



Policy Name	ADMISSIONS
Relevant To	Federation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bidwell Brook Only <input type="checkbox"/> Ellen Tinkham Only <input type="checkbox"/>
Type of Policy	Model <input type="checkbox"/> School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of Policy Holder	Nikki Burroughs
Subject/Department	Admissions
Approved By	Full Governing Body <input type="checkbox"/> CBT Governors <input type="checkbox"/> T&L Governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/>
Version Date (if applicable)	n/a
Date of Last Review	Autumn Term 2024
Date of Next Review	Autumn Term 2025

Bidwell Brook and Ellen Tinkham Schools are part of the Learn to Live Federation. Both are maintained special schools for which Devon is the admitting authority. Admission to these Federation schools is contingent upon the successful completion of a statutory assessment of Special Educational Needs (SEN), leading to the issuance of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) by a relevant Local Authority.

Both Bidwell Brook and Ellen Tinkham Schools provide tailored educational provisions designed to meet the needs of pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties or Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, as specified in their EHCP.

Pupils may present with various characteristics, including but not limited to:

- Severe communication impairment;
- Complex physical and/or sensory impairment;
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder;
- Complex health difficulties that may be life-limiting;
- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder;
- Obsessive/compulsive behaviours.

These schools accommodate pupils aged between 3 and 19 years. Bidwell Brook has an official admission number of 140 pupils, while Ellen Tinkham has an official admission number of 220 pupils. These figures represent the distribution of students across all year groups, from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to the Sixth Form.

The Learn to Live Federation, comprising both schools, is eager to welcome all new pupils and their families. The Federation prioritises several key objectives to ensure a smooth transition:

- Parents / carers should feel content with the chosen placement and induction process;
- Children should have a positive introduction to the school environment;
- The school must be confident in its ability to meet each child's specific needs.

Federation schools collaborate closely with the Local Authority concerning potential admissions. Each child or young person admitted to the school will possess an EHCP through which the Devon SEN Statutory Team will articulate the provisions required for each pupil. This collaborative approach ensures that education, health, and care services work in unison to meet the individual needs of the pupil, ultimately supporting the achievement of agreed outcomes.

The admissions policy of our school is designed to ensure that we cater to the specific needs of each pupil while adhering to the established regulations and guidelines. Admissions will be granted under the following circumstances:

- Pupils will be admitted if they possess an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), or in exceptional situations where a Statutory Assessment is ongoing and the pupil has been referred by the Local Authority;
- The school must be equipped to meet the child's academic, social, and medical needs effectively;
- We will respect our legal responsibilities, including the SEN Code of Practice, GDPR, data protection laws, and the relevant constraints outlined by the Local Authority, such as Admissions Criteria and County Transport Policy;
- Admissions are subject to careful evaluation of referral documentation by the Head of Site, along with the appropriate teaching staff and governors, contingent upon the availability of spaces within our agreed capacity, as designated by the Local Authority.

All pupils are enrolled through the Local Authority, and places may be allocated at any point during the academic year, provided availability permits. The Governing Body is legally mandated to adhere to Local Authority decisions regarding individual applications and to operate within the Local Authority's admission arrangements.

It is important to note that the school does not accommodate children whose cognitive abilities fall within the average range and whose primary needs are centred on emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The admission process is structured as follows:

- It will be transparently communicated to prospective parents and carers, offering opportunities for informal and formal visits to facilitate informed decision-making;
- The process shall be approached with sensitivity, taking into account the needs of the pupil and their family;
- We aim to establish a collaborative partnership with parents and carers, clarifying mutual expectations;
- Ongoing dialogue will be encouraged through home visits and induction meetings, fostering a supportive environment for parents and carers to engage as confident partners in their child's education;
- Consideration will be given to the needs of other pupils within the class and the resources available;
- Close collaboration will be maintained with feeder schools, nurseries, and playgroups where appropriate, alongside liaison with external agencies involved with the pupil, such as Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Educational Psychology (EP), Social Care, Occupational Therapy (OT), and Outreach services when necessary.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Prior to placement being confirmed

- Parents / carers are encouraged to make an informal visit to the school. Parents / carers may visit the school without their child at this stage. They may be accompanied by a key professional or a friend. Open Mornings will be held to provide all parents / carers with the opportunity to visit the school;
- Parents / carers may wish to indicate their views of one of our schools as a suitable placement;
- EHCP's go to the Moderation Panel, led by the Special Educational Needs 0-25 Team. Prospective pupils EHCP Plans are sent to the school for consultation. The Governors have delegated responsibility to the Executive Head and Senior Leadership Team Admissions Group;
- Upon the receipt of the consultation papers the Senior Leadership Team Admission Group looks carefully on whether or not the school can fully and effectively meet the child's needs. Consideration is given not only to the child's own needs but also to the needs of others in the school and the potential impact upon them. The school aims not to exclude and so it is necessary to ensure that the school will be able to adapt to meet the child's changing needs;
- After consideration of the papers in consultation with appropriate staff, our Admission Team will agree the place is appropriate and confirm place to the Local Authority.

Or

Notify the Local Authority that they feel unable to meet the pupil's needs with clear reasons for this action;

Or

Say yes “in principle” but state that a place is currently unavailable at that time.

There is an expectation to respond to the Special Educational Needs 0-25 Team within 15 days with the school’s response to the consultation.

Following Confirmation of Placement

The Local Authority makes the decision to offer a place at the school. When this has been confirmed, the admissions process is as follows:

- Class identified;
- Lead for Admissions makes contact with the family - our school and the child’s current nursery / school setting will establish a liaison programme. The purpose is to share appropriate information about the child and work towards a smooth transition. It will be needs led and on an individual basis;
- Home visit offered, from multi-disciplinary team;
- Transport arrangements to be confirmed with parents and applications made to Local Authority;
- Admissions pack sent and completed by the family;
- In the weeks leading up to Reception children starting school, Reception class staff may carry out Home Visits in conjunction with parents / carers wishes. This will facilitate the completion of admission papers, medical plans and other issues for the individual child;
- Prior to starting, welcome letter sent to parents;
- Year R children will follow an Induction programme during the first half term. This will be planned in conjunction with parents / carers and be determined by the needs of the individual child. The child will initially attend on a part-time basis working towards full-time attendance usually by the end of the first half-term;
- Children above year R will generally start school full time from entry;
- For new children beyond Reception year, there will be opportunities to facilitate a visit to the school for the child if appropriate. This may be with school staff / parents / carer.

Once the Child has Started School

Pupils will have full-time places. Parents of younger children may prefer to agree a staged move towards full-time attendance. They will need to be in full-time attendance the term after their fifth birthday.

- Opportunities for close liaison between home and school will be maintained via the Home:School Diary;
- Liaison between home / school may also be via telephone or by making a time to meet with school staff and parents / carers in school;
- Each term there will be a Parents’ Evening to enable parents / carers and teachers to meet and discuss the child’s progress;
- An Annual Review is held within 12 months of the Education, Health & Care Plan being issued and thereafter annually;
- Parents’ “open” mornings are held at least termly during term time.