

Ambitious College Admissions Policy

1. Purpose and scope

Ambitious College is registered with the Education Funding Agency (EFA)¹ as an approved post-16 institution. Ambitious College is funded through a combination of fees paid by Local Authorities, the EFA and also voluntary income to fund the College's development, research, evaluation, providing support and additional resources. The College is owned and run by the national charity Ambitious about Autism which provides services, raises awareness and understanding, campaign for change. The Ambitious about Autism vision is to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism and our mission is to help them to learn, thrive and achieve.

The purpose of Ambitious College is to support young learners to live ordinary lives a part of their home community. We know that with the right opportunity and support they can achieve great things. We measure outcomes toward this goal in the following areas:

- Independent living
- Employment
- Good health and wellbeing
- Friends, relationships, and community inclusion.

Ambitious College provides its learners with a specialist curriculum that meets their needs and interests. The curriculum prioritises the development of the communication, vocational and independent living skills learners need to make a successful transition to adult life. It is delivered by highly skilled and experienced staff, and provides opportunities to learn locally through a range of partnerships with local employers, services and our mainstream College partners.

Ambitious College has two campus sites currently located in Barnet and Southall both of which are on temporary sites until the end of the 2015/16 academic year. The Barnet campus and the Southall campus will transfer to the new campus site of Ambitious College in Tottenham and West Thames, respectively, from July 2016. Changes in the College provision places will be published in the Admissions Policy document, which will be available on the College website.

In each location the Ambitious College campus is co-located within a mainstream General Further Education College so that, where appropriate our learners can access courses and facilities provided by the partner College. Ambitious College has relationships with Local Authorities across London and the Home Counties.

¹ Education Funding Agency is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Education.

Ambitious College complies with the SEND Code of Practice 2015² and where applicable the School Admissions Code (December 2014)³.

2. Admission Criteria

Ambitious College will admit learners with a primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and who also have a Learning Difficulty, where the College is named on the young person's Learning Difficulty Assessment⁴ (LDA) or within their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The learner may have previously had a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or LDA which is being transferred to an EHCP.

Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014 allows the Secretary of State to publish a list of approved post-16 institutions, for the purposes of enabling the institution to be the subject of a request, for it to be named in an Education, Health and Care plan.

The College will provide the Local Authority with the College prospectus and the link to the College to be provided on the Local Authority's Local Offer page.

Each learner has a highly personalised study programme with a focus on outcomes.

Places are available as follows:

	Academic Year
Campus	2016-17
Tottenham	26
West Thames	20

Oversubscription places: 0

Ambitious College admits young people from age 16 to 25, who have a primary diagnosis of ASD with a Learning Difficulty and who require special education.

Prior to naming the College on the young persons EHCP, the Local Authority will have consulted with the College in line with their statutory obligations as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

² SEND Code of Practice 2015 Department of Education Reference: DFE-00205-2013

³ School Admissions Code (December 2014 – DFE-00728-2014) applies to all maintained schools, Academies and Free Schools in England. Colleges are not specifically designated in the code. Colleges receive public funds therefore there is an implied obligation to comply with the Code.

⁴ LDA's are conducted under section 139A of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

Places are usually taken up at the start of the College year but by arrangement with the Principal may be accessed at any time of the year.

Places are commissioned by the Local Authority in which the young person resides and in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Each application is considered on an individual basis. In each case, our application process evaluates the needs of the individual young person and determines whether the College would be unsuitable to meet their needs with particular reference to the following factors set out in the SEND Code 2015:

- The College is unsuitable for the young person's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs.
- The attendance of the young person at the College would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

Additionally the following factors will be considered:

- The parents/carers or the potential learner have expressed a preference for the College (or in the case of dispute the Local Authority intends to name the College).
- The young person has a Statement of SEN, an LDA or an EHCP, indicating ASD as the primary need or are assessed by Ambitious College as ASD being a significant or primary need.
- The needs of the learners will be assessed to take into account the cohort and environment to enable the efficient education of others.
- Additional support might be required for young people, whose safety or that of others is unusually at risk. This would not necessarily prevent admission. It will be determined by assessment and the cost of the placement will be adjusted accordingly.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 for places for young people moving from secondary school to a post-16 institution or for young people moving between post-16 institutions, the Local Authority must review and make any amendments to the EHCP by 31 March in the calendar year of the transfer or at least 5 months before the transfer takes place.

Ambitious College reserves the right to delay commencement of the place until after the start of the academic year, should the Local Authority name Ambitious College on an EHCP or confirm funding of the place after the 31 March 2016.

3. Admission process

Applications can be made either by the parent/carer, the potential learner or by the Local Authority.

We encourage parents/carers/potential learners to visit the College prior to stating a preference. The details of our parent/carer 'visit and tours' dates and how to book are published on our website. A visit and tour for a potential learner can be accommodated on request, the preference is for 'visit and tours' to be conducted in groups, to minimise the impact on learners attending the College.

