

Admissions Policy 2026 - 2027

1 Purpose

This policy sets out the principles and procedures governing admission to Bay Learning Academy CIC. It supports fair, transparent and safe decision-making, with the learner's needs, views, wellbeing and successful transition at the centre of the process.

2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

Bay Learning Academy CIC operates in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and commissioning requirements, including:

- Equality Act 2010, including the protected characteristics.
- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years 2015.
- Education Act 1996, including section 19. The statutory duty to arrange suitable alternative education under section 19 rests with the local authority.
- Applicable Local Authority and school commissioning agreements, safeguarding duties and contractual requirements.

Bay does not discriminate against a learner because of a protected characteristic. Admission decisions are based on whether Bay can safely and effectively meet the learner's needs through the agreed placement and support arrangements.

3 Commissioning and Referrals

- Bay accepts referrals from Local Authorities and schools and does not accept direct referrals from parents, carers or learners.
- The commissioner must provide full and accurate information, including the EHCP where applicable, risk assessments, safeguarding information, attendance records, prior attainment, support plans and relevant multi-agency information.
- Bay works with commissioners, families, professionals and the learner to understand needs, strengths, risks, aspirations and the support required.

4 Admission Principles

Bay is committed to:

- providing a safe, inclusive and relational environment;
- supporting each learner's education, wellbeing, belonging and preparation for next steps;
- listening to learners and ensuring their views, feelings and wishes influence planning and review;
- working in partnership with families, commissioners and relevant professionals; and
- making reasonable adjustments and providing personalised support where this can be delivered safely and effectively.

5 Suitability Assessment and Placement Decisions

Before admission, Bay undertakes a suitability assessment to decide whether it can meet the learner's needs safely and effectively. This may include document review, discussion with the commissioner and family, a visit, learner conversation, risk assessment and consideration of staffing, environment, timetable and reasonable adjustments.

Bay may decline a referral where needs cannot be met safely or reasonably, or agree conditions such as an individual support package, phased start, reduced timetable or multi-agency involvement. Decisions and reasons will be communicated transparently to the commissioner and, where appropriate, the parent or carer and learner.

6 Admissions Procedure

6.1 Referral and Initial Review

- The commissioner submits the referral information.
- Bay reviews needs, safeguarding information, risk, prior attainment and proposed outcomes.
- Senior leaders decide whether to progress to a suitability discussion and induction.

6.2 Suitability Discussion

- Bay discusses provision, support, risk management, reasonable adjustments and intended outcomes with the commissioner and relevant parties.
- The learner and their parent or carer are given opportunities to share information, ask questions and express their views about the proposed placement.
- Any conditions of placement are agreed and recorded.

6.3 Parent Carer and Learner Induction

Where the referral progresses, Bay provides a structured induction. This includes a visit or orientation, introductions to key staff, explanation of the timetable, curriculum, safeguarding arrangements, attendance and behaviour expectations, and the support available.

Every learner is introduced to the Student Welfare Lead and the wellbeing room. Learners are told how they can access the room and seek support, including where they need a calm, private space or a wellbeing check-in.

As an early part of induction, each learner has a one-to-one conversation with the Student Welfare Lead. This is the first formal step in Bay's student voice and relational practice approach. It provides a safe opportunity for the learner to share their views, feelings and wishes about settling into Bay, relationships and belonging, learning and achievement, growing up, life at home and in the community, and future plans. The learner is not required to discuss anything they do not wish to share.

Relevant information from the conversation is used, with appropriate regard to confidentiality and safeguarding, to inform support, reasonable adjustments, the Individual Learning Plan and transition arrangements. Any safeguarding concern or disclosure is acted upon in line with Bay's safeguarding procedures; confidentiality cannot be promised where a learner may be at risk.

Baseline activity may include English and maths assessments and, where appropriate, reading, wellbeing or vocational assessments. A Learner Handbook is issued and explained, including safeguarding, attendance, curriculum, assessment, complaints, learner voice and support arrangements.

6.4 Start Arrangements

- Acceptance and the agreed start date are confirmed with the commissioner.
- The learner and parent or carer receive the timetable and relevant information.
- Transport, support plans, reasonable adjustments and any phased transition are finalised.
- Key information from induction is shared only with staff who need it to support the learner safely and effectively.

7 Student Voice Wellbeing and Ongoing Review

Student voice is an ongoing process, not a single induction activity. Learners have multiple opportunities to share their views, feelings and wishes through planned one-to-one meetings with the Student Welfare Lead, informal conversations, wellbeing check-ins, review meetings, curriculum and pastoral discussions, feedback activities and conversations about transition and next steps.

The Student Welfare Lead coordinates welfare support and helps learners access the wellbeing room. The room is available in line with Bay's operational and safeguarding arrangements and is not used as a punitive space. Staff remain alert to changes in presentation, engagement, relationships, attendance or wellbeing and offer additional check-ins where needed.

Academic progress, attendance, wellbeing, relational development and agreed outcomes are monitored throughout the placement. Learner voice is considered alongside information from families, staff, commissioners and other professionals. Reports and review meetings record what the learner has said, what action has been agreed and how Bay has responded, where appropriate.

Where induction or ongoing monitoring identifies a need for targeted mental health or wellbeing support beyond Bay's role, staff will follow safeguarding and referral procedures, work with the commissioner and family as appropriate, and signpost or refer to suitable services. Urgent risk is escalated without delay.

Placements remain subject to Bay's continuing ability to meet need safely and effectively. If needs change, Bay will consult the learner, family, commissioner and relevant professionals and support a managed transition where an alternative placement is required.

8 Information Recording Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Induction records, wellbeing notes and student voice information are recorded proportionately and stored securely. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis in accordance with data protection, safeguarding and information-sharing requirements. Learners are told how their information may be used and when it must be shared to keep them or another person safe.

9 Review of a Decision

If a referral is declined, the commissioner may request clarification, provide further evidence or ask for an internal senior review. Final decisions rest with the Senior Leadership Team and are based on safeguarding, capacity and learner need.

10 Policy Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the effectiveness of admission and induction arrangements, including learner experience and use of student voice. This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier following legislative, commissioning or organisational change.