



Admission and Transition Policy

St Nicholas School is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School with Gold Status and promotes rights respecting values in all its policies



The Governing Body of St Nicholas School formally adopted

this Policy on July 2024

It will be reviewed July 2026 unless otherwise advised

Signed _____

Head Teacher

Signed _____

Chair of Governors

Our practice will reflect the Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote race Equality (Race Relations Amendment Act 2000) and equality of opportunity and good race relations across all areas of school activity. Promoting equality is central to the ethos of St Nicholas School. Our practice will also reflect the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Criteria for Admission to St Nicholas School

- St Nicholas School caters for primary age children with Moderate Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties, Complex Needs, Autism and Speech and Language Needs from age 4 (Reception) to 11 (Year 6) years of age. Admission to St Nicholas will be subject to the child having an Education Health and Care Plan (or one in process) and a suitable place being available to meet the needs of the child.
- Following identification of their special needs and learning difficulties through the formal assessment procedure, the majority of pupils will start in Reception when they reach statutory school age.
- A small number of children will be mid-year starters meaning they can start in Years 1-6. They attend St Nicholas following an Annual Review process in their current setting which identifies that the school is no longer able to meet their needs and Croydon LA have agreed to place the child at St Nicholas.
- Careful consideration will be given when an older child is referred to St Nicholas e.g. year 5 or above, due to the time needed to settle prior to transition to a school for secondary aged students.

Admission Procedures

A change of environment for a child with SEN can be extremely unsettling for both the child and family. It is therefore, imperative to plan any admission or transition carefully with parents and other professionals involved. Sufficient time must be allowed for the child to become gradually familiar with their new environment.

Admission of a pre-school child

1. Parents are invited to look around the school before they make a decision about which school they would prefer. This allows parents to make an informed choice when applying for Reception places and means that St Nicholas can be named on the EHCP.
2. During the visit, parents will be shown around by a member of the leadership team. They will be able to observe children working in classrooms. Time will be spent discussing the curriculum, assessment procedures, how individual programmes are devised and how parents are kept informed of their child's progress. They will also be shown the specialist rooms and outside spaces. Parents are encouraged to ask questions.
3. Currently the local authority uses the ECHP or assessment process to place children in Specialist provision. Pre-school or Nursery provision will write the EHCP in the child's pre-Reception year. The Local Authority will then hold an EYFS admissions panel meeting to make the final decision on admissions to St Nicholas for the following September. The Head, Deputy Head, lead for EYFS and SaLT lead are involved in this process and children may be seen in their pre-school setting if more information is needed. The Local Authority will inform parents of this decision

4. Once parents have accepted a place for their child, an appointment will be made with the school nurse to obtain any medical history so that care plans and training can be put in places. New parents and their children will be invited to some Stay and Play sessions in the first few weeks of the Autumn term.
5. A new child starting in Reception classes will be full time from the third week of the academic year. Children in years 1-6 will have a phased start personalised to their needs.
6. The class teacher will arrange to meet parents during the first weeks of September, or prior to the child starting school, to exchange information about the child and answer any questions that parents may have.

Transfer from a special or mainstream primary school

1. Parents will be invited to visit the school and to discuss the suitability of the placement.
2. A member of SLT will arrange to visit the school to observe the child and to discuss his/her educational needs with staff. St Nicholas School will also invite the child in for a trial session at St Nicholas School.
3. Once a place has been allocated, a visit to St Nicholas will be organised to introduce the child to their new school.
4. Teachers and therapists from both schools will liaise regarding the needs of the pupil.
5. Transition Social Stories will be created, including photos of relevant staff and the school building, to support the transition process.
6. Any medical needs the child may have been discussed to establish a medical/health profile of the child and the nurse and therapists will contact the child's previous school to obtain further medical information and records.
7. The class teacher will arrange a meeting with the parent once the child has started to exchange information about the child.

