SHAPE HOUSE

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Review Log:

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Updated by:	Approved by:	Date:	Review Date:
Chris Medwell Jamie Christian	Jane Cox	06/11/25	06/11/26
Chris Medwell Jamie Christian	Jane Cox	31/08/2026	31/08/2027

SHAPE HOUSE
DONCASTER

Alternative Provision Admissions/Onboarding Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the process for onboarding new learners into the Alternative Provision. The aim is to ensure a smooth transition, establish clear expectations, and provide appropriate support for students, families, and staff.

Shape House Doncaster

At Shape House, we believe every child and young person deserves to feel safe, heard, and inspired to learn. Through therapeutic outdoor experiences, creative arts, and practical activities, we nurture confidence, empathy, and resilience. Our child-led approach empowers learners aged 11–16 with special educational needs and disabilities to take ownership of their journey, develop essential life skills, and rediscover the joy of learning. We equip them with the tools to communicate, collaborate, think creatively, and plan for a future where they can thrive —whether reintegrating into education or stepping forward into the wider world.

Shape House is an Alternative Provision (AP) for Children and Young People aged 11-16 with SEND who require placement in a setting other than school.

Admissions Criteria

Prior to a placement at Shape House, the Local Authority must fully consult in line with its statutory obligations.

Placements at Shape House will be funded in line with Local Authority procedures. Placements may be arranged via Local Authority procurement platforms, via SEND Placement Panel or direct entry via school.

Places will be available throughout the academic year where capacity allows. Placements will usually last between 12-36 weeks with agreement from the Local Authority and Roll School.

Shape House will liaise with the Local Authority and Schools to ensure the placement meets the needs of the child/young person and that the provision can offer suitable short-term education.

Shape House will always ensure that parents and the commissioning Local Authority are kept informed when the provision is considering refusing an admission. Shape House will be clear with both parents and the Local Authority about the reasons underpinning a potential refusal.

SHAPE HOUSE
DONCASTER

Admissions Criteria/Priority Placements

Shape House will always take into consideration capacity and whether a placement has any impact on the efficient use of resources or impact on efficient education of the child young person, or impact on the education of other children/young people accessing the provision.

Consideration will always need to be given to the numbers in - and profile of current placements.

Shape House will work with the local authority, commissioning, schools and other professionals on priority referrals. Where individuals with High Needs or those with less notice are identified for referral, we have a bank of staff identified for recruiting and experienced and qualified staff who will be able to support at short notice. We are flexible in our approach to referrals and will look at referrals on a case-by-case basis to best support and meet needs.

Objectives

- To provide a consistent, supportive, and structured induction for all new learners.
- To gather essential information to support safeguarding, learning, and wellbeing.
- To build positive relationships with learners and their families.
- To set clear expectations around behaviour, attendance, and engagement.

Pre-Onboarding

- Referral review: Assess referral paperwork, EHCP (if applicable), and background reports.
- Risk assessment: Identify safeguarding or behavioural concerns.
- Placement agreement: Confirm placement objectives with referring school/LA.
- Parent/Carer contact: Initial call or meeting to introduce the provision and address questions.

Onboarding Process (First Week)

Day One

- Welcome meeting with learner, parent/carer, and key staff member.
- Tour of provision and introductions to staff/peers.
- Issue of induction pack (timetable, behaviour policy, safeguarding contacts, expectations).
- Completion of baseline assessments (academic, wellbeing, social/emotional).

First Week Activities

- Low-stakes settling activities to reduce anxiety.
- Completion of a personal learning plan (PLP/ILP) outlining academic goals, support needs, and personal development targets.

SHAPE HOUSE
DONCASTER

Roles & Responsibilities

- Senior Leader/Manager: Oversees onboarding, ensures policy compliance.
- Key Worker: First point of contact for learner/family, monitors progress.
- Teaching Staff: Deliver induction curriculum and assess baseline levels.
- Safeguarding Lead: Ensures all safeguarding information is updated and acted upon.

6. Documentation

- Learner profile (academic, behavioural, medical, SEN).
- Risk assessment.
- Personal Learning Plan.
- Placement agreement signed by parent/carer, referring school, and AP.

Monitoring & Review

- First Review: Within 6 weeks, a meeting with learner, parent/carer, and referrer to assess progress.
- Ongoing Monitoring: Weekly mentor check-ins and termly reviews.
- Exit Strategy: Where appropriate, clear plan for reintegration or next steps.

Attendance at Shape House

Attendance is closely monitored at Shape House with confirmation of attendance communicated to schools by 10.30am at the latest.

If any attendance concerns arise, schools and local authority commissioners will be notified and concerns recorded on CPOMS.

Persistent absences would be classed as a cause for concern, Shape House Staff would offer outreach support for families in order to reengage children and Young people. Centre Leads would work closely with schools, LA Commissioners, families and the child/young person to identify barriers or needs related to learning, or any safeguarding concerns that are leading to persistent absences.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with guidance (e.g. DfE guidance on alternative provision) and best practice.

SHAPE HOUSE
DONCASTER

