



**ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSION POLICY  
2026 - 2027**

## Admissions and Inclusion Policy

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| Ownership & Consultation |                                                                                                                   |
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| Version control      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Implementation date  | September 2020 |
| Reviewed and updated | September 2021 |
| Reviewed and updated | September 2022 |
| Reviewed and updated | September 2023 |
| Reviewed and updated | August 2024    |
| Reviewed and updated | August 2025    |
| Reviewed and updated | August 2026    |
| Review Date          | August 2027    |

## ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSION POLICY

### **Introduction:**

Sophia High School has a strong expectation that its students will be successful in their personal learning goals, and that each child's goals will be unique to their strengths and abilities. This policy aims to identify and admit children who will benefit from an online academic education, participate fully in our interactive live lessons with their fellow students and teachers, play a full role in the life of the school and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community.

Sophia High School provides full time online education provision to students who are enrolled on our admissions register. We successfully hosted the UK Department for Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) Quality Advisory Evaluation from Ofsted in September 2023, which led to SHS being the first UK DfE Accredited online education provider. We are also the only online school to be accredited by the Council of British International Schools (COBIS), and the only online school as a member of the UK Independent Schools Association (ISA). All inspection reports are currently on our website.

### **Aims:**

The school will aim to provide an inclusive education in full accordance with the UK Department for Education (DfE's) accreditation and quality assurance for online education providers in the UK. All prospective students undertake online standardised baseline assessments in GL Assessment English (PTE), Maths (PTM), Science (PTS), and the CAT 4 assessment which are primarily designed to reveal facility in English and correct level of instruction. Children with English as a Second Language may also be asked to take part in the Cambridge English Placement Test in order to identify language proficiency and plan next steps in support.

Students also take part in a 1-1 virtual lesson with our team of teachers to ensure it will also help the school identify applicants who have additional learning needs and to ensure that students are able to access and utilise the full range of interactive learning tools and opportunities provided by our online learning programme.

Students who are commissioned by UK Local Authorities, schools or families, to support the Alternative Provision mandate, will be enrolled through a personalised programme of Induction, which meets the needs of the student, provides insights into their strengths and challenges, and allows them to best transition to online learning.

Sophia High School believes that:

- Every child has a right to access quality education.
- A diverse learning community is enhanced by the special gifts and talents of every member. We embrace the differences and challenges that each child brings.
- We value the uniqueness of each child and offer places to a student cohort with a wide range of abilities who will thrive within the online programmes offered and benefit from contributions to our interactive live lessons environment.
- There should be equal opportunity for every student to participate in all activities.
- Through close collaboration with parents, we meet the needs of those students and families who are seeking quality education in accordance with the DFE requirements for Online Education providers.
- A high expectation of academic, personal, cultural and social achievement is conveyed to all through our Values and Aims, which drive the learning at Sophia High School.

### **Equal Treatment:**

We welcome children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our school community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all our pupils to attend all assemblies and team meetings, and to take part in the full range of curricular subjects on offer. All pupils attend live lessons with their cameras and audio on (unless agreed prior to joining lessons with the DILAP) and participate in interactive learning both visually and through audio input to lessons with their teachers and peers.

Not all children will be suitable for the online programmes offered at Sophia High School. Some may fall outside of the boundaries of assistance which can be offered with a defined level of additional support.

### **Disability and Special Educational Needs:**

Sophia High School is committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, to support disabled applicants and those with additional learning needs to access both the admissions process and the educational provision offered by the school.

As an interactive online school, students are expected to participate in live lessons using audio and visual communication. Whilst reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, the use of the chat function alone is not generally considered sufficient for participation in lessons due to safeguarding requirements, assessment of learning and the interactive nature of the school's educational provision.

We need to be aware of any known disability or additional learning needs which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the online education provided. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational need should provide us with full details prior to the admissions procedure at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place.

Sophia High School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with a particular need, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the reasonable adjustments which may be made to ensure that the application procedure is accessible for the child and that Sophia High School can cater adequately for the child's needs should an offer of a place be made.

Sophia High School will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. For example, we may be able to provide assessment materials in alternative formats for visually impaired applicants or utilise accessibility features and assistive technologies to support participation in the admissions process.

Similarly, if an additional learning need or a disability become apparent after admission, we will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at Sophia High School, where appropriate, relevant professionals regarding reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue to access and benefit from education at Sophia High School.

### **Alternative Provision**

Alternative Provision encompasses various educational options outside mainstream school settings, including online education provision for students from Key Stage 1 through to post-16 education. Such provision is designed to meet the needs of students who may benefit from a different approach to learning due to a range of educational, medical, social, emotional or personal circumstances.

Alternative Provision providers are required to comply with relevant independent school standards, safeguarding requirements and registration processes where applicable. Local Authorities and commissioning bodies may undertake quality assurance processes to ensure that providers meet appropriate standards of educational quality, safeguarding and student welfare.

Sophia High School provides online alternative education, through live, interactive lessons delivered by appropriately qualified teachers. The programme is designed to support students who may benefit from a flexible learning environment, personalised pathways, or access to a broader range of courses and qualifications.

