



# The Bridge School

## Admission Policy 2022/2023

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***For Key Stage 3 Assessment and Development Placements  
And KS4 Alternative Provision Placements***

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The Bridge School is a Pupil Referral Unit. It has a number of functions but prioritises its statutory duty to provide full-time education for young people who have been excluded from school, or whom do not have a school allocated.

Beyond this priority function the school supports the Local Authority, local area and the community of high schools in their objective to reduce the risk of permanent exclusion and support young people who may experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

The Bridge School currently provides placements for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students – 11 to 16 years old.

At both KS3 and KS4, students can receive provision from The Bridge School via different pathways but these fall within the categories of either:

- Placements requested by the Local Authority because of the '**Permanent Exclusion**' of a child from a high school.
- Students are allocated a place through '**In Year Fair Access**' (IYFA).
- Placements purchased by the referring high school – referred to as '**Engagement**' placements.
- Students are referred by a high school or the LA SEND and Inclusion Services because they are waiting the completion of an Education Health Care Plan assessment process: This is called '**Engagement Plus**'.
- The Halton Virtual School makes a request for a placement to prevent the permanent exclusion of a Looked After Child/Child in the Care of the Local Authority.

Parents or Carers *cannot* directly apply for a placement at the school. They can work in collaboration with, or request, their child's high school or the Local Authority SEND and Inclusion Services to make a Referral (**Engagement**) or Application (**IYFA or EHCP completion**). This would then be considered through the Referral Policy outlined below, or the In Year Fair Access Protocols.

To find details on, and to read, Halton's In Year Admission Policy click on the attached link: <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/EducationandFamilies/Schools/ChangeofSchool>



Halton Fair Access  
Protocol 2023.pdf

or open this embedded document:

Although the objectives of the different Key Stages are distinct, they do in some respects, share goals.

## 1. Objective for KS3 Students

To assess and evaluate the specific needs of the student in order to:

- Develop skills which will enable the learners to participate functionally within social groups – formal and informal social settings and groups
- Further develop the students' emotional resilience, relative to coping within differing, formal and informal, social settings and with different levels of demand.
- Maintain and further develop the student's literacy and numeracy skills.
- Inform the referring school of appropriate and essential strategies to facilitate successful reintegration
- Present, if appropriate, a thorough evidence base for the purpose of submitting an application for an EHC Plan.
- Prepare the student for their next educational setting.

## 2. Objective for KS4 Students

To provide commissioned programs of Alternative Provision:

- Offer and provide sustainable placements that are reflective of student aspirations and needs
- Develop and provide Alternative Provision packages that are reflective of the commissioning needs of referring high schools
- Ensure that all commissioned Alternative Provision is Quality Assured and meets educational standards of Safeguarding.
- Offer welfare support for each individual student through the assignment of an individual Key Worker

## 3. Referral

**3.1** If a student is coming to The Bridge School at KS3 as part of a preventative strategy, the referring school should be able to offer robust evidence of strategies and interventions that have taken place prior to referral. These may be broad in their style and application, but should consider the guidance provided by the Local Authority in regard to a 'graduated approach' to Special Education Needs (Social, Emotional and Mental Health).

**3.2** Similarly, referrals for KS4 placements should provide information regarding the individual needs of the student. It is probable that a student may have been directed towards Alternative Provision because it is felt that their needs would benefit from this approach.

**3.3** At KS3 it is important to The Bridge School that student needs are evaluated and supported in a graduated way within the referring school as this will act as an initial evidence base for referral and towards statutory assessment of special educational needs, should that be appropriate. This process, implemented at this stage may ensure the student benefits from provision reflective of their needs with a significant period of their secondary education to complete.

**3.4** When a student is referred at KS4 there is less time to create and implement long term provision reflective of individual need, through the process of an Education Health Care Plan. Evidence of assessment of need helps The Bridge School match the student with available provision. An evidence base of graduated intervention, however, is *not* integral to the referral process at KS4.