Transfer from St Nicholas to another primary special school or mainstream school

1. The teacher and a member of SLT will discuss this with the parents at the Annual Review meeting the child's progress and current needs and identify the reasons for a proposed move to another school, which could meet the child's needs better. The Educational Psychologist may carry out a further assessment on the child. Parents will be advised to visit the proposed school or schools of their choice.
2. The Head will discuss with the appropriate special school or mainstream school, to which the child may transfer, to invite a member of staff from the proposed school to observe the child at St Nicholas.
3. The child will be put forward to be discussed at a Croydon LA SEN admissions panel meeting. Parents will be informed of the outcome by the LA.
4. Once a child has been allocated a place, St Nicholas will endeavour to arrange at least one transition visit.

Transition within school

When a child transfers to a different class within the school, usually at the beginning of the academic year, staff, children and parents are prepared in the following way:

1. Proposed classes are discussed and organised by the SLT and then presented at a meeting to teachers. There may be some changes to classes at this stage. The SLT will finalise classes following this meeting.
2. Parents are informed about class changes in writing at the end of the summer term.
3. Parents are invited to attend a virtual meeting with their child's new class teacher at the start of the Autumn Term
4. Staff meet with each other during July to share information about new children coming into their classes in September and arrange to spend time observing children in their current classes.
5. Therapists will also liaise with staff regarding the therapy needs and programmes of children transferring into their class.
6. Transition social stories, including photos of classroom staff will be sent home at the end of the summer term for families to share, in preparation for the new school year.

Transfer to a special secondary school

At the end of Year 6, pupils transfer to a secondary phases school to complete their education which continue until they are nineteen years of age.

Croydon has four secondary schools which provide education for pupils with SEN. These are Bensham Manor, Priory, Beckmead Family of Schools and Addington Valley Academy. However, parents may also wish to consider other placements and schools in other local authorities.

Parents and pupils are prepared for the move to secondary school in the following way:

1. Parents/carers of pupils in Year 4 and 5 – Parents are invited to a coffee morning where the transition process is explained and parents have the opportunity to discuss any questions or anxieties they may have. A representative from SEN secondary schools will be invited to attend the meeting. This will be further discussed at the Annual Review Meeting.
2. Transfer to secondary school is initially discussed with parents at the Year 5 Annual Review meeting and followed up at the Year 6 Annual Review. A preferred secondary school placement is recorded at the Year 5 review meeting and this information is sent to the LA SEN Case Manager.
3. Parents are encouraged to attend open mornings of secondary schools and/or make appointments to view schools which parents feel would meet their child's needs.
4. In the summer term of year 5 parents will receive communication from the Local Authority containing a Secondary School transfer application form where parents will name their preferred school(s). The deadline for applications will be identified on the form.
5. During the autumn term, SLT will liaise with relevant staff at prospective secondary schools to discuss needs of the Year 6 children. Senior staff from the prospective schools are invited into St Nicholas to observe Year 6 children and discuss their needs and whether they can be met.
6. The LA admissions panel meetings for secondary transfers are held during the spring term for Year 6 pupils and parents should be informed of the outcome by the LA by the end of February. Once a placement is confirmed our transition process begins.

The transition process:

- Pupils transferring to either Bensham Manor, Priory School or Addington Valley Academy will visit during the summer term. The initial visit will consist of a tour of the school and some time spent exploring the classrooms and playground
- Pupils will have another visit where they will join some lessons such as PE, Music and Art. Pupils will be accompanied by familiar adults from St Nicholas School.
- Parents will be informed about the transition programme and are kept informed about how their child is responding to the change throughout this preparation time.
- Information, attainment data and , safeguarding behaviour support is transferred between St Nicholas and respective schools at the end of the summer term.
- Social Stories are prepared for each child and shared during the summer term. These are sent home over the summer holiday for parents to continue to use.

Pupils that will be attending other secondary schools, both in and out of Croydon borough, will be supported to engage in the individual schools' transition programme. Parents will be advised of what these involve once information becomes available.

As part of the transfer to secondary school, the transitions teams from both schools invite parents/carers to an individual 'family and professionals' meeting to gather information from families and professionals. This meeting is an opportunity for parents to meet education and therapy teams from their child's new school, and to address any queries they may have. Other professionals who may be involved with the child such as the current teacher, School Nursing Team and representative from Social Care are also invited. These meetings are either held at St Nicholas School or at the child's new school.