Sophia High School accepts students commissioned by Local Authorities, schools and families, with a range of identified needs. These may include physical disabilities, additional learning needs, mental health needs, emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), medical needs and requirements specified within an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The school has a Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning to support the admission and induction of students accessing Alternative Provision. This ensures that an appropriate assessment of need is undertaken, safeguarding considerations are reviewed, and reasonable adjustments are considered prior to an offer of a place being made.

### **Application:**

When you have read the Prospectus and the Standard Terms and Conditions, please complete the online Student Registration Form in order to register your interest in a place for your child at Sophia High School. The online Student Registration Form must be signed by a parent and then returned to the School, together with a Registration Fee of £120 GBP.

This registration fee is required in order for your child to be assessed for entrance at Sophia High School. Registration Fees are non-refundable.

### **Assessment:**

All children who apply for a place at Sophia High School are invited to take part in an assessment with members of the Senior Leadership Team; this involves an assessment of child's current attainment and learning profile, together with discussions to explore the child's interests, attitude to learning, ability to engage successfully within an online education environment, personal qualities, ability to contribute positively to the school community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the school. The assessment process also helps the school to identify any additional learning needs, disabilities, medical needs or reasonable adjustments that may require consideration. The School will also require the child's most recent school report and may request further information from the child's current or previous school regarding academic progress, attendance, wellbeing and social development where appropriate.

At Sophia High School we recognise that the way children learn is highly individual, and it is important that all teachers use a range of strategies and differentiation to allow each child to successfully access the online programmes at Sophia High School. In light of this, the Admissions Team uses a range of activities and facilitates different opportunities for children to allow them to best highlight their strengths during the assessment process.

All students, either prior to entry or upon entry (wherever possible) take the GL Assessment PTE, PTM, PTS and CAT 4. Sophia High School is the only online school with permission from GL to run the full suite of their online assessments. Students are required to have their cameras switched on, with their face visible throughout the assessment, and to remain connected to the online platform for the duration of the assessment in order to maintain the integrity of the assessment process and support safeguarding requirements.

Standardised assessments are administered online to provide nationally and internationally benchmarked attainment data based on age-related expectations. These assessment outcomes provide a baseline from which Sophia High School can identify individual strengths, areas for development and appropriate learning pathways for each student upon entry to the school. Assessments are administered in accordance with the recommended schedule throughout a student's time at Sophia High School to monitor attainment, track progress and inform teaching and learning.

Children in the Foundation Programme need a chance to explore their environment and become engaged at their own pace during the Admissions process. The Assessment process for these children allows them to participate in developmentally appropriate activities online which encourage them to move, participate, speak (if comfortable doing so), listen, collaborate, build, manipulate, and use the live online learning environment technology. The small group setting encourages children to quickly develop a reassuring bond with peers and teacher, and also highlights their developing social skills.

Key Stage 2 and 3 (Y3 – Y9) children also need time to relax in the new setting and so the Admissions process for these children should also encourage their participation in a range of activities at their own pace. By using a range of strategies such as discussions, online tests, creative activities and use of live online learning environments, children are engaged in different ways to allow their confidence to develop and their strengths to show. Opportunities to encourage individual creativity are facilitated, alongside collaborative activities where cooperation and teamwork are required with the teacher leading the session.

Key Stage 4 students (Y10 - Y11) take part in the GL CAT4 standardised assessments. These assessments provide valuable information about a student's learning potential, strengths and preferred learning approaches, and help form the basis of discussion with parents regarding appropriate subject choices, academic targets and individual learning pathways.

English as an Additional Language support may be required for some students entering Sophia High School. Students whose first language is not English may demonstrate strengths across a wide range of curriculum areas, and it is important that the admissions process provides opportunities for them to demonstrate their abilities and potential. Through discussions, assessment activities and engagement with teachers during the admissions process, the school will identify students who may benefit from EAL support and establish an appropriate baseline from which progress can be monitored and support planned.

Prior to accepting a registration fee, the school reserves the right to administer an English language assessment to determine whether a child has the level of English proficiency required to access the curriculum successfully, or whether additional English as an Additional Language (EAL) support may be required. Children, and their parents, will be required to sign up to the school terms and conditions to secure an offer of a place.

The School must be satisfied that students who apply for the school will benefit from the online learning environment and interactive digital learning tools used via Google Classroom and be able to access the full breadth of the curriculum in order for a place to be offered. Sophia High School carefully assesses whether it can reasonably meet the needs of each applicant within its online learning environment. Where additional support is required, the school will work with families and relevant professionals to determine whether appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments can be made to support the student's successful participation in school life.

Due to the collaborative nature of the school's online learning model, the School must be confident that a positive and constructive partnership can be established with parents/carers in the best interests of the student before an offer of a place is made

Alternative Provision students commissioned by Local Authorities, schools or families will also participate in a series of informal induction and 'getting to know you' sessions prior to their start date. An individual induction programme may be implemented to support a successful transition into the school and to ensure that identified needs are appropriately understood and supported.

