



Springwell Alternative Academy Admissions Policy

Introductory statement

Springwell Alternative Academy is the term used to describe the Wellspring Academy Trust's Alternative Provision in Barnsley. The academy is a dispersed provision based on a number of sites across the borough of Barnsley. Some of these sites are co-located with Barnsley secondary schools/academies and also Springwell Special Academy.

Springwell Alternative Academy provide a caring, nurturing and developmental environment for young people who have been excluded from or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. After receiving our support over a period of time, we will ensure that individuals move on to their next destination having felt known, valued and understood.

The aim of Springwell Alternative Academy is to re-engage its students into education and progression to employment, training or further education.

Students supported by the school

Springwell Alternative Academy has a core purpose to deliver education programmes to challenging or vulnerable children and young people who are not in school for a variety of reasons;

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded from school
- Children and young people who are at risk of permanent exclusion from school.
- Children who are anxious and/or school phobic but do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Number of places available

Springwell Alternative Academy will provide education for up to 99 places commissioned by Barnsley LA.

Key Stage 1: 4
Key Stage 2: 10
Key Stage 3: 10
Key Stage 4: 50
6th Day: 20
Specialist Highfields: 5 (to be reviewed)

Total: 99

The school operates a maximum class size of 10 pupils (where appropriate) in order that the educational provision is effective and safe.

Springwell Alternative Academy will use best endeavour to provide additional placements, over the planned places, in the final part of the school year*. This is in recognition that the academy will not be full in September. These 'extra' places will be provided at no additional charge to the commissioners due to the academy being funded as full in September although not at full capacity. Any additional places will only be provided if they do not incur additional resourcing costs.

**Demand for places increases during the year and is at a peak between Easter and June before year 11 leavers release places again.*

Additional commissioned places may be available through negotiation with commissioning bodies and Springwell Alternative Academy. Springwell Alternative Academy is not a designated Post 16 provider. We will end our intake at Year 11.

In considering the school's position prior to responding to the local authority, the school will take account of the planned class size, year group numbers and learning area into which the child would be placed. The academy's position is that the maximum class size and Key Stage size is set out in this policy and numbers in excess of that maximum should be grounds for incompatibility within the provision of efficient education as it would run contrary to the model of educational provision which works effectively within the academy.

Referral arrangements

All referrals for the LA commissioned places must be done via the Fair Access Protocol:

Who can refer:

Schools/Academies in line with the LA Fair Access Protocol

For exceptional cases, the local authority will agree on admission directly with Springwell (see 3 below).

How to refer:

1. Permanent Exclusion: Complete the permanent exclusion form contained in Summary of Guidance on Exclusions – fully completed forms with supporting evidence must be in place. Incomplete forms or lack of supporting documentation will trigger the forms and referral being returned. There is an expectation that the Headteacher or representative of the excluding school makes contact immediately with the Springwell Learning Community to inform of their decision to permanently exclude. The exclusion form or equivalent must be with Springwell Learning Community by the date of the Permanent Exclusion.

2. Children at risk of permanent exclusion: Schools follow the Fair Access Protocol agreed through the Barnsley Local Authority and Springwell Learning Community. Referral forms should be completed and submitted to Springwell Learning Community by the agreed deadlines laid down in the protocol.

3. Exceptional cases: Where pupils who are not attending mainstream school and for whom a mainstream place is not appropriate the local authority can place directly with Springwell Alternative Academy.

4. Looked After Children: Children who are looked after by the local authority may be placed in Springwell Alternative Academy without following the Fair Access Protocol. These placements will be arranged directly between the LA and Springwell.

Additional places not covered by the Local Authority commission:

Who can refer:

In negotiation directly with Springwell, schools and academies can commission places for full or part year provision. These places are only available if capacity allows, above the LA commissioned places and do not negatively impact on the delivery of those pre-commissioned places.

