Garwood
Rutherford School

Admissions policy

Created: September 2025
Review: September 2026

Copies of all of our policies can be found in the school office, and online at rutherfordschool.org.uk

RUTHERFORD SCHOOL
ADMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Context

1.1 Rutherford School is a specialist independent educational facility for pupils aged 3- 25 with PMLD, severe sensory impairments and complex medical needs.

1.2 Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated April 2020), students identified as having a special educational need are considered within one or more of the following broad categories of need:

- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties;
- Communication and Interaction Needs;
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

1.3. All learners at Rutherford have PMLD. Students may also be identified as having complex health needs and sensory impairments.

1.4 The school fully subscribes to the principles underlying the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated April 2020). The Code of Practice sets out the principles that should be followed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities.

The principles of the code of practice include:

- Taking into account the views of children, young people and their families;
- Enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision making;
- Collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support;
- Identifying the needs of children and young people;

• Making high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people; • Focusing on removing barriers to learning;
• Helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood.

1.5 Referrals by Local Authorities and Privately Funded Students. Usually, students who attend Rutherford School have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and are placed and funded by their Local Authority (LA). Children will be considered for admission at any point in their Education Health and Care Plan process, if they meet the admissions criteria. Students may also be in receipt of funding through Health, Social Care or Direct payments when post 19.

1.6 However, as an Independent Special School, Rutherford is able to accept privately funded students who do not have an EHCP. An example of this would be a family relocating to London from overseas for a specified amount of time and who are not permanent residents. Students can be referred by their Local Authority or by parents initially and can join at any stage of their school career.

1.7 Equipment costs will be submitted separately to funders prior to admission. Additional equipment costs will be payable from relevant funders when assessed as necessary for each student. This will form part of the Annual Review, however there may be times when costs for an essential piece of equipment are submitted outside of the Annual review cycle.

2. Admissions Criteria

2.1 In order to be placed at Rutherford, the school will determine if a child's needs can be best met within the school under the following criteria:

• A learner will have PMLD and will be working at pre-formal curriculum level;
• Medical Needs which can be met by our Nursing team
• A level of developmental, sensory or physical impairment that can be supported within the school.
• There is a place available within the existing group structure at the time for when entry is sought

2.2 We admit pupils from a wide catchment area which includes the whole of Croydon and surrounding boroughs.

2.3. Applications for admissions can be made at any time during the academic year.

2.4 The school is currently registered for 28 pupils, however, availability of places varies from year to year.
Prospective parents and pupils are welcome to visit the school by appointment throughout the year.

2.5 Rutherford is an independent provision, therefore places are offered at the discretion of the Headteacher and Senior Leaders.

2.6 It is a criterion for entry that students be adequately transported to and from school. In the case of a student being funded by their local authority, then Rutherford School will ask that the LA make the necessary arrangements for this. In special circumstances, notably where an agreement has been reached between LA and the family, the transport costs and arrangements may be the responsibility of the parents.

2.7 To make an application, you may contact the school directly and at a later time you will need to contact the relevant Local Authority SEND department to proceed with your application

2.8 A final confirmation of a placement is dependent on funding agreement and the signing of the Rutherford placement School Provision and Funding Agreement (appendix 1).

3. Admissions Process

3.1 Pupils will be admitted to Rutherford School following:

- A successful assessment conducted by the multi-disciplinary team (Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist and the school medical team).
- Agreement for funding by the Local Authority or other relevant stakeholders.
- Availability of a place.
- A funding commitment to payment for a full academic year's fees on agreement of placement and in the event of withdrawal of the pupil by parental choice, transition or in the rare event of a pupil dying, the same contractual agreement will apply.
- Parental signature of the Home School Agreement and Admissions documentation.

3.2 The process for assessments of new pupils is as follows:

1
- recieve referral from parent
- recieve referral from LA or SC

2
- HoS or SLT to speak with parent to ascertain needs and request EHCP for consultation
- MDT team review EHCP sent by LA and decide whether the student would be suitable for consideration

3
- Invite parent/ parent and child in for a tour of the school (Sarah H to support with tours)

4
- Following discussion at tour if the student is appropriate for consideration then invite in for MDT assessment or this to take place during tour visit.

5
- MDT team to produce reports based on initial assessment as to appropriateness of pupil for the setting and provision available (see examples in costings folder). Reports neededd from Teaching and Learning, Nursing, Physiotherapy and VI/OT/SaLT if pertinent to application.
- SMT to then review the costing grid to decide cost bandings following assessments e.g. BBB/BBC etc . . .
- SMT to use costing spread sheet to calculate exact costings according to bandings and add to end of assessment report to be sent to LA/SC.

6
- If placement accepted by funding body then full assessments for care plans and programmes to be undertaken prior to agreed start date.
- Rutherford funding contract to be signed by parent and funding body.

