

Spring School Admissions Policy September 2027

1. Purpose

This policy applies to Spring School which is a special free school and is part of the Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST). AaAST is a multi-academy trust that runs and supports the development of special schools to enable autistic children and young people to learn, thrive and achieve. AaAST schools are funded through Local Authority fees and voluntary income. Within the trust our collective vision is a future where every autistic child and young person can be themselves and realise their ambitions. Our mission is that we stand with autistic children and young people, champion their rights and create opportunities.

Spring School opened in September 2023. It is located within Kingston and will develop relationships with local services and Authorities.

Our admissions processes consider applications in light of our duties arising under the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Equality Act 2010. Admission to Spring School will be by way of the school being named within an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

To understand the cohort of children suitable for a school place, please visit [Prospectus | Spring School](#)

2. The Statutory guidance

The following statutory guidance shall be followed by Spring School:

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Policy statement

Spring School will admit autistic children and young people from age 4 to 19 with a primary diagnosis of autism spectrum condition (ASC). Additional diagnoses of either learning disabilities or medical conditions must be assessed on an individual basis, to determine whether the school will be able to meet the child's or young person's needs.

Funded Places in 2027-2028 capacity detailed below.

Total School Capacity:	57 pupils	
Primary maximum class group:	8 pupils	Reception (EYFS), Years 5-6 (Key stage 1-2)
Secondary maximum class group:	10 pupils	Years 7-11 (Key stage 3-4)

Spring School opened in September 2023 on a temporary site and will remain on that site until the Department for Education (DfE) completes the permanent building. When the permanent school is completed, Spring School plans to build its pupil cohort strategically over a 7-year period from the current capacity of 55 (at the temporary site) to 90 - 100.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Next Review Date:	Feb 2027
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	7.0

By arrangement with the Head of School places may be accessed in-year where space is available, depending upon the application of the admissions criteria and needs of the child/young person and other pupils.

As part of the process of finalising an EHC Plan, parents/carers have the right to request the Local Authority maintaining the plan to name their preferred choice of school (s 38 (2)(b) (ii) Children and Families Act (C and F Act)). Where Spring School is identified as a preference, the Local Authority will be required to consult with the Head of School (s 39 (2) C and F Act). The Local Authority is required to name the parent/carers preference unless it can show one of the following apply (s 39 (4) C and F Act):

- That the proposed placement is unsuitable to the age, ability, aptitude and SEN of the child/young person.
- Naming the proposed placement is incompatible with i) the efficient education of other children, and or ii) an efficient use of resources.

Each application to Spring School is considered on an individual basis. In every case our admissions process evaluates the needs of the individual child or young person. It determines whether the school can meet the special educational needs (SEN), provide the special education provision (SEP) and meet the outcomes in their EHC Plan with reference to the factors set out above in s 39 (4) of the C and F Act. Additionally, the following factors will be considered:

- Whether the school may need to provide additional support for a child or young person whose safety or that of others is unusually at risk. This would not necessarily prevent admission. The additional support would be determined by assessment with the cost of the placement adjusted accordingly.
- The distance from the school and the time of travel to school will be considered during the admissions process and any concerns reported.

Admissions Process

Parents/carers must be asked by their Local Authority to give their school preferences at the time a draft EHC plan is issued. Occasionally there may be other circumstances - whether parent/carer or Local Authority driven - when a new school place is sought. We encourage parents/carers to visit the school prior to making a request for a place at Spring School to their Local Authority. The details of these will be published on our website.

If following a visit, a parent/carer is interested in a place at the school, they must contact their Local Authority to ask them to consult¹ with us. Where Spring School is given as a preference by a parent/carer thereby initiating a consultation process, or where a consultation process is initiated by a Local Authority itself without parental knowledge, we will communicate the decision to the Local Authority and in most instances to the parent/carer unless otherwise advised.

