

SEN Admission Arrangements

The School Admissions Code 2014 sets out the mandatory requirements relating to admission to all maintained schools in England, except maintained special schools.

Legislation governing infant class sizes prevents schools from admitting more than 30 pupils between the ages of five and seven to a class with a single teacher.

However, certain pupils can be considered 'excepted pupils' for the purpose of the limit, and can be admitted even where this would mean exceeding the 30-pupil maximum. Such pupils include:

- Those with statements of SEN or EHC plans which name the school who are admitted outside the normal admissions round
- Children with SEN who are normally taught in an SEN unit attached to the school or in a registered special school and attend some infant classes within the mainstream school

In paragraph 1.6, the Code notes that admission authorities are under a duty to outline the “criteria against which places will be allocated” when the school is oversubscribed. It adds that these oversubscription criteria must not discriminate against or disadvantage children with disabilities or those with SEN.

Furthermore, a school must not refuse to admit a child who has SEN but does not have an EHC plan on the grounds that they do not think they are able to cater for the child’s needs.

Pupils with Statements and EHC Plans

All children whose statement of SEN or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school must be admitted. A school is required to admit the pupil from the moment it is named on the EHC plan. Any specific arrangements to cater for the pupil's needs must be put in place as soon as possible, but the school may not delay admitting the pupil in order to make these arrangements.

A school must be consulted before it is named on a pupil's plan. If the school has any concerns about accommodating the pupil's needs or preparing for his/her transfer to the school, it should raise these during the consultation period.