**3.5** In many cases, a student coming to The Bridge because of permanent exclusion will also have an evidence base of intervention, as it will be probable that the nature of their behaviours are reflective of issues that are a result of social, emotional or mental health difficulties. We accept, however, that there will be cases where a prior school or referring school may not have such evidence of prior intervention, due to the transient nature of that student's placement, or because of the limited time they have had to work with them.

**3.6** Referrals for KS3 placements should be made to Renata Squire, Head of Student Welfare - [renata.squire@halton.gov.uk](mailto:renata.squire@halton.gov.uk) Referrals for KS4 placements should be made to Wayne Alexander, Head of Alternative Provision – [wayne.alexander@halton.gov.uk](mailto:wayne.alexander@halton.gov.uk) . On receipt of the Referral there will be an initial evaluation of the information provided. Thoroughly completed referrals are more likely to be processed without delay. Following this, a meeting with the school and parents/carers will be arranged where:

- Current knowledge of needs will be specifically identified.
- Specific targets for the school to work towards will be identified.
- Time scales for the placement will be agreed – including start and end/review dates
- A Service Level Agreement will be signed by all parties
- There will be an explanation of the Induction process – including presentation of the Parent Handbook and Student Handbook

#### **4. The timings of referral and placement**

**4.1** In order to create the best possible environment and outcomes for the referred students, placements for KS3 'Assessment and Development' will begin, where possible, at the start of a half-term and be completed at the end of that half-term.

**4.2** KS4 placements can start at any time in the school year but must follow the Referral and Induction process before the placements begins. Referring schools should therefore consider the timescales these processes will require.

**4.3** The consequences of hastily or reactively arranged placements that do not allow time for planning and preparation can be numerous, and may include:

- High anxiety levels experienced by the student
- Work provided that is not reflective of student need
- Communication issues
- Lack of awareness over school boundaries and expectations
- Attitudes of opposition or confrontation
- Risk behaviours and injury
- Risk of early breakdown in participation, attendance or placement

**4.4** Within KS3, commencing student placements collectively will promote cohesion within the learning group, and facilitate rates of progress. Learning objectives can be covered in a systematic way that builds learning and prepares students for reintegration and transition. Additionally, students beginning and ending placements at similar or identical times will support the process of systematic planning and assessment.

**4.5** It may be deemed appropriate from evidence presented at the End of Placement Review, that the placement be continued for an additional half-term. In order for this to happen there must be an agreement from stakeholders, including parents/carers, prior to the end of the initial placement. Failure to gain this agreement would, in the case of an 'Engagement Placement', result in the completion of the placement and the student returning to the referring school.

**4.6** In order that KS3 placements can begin at the start of a half-term and KS4 placements can start at other times, it is desirable that the referral agreement takes place at least two working weeks prior to the start of a placement. This is in order for:

- a thorough induction to take place
- targets and responsibilities of the Service Level Agreement to be clarified
- a Student Passport to be completed

**4.7** Students that are referred to The Bridge School because of permanent exclusion or an In Year Fair Access request, will be admitted into the student learning group on completion of a multi-agency planning meeting (where possible) and a thorough school Induction.

## **5. Prioritisation of referrals**

**5.1** Referrals Forms may be requested from, The Bridge School office – [nicola.gardner@thebridge.halton.sch.uk](mailto:nicola.gardner@thebridge.halton.sch.uk) or [admin@thebridge.halton.sch.uk](mailto:admin@thebridge.halton.sch.uk) or alternately by the office phone number of 01928-581301.

**5.2** Early identification of need that is communicated to The Bridge School will ensure the effectiveness of the referral process

- 5.3 Completed Referrals that do not document evaluated appropriate student information or supportive interventions, from the previous 12 months, may be deferred until sufficient evidence has been submitted.
- 5.4 Completed KS3 referrals will be added to the waiting list until a place becomes available. Notification will be given that this has taken place and an estimated timescale for placement availability, or placement date, will be communicated. KS4 Referrals are processed immediately and are not added to a waiting list.
- 5.6 KS3 Referrals that are received after the 'deadline' set for placements at the start of a half-term will be considered for a placement commencement at the start of the following half-term.
- 5.7 When a KS3 placement becomes available, the Head of Student Welfare will contact the school to arrange a 'pre-placement' meeting.
- 5.8 Priority will be given to students who are Looked After by the local authority and live within the Halton area.
- 5.9 From time to time, there may however, be *exceptional* circumstances which may require the school to deviate from this policy.