Pupils leaving the academy

Placements at the academy can be ended in several ways:

1. **Reintegration via Fair Access Protocol:** Springwell will refer those pupils it deems appropriate for reintegration. The Fair Access Protocol will determine the destination school/academy.
2. **Return to host school:** For those pupils on a temporary placement and dual registration, pupils will return to school at a time agreed between Springwell and the school.
3. **Post 16 progression:** Pupils finishing Year 11 in Springwell Alternative Academy will be supported into further education, employment and training.
4. **Pupils moving out of authority:** Springwell will follow the Children Missing Education process to ensure any pupils leaving the local authority are placed safely and timely in another appropriate educational setting.

Registration arrangements

Except for Permanent Exclusions and exceptional cases, the Fair Access Protocol will determine the registration of each referred pupil. Those pupils who are permanently excluded or exceptional cases will automatically be placed on the roll of Springwell Alternative Academy. All other pupils roll will be determined by the Fair Access process and depend on individual circumstances.

Where students are on the roll of another school and attend for a short period of time the student will be dual registered.

Commissioning process

Local Authority commissioners

Barnsley Local Authority (LA) is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils (*unless... For reasons relating to the physical or mental health of the child, a reduced level of education would be in the child's best interests.* (Section 10.39 SEN Code of Practice).

The LA commissions Springwell Alternative Academy to enable it to fulfil this legal duty.

When the commissioner is a local authority, it will be purchasing places at the academy. A contract agreement will be negotiated and drawn up to provide a number of places under an agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA). This SLA will set out the obligations of the academy, the commissioning authority and the child's host school so that all parties are clear about: what will be delivered; how; when; at what price; the responsibilities of the parties to the agreement to maintain the highest level of support to the child; and what monitoring arrangements will be agreed to review the contract performance.

School and academy commissioners

The academy will also provide similar contracting procedures for individual schools and academies. This will be a local service level agreement arranged with the school or academy to provide alternative provision according to need. This will be bespoke in order to provide personalised programmes of alternative provision.

Funding

Each full-time equivalent place in Springwell Alternative Academy will attract base funding of £10,000 per place. This money is paid directly to the Wellspring Academy trust from the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

Commissioners (schools, academies and local authorities) will provide top-up funding above this base level to cover the total cost of provision. This top-up funding is based upon the pupil's assessed needs and the cost of meeting those needs in the academy.

Top-up funding;

- Top-up funding is paid by the local authority or other school or academy that commissions the place. For local authority places this funding will come from the High Needs Block.
- For places commissioned by schools, the school pay an agreed top-up funding for the individual pupil, either from its delegated budget share, or from funds devolved to schools, in a fair and transparent way.
- Top-up funding rates are determined fairly and reviewed regularly.

Top-up funding is agreed with the commissioner on an annual basis and paid in full at the start of the academic year.

Criteria to be applied in respect of other pupils when oversubscribed.

The following oversubscription criteria will apply when there are more referrals than places available in order of priority:

(1) Children who are permanently excluded prioritised in the following order:

- a. Children who are looked after by a local authority
- b. Other permanently excluded children.

(2) Children referred under the exceptional cases procedure prioritised in the following order:

- a. Children who are looked after by a local authority
- b. Other children referred as an exceptional case.

(3) Children referred via Fair Access Protocol who are not permanently excluded:

- a. Children who are looked after by a local authority
- b. Other children referred

Where, after applying the above criteria in order, two or more referrals are tied for the last available place the commissioner will decide which child should be admitted.

Offers

Offers of places are made in line with agreed protocol from commissioning bodies.

Referrals will be accepted unless the following apply, the commissioner fails to fund the place, or the academy is full.

Procedure following an offer

Springwell will follow a timely admissions process working with all stakeholders to cause as little disruption to educational provision as possible.

Appeals against any refusal to accept a referral

Wherever a referral is refused, the commissioner can submit an appeal to the Wellspring Academy Trust at info@wellspringacademies.org.uk. Any appeals will be heard within 15 working days.

Complaints

Any objections to this policy or its application should be raised with Wellspring Academy Trust.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, they are able to complain to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) at Academy.QUESTIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Equal Opportunities

The academy is committed to equal opportunities and admits students across the full spectrum of academic abilities. All students have equal access to the curriculum and there is a learning support programme for students with special needs.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be published on the school's website before the end of the preceding September. The policy will remain on the website throughout the school year.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's other policies published on the academy website.