4. Key Principles

If the School Admissions Panel agrees that Spring School can meet the special educational needs and provision of the child or young person, a school place is offered, and the costing provided to the Local Authority. The offer may contain other conditions which will need to be considered by the Local Authority concerned. We will communicate the decision to the Local Authority and in most instances to the parent/carer unless otherwise advised.

¹ This is a process whereby the Local Authority makes a formal request to ask whether Spring School can meet the SEN and SEP of a child or young person as set out in their EHC plan and whether a place at the school will be offered. As part of this process a Local Authority may send a number of documents pertaining to the child/young person including their EHC plan, annual review and reports from other professionals.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Next Review Date:	Feb 2027
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	7.0

The offer of a place is conditional upon funding being approved and confirmed by the relevant Local Authority. Where Spring School is named on an EHC Plan, Spring School will assume that the Local Authority has agreed to fund the place.

If after carefully considering an application, the School Admissions Panel feels it cannot meet the special educational needs and provision of the child/young person, or if admitting the child/young person would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, the parent/carer and local authority will be advised of the outcome.

Where offers of a school place are made these are **not reserved** until such time that a Local Authority notifies the school in writing that they agree to fund the place, and the school confirms a space is available. Conditional offers will **automatically lapse** after six weeks. To request that place does not lapse, either the relevant Local Authority or parents will need to contact the Admissions Team to ask for the conditional offer to remain open and must provide the reasons why. Prompt consideration will be given to this request. Once an offer is over three months old, the School Admissions Panel reserve the right to carry out a new assessment to confirm the conditional offer of a place. If the School becomes over capacity, it reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place. Should this occur the Local Authority and parent/carers will be notified as soon as possible.

The school reserves the right to delay commencement of a new placement where funding decisions are made by Local Authority after the statutory deadline set out in Regulation 18 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2015.

i) Funding

Our school receives funding from the Department for Education (DfE)

Funding is allocated based on the date that funding was agreed by the Local Authority and the admission date for the child or young person.

The level of funding required is detailed in the offer letter sent to the Local Authority. The school will negotiate the additional (top-up) funding from the Local Authority commissioning a place and these fees are paid by the Local Authority.

ii) Contracting

Our school uses the 'National Schools and College Contract' with the Schedule 2 (short form version) and the Schedule 6 for a variation due to General Data Protection Regulation for the contracting of placements together with the Schedule 1 (Arrangements for the Provision of Education, Health and Care in Schools)

In accordance with the DfE requirements, a contract signed by all parties must be in place prior to the commencement of the placement.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Applications to the school are processed by the Admissions Team and considered by our School Admissions Panel. The panel comprises:

- Executive Head Teacher
- Head of School
- Admissions Manager/members of the admissions team
- Any other professional staff required to support the admissions process

Responses to consultations for a school place are determined by:

- Consideration of the documentation received (i.e., draft or final EHC Plan, Annual Review reports, professional reports)

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Next Review Date:	Feb 2027
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	7.0

- Observing the child/young person in the current educational setting.
- If appropriate, observing the child/young person in some instances in 2 core sessions at Spring School where a decision cannot be made on the documentation alone.

In most cases there is no charge raised for the assessment. If the current education placement is a significant distance outside the Greater London area, requiring extended travel and a potential overnight stay, the school reserves the right to charge the Authority for costs incurred for the assessment using a 'best value' model for travel and subsistence, in line with our Staff Expenses Policy.

The school's Admissions Panel will thoroughly consider each application for a school place prior to making a response, and in all cases will comply with the 15-day requirement unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority.

