The Wyvern School Admissions Policy

An agreed policy in partnership with Kent County Council.

Achieving excellence in a learning community valuing happiness, independence and respect.

Approved by: FBG		**Date:** July 2026
Last reviewed on:	March 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PUPILS CONSIDERED FOR ADMISSION

1.1 Designation

The Wyvern School is designated to meet the needs of pupils who experience Profound Severe and Complex (PSCN) learning needs. With the continuing advance of inclusion policies and the evolution of special education, this designation is becoming increasingly PSCN which is common for special schools in England and Wales. However, it is the view of HMI and DfE that such a designation, that typifies a broad mix of educational need, can only be successful where there is clarity and agreement in the necessary parameters of the school's framework for admission. This document is the establishment of this definition.

1.2 The Wyvern School's designation centres upon cognition and learning difficulties. Pupils admitted will therefore experience developmental delay and their attainment will reflect those learning and cognition difficulties. Poor attainment due to behaviour difficulties or absence from school would reflect a different underlying cause, the remediation of which lies outside of the school's core offer.

A pupils' progress within the National Curriculum will range from slow but discernible, to little discernible progress. Many will not attain National Curriculum levels but may well have the potential to achieve within pre key stage standards and/or engagement curriculum levels (or other markers of achievement within the engagement curriculum

PSCN Needs (KsENT definition)

Pupils will have Cognition and Learning as their identified main difficulty, though other needs may relate to all other three dimensions of need: Communication and Interaction; Physical Disabilities and Sensory needs.

Profound Needs
Cognition & Learning: Typically working at 0 -18 months' development stage.
Communication & Interaction: Rigid adherence to own agenda. Extremely low tolerance to change can lead to challenging behaviour that needs support. Easily distracted by various sensory stimulus. Interacts only for needs and desires. Disinhibited. Finds group situations difficult to tolerate. Will avoid/leave group or show challenging behaviour in group situation. Dependent on adults to interpret needs for daily life. Unable to interact without augmentative communication aides. Very limited communication, or pre-verbal, and requires support to communicate basic need. Communication limited to key words only and/or supplemented with visual cues. Adult prompts are needed to initiate. May have echoed responses. Communication and anxiety relayed through extreme behaviors such as attacking others by hair pulling, biting, thrashing out. Ritualistic behavior. No concept of sharing. May occasionally participate in chase games on own terms. Spends most of the time displaying specific behaviours that include hand-flapping, rocking, spinning, or repetition of words and phrases.
Physical and Sensory: Unable to carry out daily functions including toileting, feeding and mobility without adult support. Unstable health condition causing an unpredictability in the way the child's needs present. Has a degenerative condition. Healthcare plans in place. Profound sensory Impairment, e.g. Non-Verbal, profoundly deaf, blind or multi-sensory impairment and requires extremely specialised support, environment and resources/ communication aids. Profoundly disabled.

Severe Needs
Cognition & Learning: Typically working at pre-Key Stage 1 standards. Global delay. Profiles can be uneven
Communication & Interaction: Resistant, challenging behaviour at times of transition. Significantly, challenging behaviour needs time and space. Can self-injure, e.g. biting hand/arm when anxious about next steps. Often requires physical interventions to maintain safety. Only forms relationships with highly familiar people who know the student and his/her needs well. Beginning to tolerate a group in structured familiar situations. Poor/ limited awareness of being part of a group. Attempts to communicate

but uses limited range of successful strategies, uses stereotypical routines, repetitive formats. Misinterprets non-verbal communication e.g. watches adult faces with interest without feeling. Discrepancy between comprehension and expression. Understands a limited range of key words/phrases in context. Some play routines, limited repertoire e.g. plays same story/game in same way every time. Resists sharing and turn taking, can tolerate confident adult guidance cues to teach sharing. Fixated behaviour in related to a specific stimuli or interest.
Sensory and Physical: Severely limited ability to carry out daily personal needs e.g. feeding, mobility. Controlled health condition although changes to the medical regime can have an impact. Healthcare plans in place. Severe impairment with speech, hearing or visual. Severely disabled.