Applications by Parent/Carer or potential learner

- The parent/carer/potential learner completes an 'Application for Admissions' form and returns it with relevant documentation such as a finalised EHCP. The College will send to the parent/carer/ potential learner a 'Professionals Information' form to be completed by a professional associated with the young person, such as within their current educational placement.
- On receipt of the completed forms, the College will inform the Local Authority in which the family lives that an application has been submitted and they are seeking funding.

Applications by Local Authority

- The Local Authority will consult with the College prior to naming it, in line with their statutory obligations.
- If a referral is made by the Local Authority then the College will respond within the statutory 15-day period.

The College's response is determined by the documentation received (i.e. Statement of SEN/draft EHCP, Annual Review reports, professional assessments) and by the assessment visits. The assessment will ideally be conducted in the young person's current school or education placement. Where this is not possible, individual arrangements can be made.

The College's Admissions Panel will consider each referral prior to making a response, and in all cases this will comply with the 15 day requirement, if applicable.

Once agreed that the College can meet the needs of the learner, a place is offered and an example study programme and the costs for the Ambitious College place for the potential learner are provided to the Local Authority, to be considered and approved at their panel meeting.

When funding has been approved by the Local Authority an individualised study programme is produced and shared with parents/carer/ potential learner. The approved study programme is provided to the Local Authority.

After admission, learners are provided with a 6 week assessment period on entry to College to determine the level of resource required to meet the learner's need.

Diagrams showing the admissions process can be found in Appendix 1 (parent initiated) or Appendix 2 (local authority initiated).

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, the Local Authority will need to name Ambitious College on an EHCP by 31 March for commencement of the academic year in September of the same year. Ambitious College assumes, by being named on an EHCP, that the Local Authority has agreed to fund the College place. A contract for services will follow approval.

Ambitious College reserves the right to delay commencement of the place until after the start of the academic year, should the Local Authority name Ambitious College on an EHCP or confirm funding of the place after the 31 March 2016.

From September 2016 all learners attending Ambitious College are required to have a finalised EHCP, so the study programme can be written to align with the outcomes in the EHCP.

4. Oversubscription criteria

The Oversubscription criteria will comply with the School Admissions Code (December 2014) and specifically paragraph 1.7 and 1.8.

If the College is oversubscribed, the priority for admission will be given to those young people who meet the criteria below:

Priority Category	Criteria
1	Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children (as defined in paragraph 1.7 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014)) ⁵
2	And thereafter, the full, half or step siblings who are twins or young people from a multiple birth of existing learners, living permanently at the same address.
3	And thereafter, the full, half or step siblings of existing learners living permanently at the same address.
4	And thereafter, the qualifying young people of staff who have sufficient service as defined under paragraph 1.39a of the School Admissions Code (December 2014).
5	And thereafter, the qualifying young people of staff who are recruited as defined under paragraph 1.39b of the School Admissions Code (December 2014).
6	And thereafter young people of UK service personnel as defined under paragraph 2.18 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014).
7	And thereafter young people as defined, under paragraph 1.39A of the School Admissions Code (December 2014), who are eligible for pupil premium.
8	And thereafter young people, as defined under paragraph 1.39A of the School Admissions Code (December 2014), who are eligible for service premium.
9	And thereafter young people who are twins or young people from a multiple birth.
10	Lastly, distance from the College campus site as defined by time using route planner software from home postcode to College campus postcode. We will use the postcode for the address where the young person is resident for the majority of the week (Monday to Friday).

⁵ Would not be applicable at 19 years when in adult services

Where two applications are equally ranked within an individual category (categories 1 to 10 above), a tie-break situation will occur. The tie-break priority will be decided on a combination of the individual category 1 to 9 and category 10, where the least distance will have the higher priority. Where the distance between the young person's home and the College is the same, a random allocation will be used as a tie break. This process will be independently verified.

5. Waiting list

A waiting list will be established if, during each College year, the College has reached the maximum number of places for a campus.

We maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list and will be in rank order in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

When a place becomes available, the relevant Local Authority will be notified.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, if any existing Learner is moving on from Ambitious College to a new destination, the Local Authority will need to name the new destination on the Learners EHCP by 31 March. Therefore after the 31 March, Ambitious College may be able to release additional places to those placed on the waiting list.

6. Appeal arrangements

Admission appeals will be considered by the Ambitious about Autism independent Appeals Panel and conducted in accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014).

7. Funding and Contracts

Ambitious College receives funding from the EFA and, as an approved post-16 institution, is included on the Secretary of State's list of eligible Colleges, in accordance with Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

EFA funding is provided, in line with the EFA 16 to 25 high needs funding principals, in two Elements:

Element 1 funding is provided to all qualifying placements⁶.

⁶ A qualifying placement is funded by the Education Department of the Local Authority, above the minimum annualised timetabled hours, commences before the date of the February statutory return and for the 2016-2017 Academic Year an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Element 2 is provided for a limited number of qualifying placements. The funding is not reserved for a specific learner or Local Authority. Ambitious College allocates the Element 2 funding on the basis of the date the Local Authority confirms, in writing, funding of the place. Where two places are confirmed by the Local Authority on the same date the time of receipt will also be taken into account. For this reason the College prefers for confirmations of funding to be sent by email.

