



Admissions Policy and Procedure	
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and Philosophy

Ruskin Mill Trust offers holistic learning opportunities to pupils and students through role modelling positive relationships in the fields of arts, crafts, commerce, agriculture, nutrition, living skills and the environment with pathway support onto further education bespoke to the individual.

Since 1987, the Trust has developed its unique brand of expertise working with young people with complex behaviour, and learning difficulties and disabilities including the autistic spectrum and conditions. Our provisions offer both day and residential placements and we accept admission applications all year round.

Grace Garden School is offers outdoor learning opportunities through our Steiner-inspired holistic curriculum which provides the skills, experience and character necessary for young people aged 9-16 years old with complex needs to flourish and thrive in modern society. The school, located on the outskirts of Bristol on an 18 acre farm, is a place of therapeutic learning and growing which brings together hand, heart and head to support personal development and progression.

1.2 Ruskin Mill Trust Vision and Values

Our Vision

That each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

Our Values

We value inclusive learning and living activities that integrate practical activity, thinking and our emotions.

We value mutual respect and we strive to understand all people's differences and uniqueness.

We value the capacity for re-imagination present in all people, towards positive change and development.

We value openness, goodwill, tolerance and treating individuals with dignity and respect.

Signed by:

Helen Kippax
Board of Trustees

Date:

Executive Principal

Date:

2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

- **Applicant**
Any person who shows an interest in taking up a place at one of the Ruskin Mill Trust (the Trust) provisions or registered subsidiary thereof. Where the applicant is a child or an adult at risk the term 'applicant' includes those with parental or legal responsibility for them
- **RMT Provision**
One of the schools, colleges or residential care provisions operated by Ruskin Mill Trust or its subsidiary companies. Details about all of the RMT Provisions can be found at www.rmt.org
- **Provision leader**
The person with overall responsibility for the safe and effective management of the RMT Provision. This might be a college principal, a school head teacher, a head of operations or a residential manager or someone appointed by the Trustees to act within this position
- **Provision residential leader**
The person with overall responsibility for the safe and effective management of the residential provision associated with a RMT Provision. This might be a Head of Residential or a school Head of Care
- **Student**
Any person on the role of one of the RMT Provisions. This might be a school pupil, a college student or a service user at a residential care provision
- **Grace Garden School (GGS)**
Grace Garden School (GGS) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ruskin Mill Trust. It is registered with Ofsted for Education and Social Care and provides accommodation to a small number of children who attend the school in a Children's home.
- **Admissions team**
The group of staff members at each RMT Provision who are responsible for gaining and sharing the information needed for the Provision leader and Provision Residential Leader where appropriate and their colleagues to make an informed decision about offering a place to an applicant.
- **Senior Management Team**
The senior staff at each RMT Provision who consider all the information about an applicant and who support the Provision leader and the Residential Provision Leader in their decision about offering a place to an applicant.

3. POLICY

This policy document aims to provide information about how people can apply for a place at one of the Ruskin Mill Trust (hereafter, RMT or 'the Trust') Provisions.

The following principles are used to inform the Trust's admissions process:

- i) The Trust will consider an application for placement from, or in connection with, any individual regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, social status, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment as long as they are willing and able to engage in the curriculum offered and they and others can be kept safe.
- ii) After consideration, The Trust may offer the applicant an assessment to include both day provision and residential if appropriate. If an assessment is not offered, the reasons will be explained to the applicant and / or those with Parental Responsibility, as appropriate.
- iii) If agreed, the Trust will gather information about the applicant's capabilities, needs and interest, including information about any risk that the placement might pose to the applicant or to others. The Trust will use this information to decide whether it is able to meet the needs of the applicant. For applicants who are in the care of their local authorities, this will include all relevant information about their legal status.
- iv) The Trust will ensure that the applicant and those who are responsible for them are kept informed throughout the admissions process.
- v) The Trust will identify the cost of each placement based on the applicant's needs. This will either be the College placement fee, or, if a risk assessment indicates that this is necessary, an enhanced fee. This is to ensure that sufficient support and correct provision is in place for each individual. The Trust will provide local authorities and other funding agencies with qualifying information to justify the level of funding requested.
- vi) The Trust will provide clear guidelines to applicants about what is expected from them and what they can expect from the Trust and the Provision where their placement is based. These guidelines are set out in the Student Handbook. This will include guidelines related to the following areas which apply to both the educational setting and to any residential provision that is offered:
 - a. Attendance
 - b. Behaviour
 - c. Use of mobile phones and electronic equipment
 - d. Access to TV and video games
 - e. Food and Nutrition
 - f. Health and medical
 - g. Expectations within the household
 - h. Communication