Moderate and Complex Needs
Cognition & Learning: Typically working at pre-Key Stage 1 standards. Profiles may be uneven.
Communication and Interaction: Typically significant language delay or disorder. May be non- verbal and using Alternative Augmentative Communication system.
Physical and Sensory: Some ability with personal independence skills. Well-controlled health condition rarely presents a significant barrier. Healthcare plans in place.
Moderate HI and/or VI. Moderately disabled.

Admission Guidance
Admission into Early Years: 2 years behind their chronological age
Admission into Key Stage 1: Below pre -Key Stage 1 standards
Admission into Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 & 4): Below or at pre-Key Stage 1 standards.
Admission into Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 & 6): Below or at pre-Key Stage 2 standards.
Admission into Key Stage 3: Below or at pre-Key Stage 2 standards.
Admission into Key Stage 4: Below or at pre-Key Stage 2 standards.

2. CHARACTERISTICS NOT NORMALLY CONSIDERED FOR ADMISSION

2.1 Pupils who fall outside the school's designation to provide for learning difficulties would be inappropriately placed at The Wyvern School. Such pupils may:

(a) Exhibit patterns of behaviour, as their presenting and primary need which would put the safety and security of pupils and others, at risk

(b) Have needs that are “incompatible with the interests of other children already in the school”

(c) Demonstrate Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as a first presenting need, which may in turn, affect their educational progress and acquisition of basic skills as a secondary and subsequent factor

(d) Not have their needs met at the current school

(e) Require styles of intervention to manage their behaviour that would negatively impact on the well being of the other, more vulnerable children and young people.

3. ADMISSIONS

3.1 The following factors (which are not in a priority order) will be taken into account to determine admissions and will be used by the school to consider representations made by LEA officers to prioritise admissions in the event of over-subscription:

a) Pre Provisions Advisory team information and advice.

b) Referral for admission by the local Consortium of Schools Provision Advisory Team or SEN Department (or Local Learning Group) or subsequent revision of SEN decision-making processes made by Kent County Council Education and Libraries.

c) Parental preference - expressed in statutory assessment or annual review

d) The pupil has an EHCP where the described needs of the pupil fall into the characteristics of pupils considered for admission (above)

e) The curriculum of the school can meet **all** the needs in the EHCP

f) Established arrangements with the local health trust or social services department ensure that **all** non-educational needs can be met through such arrangements.

g) A vacancy. Determined by availability within:

- Overall capacity of school
- Overall capacity of phase (accommodation limit)
- Class grouping (broadly determined by NC Year and Pathway)
- Appropriate peer group

h) Nearness and ease of access - allied to nearest appropriate school, wherever feasible and The Wyvern School's role as a District resource

i) The school's preference to place children within their local community (which serves the need to re-integrate pupils into their local mainstream school)

j) Appropriate observation and assessment has taken place.

4. GUIDANCE FOR NORMAL TRANSFER & ADMISSION DATES

4.1 Pupils will normally only be admitted at the beginning of each academic term and preferably at the beginning of the academic year. The following notes for each Key Stage include other factors that might influence admissions.

4.2 <u>Key Stage 1 & 2</u>

Pupils will normally be admitted at the beginning of term (as appropriate)

Applications for admission, which are received for other times, will most usually be allowed if the pupil is moving from another authority/area of Kent and is already in similar provision elsewhere, all the admission criteria are met, and the pupil would be without a school place if refused admission.

4.3 Key Stage 3

Existing Wyvern School pupils will have completed an annual review in year 6 to determine if The Wyvern School continues to be the appropriate placement. Some pupils may seek admission at alternative provision for year 7 thus creating a vacancy at The Wyvern School.

Applications for admission to year 7 from pupils not already at The Wyvern School will be considered within the same timescales as mainstream primary to secondary transfer.

Applications for admission after the beginning of year 7 will be conducted in the same way as Key Stage 1 & 2 admissions.

4.4 Key Stage 4

Existing Wyvern School pupils will have completed a transition review in year 9 to determine if The Wyvern School continues to be the appropriate placement. Some pupils may seek admission at alternative provision for year 10 thus creating a vacancy at The Wyvern School. These decisions will precede consideration of applications from outside.

