

Admissions Policy

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Operated by: Nudge Education Ltd · **Version:** Dec 2025 · **Owner:** Director of Operations

ADMISSIONS POLICY
DEC 2025

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Introduction

Nudge Education exists to re-engage chronically disengaged children and young people with education, improve wellbeing and provide access to a Life Worth Living. Our bespoke, flexible interventions are designed to meet the needs of each individual, ensuring that no young person is left behind.

This Admissions Policy provides a clear, fair, and transparent process for admitting young people into our provision. It outlines eligibility, responsibilities, and safeguarding requirements, ensuring that interventions are effective, timely, and compliant with statutory expectations.

Purpose

This policy ensures that:

- Admissions are inclusive, consistent, and transparent.
- Safeguarding and welfare are central to every admission.
- Commissioners, parents, and carers are clear about the process.
- Nudge Education provides swift access to support, particularly in crisis situations.
- Each young person is placed on a pathway that supports either their return to education, introduction to work or improved wellbeing, dependent on the individual Transition Target.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All young people referred to Nudge Education.

- Referring organisations (local authorities, schools, virtual schools, social workers, children's homes, NHS, foster carers, parents/carers).
- Nudge Education practitioners and operational staff.

Admissions Principles

- Inclusive and Needs-Led: Every young person is considered, regardless of background, circumstance, needs or prior educational experience.
- Safeguarding First: No intervention is started without thorough consideration of safeguarding - for the young person, their environment and our practitioners who will deliver our support.
- Whole-Child Approach: Academic (where agreed), personal, social, and emotional needs are considered and prioritised.
- Bespoke and Flexible: Interventions are tailored to the individual and can begin at short notice, depending on geographical location and the young person's needs.
- Collaborative: We partner with commissioners, schools, parents/carers and other professionals to create a team around the young person for the duration of our support.

Admissions criteria

We accept referrals for children and young people across the UK and Channel Islands who:

- Are unable to attend school for a number of reasons, or integrate with day-to-day life.
- Are persistently/severely absent from school or chronically disengaged from education.
- Are at risk of exclusion or facing challenges in the school environment.
- Have SEND, SEMH, or other additional needs that create barriers to their current provision.
- Are experiencing poor mental health, may be waiting for clinical support (e.g. CAMHS, CYPS) and/or require non-clinical therapeutic intervention or interim support.
- Are looked-after, in foster care, or supported by children's services.
- Require interim, transition-focused support before reintegration into mainstream or specialist education.
- Are aged between 4 and 25 years.

Exceptions:

- Admissions may not proceed if an intervention is deemed unsafe or inappropriate for the young person or others.
- Alternative pathways may be recommended if Nudge Education is unable to safely meet the identified needs.

Admissions process

Step 1: Referral Submission

- Referrals are accepted from any prospective partner, including but not limited to local authorities, schools, social workers, care homes, foster carers, NHS and parents/carers.
- Required information: name and address of the young person and parent/carer, EHCP (if applicable), safeguarding information, risk assessments.
- Supporting information: attendance history, education assessment data (if applicable), contact details and/or reports from other relevant professionals.
- The person completing the referral form should have the authority to do so and provide contact details for invoicing purposes.

Step 2: Initial Assessment

- Nudge conducts a holistic needs assessment to build a Pen Portrait of the young person.
- Risk and safeguarding checks (including a staffing ratio) are completed before intervention begins.

Step 3: Matching

- Each young person is matched with the practitioner(s) best suited to their needs and the target for the intervention.
- A bespoke intervention plan is developed, outlining goals within both academic and/or personal pathways.

Step 4: Intervention Commencement

- Sessions begin as soon as safely possible.

- Timescales vary depending on the needs and location of the young person. The Education Intervention Coordination Team will update the commissioner with regards to timescales.
- Once sessions have begun, the intervention is monitored by an Education Intervention Coordinator (EIC) with regular feedback provided to commissioners and parents/carers.

Step 5: Review and Transition

- Interventions are reviewed regularly with all stakeholders.
- A transition plan ensures sustainable reintegration into education, employment, or training.

Procurement Variances

Some Local Authority procurement processes require us to complete an application to support a young person. We commonly refer to this as the Expression of Interest (EOI) process. We will only submit an EOI if we are able to fulfil the requirements of the intervention and have the practitioner capacity to deliver within the timescales requested.

In the event that the EOI is successful, commissioners typically complete Step 1, unless otherwise agreed.

Inclusion and SEND

Nudge Education is fully inclusive, trauma-informed and welcomes young people with SEND, SEMH needs, and EHCPs.