- i. Confidentiality and information sharing
 - j. Levels of support
 - k. Engagement in activities and household routines
 - l. Reviews
 - m. Information about Transitions if appropriate and at the completion of the placement
- vii) The Trust will work with the applicant and, where appropriate, those who are responsible for them, to ensure appropriate and relevant information sharing is agreed and that information is shared in a timely and agreed manner.
- viii) The Trust will ensure that, where the placement includes residential provision, all relevant information will be shared with its residential service provider, Grace Garden Children's Home (unless the residential provision is operated by the provision where the placement is to take place).
- ix) In the event of new or unexpected risks becoming apparent during any visits that take place to the provision as part of the admission and assessment process, the Trust will:
- a. review the visit arrangement and work with the applicant and those who are responsible for them to make sure the visit is safe to continue until new arrangements can be put in place for the applicant
 - b. take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the safety of the applicant and others at the provision, until the visit arrangements can be reviewed or additional support provided.
 - c. In extreme circumstance, terminate the assessment.

4. ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The Trust provisions provide staff expertise and specialist facilities to meet the needs of students with a range of special educational needs and complex learning difficulties or disabilities, particularly those associated with developmental delay and difficulties in the areas of communication, behaviour and emotional stability. They may have an identified condition such as Asperger's Syndrome, Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Attachment Disorder or a complex profile with conditions that co-exist with one or more special educational need or mental health difficulties.

The provisions are unlikely to be able to offer a place to an applicant whose needs could not be catered for by the facilities available or whose condition or behaviour would pose an unacceptable threat to the welfare, health and safety of the school's students or staff.

Examples would include those with serious eating disorders, those with a history of serious substance or drug misuse, seriously sexualized behaviours or those with a known history of serious violence towards others especially with the use of weapons.

5. PROCEDURES

The following outlines the basic procedure for admissions to one of the Trust provisions.

5.1 Initial Enquiry

The applicant student or any people or agencies who are speaking on their behalf (for instance parents or carers, schools, Local Authorities or careers advisors) can make an initial enquiry about placements at one of the Trust's provisions. During the initial enquiry, the admissions team at the Trust provision will:

- a. make sure that the applicant or the individual making the enquiry on their behalf understands the provision offered at the provision that is being requested. This relates in particular to the curriculum and to the residential provision where this is appropriate
- b. begin to gather information about the needs and interests of the applicant
- c. make an initial decision about whether or not the enquiry should proceed
- d. advise that Local Authorities or their representatives are informed of their desire or plan to apply
- e. Book a visit.

5.2 Initial Visit

If the initial enquiry indicates a placement might be possible, the applicant, together with their family or the people who support them are invited for an initial visit to the provision. This is to ensure the applicant gains a clear understanding of what is on offer, and has an opportunity to speak with some of students and staff at the provision. Relevant information will be entered into the Trust's database.

5.3 Pre-entry assessment and information sharing

Following the initial visit, if all parties agree that that the placement is likely to be suitable, then an application form is completed by the referring authority, their representatives, parents, legal guardian or current placement. A copy of the Education and Health Care Plan will be requested and they will seek information from the applicant and from a range of individuals and professionals who know about the applicant's abilities, needs and interests. Where the applicant is subject to any kind of legal requirement (for example, if the applicant is in the care of their local authority under section 20 or section 31 of the 1989 Children Act) the admissions team will ensure that the relevant local authority safeguarding board is aware of the application and that all relevant information has been provided. Where the applicant lives in a different local authority area from where the Trust provision is situated, then both safeguarding boards will be contacted. Relevant information will be entered into the Trust's database.