## 6. Lengths of placements

- 6.1 KS3 Engagement Placements should last a minimum of 6 weeks or a half-term. If requested by any party, there can a mid-placement Review. If there is agreement by all parties that the placement should cease, then it will do from that point, and the student will return to their referring school.
- 6.2 All KS3 Engagement students will have an 'End of Placement Review' at the end of the half-term or the SLA. If all parties agree that an additional half-term Placement should take place, then the student will have their Placement extended for that period.
- 6.3 At the end of either the first half-term or the second half-term the student must return to their referring school. An exception to this would be if a student has been submitted for an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), and a *documented multi-agency agreement* had suggested that a return to the referring school would not be appropriate. This circumstance may be the result of the student's needs being better met in the interim at The Bridge School whilst a long-term placement is identified.
1. It is expected that, through documented dialogue with all parties, the referring school would have started this process (of evidence collection) prior to the Placement Review Meeting.
  2. If it is agreed by all parties that the placement is extended in order for the EHCP to be completed then the referring school will pay the agreed 'Top Up'\* fee (pro rata) for the period of the placement. *Please refer to 8.0: Placement Fees.*
  3. These fees are reflective of the long-term provision costs for such a profile of student.



4. This type of placement will be referred to as '**Engagement Plus**' as the student maintains their registration at their referring high school but has a long-term 5 day per week placement at The Bridge.

*\*Top Up is the per placement pupil funding provided to the school for a single registered student, on roll full-time at The Bridge School (or any specialist placement).*

## KEY STAGE 4 – ALTERNATIVE PROVISION PLACEMENTS

**6.4** KS4 Engagement Placements should last for a minimum of 12 weeks (1 full term).

**6.5** For KS4 students, a Placement Review meeting between the learner, parents/carers, the home school and The Bridge School will be held at 6 weeks. If, after the initial 6 weeks/half a term, all parties agree that the placement is not appropriate, then the placement will cease at that point. If one or more of the parties feel the placement is appropriate then it must remain in place until the end of that period and the SLA. After that point, (12 weeks) the referring school, if they wish can cease the placement, regardless of The Bridge School's advice, or the parent/carers request.

## 7. A Bridge School Placement

**7.2** For both KS3 and KS4 student, the placement will consist of:

- Specific assessment and evaluation of need – both personal (social and emotional) and educational.
- Time spent with Key Workers in order to develop social skills and emotional resilience.
- Time spent with Teachers, Teacher Assistants and Key Workers, identifying strategies to minimise anxiety and disruption.
- Time spent with Teachers developing Behaviour for Learning, PSHE & Citizenship, and Literacy, Numeracy Science and ICT.
- Review and Planning meetings with staff from the referring school and parents/carers
- Transition to the post-placement school, training or employment

**7.3** The placements offered at KS3 have an objective of supporting a graduated process of supporting or identifying Special Education Need primarily in order that a young person can return to their originating school. The placements are temporary, with agreed end dates. As such The Bridge School offers full-time (5 days per week; 24 hours education) provision for the period of the placement.

**7.4** The placements offered at KS4 are often for extended and possibly (reflecting Review agreements) for multiple term periods.



