

Admissions Policy

Key Elements

This document sets out the admissions process for Joseph Clarke School

Last Reviewed: April 2025



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1. Introduction

Joseph Clarke School is part of Learning in Harmony Trust located in Waltham Forest. Joseph Clarke School seeks to open up the world for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Although based in Waltham Forest, we also offer places to children and young people from surrounding local authorities.

Our mission is to enable children and young people to flourish, lead independent and fulfilling lives, and make a positive contribution to the world. We do this by providing them with the highest standard of specialist education, care and support, in partnership with families, the local community and other expert practitioners and wider services.

Joseph Clarke School educates children and young people from 3 – 19 years of age with all learners having an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). The school focuses on providing high quality education and welfare support to meet pupils' individual needs, ambitions and their full potential.

The majority of learners attending have a vision impairment (VI). Many of these pupils have additional needs that include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). We do cater for a small cohort who are not VI but who have ASC. Teachers of learners with VI undertake the Mandatory Qualification for Teachers of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment and are well placed to address barriers to learning associated with VI. Learners with ASC are supported throughout the school by a Lead Teacher who promotes specific strategies to support individual learning styles.

Joseph Clarke School recognises that some learners attending may communicate their needs and wants through their behaviour. Our teams are well trained to manage behaviour that can present as a concern. We adopt a trauma informed approach to supporting our learners and our staff promote a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) at all times.

Joseph Clarke School comprises of:

1. Early Years Foundation Stage for learners aged 3-5 years
2. Primary Department for learners aged 3-11 years who have a Vision Impairment or additional needs.
3. Secondary Department for learners aged 11-19 years who have a Vision Impairment or additional needs.
4. Joseph Clarke Post-16 provision works with learners who follow a curriculum designed to give them future choices in college, and independent or supported living.
5. Our Sixth Form educates post-16 learners who can access a range of qualifications to support their future employment and quality of life. Provision is often in partnership with other credible providers e.g. Waltham Forest College. This enables our students to access a broad curriculum and qualifications offer.

The curriculum is designed to inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future. Joseph Clarke School provides a coherent curriculum that builds upon learners' experiences in each phase to help them to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Our curriculum is carefully planned, ambitious yet accessible to learners of all abilities. It is designed with the special educational needs of Joseph Clarke School learners in the forefront of our mind. The curriculum contains regular assessment with strategic feedback. For our vision impaired learners, the curriculum is scaffolded by the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI). Our Habilitation Team works closely with school staff and external therapists to ensure that learners are well prepared for independence in adulthood.



2. Securing a place at Joseph Clarke School

Securing a place for your child at Joseph Clarke School involves a three-way conversation between families, the school and the commissioning local authority. It can be a little confusing, so we hope this step-by-step guide helps you navigate the process.

Ultimately whether your child comes to Joseph Clarke School depends on:

- Whether you and your child like it here;
- Whether your local authority agrees that a special school is best for your child, and will fund a place here;
- Whether we have the space and resources to meet your child's individual needs;
- Where you live: we prioritise children who live in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, although we do also welcome and take children from other boroughs.

3. Admissions Process

Step 1: Talk to your local authority's Special Educational Needs (SEN) team

You should be able to find contact details on the education section of your council's website. The SEND Team will assess your child and provide you with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) – previously known as 'Statements'. The EHCP will indicate whether or not the local authority believes that your child will benefit from being in a special school.

Step 2: Arrange an informal visit to the school to see what we can offer your child

If the local authority concludes that your child will benefit from being in a special school, you should arrange to visit schools that may be able to support your child. To visit us, call Sarah Bent on 0208 523 4833. You do not need to bring your child on this initial visit; it's just an opportunity for you to see the school in practice and ask any questions you may have.

Step 3: Inform the local authority of your preferred choice of school

Assuming the local authority believes your child should attend a special school, you should tell the SEND Team that you are interested in being referred to Joseph Clarke School. If you live outside of Waltham Forest, your local authority may suggest another, more local school. If the local authority agrees to Joseph Clarke School as an option, they will send us a referral letter and reports for us to consider.

Step 4: The school formally assesses the referral

At this stage we will match all incoming referrals in terms of age, educational needs and resource requirements to the places that we have available and will prioritise children who are, or have been, Looked After.

Step 5: Visit with your child

If on paper it looks as if we can meet your child's needs, we will invite you and your child to visit the school. This face-to-face meeting is an important opportunity to find out more about your child's needs and ensure we can fully meet them.



Step 6: The school tells your local authority if we think we are right for you and your child

If we have the spaces and the right resources, we will inform the local authority. If we don't have a space, we'll ask if you would like to be added to our waiting list.

Step 7: Your local authority formally lets you know whether your child has a place at Joseph Clarke School

You will hear from your local authority first, not from us.

Step 8: The school sends you a letter

If you've been offered a place by the local authority, we'll write to you to let you know about start dates and other arrangements.

4. Useful Information

If you live in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, you can find information about how the council handles special educational needs and disability provision, including school admissions below.

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/local-offer-special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/about>

If you do not live in Waltham Forest, you will need to talk to your own local authority.

Barking & Dagenham	EHC Team, Children's Services, 2 nd Floor Barking Town Hall, 1 Clockhouse Avenue, Barking, Essex, IG11 7LU	020 8227 5626
Bexley	SEN Support Officer on behalf of Suzi Miller, SEN Case Officer, SEND Statutory Assessment Service, Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA6 7AT	020 3045 5860
Brent	SEND Case Officer, Special Educational Needs Assessment Service, Children and Young People Department, Brent Council, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ	020 8937 2947
Camden	SEN Team, London Borough of Camden, Town Hall, Judd Street, WC1H 9JE	020 7974 4331
Enfield	Special Educational Needs, London Borough of Enfield, Civic Centre, Silver Street, EN1 3XQ	0208 132 1923
Essex	SEND Operations Partner, Send Operation Service , Goodman House, Station Approach, Harlow, Essex CM20 2ET	0333 013 9911
Hackney	Education Health Care Planning Team, Hackney Education, Hackney Council, 1 Reading Lane, LONDON, E8 1GQ	020 8820 7003 M: 07917 014436



Haringey	Business Support Officer, Corporate and Customer Services, Haringey Council, Level 2, Alexandra House, 10 Station Road, Wood Green, N22 7TR	020 8489 5012
Hertfordshire	SEND Officer St Albans and Dacorum Integrated Services for Learning, Hertfordshire County Council, Apsley 1, Brindley Way, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9BF, Postal Point:AP1108	01442 454 117 (Internal: 84117)
Newham	APC for Team 2 - 0 – 25 <i>SEND Service, Commissioning Education and Skills</i> , London Borough of Newham, Newham Dockside, 1000 Dockside Road, London E16 2QU	020 3373 8279 Int: 38279
Redbridge	EHC Coordinator, Education & Inclusion, SEN & Disability Team, London Borough of Redbridge, 9 th floor Rear, Lynton House, 255-259 High Road, Ilford, IG1 1NN	020 8708 4910
Waltham Forest	Waltham Forest SEND Team Front Door Wood Street Health Centre, 6 Linford Road, Walthamstow, London E17 3LA senteam@walthamforest.gov.uk	020 8496 6503 0208 496 6595