Ambitious College will negotiate the additional (top-up) funding from the Local Authority commissioning a College place.

Ambitious College uses the 'National Schools and College Contract' with the Schedule 2 (shortform version) and the Schedule 4 (Arrangements for the Provision of Education, Health and Care in Colleges).

8. New pupil induction

When a place has been confirmed and the funding agreed by the local authority, we will:

- Send out a welcome pack which includes information and forms for the parent/carer/ learner to complete and return. The fully completed forms should be returned at least three weeks in advance of the start date.
- Allocate a College staff member to be the point of contact for parents/carers/learner.
- Agree a transition plan with all parties concerned.
- Create a 'One Page Profile'⁷ for the Learner.

⁷ Examples of Person Centred Practice and one page profile can be found at:
www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/one-page-profiles

9. Further information

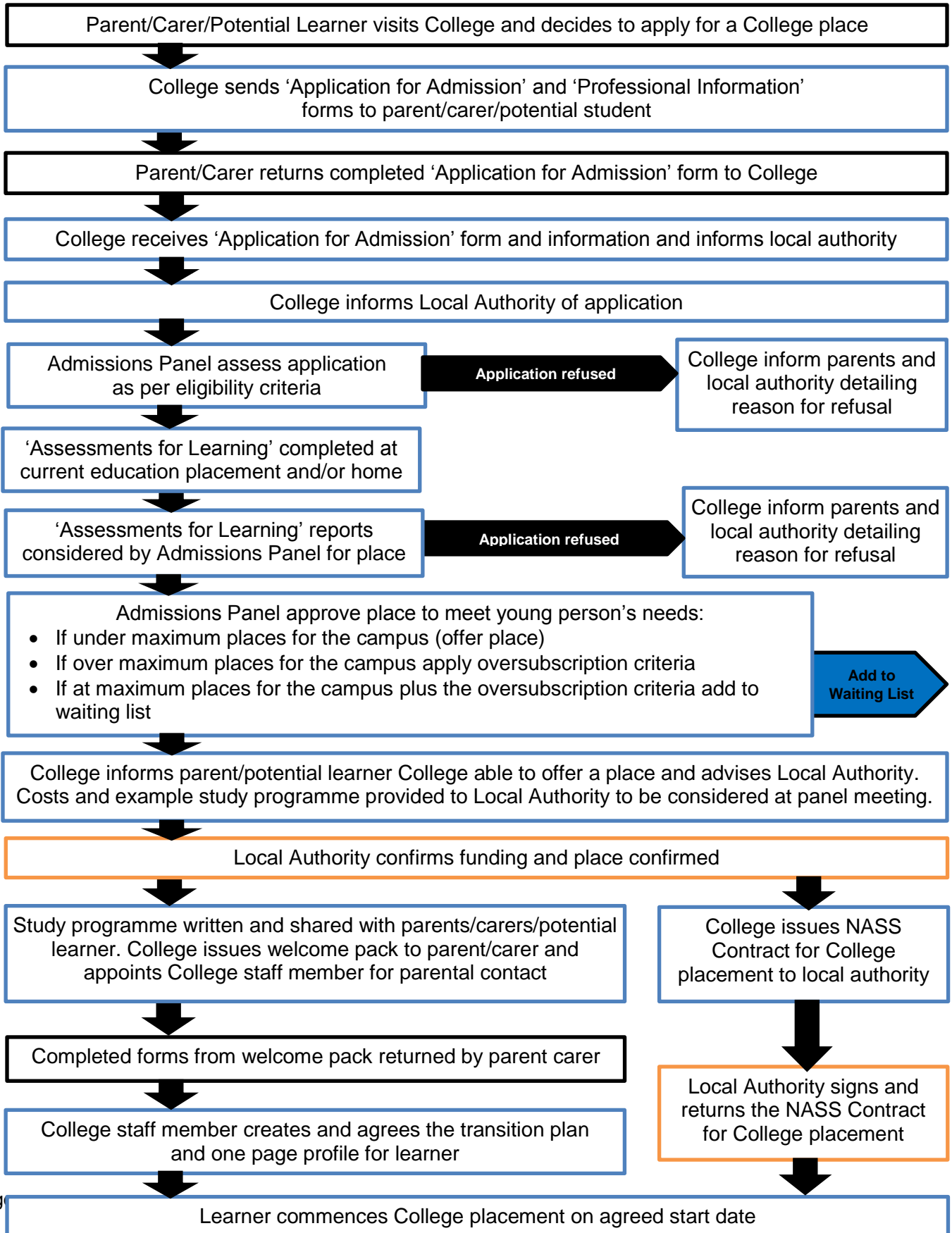
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Author	Date Written/Reviewed	Adopted by Gov Body on	Comments
Bernice Sargent	19/06/2015	June 2015	To be reviewed annually
Bernice Sargent	14/10/2015	November 2015	To be reviewed annually
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Appendix 1 Application Process (Parent initiated)



Appendix 2 Application Process (Local Authority initiated)

