance and References:

- Children and Families Act 2014 — sections 39, 40, 41 and 61, as applicable.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE/DHSC).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Education Act 2002 — independent school registration and standards framework.
- Independent School Standards guidance, Department for Education, April 2026.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education, current edition.
- School Admissions Code — where applicable to the relevant type of provision; independent schools are not generally subject to the state-funded school admissions code.
- MIAG Framework for Excellence and associated Five Ps strategies.

Review and Approval:

This is an organisation-wide policy. Provision leaders are responsible for ensuring that local admissions arrangements, forms and workflows reflect this policy and the specific legal and regulatory requirements applying to their provision.

The policy will normally be reviewed annually, or sooner where there is a material change in legislation, DfE guidance, registration status, commissioning arrangements or MIAG provision.

DOCUMENT CONTROL:

Policy title	Admissions Policy
Policy type	MIAG Organisational Policy
Applies to	Organisation-wide / all MIAG provisions
Policy owner	Lisa, Savage, Chief Operating Officer
Operational lead	Head Teacher / Provision Lead
Version	1.0
Effective from	September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Approval status	For organisational approval
Approved by	Guy Hopson, Chair of Governors
Date Approved	02 October 2026

Version History:

Version	Date	Summary of Change
1.0	September 2026	New MIAG Organisational Policy establishing consistency across provisions in relation to student admissions