Where appropriate, GL Assessments may be delayed or adapted in accordance with the student's identified needs, including requirements specified within an EHCP or in relation to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Priority:

Subject to satisfactory assessment outcomes and acceptance of the School's Terms and Conditions, priority for places will normally be given in the following order:

- Students already enrolled at the School;
- Applicants who apply before the end of January of the preceding academic year;
- Applicants for whom the School is satisfied that the online provision can appropriately meet their educational needs;
- Applications received thereafter on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to availability.

In the event of oversubscription at the end of January of the preceding academic year, priority will normally be given in the following order:

- Siblings of students already enrolled at the School; and
- Children of staff employed by the School.

Children with Additional Learning Needs may require additional assessment, professional advice or specialist input during the admissions process. Working closely with families, the School Leadership Team and relevant support agencies is therefore important from the outset to ensure that a clear understanding of the student's needs is established.

Applications from students with identified Additional Learning Needs will be reviewed by the Executive Principal, Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning, Registrar and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team to determine whether the school can appropriately meet the student's needs through its online educational provision and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

During the admissions process, the Admissions Team may identify that a child could benefit from additional learning support or reasonable adjustments in order to access the school's online learning environment successfully. In such circumstances, further assessment or consultation may be undertaken, including involvement of the Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning where appropriate.

Early identification of additional learning needs is important in ensuring that appropriate support and provision can be considered. The school is committed to working collaboratively with parents/carers and, where appropriate, relevant professionals to explore suitable strategies and reasonable adjustments that support the student's successful participation in school life.

### **Disclosures:**

Parents/carers must, as soon as reasonably practicable, disclose any known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, disability, medical needs or additional learning needs that may be relevant to the admissions process or the student's educational provision.

### **Offer:**

If the School decides to offer the child a place, a confirmation letter along with an Acceptance Form will be sent to the family. To accept the offered place, a completed Acceptance Form together with any required identification and registration documentation must be submitted in accordance with the School's admissions and regulatory requirements.

The decision to offer a place is at the discretion of the School Education Team. Offers may be withdrawn by the School should parents breach the Parent Terms and Conditions at any time.

### **Deposit:**

A deposit is also required to secure the place; details of deposit are outlined within the offer letter.

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|------------------------|-------|
| Families in the UK     | £1000 |
| International Families | £1000 |

### **Deposit and Cancellation:**

Please refer to the School's Terms and Conditions for information regarding how the Deposit will be held and the circumstances in which it may be refunded. Further information regarding cancellation of an accepted place is also contained within the School's Terms and Conditions.

### **Not Offered:**

Where an application is unsuccessful, the School will communicate its decision to the family using the most appropriate method of contact. Families whose applications are unsuccessful may request a discussion with a member of the Leadership Team or Admissions Team to seek further information regarding the decision.

### **Attendance:**

In accordance with the School's Attendance Policy and applicable Department for Education expectations, the School monitors and records attendance for all students in each lesson. Attendance is expected to be at 90% or above, 95% is the target for all students. Students are able to access recording of live online lessons should attending in person not be available due to approved absence or illness.

Attendance for commissioned Alternative Provision students is monitored in every lesson and attendance information is shared with the commissioning school, Local Authority or other commissioning body in accordance with agreed reporting arrangements. We track attendance through access to the Google Classroom and through our MIS system online attendance system: Athena which allows us to keep an accurate record of date/time of lesson attendance, and also if a student leaves prior to the end of the lesson. Parents/carers will be contacted where attendance concerns arise, patterns of absence emerge, or where a student appears to be experiencing difficulties engaging with their education. This section should be read in conjunction with the School's Attendance Policy, which sets out the school's attendance expectations, monitoring procedures and arrangements for supporting student engagement.

### **Exclusion:**

By registering a child for a place at the School, parents/carers agree to support the School's policies, procedures and expectations, and to encourage their child to engage positively with their learning and the wider school community.

Where concerns arise regarding a student's attendance, engagement, conduct or behaviour, the School will seek to work collaboratively with the student and their parents/carers to identify appropriate support and interventions.

In exceptional circumstances, where concerns cannot be resolved and the School considers that it is no longer able to meet the student's needs appropriately, or where continued attendance would be incompatible with the efficient education of other students or the welfare of the school community, the School reserves the right to withdraw a student's place in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions and relevant policies.

This section should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour and Exclusions Policy.

**Sibling Policy:**

The School offers priority consideration for siblings of students already enrolled at the School, in accordance with the Admissions Policy. Parents/carers are responsible for informing the School if they wish a sibling to be considered for admission.

Where two or more siblings attend the School at the same time, a sibling discount may be available in accordance with the School's current Fee Structure. Further details can be found in the School's Fee Structure document available on the School website.

**Parental Contract:**

This admissions and inclusion policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Parental Terms and Conditions.

The current version of the school's Terms and Conditions can be found on the school website: [www.sophiahigh.school](http://www.sophiahigh.school)