



## Admissions Policy

Name of Policy	Admissions
Review Committee	Board of Trustees
Last review date	September 2022
Next review date	September 2023

## 1. Purpose

GUST Independent School is an Independent Special School. The process of selection is based upon academic merit and the admissions procedure is designed to assess this in a number of ways which are appropriate to the age of the applicant. Our selection process is designed to identify students who are able to benefit from, and thrive upon, the distinctive education we offer and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School. The respective Local Authority and the SEND department will be involved at some stage.

## 2. Equal Treatment

Diversity and inclusion are fundamental to the school's ethos. The School's aim is to encourage applications from students with a diverse range of backgrounds. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for today's world. The School is non-discriminatory, in line with the Equality Act (2010). All applicants will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents', race, culture, language, religion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, disability, sexual orientation, political or other opinion, property, birth or other status. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our school community and rights and freedoms of others.

## 3. Special Needs

The School welcomes students with special educational needs or disabilities and will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, in order to accommodate and support the needs of the student appropriately. We strongly advise parents/carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before submitting their application.

## 4. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

## 5. Definitions

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or

- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order
- This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

#### 6. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's/equivalent's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.

Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

#### 7. About GUST Independent School

Each child is admitted to GUST Independent School through:

- A referral from Northumberland County Council.
- A referral directly from a school or other County Authority.
- Tender through NE12 framework.

Pupils may be admitted to GUST Independent School throughout the school year at any time.

We are currently able to take 40 pupils on our school roll.

Before a place is offered at the school, GUST will receive the current EHC plan (if it exists), or detailed information regarding the pupil, and decide whether or not it is able to fully meet the needs of the pupil.

If GUST believes they can fully meet the needs of the pupil:

- The parent/carer and any professional(s) involved are contacted by the Head of School or School Business Manager by telephone/email/letter to arrange a visit.
- Staff may visit the pupil at their home prior to visiting the school, if this is requested.
- The Parent Pack is emailed/posted to parents/carers' and professionals, enabling a broad oversight of who we are, where we are and what we can provide.
- On arrival at GUST, the visitor(s) are greeted by the Head of School/Deputy Head/Assistant Deputy Head. Discussions take place allowing the visitor(s) and staff an opportunity to ask questions, raise queries and clarify matters arising.
- A tour of the school follows.
- Visitors can meet the staff who will be involved with the pupil.
- Visitors are presented with examples of work, discuss timetables, expectations, e.g. pupil to attend regularly, pupil to be treated with dignity and respect by all staff members.
- The preferred method of communication between school and all parties is agreed.

Following the visit, the referring body will inform GUST if the pupil will accept a place at school. GUST will only offer a full-time placement to each pupil (5 days per week), with the exception of a transition plan.

It is unlikely that a pupil who has been admitted to GUST would return to a mainstream setting, however the possibility of a phased return to mainstream is supported by GUST in the circumstances where this is relevant.