

Sandwell Transition Education and Partnership Service

Admissions Policy

Sandwell's Transition, Education and Partnership Service (STEPS)



Admissions Policy for International New Arrivals

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Headteacher every two years.

This policy was reviewed and approved at the Headteacher on **07.02.2026**.

The next scheduled review and renewal date is **07.02.2028**

Rationale

We are committed to supporting the integration and inclusion of International New Arrivals (INA) to Sandwell. We facilitate access for families to the Sandwell school's admission processes including the representation of students included within the hard to place protocol. Families will be able to access information and support they need to become fully integrated into Sandwell's community. Our intent and processes at STEPS recognise the importance of obtaining and sharing full and accurate information about the new students in a timely, sensitive and efficient manner.

Our aims are to:

- To support Sandwell's admissions process and safeguard all International New Arrivals
- To provide International pupils residing in Sandwell, with a safe, welcoming environment where they are respected and encouraged to become active and valued members of the school and wider community.
- To use formative assessments to identify the learning strengths and needs of each pupil against the DfE proficiency in English Scale, phonics band or literacy levels.
- To ensure that pupils and their families see their languages, culture and identity valued, respected and reflected in the classroom, the Centre and as part of an inclusive curriculum designed around British culture and values.
- To use qualitative and quantitative data to support and inform the transition process of each pupil into school or long term educational provision.
- To provide a cohesive, multi-agency approach to supporting families and pupils throughout their time at the Centre and during the transition process into school/college. This includes support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and safeguarding needs.
- To build capacity in Sandwell Schools, through the support of EAL teaching and learning, through collaborative practice, the EAL Quality Mark, network meetings and CPD.

Objectives of this policy

- To ensure all pupils, have equal opportunity to access education in line with the School Admissions Policy of Sandwell, and the Fair Access Protocol.
- To facilitate effective transition of pupils to a school by sharing attainment, safeguarding, immigration status and SEND information.
- To give the children fair and accurate representation at Fair Access Panel through the promotion of transparency, integrity and fairness.
- To safeguard pupils who may be vulnerable and waiting for a school place to be allocated.
- To provide the pupils with an opportunity to access a curriculum with the intent of developing language skills and the incorporation of British values and culture to enhance the transition experience into British school life.

The STEPS Ethos

All children are encouraged to 'Dream, Grow and Thrive'. This is promoted through our inclusive values and practice by:

- Providing a warm welcome for the children and their parents/carers, providing encouragement and reassurance that STEPS is a safe, inclusive and caring environment.
- Ensuring that parents/carers understand the local, national and specialist educational system which their child will become a part of.
- Providing children and families with effective multilingual information about STEPS, future schools, transitions and local support agencies.
- Recording and sharing relevant information about a child's background and previous educational experiences, including trauma, adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and engaging with the appropriate supporting agencies.
- Acknowledging and celebrating the skills, knowledge and achievement of pupils attending the STEPS Centre.
- Developing strategies to encourage language acquisition, confidence and positive, healthy relationships.
- Encouraging the pupils to share their experiences of their country of origin and displaying and celebrating examples of the student's language and images of their home country.
- The consideration of pupil and parent voice in the strategic development of the STEPS Centre and its provision.

New Arrivals

The majority of International New Arrivals speak and use English as an additional language. The pupils demonstrate a wide range of receptive and expressive use of the English Language, in addition to their wide-ranging differences in educational experiences and opportunities. Children may have identified or unidentified special education needs and disabilities, social and economic barriers, and adverse childhood experiences and safeguarding needs.

Formative and summative assessment opportunities are integrated into the STEPS curriculum offer and are used to support schools in their judgements of the support that pupils will need when they transition to their new school. We will also monitor attendance, learning behaviours, barriers to learning, such as SEND needs, and safeguarding concerns. The aim is to give a holistic view of the child and their needs, to ensure successful inclusion and achievement in their new school.

At STEPS we are committed to providing appropriate and personalised support for all children who are learning English as an additional Language. Throughout their time at STEPS, we will differentiate support and challenge children appropriately, so they are able to fulfil their learning potential. This includes offering a challenging curriculum for international students who speak English as their first language. We imbed opportunities to improve their fluency in listening and speaking, reading, writing and understanding English within structured lessons and social time.

The STEPS Induction Process

- An application will be submitted by the family for a Sandwell school place. They must be a resident of Sandwell. The residency will be confirmed through checking the Local Authority to which council tax is paid. The application forms can be found at: <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/school-admissions>
- or they can be collected and submitted directly at the STEPS centre.
- An application is submitted to Sandwell admissions. A copy of the application will be sent the STEPS centre if they cannot find a school place within a reasonable distance.
- After 20 days, admissions will send the application to Fair Access.
- The family will be contacted by the STEPS centre for a family interview. This interview is usually offered within 7 days of receiving the application.
- At the initial interview, STEPS staff will collect detailed information about the child/family. If there is a safeguarding concern, or family need, we will signpost the family to the appropriate agency at this time.
- Parents/Carers and their child will be given a tour of the centre on the interview day. Parents will also be given a timetable of adult ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) and Support classes.
- Parents and children will be given a start date and information when the next Fair Access Panel will be to consider a suitable placement for the child.
- Staff will share relevant information with parents about STEPS policies and procedures and where these can be accessed on the council website i.e. attendance, non-attendance procedures, Safeguarding Policy and disclosures, STEPS Behaviour Policy, bus pass procedure etc.
- Parents/carers will be given details of their Key Worker – name, telephone number.
- Staff will explain the process of allocating school places and admission into schools, including the appeals process and the processes if they choose not to engage with STEPS.
- STEPS will support the applications of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for pupils who have significant special educational needs and disabilities. STEPS will also work collaboratively with Inclusion Support to ensure they are informed and support transition to new schools.
- Staff will share the complaints procedure.
- STEPS will ensure Synergy is regularly and accurately updated with start date, end date and base centre.