6. Other Key Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following other policies, which can be found on the Spring School website, or requested:

- Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Policy
- Adult at Risk Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- Compliments and Complaints Policy

7. Further details found in Appendix A

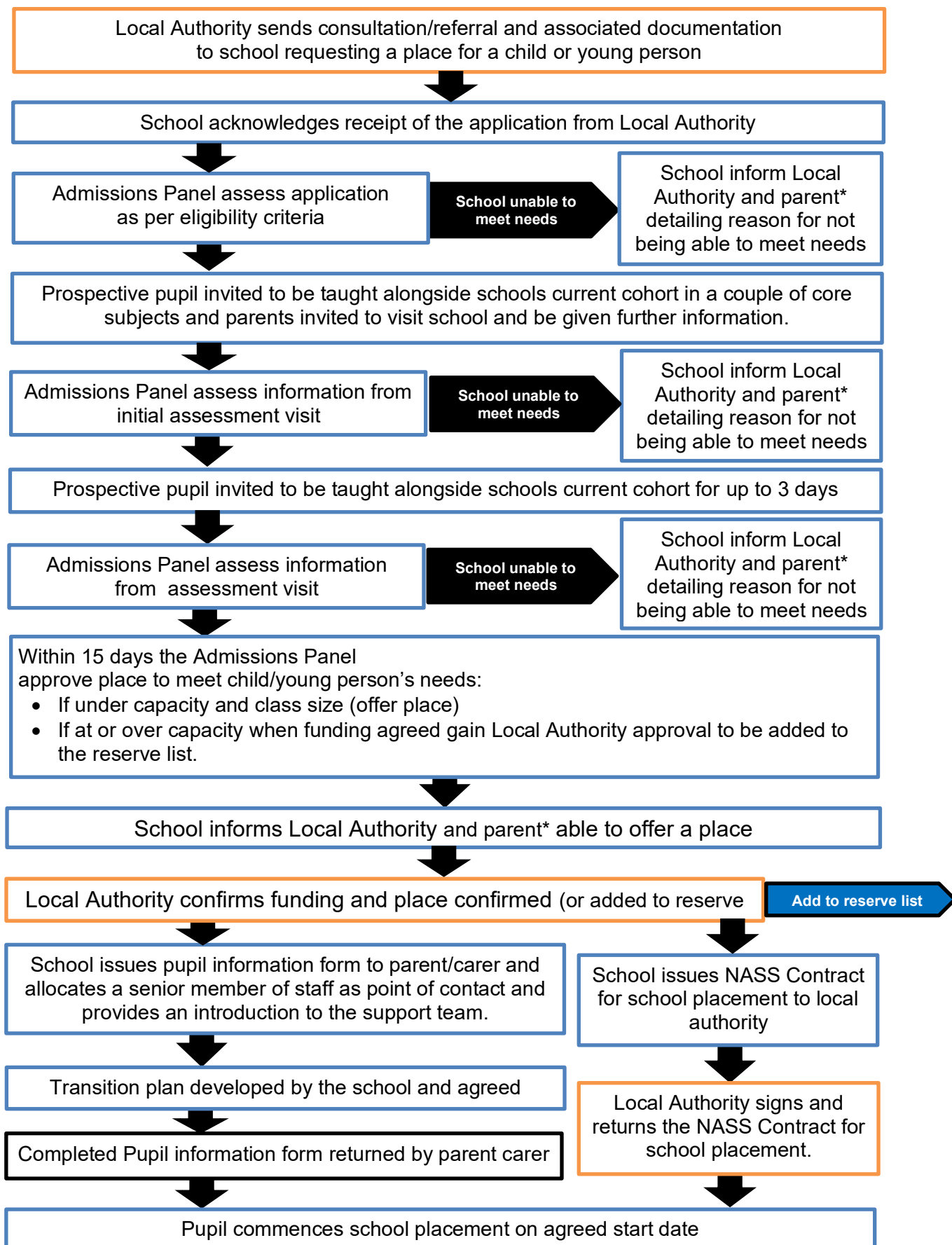
- The application process.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy shall be reviewed by the Director of Education and Care and approved by the Education and Care Committee on an annual basis.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Next Review Date:	Feb 2027
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	7.0

Appendix A: Application Process (Local Authority initiated)



* Where directed by the Local Authority a parent would not be informed.

Policy Owner	Director of Education	Next Review Date:	Feb 2027
Policy No.	102c	Version No.	7.0