



PUBLIC POLICY

Admissions and Referral Policy

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Organisation	Lighthouse Learning Provision Ltd
Policy owner	Board of Directors / Provision Lead
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Review	July 2027, or sooner following relevant legal, safeguarding, operational or commissioning change

Policy at a glance

Placements are accepted only where Lighthouse can meet the learner's needs safely and purposefully within a clearly commissioned package. Decisions are individual, evidence-based and transparent.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out how Lighthouse receives referrals, assesses suitability, agrees placements, inducts learners and reviews or ends placements. It applies to referrals from schools, Local Authorities and other approved commissioning routes.

2. Principles

- The best interests, safety and educational needs of the learner guide decisions.
- Admission is not automatic and is never based only on diagnosis or availability.
- Full and accurate information must be shared before a safe decision can be made.
- The commissioning body remains responsible for the overall suitability, legality and oversight of the placement.
- Lighthouse will not present itself as a registered school and will operate within the limits applicable to non-school alternative provision.

3. Referral routes and required information

- Reason for referral, current education arrangement and intended timetable.
- Learner and family views, strengths, interests, communication and preferred support.
- EHCP and professional reports where applicable.
- Safeguarding history, current plans, social-care involvement and named professional contacts.
- Medical, allergy, medication and emergency information.
- Attendance, behaviour, missing, physical-intervention and risk history.
- Desired outcomes, review dates, reporting requirements, transport and funding authority.

4. Suitability assessment

The Provision Lead and Directors consider whether Lighthouse can provide a safe, meaningful package within its environment, staff competence, ratio, timetable, activity range and insurance. They may request further information,

professional discussion, a visit or an assessment meeting. The assessment considers interaction with the existing cohort and whether site-specific or individual risks can be controlled.

5. Decision outcomes

- **Accept in principle:** subject to written placement agreement, completed information, risk assessment and agreed start plan.
- **Request further information or assessment:** where the available evidence is insufficient or circumstances are changing.
- **Offer a modified package:** for example a phased start, different ratio, restricted activity or revised timetable, subject to commissioner agreement.
- **Decline:** where needs cannot be met safely or purposefully, the package would be unsuitable, information is materially incomplete, required resources are unavailable or the placement would put the learner or others at unacceptable risk.

6. Pre-placement agreement

Before a start date is confirmed, Lighthouse and the commissioner agree the timetable, staffing ratio, transport, fees, notice and non-attendance arrangements, outcomes, reporting, review frequency, contacts, consent, information sharing, medical arrangements, safeguarding responsibilities and emergency procedures. The commissioner confirms who retains registration, attendance and statutory education responsibilities.

7. Induction and baseline

- Introduce the learner to the environment, key adults, routines, boundaries and how to seek help.
- Complete the learner profile, baseline assessment, individual support plan, regulation plan and risk assessment.
- Agree immediate priorities and realistic early targets.
- Use a phased or supported start where this is in the learner's interests.
- Confirm the daily communication and absence-follow-up arrangements.

8. Attendance and unexplained absence

Lighthouse keeps a daily register and follows up unexplained absence promptly in line with the placement agreement. Non-attendance, lateness, avoidance and disengagement are recorded and communicated to the responsible school or commissioner. Any pattern indicating welfare risk, exploitation or missing education is escalated through safeguarding routes.

9. Placement reviews

Placements are reviewed at the agreed interval and sooner where risk, attendance, presentation, staffing, outcomes or family circumstances change. Reviews consider learner voice, progress, safeguarding, engagement, support strategies and next steps. Plans and risk assessments are updated after review.

10. Changes, suspension and ending a placement

Where possible, changes are planned collaboratively and with reasonable notice. An individual session may be ended or paused to manage immediate serious risk, but this does not by itself terminate the placement. Lighthouse may recommend amendment or termination where safety cannot be maintained, the agreed package is no longer suitable, information has been withheld, payment or contractual terms are materially breached, or the commissioner and Lighthouse agree a different pathway is needed. Safeguarding information and records are transferred securely at transition.

11. Appeals and complaints

A commissioner or family may ask for the reasons for an admissions decision and may raise concerns under the Complaints Policy. A complaint cannot require Lighthouse to accept a placement that it reasonably considers unsafe or outside its competence, but decision-making will be reviewed for fairness, accuracy and equality.

Records and forms: Referral Form, Information Checklist, Suitability Assessment, Placement Agreement / SLA, Consent Forms, Learner Profile, Baseline Assessment, Individual Support Plan, Individual Risk Assessment, Attendance Register, Placement Review Form, Transition Record.

Reference framework

This policy should be read with the current versions of the following legislation, guidance and local procedures. References are applied according to Lighthouse's status as a non-school alternative provision provider.

- [Arranging Alternative Provision: a guide for local authorities and schools](#)
- [Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026](#)

Questions or alternative formats: info@lighthouselearningprovision.co.uk | 07436 177831