4. Reviews

4.1Review Process

4.12 Students' progress and the continued suitability of the placement are reviewed at annual reviews each year. Parents, Teachers, Therapists, the school Nursing team and the Local Authority receive an invitation to the Review in advance to ensure all relevant parties are given notice to attend. Where a parent/carer fails to attend the Review and there is no LA representative present, we will contact them by phone to establish if they are happy for the Review to continue without them, or if they would like the meeting to be rescheduled. If a LA representative fails to attend the Review, the meeting will continue without them.

4.13 Those present at the meeting will consider the following:

- Do the contents of the EHCP remain appropriate?
- Are any amendments to the EHCP required?
- Should the LA continue to maintain the EHCP, or should the LA be recommended to cease it?
- The current targets will be discussed and any changes agreed;
- New targets set must meet the broad outcomes agreed in the EHCP;
- At the meeting, notes will be kept which detail persons present, their views about what is working well or not so well and a list of agreed actions.

A review meeting may make recommendations on any of the matters listed above. Amendments to the EHCP are likely to be recommended if:

- Significant new evidence has emerged which is not recorded on the Statement/EHCP;
- Significant outcomes recorded on the EHCP are no longer present;
- The provision should be amended to meet the student's changing needs and the targets specified at the review meeting, or
- The student should change educational setting, either at point of transfer between phases, or when a student's needs would be more appropriately met in a different placement.
- The meeting will consider all contributions including written contributions and any verbal contributions by those attending. Action Following the Annual Review meeting: Detailed notes are taken at the Review, typed up and form the Review Report. Action points are collated and distributed along with copies of the report which support the Review. These actions are implemented, monitored and reviewed by those involved on a regular basis.

4.14 A school report in the form of an STAR review is also provided with an invitation for parents to come and discuss progress and provision. This review provides reports from the multidisciplinary team. This review is usually conducted at around the midway point between Annual Reviews.

4.15 An interim Annual Review may be called at any point in the year if there is a significant change in need or breakdown in placement.

4.16 Fees will be reviewed annually in line with inflation in addition to in relation to changes in need and provision at an Annual Review.

4.2 Student Views

4.21 At Rutherford we believe that the voices of our students should be heard and acted upon. They inform and develop our practice and help us to prioritise for the learner so that we can better meet their needs. We recognise that there can often be a difference in what is important 'to' and 'for' a young person and use a range of strategies to ensure that we cultivate both.

4.22 Students at Rutherford may not be able to vocalise their thoughts and feelings in words so it is imperative that we take a holistic approach in understanding what they have to say. It is important to know get to know the young person and work in a disciplinary way to develop a better understanding of what each young person is trying to tell us. This process is embedded in the way we work and we record a snapshot of this process to share at our person centred, biannual reviews

4.3 Parent Views

4.31 At Rutherford parent and carer views are valued and contribute to the personalised learning pathways for each student. Parent's views on targets and approaches and students views are collated formally bi-annually through reviews and on an informal basis through daily contact with families. Parents are engaged both virtually and through written and in person communication.

4.32 Parent views are collected prior to Annual Reviews through EHCP parent view documentation.

4.33 We are currently transitioning from the use of the Evidence for Learning App to share students learning with parents. A home to school contact book is sent each day which facilitates increased liaison and this is often followed up through phone calls and emails to discuss any successes or difficulties in more detail.

5. Equality and Non-Discrimination

Rutherford School is committed to promoting equality and preventing discrimination in all aspects of its admissions process. Admissions decisions are made without regard to race, gender, disability, religion, or socioeconomic background, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and Part 1 of the Independent School Standards.

6. Curriculum Access for All Learners

All learners at Rutherford School, including those working at a pre-formal curriculum level, have access to a curriculum that is adapted to meet their individual needs. The school ensures that educational provision is inclusive and responsive, in line with the Education Inspection Framework and Part 1 of the Independent School Standards.

7. Complaints Procedure Related to Admissions

Rutherford School has a formal complaints procedure in place for concerns related to admissions. Parents and guardians may raise complaints through the school's established channels, and all complaints will be handled in a timely and transparent manner, in accordance with Part 7 of the Independent School Standards.

8. Accessibility of Key Documents

The school ensures that all relevant documents, including funding agreements, assessment reports, and admissions information, are available in accessible formats upon request. This supports transparency and inclusivity, in line with Part 6 of the Independent School Standards.

Appendix 1

Rutherford School Provision and Funding Agreement

AGREEMENT OF PROVISION AND FUNDING
Rutherford School

Agreement For The Provision of Support Services Between:

Rutherford School
1A Melville Avenue
South Croydon
CR2 7HZ

And

Young person's name and address

Date of Birth – XX/XX/XXXX

In this Agreement Rutherford School, Part of Rutherford School may also be referred to as "we", "us" or "our."