Provision is tailored to individual needs, with evidence provided to support EHCP writing, annual reviews, and statutory reporting. Nudge Education aligns with the SEND Code of Practice, (where applicable) ensuring personalised support that meets the unique needs of every learner, with a strong focus on early identification and meaningful outcomes. Nudge Education is fully committed to Safer Recruitment practices (policy below), including thorough vetting, reference checks, and enhanced DBS screening for all team members, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every young person we support.

Roles and Responsibilities

Nudge Education

- Provide safe, tailored interventions.
- Ensure safeguarding and compliance.
- Maintain accurate admissions and attendance records.
- Deliver regular reports to commissioners and carers.

Commissioners/Referring Partners

- Submit accurate referral details and safeguarding information.
- Conduct pre-admission risk assessments.
- Maintain regular contact with Nudge Education.

Parents/Carers

- Be supportive of Nudge sessions and encourage engagement.
- Ensure a responsible adult is present in the young person's home setting for the duration of a session, if sessions take place at home.
- Ensure access to appropriate technology (where applicable). Nudge Education can provide technology should this be required in sessions.
- Support attendance and raise safeguarding concerns as needed.

Young People

- Engage with their intervention and practitioner to the best of their ability.
- Communicate barriers to engagement through their support network.

Monitoring and Compliance

Admissions and attendance registers are securely maintained in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation. Attendance is reported as per our Commissioner's expected timeframes (policy below).

Policy effectiveness is monitored annually, with updates informed by best practice,

feedback, and regulatory changes.

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

- Recruitment, Selection and Sub Contracting Policy
- Trauma Trauma-Informed Practice Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

All Policies can be found here.

Review

This policy has been signed off by the Nudge Education Directorate. Charlotte Nouch Director of Partnerships & Services 5 Dec 2025

NEO Online Addendum

This addendum applies the canonical Nudge Education policy above to the online provision context of Nudge Education Online (NEO). It is sourced from NEO - Admissions Policy v04.26.docx.

NEO BY NUDGE EDUCATION

Admissions Policy Nudge Education Online

Policy Owner	Director, Nudge Education Online & Head of School
Approved	April 2026
Review Date	April 2027
Version	04.26
Operating Company	Nudge Education Ltd (Company Number 10192753)
Proprietor	Diego Melo
Accreditation Route	Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) — accreditation in progress

This policy applies to all learners, staff, practitioners, contractors, volunteers and visitors of Nudge Education Online (NEO). NEO is a fully online alternative provision for learners aged 11–18, operated by Nudge Education Ltd. NEO is not a DfE-registered independent school and is not subject to Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection. NEO is pursuing OEAS accreditation only.

1. Introduction

Nudge Education Online (NEO) is a fully online alternative provision for learners aged 11–18 (Key Stage 3, 4, and 5), operated by Nudge Education Ltd (Company Number 10192753). NEO launches in September 2026 with Year 9 and Year 10 cohorts; further year groups open progressively as the organisation grows. NEO delivers a trauma-informed, neurodivergent-affirming education grounded in six Cornerstones — Connection, Movement, Creativity, Reflection, Rest, and Nutrition. Live lessons are delivered by qualified, subject-specialist teachers. Each learner is also assigned a named practitioner who acts as mentor and single point of contact for the learner, family, and (where relevant) commissioner. NEO welcomes applications from families seeking an alternative to mainstream education, as well as referrals from local authorities, schools, and other commissioning partners. This policy sets out the process for both routes and ensures transparency, consistency, and fairness for all applicants. No learner will be refused admission on the grounds of disability, SEND, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background. NEO celebrates the diverse ways in which young people think and learn. NEO is not a DfE-registered independent school and is not subject to ISI inspection. NEO is pursuing OEAS (Online Education Accreditation Scheme) accreditation only. This policy should be read alongside the NEO Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy, Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection, Confidentiality and Privacy Policy, and Terms and Conditions.

2. Legal Framework

This policy operates in alignment with the following frameworks, and NEO will review it whenever any of these are updated: Education Act 1996 Children and Families Act 2014 Equality Act 2010 SEND Code of Practice 2015 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE) UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 Information

Commissioner's Office (ICO) Children's Code (Age Appropriate Design Code)
Online Safety Act 2023 Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) criteria

3. Who We Serve

NEO supports young people aged 11–18 who benefit from a flexible, relational, online learning environment. Our learners commonly include: Young people who have experienced barriers in mainstream education, including those experiencing emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA). Learners with SEND, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who need a differentiated and accessible online setting. Young people who are not in full-time education, at risk of disengagement, or electively home educated and seeking a structured provision. Learners requiring alternative provision commissioned by a local authority or school, including short-term, transitional, or post-care placements. Young people with health-related needs that make attending a physical school difficult. Families seeking a neurodivergent-affirming, trauma-informed learning environment. Young people requiring catch-up tuition alongside, or in preparation for, a mainstream placement. NEO does not select on the basis of academic ability or prior attainment.