## 8. Placement Curriculum

### KEY STAGE 3 – ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PLACEMENTS

8.1 For all Key Stage 3 students, the curriculum will consist of:

<p><b>Development of Social Interaction Skills and Emotional Resilience:</b></p> <p>This will consist of two strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bespoke 1:1 work focussing on specific needs based developmental areas and related to individual targets.</li><li>• Small group work based on generalised areas of development and interaction including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Self-regulation</li><li>○ Self-awareness</li><li>○ Empathy</li><li>○ Social Skills</li><li>○ Motivation</li></ul></li></ul> <p>The above areas will be assessed on commencement of the Placement and at the end of the Placement.</p>
<p><b>Literacy and Numeracy – Reading and Number</b></p> <p>The students will have a core offer of literacy development. A specific priority within this will be maintenance and development of reading and the skills which support this.</p> <p>Numeracy development will have a core focus of developing number work, in order that wider mathematical skills can be successfully entered into on return to their referring school or on transition to their next placement.</p>
<p><b>Citizenship – Cross Curricular</b></p> <p>This will include Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>The process of democracy</p> <p>The key [British] values of our society</p>
<p><b>PE – Cross Curricular</b></p> <p>This will be done on a yearly cycle, with half-termly themes, in order that students who have extended periods in the school do not repeat work, and that subsequent work can demonstrate continuity and progression.</p>
<p><b>Expressive and Creative – Cross Curricular</b></p> <p>This will be done on a yearly cycle, with half-termly themes, in order that students who have extended periods in the school do not repeat work, and that subsequent work can demonstrate continuity and progression.</p>
<p><b>Science – Cross Curricular</b></p> <p>This will be done on a yearly cycle, with half-termly themes, in order that students who have extended periods in the school do not repeat work, and that subsequent work can demonstrate continuity and progression.</p>
<p><b>Careers Guidance</b> – all students will receive broad guidance for preparation for entering post 16 pathways into employment, education or training.</p>

8.2 Aspects of the above curriculum will be assessed. These will focus on: the specific reasons a student has been referred to the provision; the progress made in these areas and the

identification of specific need, in order that the next provision/school will have a functional depth of information with which to work. The aspects that will be assessed are:

- Social and Emotional Development (either):
  - Southampton Emotional Literacy
  - Boxall Profile
  - PIVATs
- Literacy and Numeracy
  - Reading age
  - Spelling age
  - National Curriculum Attainment Levels
- Attendance and exclusion
  - By percentage of sessions offered, including authorised and unauthorised absence
- Presenting behaviour
  - School Points System
  - School quantification of 'Presenting' behaviour
  - Other agreed assessments contributing to the EHCP evidence base.

#### KEY STAGE 4 – ALTERNATIVE PROVISION PLACEMENTS

**8.3** Students taking an educational day delivered directly from The Bridge School will be offered a curriculum that includes:

- Core subjects: English, Maths, Science, ICT.
- PSHE and Citizenship
- Careers Guidance

**8.4** Students accessing provision off-site (not in The Bridge School building) will be offered a curriculum that includes:

- Functional Skills or GCSE English and Maths
- A range of vocational training programs
- Careers Guidance

**8.5** A full and current list of Alternative Providers used by The Bridge School, and the accreditations they provide, can be found on the school website at [www.thebridge.halton.sch.uk](http://www.thebridge.halton.sch.uk)

#### TRACKING OF PROGRESS:

**8.6** After a Key Stage 4 learner has been accessing an Engagement Placement for more than 6 weeks The Bridge School, as part of its Quality Assurance processes will collate tracking data at the end of every half term that identifies the learner's Working At Grade, Expected Grade and rate of Progress. If, due the timing of a learner's placement tracking windows is missed then The Bridge School will create an end of placement overview that reports on the areas covered within the normal data tracking process.

- 8.7** After a Key Stage 4 learner has been accessing an Engagement Placement for more than 6 weeks The Bridge School will introduce support with Careers Guidance. Where websites such as 'U-Explore' (or similar) are used by the home school, learners will access their own on line profiles, where information can be recorded. Where this software is not used The Bridge School will provide career session reports to the home school.
- 8.8** Although the Bridge School is able to offer support in CEIAG it is the responsibility of the home school to monitor and track eventual outcomes for their own learners, and to arrange post 16 pathways into education, employment or training.

## **9. Cost of Placements**

- 9.1** At both KS3 and KS4 the cost of an engagement referral is £70 per full day. Where half day timetables are requests for the Astmoor Vocational Skills Centre the costs will be £35 per half day session.
- 9.2** In addition to the foundation cost the home school will be charged £2.60 per day for lunch, for students who are not eligible for free school meals.
- 9.3** If the home school would like a weekly bus pass provided, the cost is £15 per week (covers cost of pass and administration).
- 9.4** For Key Stage 4 learners that engage in 1:1 tuition home schools will be asked to meet the short fall in payment from the £70 per day charge. Itemised details of all costings will be outlined in the Service Level Agreement that requires Approval by signature, prior to the Placement commencing.