5.4 Initial risk assessment

The admissions team at the provision will seek to find out whether the applicant might pose a risk to others or whether they might be vulnerable to harm from others. This information is important in helping the provision decide how establish a successful placement, if one is offered. The initial risk assessment is completed prior to assessment and entered into the Trust's database.

5.5 Assessment visit

The information gathered and the initial risk assessment is considered by the provision's Senior Management Team or nominated senior staff members. If the team agrees that a placement is likely to be successful the applicant is invited for an assessment visit. During this visit the applicant will take part in learning sessions at the provision and, if it is appropriate, may be invited to stay over in the provision residential provision.

5.6 Post Assessment

Staff in the provision and, if appropriate, the residence will enter their findings from the Assessment into the Trust's database. The Admissions team will collate the findings and report to the Senior Management Team or nominated senior staff as to how the applicant got on with the activities they took part in and whether they think the provision can meet the applicant's needs and progress to outcomes specified in the Education and Health Care Plan. They will also report on the applicant's own views about their visit and whether they want to take up a placement at the provision.

In addition, they will report on whether the applicant and, if appropriate, the people who are responsible for them, have agreed to the Trust's guidelines as set out in the Student Handbook. In addition to meeting outcomes, the Senior Management Team will consider whether the applicant might pose a risk to others or be at risk of harm themselves. If so, the Senior Management Team will draw up a plan to identify the actions and / or resources that will be needed to mitigate those risks. At this meeting the leader of the provision will decide whether to offer a place to the applicant, and if so, whether any special conditions are required. Where the placement includes residential provision, the provision leader will not decide to offer a place until the provision residential leader has agreed that the placement should be offered. The fee for the placement is established at this meeting and a tracking sheet completed and signed by the provision leader.

5.7 Information Sharing

Following the decision to offer a place, the admissions team will make sure that all relevant people and agencies are informed about the placement offer and, if any specific risks have been identified, how the provision will respond. Agencies contacted might include the relevant safeguarding boards of both the home and the host local authorities and those responsible for ensuring a suitable care plan is in place, if this is appropriate. Where the placement offered includes residential provision the Trust's residential provider, Grace Garden School, will be provided with full information about the applicant student's capabilities, needs and interests.

5.8 Offer of placement

Where an offer of placement is made by the provision leader of the provision, this will be in writing. A start date is suggested or arranged by mutual agreement. Written details of the cost and the terms and conditions of the placement are communicated to the relevant funding authorities. This document forms the basis of the contract between the Trust and

the funding authority responsible for paying for the placement. This offer is recorded in the admissions folders accordingly and where appropriate logged on the Trust's database.

5.9 Placement planning

Information gathered about the capabilities, needs and interests of the applicant will be used to inform the planning of the applicant's new placement. The plan will outline the education and residential care provision as appropriate and will identify any additional targeted support arrangements that are required. This plan will be reviewed by the provision leader and the relevant team of staff who work with the student at least once each term throughout their placement. The residential and day staff will work closely together to prepare for the start of any new placement, and placements will not be started until appropriate staff and support are in place. Any relevant information and plans to be recorded in the relevant admissions and college folders and where appropriate logged on the Trust's database.

6. DATA PROTECTION

All data collected during the admissions process is subject to the Data Protection Act and will be stored securely.

7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy and information report will be reviewed by [name of role/individual] every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the Executive Team.

Impact of Non-Compliance For:

Staff	Disciplinary action
Students	Potential risk of harm
Legislation / organization	Reputational damage, litigation, non-regulatory compliance

File Path:	
Dissemination (who will receive the policy):	RMT Admissions Team, Senior Management Teams
Associated Training Requirements:	Assessment training for key staff

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

RMT Equality and Diversity Policy