4. Placement Types

NEO offers four placement types, subject to review according to the growth rate of the organisation:

Placement Type	Description	Typical Commissioners
Full-time placement	Complete timetable delivered wholly online, suitable for learners whose needs are best met by a sustained NEO placement.	Families; local authorities; schools
Short-term / transitional	Bridging placement for learners between settings, in crisis, post-	Local authorities; social care; schools

Placement Type	Description	Typical Commissioners
	care moves, or awaiting long-term provision.	
Catch-up tuition	Targeted subject tuition for learners who remain on the roll of another setting.	Families; schools; local authorities
Curriculum access only	Standalone subscription access to the NEO curriculum at £250/year; does not constitute a school placement.	Families; home educators

5. Admissions Routes

There are two primary routes into a NEO placement: Route A — Direct Application: parents and carers apply directly for a place for their child. Route B — Commissioned Referral: a local authority, school, or other commissioning body refers a learner under a service level agreement. Both routes follow a structured process designed to confirm that NEO is a suitable fit for the learner and that appropriate support is in place from day one.

6. Route A: Direct Application

6.1 Enquiry and Information

Families are encouraged to contact NEO to discuss their child's needs before submitting a formal application. An initial conversation with a member of the admissions team covers: The family's reasons for seeking an alternative to their current provision. The learner's strengths, interests, and any known SEND. How NEO delivers its curriculum and what a typical week looks like. Fees, terms, what is included in the provision, and what is charged separately (for example, public examination entry fees).

6.2 Application

Following the initial enquiry, families submit a formal application. The application should include: The learner's name, date of birth, and contact details. Information about the learner's educational history and any previous school reports. Details of any SEND, EHCP, or health needs. Any relevant safeguarding information. The family's goals and aspirations for the learner.

6.3 Assessment and Meeting

Following receipt of the application: Initial review: the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SENCo review the application within five working days, considering suitability, capacity, and any safeguarding information.

Introductory meeting: a virtual meeting is arranged with the learner, parent or carer, and relevant NEO staff. The meeting allows the learner to ask questions and for both parties to assess fit. Decision: a written offer or outcome is provided within five working days of the meeting.

6.4 Offer and Enrolment

Where an offer is made, the family receives: Confirmation of the proposed programme, including hours, subjects, and any additional support. The applicable terms — the **NEO Terms of Business (Commissioned Placements)** or the **NEO Terms and Conditions for Parents and Carers**, as applicable — which must be accepted before the placement begins. Information about the induction process and the named practitioner who will act as the family's single point of contact. The NEO fee schedule, payment arrangements, and a clear statement that public examination entry fees are charged separately from tuition fees. Notice that the notice period for withdrawal is one calendar month, given in writing and billed through in full, as set out in the applicable terms and the **NEO Withdrawal Policy**.

7. Route B: Commissioned Referral

7.1 Referral Process

All commissioned referrals are managed centrally. Referrals may originate from local authorities, schools, social care teams, virtual schools, or other commissioning bodies. The process follows these stages:

Stage	Led By	Timeline	Outcome
Referral received and logged	Commissioner	Day 0	Referral logged; acknowledgement sent to referrer.
Initial screening	DSL and SENCo	Day 1–3	Suitability, capacity, and safeguarding reviewed.
Referral meeting	Multi-agency	By Day 10	Learner profile confirmed; placement type agreed.
Written offer	Proprietor / Director	By Day 15	Offer or outcome issued in writing.
Induction and start	Teaching team and practitioner	Day 20+	Programme begins with a phased induction.

In urgent safeguarding or “no school place” cases, stages may be fast-tracked with DSL and commissioner agreement.

7.2 Referral Documentation

Referrals should include: Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), if applicable. Attendance and engagement history. Any safeguarding or risk information. Previous setting reports and support plans. The commissioning body’s objectives for the placement. Where documentation is incomplete, NEO will request additional information before the referral meeting proceeds.

7.3 Service Level Agreements

All commissioned placements require a signed service level agreement (SLA) detailing: Scope of service, duration, and review arrangements. The agreed programme of learning and intended outcomes. Cost structure and payment

schedule, with public examination entry fees invoiced separately. Safeguarding and information-sharing responsibilities. Arrangements for transition, extension, and exit.

8. Allocation Priorities

Where capacity is limited, priority is given in the following order:

Priority	Category
1	Looked After Children and Children in Care.
2	Children on Child Protection or Child in Need plans.
3	Young people without a school place or not in full-time education.
4	Learners with an EHCP or undergoing statutory assessment.
5	Young people at risk of exclusion, experiencing EBSNA, or with health-related needs.
6	All other applicants, in order of application date.