## **10. Types of Service Level Agreement (SLA) available for KS3 and KS4 students:**

- 10.1** There are currently Service Level Agreements for the types of support offered below:

Placement Type	Cost
1. <b>KS3 Engagement:</b> Fixed period 'Assessment and Development' Placement (Key Stage 3)	£70 per day
2. <b>KS3 Engagement Plus:</b> Full-time placement for the duration of the statutory assessment process for completion of an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).	£79 per day
3. <b>KS4 Engagement:</b> Commissioned Alternative Provision for KS4 students from referring high schools (maximum 4 days per week).	£70 per day/£35 per half day

4. <b>Transition Support:</b> (either to reintegrate at the end of a Placement or to support the IYFAP) at either KS3 or KS4.	£35 per session/half day
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**10.2** The Service Level Agreement will be completed by **The Head of Student Welfare, Renata Squire**, (for KS3 referrals) or by **The Deputy Head Teacher, Wayne Alexander** (for KS4 referrals). The SLA aims to outline the responsibilities of each agency involved and provide clarity on the specific provision to be offered to the student, and the cost to the referring school/agency.

**10.3** Service Level Agreements must be signed by a senior member of school staff.

**10.4** Signed SLA's must be returned to The Head of Student Welfare ([renata.squire@thebridge.halton.sch.uk](mailto:renata.squire@thebridge.halton.sch.uk)) for KS3 students, and the Deputy Head Teacher ([wayne.alexander@thebridge.halton.sch.uk](mailto:wayne.alexander@thebridge.halton.sch.uk)) for KS4 students, **before** the student starts an Engagement placement. This can be done via email or hard copy.

**10.5** Schools who do not return paperwork on time risk being put back on the KS3 waiting list. In this type of situation it is possible that another student referral could take priority, and the available placement be taken. KS4 referrals not returned within desired timescales risk a delayed start to a placement.

**10.6** Schools who do not fulfil the terms of a Service Level Agreement, risk the placement ending prematurely at the end of a half term.

## **11. Induction**

**11.1** Induction *must* be completed prior to a placement beginning. This is to support the student and the family so that the time spent in placement is maximised.

**11.2** Insufficient Induction can lead to inadequate preparation for a student. This may result in unnecessary and undesirable levels of student anxiety, confrontation and conflict which in turn can compromise engagement and progress. Induction assists the process of effectively safeguarding both the individual student, and the wider student population and staff team.

## **12. On Completion of the Placement Schools will receive:**

- For KS3 students, an End of Placement report identifying specific areas of need and appropriate strategies
- An evidence base to demonstrate the progress made towards the initial targets set at the commencement of the placement.

- For KS4 students, a documented overview tracking half-termly progress at their Providers, and Attendance.
- For KS3 and KS4 students, the individual Student Passport and any additional documentation to evidence strategies, risk management and progress.
- For students who are part of an Engagement Plus SLA, all evidence and documentation for EHCP application will be collated and submitted.

### **13. Students undergoing Statutory Assessment**

- 13.1** Should it be decided, through the Review process, that it is appropriate for the student to undergo Statutory Assessment, a decision will be made at a multi-agency meeting, regarding which school this should take place in. This decision will be based on the needs of the student.
- 13.2** Should it be decided that the student completes the Statutory Assessment process at The Bridge School, the student will remain registered at the referring school for the duration of an Engagement Plus placement.

### **14. Re-Referral for an additional placement**

- 14.1** Following agreement at the End of Placement Review, if a KS3 student returns to their referring school, the referring school cannot 're-refer' that student for an additional 'Engagement' placement during the KS3 phase, unless there are *exceptional* circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will only be evaluated and agreed upon by the Head Teacher of The Bridge School, although consideration will be given to the needs and views of the Local Authority.
- 14.2** The referring school can re-refer a student who attended a KS3 placement once they have reached Year 10 (KS4), if the correct Referral steps outlined in this policy have taken place.

## 15. Appendix

### Bridge School Key Stage 3 Assessment and Development Placements

