



# Referrals and Admissions Policy and Procedure

Approved by TCES Operational Board on behalf of  
Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor

**Date of next formal review, September 2024**

This policy applies to TCES National Online School

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## Purpose

TCES National Online School is an inclusive online school that offers a full curriculum and therapeutic support to children and young people aged 5 to 25 who are unable to attend school. This can be for a variety of reasons and can be linked to school anxiety, special educational needs, emotionally based school avoidance, or where a current school isn't meeting needs. Pupils on our programmes typically have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) but we also support those either at the start of the EHCP process or without an EHCP.

Our National Online School works collaboratively with each pupil and their family (as well as school and Local Authority where appropriate), to create an online education programme delivered through the milieu of therapeutic education and which can include a higher level of intensive therapy where required. This will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it continues to meet the child or young person's needs. Programmes are offered for a minimum of 6 weeks and depending on the requirements, can see pupils through their GCSE or A-Level courses.

We offer the core subjects of English, Maths and Science plus additional subjects and we can support pupils to take GCSEs and A levels, potentially including providing invigilators in the family home where needed to enable them to sit the exams. Our experienced and qualified therapy team offers Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy and psychodynamic therapies (e.g., Art and Drama Therapy) based on our assessments of each child's need.

## Eligibility

TCES National online school supports pupils between the ages of 5 – 25 years old. Pupils can be referred to us for various reason, including but not limited to:

- Children and young people with or without an EHCP.
- Those who may or may not have neurodiverse needs but who are unable to be supported within other settings.
- Those who may have been permanently excluded from mainstream or special schools.
- Those who have become disengaged from attending for a prolonged period due to emotionally based school avoidance or their needs are not being met in their current provision.
- Those in care, who may have had disrupted placements and/or schooling with similar difficulties and for whom there is no reasonable short-term prospect of reintegration into mainstream schools or academies.
- Those who are between placements or have recently moved into a local authority area and require a short-term provision until an onsite school is identified.
- In some cases, the presenting reasons for referral may be SEMH needs or an Autistic Spectrum Condition.
- Some children and young people may present with a range of other difficulties such as speech and language difficulties, dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, ADD, ODD, emotionally based school avoidance.

All prospective pupils and their families or carers will, following referral and a conditional offer, have opportunities to discuss the education we are able to offer, meet online with staff and share in the aims and methods of education we offer.

Once a place has been offered, funding agreed and the offer of a place is accepted, all pupils will be assisted and supported to address the issues and challenges that have led to their referral.

## Information

We seek to gain as much information as possible about every pupil referred to us in order that we can make informed choices about the appropriateness of the referral and what will be required to meet their needs. Documentation with each new referral should include:

- Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) – if applicable.
- Pupil details such as their full name, address, and date of birth.
- Reports from all agencies currently involved with the pupil.
- The pupil's educational history including exam results, academic and clinical assessment data where they are available.
- The pupil's previous attendance, punctuality, and behavioural issues.
- For Looked After Pupils – their PEP and any relevant supporting information from agencies involved with the pupil.
- Latest Annual Review paperwork.

## Referrals

TCES is governed by an admissions procedure implemented by the TCES Operational Board and aims to meet the admission requirements for all referred children and young people as set by the Board in the contracts between Local Authorities and TCES.

Referrals to our National Online School are received and processed by the Business Development Team within our Central Services. Local authorities, schools and parent/carers can refer children and young people to our service.

Referrals can be made at any time as we run a rolling intake and can start pupils at any point throughout the academic year.

## How to make a Referral

Referrals should be made directly to Central Services by email to: [referrals@tces.org.uk](mailto:referrals@tces.org.uk)

# HOW TO MAKE A NATIONAL ONLINE SCHOOL REFERRAL

Referrals can be sent directly to [referrals@tces.org.uk](mailto:referrals@tces.org.uk). Referrals to include the following (if applicable)-

- EHCP
- Annual Review
- School Reports
- Additional reports (CAMHS, EP, Social care)

If the child/young persons needs can be met within our service- we will send a conditional offer letter to the referrer.