9. Grounds for Non-Admission

A place may not be offered where: NEO does not have capacity to meet the learner's needs safely and effectively. The learner's needs fall outside the scope of what NEO can reasonably provide, even with adjustments. Admission would negatively affect the learning, safety, or wellbeing of existing learners. Where a place cannot be offered, NEO provides clear written reasons and, where possible, signposts the family or commissioner to alternative provision. A decision not to offer a place is never made on discriminatory grounds. Families may request a review of the decision via the NEO Complaints Procedure.

10. Induction

All learners participate in a phased induction programme before or during their first weeks, which includes: An introductory meeting with their named practitioner (mentor and single point of contact). An introduction to the subject specialist teachers who will deliver live lessons. A guided tour of the NEO online platforms (Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Google Workspace). Information about online safety, session recording, and how to report concerns. An introduction to NEO's Code of Respect and behaviour expectations. A co-designed agreement developed with the learner and, where appropriate, the parent or carer. Baseline assessment to understand the learner's strengths, needs, and starting points. Inductions are tailored to the learner's age, needs, and level of anxiety. There is no expectation of full timetable participation in the first week; the focus is on building trust and connection.

11. Transitions

11.1 Transition into NEO

Transitions are planned collaboratively with the learner, family, and any referring body to minimise anxiety and ensure continuity. Each transition includes a written plan with clear timescales. Information from the previous setting is transferred securely and promptly to the SENCo and DSL.

11.2 Transition Out of NEO

When a learner is ready to move on — whether to further education, another school, employment, or training — NEO supports the transition through: A comprehensive handover report shared with the receiving institution (with consent). A transition plan developed with the learner and family. Continued support during the transition period where needed. Post-16 and post-18 guidance through the NEO careers education programme.

12. Family Engagement

NEO recognises the emotional impact of education change on families. Parents and carers are partners in their child's education and are supported through: Regular communication with the named practitioner about their child's progress and wellbeing. Involvement in review meetings, co-designed agreements, and

EHCP annual reviews. Access to parent information sessions on topics such as online safety, AI, and neurodivergent-affirming approaches. Signposting to external support services and parent networks.

13. Fees and Financial Arrangements

Full fee schedules, invoice cycles, and cancellation terms are set out in the **NEO Terms of Business (Commissioned Placements)** or the **NEO Terms and Conditions for Parents and Carers**, as applicable. For admissions, the following principles apply: Tuition fees cover live lessons, recorded learning, practitioner mentoring, safeguarding oversight, SEND support, and the standard curriculum. Public examination entry fees (for example, GCSE, IGCSE, Functional Skills) are not included in tuition fees and are invoiced separately to families or commissioners. Curriculum Access Only subscriptions (£250/year) provide online access to the NEO curriculum and do not constitute a school placement. The withdrawal notice period is one calendar month from written notice, billed through in full, unless a commissioning framework or contract provides otherwise. The **NEO Withdrawal Policy** sets out the process in full.

14. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All admissions and referral information is processed and stored securely in compliance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and the ICO Children's Code. Information about prospective learners who do not progress to a placement is retained only for as long as necessary, in line with NEO's retention schedule, and then securely deleted. Full details are set out in the NEO Data Protection, Confidentiality and Privacy Policy.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Proprietor	Named accountable person under OEAS framework; approves admissions policy; final sign-off on commissioned SLAs above an agreed threshold.

Role	Responsibility
Director, NEO & Head of School	Operational oversight of admissions; ensures consistency with OEAS criteria and KCSIE; owner of this policy.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Reviews safeguarding information at the referral stage; escalates where threshold concerns exist; consulted before any fast-tracked admission.
SENCo	Reviews SEND information; advises on reasonable adjustments; liaises with EHCP teams.
Practitioner (named mentor)	Single point of contact for learner and family from first induction through to exit; coordinates with teachers and commissioner.
Qualified subject-specialist teachers	Deliver live lessons aligned to the agreed programme; contribute to baseline assessment.
Admissions team	Manages enquiries, applications, referrals, and communication with commissioners.

16. Monitoring and Review

Placements are reviewed after the first four weeks and then at least termly. All reviews include the learner, parent or carer, and commissioner where applicable. Admissions data informs NEO's safeguarding, attendance, equity, and quality assurance systems. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or OEAS criteria change. The Proprietor reviews admissions data annually to ensure equity of access and alignment with OEAS accreditation criteria.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside: NEO Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy NEO SEND Policy NEO Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity Policy

NEO Data Protection, Confidentiality and Privacy Policy NEO Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy NEO Behaviour and Regulation Policy NEO Complaints Procedure NEO Teaching and Learning Policy **NEO Terms of Business (Commissioned Placements)** **NEO Terms and Conditions for Parents and Carers** NEO Withdrawal Policy

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