Next Steps Education Ltd

Admissions Policy

Approved by: Sarah Logan and Liz Fancourt Position: Directors

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Registered Company Address: 4, Bridgeland Street, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2PS

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1. Ethos Statement

At Next Steps Education we aim to give every student an equal opportunity in education by removing *all and any* barriers to learning.

Why? Because at Next Steps we want to see a world where each student is included and each student can access their full potential.

We engage students to reach for their goals and to feel successful. We deliver high quality educational experiences to all our students, fostering a sense of belonging and respect as well as providing the knowledge and skills to make academic progress and understand real-world problems through a love of lifelong learning.

2. Admissions Principles

Next Steps Education as an alternative provision is committed to welcoming students from all backgrounds, needs and prior experiences. We admit students who are on roll in a physical school/local authority (LA) and for whom their school are seeking an alternative provision, often to reengage them with education. Students will remain on roll with their physical setting whilst accessing our provision. We ensure equal consideration for all potential admissions under the Equalities Act, fulfilling our duties to safeguard against discrimination related to protected characteristics.

Our students typically come from schools across Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. We offer a curriculum for Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4: our typical age range is 5-16, however, we can admit students outside of this age range either through schools or Local Authorities.

To comply with safeguarding regulations, we seek to identify whether there are any adjustments required in relation to protected characteristics; for example, we check the preferred name for young adults who are transgender or gender fluid.

Upon admission, we seek to identify any children/young adults who may be particularly vulnerable due to safeguarding concerns, additional needs, mental and physical health concerns or other needs and circumstances. At the point of registration, our Relational Learning Lead completes a Relational Learning Plan where parents inform us about a student's needs, qualities and how we can promote their inclusion.

We are fully flexible in terms of the timing of admissions and accept admissions all year round, often at short notice if that is of benefit to the partner/student. Upon receipt of all required details from schools or LAs, we target a swift enrolment unless unforeseen issues arise. We aim to provide an effective enrolment process to provide the alternative provision young people and their schools need as quickly as possible. Students for whom English is an additional language should please note that our sessions are all taught through the medium of English and delivered by English-speaking, UK-qualified teachers. We are fully inclusive but need to draw your attention to the implication this has for students whose proficiency in English may be limited.

We are an inclusive provider and can admit students who, for a number of reasons, are unable to find or be admitted into school provisions elsewhere. Our starting position is always to seek to admit. However, Next Steps Education Ltd reserve the right to not proceed with the admission of a student if, on careful review from a safeguarding perspective, the admission may be deemed detrimental to other students, or it is clear that learning with us is not in the best interests of the individual. We would always communicate our process of decision-making to the prospective client to ensure all factors are considered.

3. Admissions process

Admissions to Next Steps Education Ltd are handled on a rolling basis throughout the year. Schools or LAs contact us via the 'hello@' email address or website form when they are new customers. Existing customers can register interest with one of the Directors.

Schools, LAs or other physical education institutions are required to complete a referral form. The referral form gathers a range of pertinent information about the student: personal details, profile, additional needs, academic performance, desired subjects, and timetable considerations. The form also includes the details of the contact link in the client school with the main responsibility for the student's use of the provision and responsible for child protection, attendance, and billing. Our team will discuss any questions schools or local authorities have relating to the referral form. At Next Steps Education Ltd, each student's application is carefully considered by the Directors and the relevant paperwork, which is subsequently stored on the student data management system, is made available to the relevant teaching staff to inform adaptive teaching.

A timetable is then built, and the Key documents shared in the referral process, such as an EHCP or a report from relevant professions as well as the details submitted on the enrolment form are saved in the student's file and on the student's Team in Microsoft 365 so that staff can access them.

Parents and clients are added to our secure portal where lesson timetables, lesson reminders and lesson reports are generated. Parents and clients will receive emails about these and can also log into the portal to see their child's information.

4. Admission of students with SEND including those with an Education, Health, and Social Care Plan (EHCP)

At Next Steps Education Ltd, when we are asked to admit a student, all requests for admissions should come from a LA or school, including those for students with EHCPs, or who are in the process of being issued an EHCP. We are a proudly inclusive provision and have a number of students with EHCPs or undergoing assessment for an EHCP with additional SEND support.

Students with an EHCP typically present with a range of complex needs that may involve one or more of communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, and sensory, physical, and medical needs. Consequently, schools and LAs are asked to declare whether the student has an EHCP via the referral process and share the plan and any other documentation with us for reference. This may include details such as specialist teaching, counselling, personal assistants, therapies, mentoring, medical interventions, and multi-agency working to aid and monitor student progress. Next Steps Education Ltd expects that the client can assure that this additional provision outlined in the personalised plan is in place via other providers so that the tutoring or learning element of the plan can be as successful as possible. The LA or school commissioning the place at Next Steps Education Ltd must retain overall responsibility for the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the personalised plan. At enrolment, we ask parents to share information about a student's specific interests, aptitudes and needs. This includes any details of any special circumstances relating to the student's health, allergies, disabilities, or special educational needs which may be relevant to their participation in the education provided by Next Steps Education. Early notification of any additional needs or disabilities is of great value, as it will enable all staff to consider whether reasonable adjustments are needed during the admissions process and what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made to support the pupil's future education. In order that Next Steps Education Ltd is fully compliant with the Equality Act, all staff, tutors and mentors are made aware of the duties towards children who are disabled and the 'reasonable adjustments' needed for particular children.

We are a completely inclusive and welcoming provision, which supports students from varied backgrounds and with varied need profiles. Our setting and organisation allows us to support students well so that they can thrive. As a responsible institution, we check our provision is right for each child to ensure that we can support them fully. It needs to be a good fit for them to ensure success. The nature of our provision means that in all but a few circumstances, we are a good fit for a young person and can offer them a place in our alternative provision.

It is important to note that we are not able to be a named school or provider on an EHCP: this must be the physical school or authority with statutory responsibility for the outcomes of that EHCP, as this gives protection and continuity to a child with SEND. We are an alternative provision engaged by a named provider in concert with the family to help achieve outcomes on an EHCP – in many cases by providing an extensive taught curriculum. Next Steps Education Ltd is not eligible to be a named school or provider as we are not listed in section 38(3) of the Children and Families Act 2014. A named provider can use funding agreed with their LA for an EHCP to pay for our provision.

We are guided by the principles and practices of the SEN Code of Practice 2014, applying them where they are relevant to an alternative provision provider. However, we are not bound by the SEN Code of Practice that relates to the statutory responsibilities of LAs and state-funded 'bricks and mortar' schools.

Information regarding a student's special educational needs, especially where they have an EHCP, will be made available to staff, tutors and mentors. The EHCP and related information will be stored securely on our student management information system (Microsoft 365) for access by relevant staff, tutors and mentors. Next Steps Education Ltd can offer students access to the teaching of the National Curriculum either online or face to face. Our teachers make adaptations to their day-to-day practice that benefit individual students with specific needs. We also protect and promote the health and well-being of each student, ensuring sensitivity to the welfare of those learners with an EHCP. Our environment is accessible and inclusive educational practices feature in our development plans.

5. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with: Child Protection & Safeguarding Behaviour Policy E-Safety Safer Recruitment