TCES National Online School programme will begin.

We will review all paperwork to fully understand the child/young persons unique needs and learning preferences.

When funding is agreed we will set up a meeting with the parent/carer. A Chromebook and a welcome pack will be sent to the child/young person.

To discuss a child/young person prior to referring, please contact [NationalOnlineSchool@TCES.org.uk](mailto:NationalOnlineSchool@TCES.org.uk) or call 0208 543 7878

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NATIONAL ONLINE SCHOOL

## Typical Process:

1. Referral paperwork is received by Central Services.
2. The Referrals Coordinator reviews the paperwork and enters all details onto our CRM.
3. The Referrals Coordinator will:
  - 3.1 Validate the referral to ensure that the information we have received is comprehensive, relevant, and up to date.
4. The Referrals Coordinator will formally acknowledge receipt of the referral AND:
  - 4.1 Offer provisional feedback from the information gathered as to the appropriateness of the young person referred, confirming with the referrer that we will proceed.
  - 4.2 Should there be gaps in the information provided, agree with the referrer:
    - Who will provide the missing information?
    - A timescale for the delivery of the information to TCES.
    - The impact that this is likely to have on TCES' decision-making timescale.
5. At this point, if the Referrals Coordinator feels that the referral is not appropriate, they will inform the referrer immediately.

6. The referral will be allocated to an Assessment Manager.
7. The Referrals Process will then be undertaken as below.

## Following Referral

From receipt of the referral, the Business Development Team will allocate referrals for assessment. An Assessment Manager will carry out a paper-based assessment. Where needs can be met, a conditional offer will be submitted to the referrer. If the offer is accepted, our Assessment Managers will contact the parent or carer and arrange a virtual assessment meeting to undertake a more in-depth discussion. It is important and expected that the child/young person attends at this stage. This forms the basis of a formal assessment to ratify the place.

## School Assessment

The assessment will give parents/carers the opportunity to discuss the needs of their child in an informal, although structured way. During the assessment, the pupil's additional needs are assessed, their educational and social background can be discussed and the factors which may have caused their disaffection or disengagement from education can be raised. Importantly, we also use this assessment as an opportunity for parents/carers and the young person themselves, to share what they see as particular interests and strengths. This information provides essential details for Risk Assessments to be completed. Discussion includes:

- Pupil strengths, interests, and talents.
- Pupil expectations.
- Parent/carers expectations.
- School expectations – Code of Conduct.
- Risk Assessment information from referral paperwork will be discussed to ascertain risks.

Ahead of the assessment our Assessment Managers will share the child's paper-based assessment document and any information provided by the referrer with the Head of service and SENCo. Responsibility for this process is delegated to the Head of Service, SENCo and Assessment Managers who will read the documents, précis key issues such as previous classroom behaviour, social interactions and learning needs.

## Plan for Admission

Once the start date has been confirmed the Head of service will convene a new starter meeting with the Senior Leadership and clinical team where the induction plan is discussed.

This will include:

- Whether (based on our understanding of the pupil's previous experience) the pupil would benefit from a graduated integration attending on a part-time timetable initially building incrementally to full-time attendance.
- The level of therapeutic intervention required.



## Induction

A range of information will be provided to the pupil, parents/carers within a 'welcome pack' as listed below:

- Welcome letter- including introduction to key staff.
- TCES Chromebook (in line with our safeguarding policy).
- School timetable.
- Consent forms- (to be completed by the parent/carer).
- Media/photo consent form.
- New starter form including emergency contacts- (to be completed by the parent/carer).
- Data Protection Policy.
- Compliments, Complaints and Comments Policy.
- Attendance Contract (to be agreed with the pupil).
- Pupil Premium form (if applicable).
- Information on parent engagement – Parent/Carer Council and training sessions.

Teacher introductions are delivered through introductory videos and 'meet the teacher' fact sheets in advance to facilitate successful integration.

Placements are reviewed on a regular basis.

TCES National Online School works closely with parents/carers, local authorities, and schools to support pupils back into onsite education.