Applications for admissions from pupils not already at The Wyvern School will be considered for the beginning of year 10 following the completion of the pupil's transition. Effective admission to Key Stage 4 will only happen if the admission process has begun by the pupil's second term in Year 9. This is essential if pupils are to engage effectively in the two year, externally accredited courses that form the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

4.5 Sixth Form (16-19 years)

Following:

- careers interviews
- transition review
- transition plan

Discussions will take place about the range of options available. Post 16 pupils and parents/carers will apply for places within the 16-19 facility.

This process requires The Wyvern School receiving copies of all relevant Transitional Plans from mainstream schools.

4.6 The Wyvern Satellite Provisions

Key Stage Two- Great Chart Primary School
Key Stage Three, Four and Five- The Towers School

Reason for criteria	Making sure that the students who are placed in the satellite classes gain the most from this opportunity is vital; therefore, having a clear set of criteria to form the basic requirement is necessary to identify the most appropriate students.

Aim	To be able to actively access some of the inclusion opportunities available within the mainstream setting. The satellite provisions have been set up to bridge the gap between SEND and mainstream education as a collaboration between The Wyvern, Great Chart Primary and The Towers Secondary School.
Communication skills	The student will be able to effectively communicate their likes, wants and needs to a range of adults with confidence and without prompting. They will be able to listen and comprehend to a range of learning at a higher ability level than that of our CLICK students at the main site.
Attention skills	The pace of learning is a step above the learning that happens in our CLICK classes at the main site, therefore the ability to be motivated to learn and actively engage in the lessons is paramount. The student will be able to access lessons taught by Wyvern Staff as well as some sessions taught by staff in the mainstream settings. Their ability to focus for longer lengths of time than the expectation of a CLICK student at our main site is necessary to access these lessons.
Social skills and play skills	The student will be able to work alongside others as well as having the ability to work in pairs or groups. They will be able to communicate with adults and their peers. They will be able to cope with changing staff. The student will be able to access outside break-times alongside their mainstream peers as well as sharing a lunch hall for eating. The student must be able to play with their peers as opposed to alongside them. Their ability to express their feelings and cope with negative emotions is vital. They must also be able to have a level of impulse control and be aware of any risks or potential dangers around them.
Academic ability	Great Chart Primary satellite- Year 1 framework for Maths and English. The Towers Secondary satellite- Year 2 framework for Maths and English. The student will have a good comprehension of the world around them. The student will be able to follow a series of instructions during a non-preferred activity as well as tasks they find motivating.
Inclusion	With support, all students should be able to access some part of the mainstream provision. This can be worked towards during their first 6 months of admission.
Number of places	The number of places at the Great Chart Primary satellite are limited to 12 and both classes at The Towers Secondary satellite are for no more than 16 students in each class.
Discretion	Reasonable adjustments will be made for individual students regarding physical disabilities affecting daily routines such as their toileting, feeding and dressing capability.
Decision made by	The ultimate decision for which student is in any class at The Wyvern School, will remain a judgement by the Head Teacher of The Wyvern School.

6. APPEALS AGAINST A DECISION NOT TO ADMIT

6.1 Admissions are considered, in the first instance, by the school's Admissions Panel (internal). The Local Authority placements team will then decide placement. A school is then named in the EHCP.

6.2 Appeals to change the named school must go through the Local Authority. Parents may appeal to the SEN Tribunal (see the revised Code of Practice for procedure).

7. EFFECTIVE ADMISSIONS

7.1 The following will usually assist effective decision-making:

- Referral from the local authority
- Analysis of match to admissions criteria
- Visit to referring school
- Review of available documentation
- Meeting with parent/child
- Verification of curriculum suitability by key stage coordinator
- Suitability and availability of non-educational provision - social services, Health Trust personnel
- Inclusion planning, dual placement, short term and long term placement and provision
- Early involvement or knowledge of the child

7.2 **Induction Procedure**

Between the Senior Leadership Team's decision to offer a place and the pupil's admission at the beginning of the next term, the following induction activities may be provided:

- Taster day for pupil
- Period of observation and assessment
- Meeting for parent and pupil with teacher

7.3 There may be exceptional circumstances where a pupil does not fully meet the admissions criteria but may be considered for placement with parental consent and no more appropriate school available, or for a fixed period of observation and assessment that may contribute to a later, more informed decision.