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Staff will demonstrate their inclusive values and practices and will:

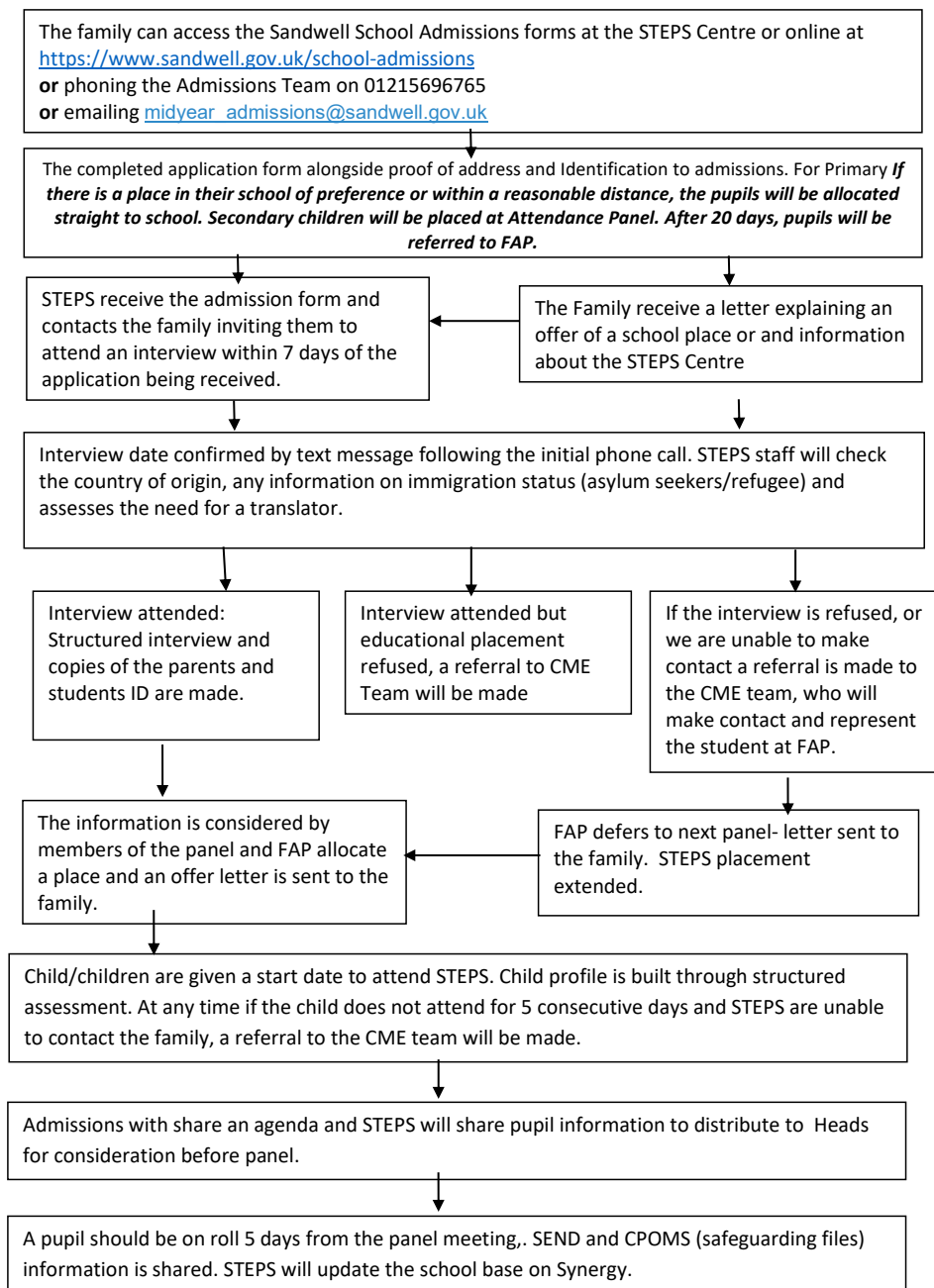
- Be welcoming and supportive to help the child settle in and feel comfortable and safe.
- Take time to talk to the new arrival, being aware that sometimes children do not make direct eye contact as it is considered disrespectful.
- Ensure the pronunciation of the name is correct and seek help/guidance as necessary.

- Facilitate a positive induction experience through encouraging friendships, using sensitive grouping and the prior interview information.
- Liaise with the STEPS Manager/ STEPS EAL teachers to ascertain what support may be available and discuss what resources are available.
- Conduct observational and formal assessments for each child around their English language and mathematical skills using the assessment toolkit.

In instances where families choose not to engage with STEPS:

- All children waiting for a school place are allocated to a member of the CME Team. If a family choose not to engage with STEPS the family will be contacted, usually visited, by the CME Team and they will gain as much information as possible, to be able to represent the student at Fair Access Panel and provide support for the transition to the allocated school.
- If a family chooses to attend an interview, but not take the offer of an educational placement, the information will be shared with the CME Link and the Fair Access Team.

INA School Application process and STEPS – Primary and Secondary



Related Policies

This document must be read, used, and applied alongside the school policies and procedures referred to below:

- Attendance Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy
- Equality Policy and Objectives
- Accessibility Plan
- Accessibility Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Young Carers Policy