In this Agreement, the person we are supporting may also be referred to as "you", or "your."

We will supply support as described in your initial assessment report, as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Estimated weekly charge for support is £???? (not including Bank Holidays). This will be charged weekly/monthly/termly.

This is based on attending ? days per week over 38 weeks, term time only.
Any Young Person attending our Life Skills Provision must have a placement agreed with Rutherford School/Life Skills Centre and funding confirmed in writing prior to admission to Rutherford School. Please contact Hannah James, hannah.james@garwoodfoundation.org.uk for their charges.

Start Date: **End Date:**

The above assessment was made on ???? and will be subject to regular reviews which may result in an increase/decrease in the hours/costs. Any changes will be discussed prior to implementation and will be covered under this Agreement. This Agreement, together with our Services Guide, Initial Assessment Report and your support plan sets out the terms under which we will provide services for you. Please read all documents carefully, and seek advice (for example from a relative, friend, advocate or legal advisor) about anything that you do not understand before signing this Agreement.

All service agreements will be issued via email unless otherwise requested. Should you require a printed copy of your agreement please contact rutherford@garwoodfoundation.org.uk or contact the team on 0208406 8220.

Notes

1. The first month of this agreement will be regarded as an adjustment period. This is to enable you to decide if the arrangements are right for you. 14 days' notice of termination is required by either party during this period.
2. Following the adjustment period, termination will occur when one of the following applies when either party gives one term's notice – you may be liable for a charge of one term's payment in lieu of notice.
3. The times of attendance will be discussed the time of assessment. The Life Skills Day starts at 8.45 am and ends at 3.15pm. Half day session start and end times will be agreed on an individual basis. Any amendments to these agreed times will be agreed by both parties.
4. In the event of any absences, such as holidays, hospitalisations or sickness by you will be charged in full in order to hold your space at the school.
5. In the unlikely event of any closures due to government instruction, adverse weather conditions and circumstances beyond our control you are required to continue to pay for your space. If this closure continues for a duration of over 10 working days then a fee suspension may be offered.
6. Invoices are raised as agreed in advance. The time frame for this is to be discussed at your assessment. Payments are due within 28 days and must be paid by cheque or BACS. Interest may be payable by you on overdue accounts. At no time should

cash/cheques be handed to a member of Rutherford staff in settlement of an invoice.

7. If you are in receipt of direct payments, a personal budget or a personal health budget (or similar) it is possible that the cost of the service we provide may be more than the funding you receive. In the event that there is a shortfall between what we charge and what you receive, then it is your responsibility to make up the difference.
8. Our charges will be reviewed annually in addition to at statutory reviews, and you will be provided with at least four weeks' notice of any change, prior to implementation, unless the change is as a result of a change in the Support Plan, in which case the revision will take effect as soon as the change is made.
9. Any personal property and affects are brought in to school at your own risk.
10. By signing this agreement you are giving consent to the following;
    Your information being shared with staff across Rutherford School and Life Skills Centre where required or needed to support you. Your image will be used for support plan purposes including; reviews, internal assessments and programmes and care plans
11. Rutherford School does not provide support workers to assist you in your own vehicles.
12. If you require assistance with medication then full details of prescriber must be available. For further details of requirements relating to the administration of medication please refer to our Medication Policy. This will be discussed and agreed prior to the start date.
13. Our staff will be assessed as competent before undertaking any clinical procedures and tasks. This includes assistance with Eating and Drinking and positional changes for which care plans will be provided.
14. Under no circumstances are support workers, or any other employee of Rutherford School or Life Skills Centre to be approached to carry out any private work arrangements directly by you. Formal requests may be put in to writing to the Head of School for consideration by the Governing Body on an individual basis. If it is discovered that an employee of Rutherford has been directly employed by you without prior approval this may result in a termination of this agreement.
15. Employees of Rutherford are not permitted to give out their own personal contact details. Contact should be made via the school office or professional email addresses.
16. All young people in receipt of an Educational placement at our school will have their needs met and reviewed in line with their EHCP.
17. Rutherford School may propose, or the Authority may request, during the Period of the Contract, a variation in the manner in which the Service is provided and funded by the Authority. Where there is a substantial change in the Service Rutherford School, the family and the funder will consider whether any variations shall be made in respect of the Fees or any Supplementary Charges. No variations should be made without the written agreement of both parties.
18. By signing this agree to adhere to all Rutherford policies and procedures.

Total Fees Payable to Rutherford School **£xxxxx** duration

Funded by (i.e. LA/PCT/Social Services) If jointly funded please provide further details

(Please print)

Name: _____

Contact: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Suzanna Bance
Headteacher

This policy will be reviewed on a three year cycle
September 2025
Date of next review: September 2026
Approved by Governors on: 8th September 2025