Admissions Policy

TAO Independent School provides a nurturing, relational, and therapeutic learning environment where every child is known, valued, and supported. We believe that safety, trust, and belonging are the foundations of growth.

Our curriculum and culture are shaped by outdoor learning, trauma-informed practice, and compassion. This policy reflects those principles and sets out how we meet statutory requirements while maintaining the high levels of care and personal understanding that define TAO

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Purpose
To outline transparent, lawful admission arrangements for pupils commissioned by local authorities and to ensure placements align with the school's capacity, facilities, and safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Equality, Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

Admission decisions are made on an individual basis, taking account of the School's ability to meet the pupil's needs safely, the reasonable adjustments that can be made, safeguarding considerations, premises constraints and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Principles

- TAO promotes equality of opportunity and does not discriminate on protected characteristics under the *Equality Act 2010*.
- All referrals are risk-assessed to confirm suitability, accessibility, and alignment with the school's therapeutic model.
- The policy links directly with the Safeguarding & Child Protection, SEND, Health & Safety, and Equality & Diversity policies.

Referral and Consultation Process

- TAO Independent School currently operates a commissioned-placement model and ordinarily accepts placements funded or commissioned by Local Authorities or other statutory bodies.
- Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, TAO will engage with the relevant Local Authority consultation process and provide clear information about whether the School can safely and appropriately meet the pupil's identified needs.
- Where a placement is commissioned by a Local Authority, the placement will be confirmed through the relevant commissioning, funding or contractual arrangements.
- TAO does not currently accept privately funded or direct parent placements. Parents/carers may contact or visit the School to discuss suitability, but a placement will only be confirmed through the School's agreed commissioning route.

Suitability & Accessibility

- Teaching accommodation is located on the first floor and there is no internal lift. Each pupil's mobility, accessibility and evacuation needs are therefore considered individually during admission, together with any reasonable adjustments that can safely be made within the premises.
- TAO Independent School is not routinely configured to provide planned or ongoing intimate care as part of its standard provision. Personal-care needs are considered individually during admission, including whether reasonable adjustments can be made safely and whether the School can meet the pupil's needs without compromising dignity, welfare or safety.
- Where, following individual assessment and consideration of reasonable adjustments, the School determines that it cannot safely or appropriately meet a pupil's needs, TAO will explain the reasons clearly to the commissioning authority and contribute to discussion about suitable alternative provision,

Process

- Formal referral received from a commissioning authority.
- Review of documents, risk assessment, and (where applicable) EHCP.
- The admission process will include consideration of pupil and parent/carer views, previous education history, professional advice, known safeguarding information, accessibility and any relevant healthcare or risk information.

- Review by the Headteacher, SENDCo and other relevant staff or professionals according to the pupil's needs. Safeguarding concerns are considered by the Headteacher/DSL.
- Pre-admission visit for pupil and carers.
- Where a placement is agreed, the School confirms the placement in writing and completes appropriate induction, safeguarding handover, baseline assessment and Learning Journey arrangements before or promptly following admission.

Monitoring

Admissions arrangements and decisions are monitored by the Headteacher, with significant themes, risks or capacity issues reported to the Proprietor as appropriate.

Linked Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

• SEND Information Report • Accessibility Plan

• Equality, Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy

• Behaviour Management Policy

• Health & Safety Policy

• Complaints Policy

Legal Framework & Review

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- Children and Families Act 2014, where applicable to Education, Health and Care Plan arrangements
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), where relevant
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Version Updates

Version	Date	Author	Review / Changes	Approved By
2.0	09/09/26	Daniel Giblin	09/09/27	Headteacher / Proprietor