

## **Admissions Policy (Academy21)**

2024-2025

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## Policy Aims and School Vision

### The Inspired Philosophy

As part of the Inspired Group, we are also guided by the philosophy of the Inspired Group:

- *A child's education is the single most important consideration for any parent or carer.*
- *At Inspired, we believe that it is an individual's total educational experience that instils the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that they will carry with them for life.*
- *We believe that this set of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values, instilled by education, will form the basis of how we approach the future.*

Inspired schools believe that these are the foundations on which we build and plan our lives. At King's InterHigh (KIH) and Academy21 (A21), we welcome students with varied plans, including attending university, or college, obtaining an apprenticeship, or going into the workplace. Being part of Inspired allows us to cater for our rich and varied student community through an inclusive and positive approach that maintains high expectations of all our students with their aspirations.

### Admissions principles

- A21 as an alternative provision is committed to welcoming students from all backgrounds, needs and prior experiences. We admit students who are on roll with a physical school/local authority (LA) and who are seeking an alternative provision, often to reengage them with education. Students will remain on roll with their physical setting whilst accessing our provision. We ensure equal consideration for all potential admissions under the Equalities Act, fulfilling our duties to safeguard against discrimination related to protected characteristics.
- Our students typically come from schools across England and Wales. We offer a curriculum for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4: our typical age range is 11-17, however, we can admit students outside of this age range either via the primary or sixth form offer at our sister school, KIH, or into A21 if students are under 20.
- To comply with safeguarding regulations, we seek to identify whether there are any adjustments required in relation to protected characteristics; for example, we check the preferred name for young adults who are gender questioning.
- Upon admission, we seek to identify any children/young adults who may be particularly vulnerable due to safeguarding concerns, additional needs, mental and physical health concerns or other needs and circumstances. Our enrolment system alerts us with a notification from physical schools when a student is potentially in greater need: for example, a young person looked after by the LA, a care leaver, a child or young person with a social worker, a young carer or a student residing in private fostering arrangements would all be flagged to us. At the point of registration, we ask mentors to state their child(ren)'s particular interests and any medical or special educational needs so that we can plan for admission and how we might look to meet those needs.

- We are fully flexible in terms of the timing of admissions and accept admissions all year round, often at short notice if that is of benefit to the partner/student. Upon receipt of all required details from schools or LAs, we target a 2-working day enrolment unless unforeseen issues arise. We aim to provide a swift and effective enrolment process to provide the alternative provision young people, and their schools need as quickly as possible.
- Students for whom English is an additional language should please note that our courses are all taught through the medium of English and delivered by English-speaking, UK-qualified teachers. We are fully inclusive but need to draw your attention to the implication this has for students whose proficiency in English may be limited.
- If mentors in physical schools wish us to consider a student's placement in a year group other than the chronological one, this can be requested via the enrolment form. For details on 'out-of-year study' placements and the related regulations around safeguarding, see our Admission Protocol – Out of Year Study Policy, available on our website.
- We are an inclusive provider and can admit students who, for a number of reasons, are unable to find or be admitted into school provisions elsewhere. Our starting position is always to seek to admit. However, A21 reserve the right to not proceed with the admission of a student if, on careful review from a safeguarding perspective, the admission may be deemed detrimental to other students, or it is clear that online learning is not in the best interests of the individual. We would always communicate our process of decision-making to the prospective client to ensure all factors are considered.

## Admissions process

- Admissions to A21 are handled on a rolling basis throughout the year. Mentors from schools/LAs can enrol new students through the A21 Admin Centre accessed through the Mentor Portal. Our Client Services Team is available to support enrolment queries. When enrolling a student they are required to complete three key stages:

### **Stage 1 Student Details**

Including: Student information, contact information, prior learning, additional requirements

### **Stage 2 Assign Mentors**

Every student requires a mentor to be assigned to them from the school/LA. Mentors can access students' records within their Mentor Portal. They can be assigned to a single student or multiple students within a school. Each student must have a designated Lead Mentor, a Child Protection Mentor, and if in Key Stages 4 or 5, an Exam Mentor. A single individual can fulfil different roles if necessary.

### **Stage 3 Preferences and Subjects**

Start date, study preferences, further prior learning and other information to support building the student's programme.

- Once all the above is completed, the information supplied is reviewed by the Client Services Team and login details for the student(s) are issued to the nominated mentor, subject to acceptance of the contract terms.
- Occasionally, enquiries may lead to admissions to KIH via A21, for example, a school or LA wishes to place a child in KIH as opposed to A21. All such admissions are processed using a specific registration form that shares details between KIH and A21. KIH leaders then review the potential admission, often a student with additional needs, so the appropriateness of their chosen timetable can be explored and information on their needs can be shared to ensure an effective induction into KIH is possible.

## Admission of students with SEND including those with an Education, Health, and Social Care Plan (EHCP)

- At A21, we may be asked to admit a student who has or is in the process of being issued, an EHCP. All requests for admissions should come from a LA or school, including those for students with EHCPs. We are a proudly inclusive school and have a number of students with EHCPs or undergoing assessment for an EHCP with additional SEND support. More detail on our support for students with EHCPs can be found in our Educational and welfare provision for students with EHCPs on our website.
- Students with an EHCP typically present with a range of complex needs that may involve one or more of communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, and sensory, physical, and medical needs. Consequently, schools and LAs are asked to declare whether the student has an EHCP via the enrolment process and share the plan and any other documentation with us for reference. This may include details such as specialist teaching, counselling, personal assistants, therapies, mentoring, medical interventions, and multi-agency working to aid and monitor student progress. A21 expects that the client can assure that this additional provision outlined in the personalised plan is in place via other providers so that the online learning element of the plan can be as successful as possible. The LA or school commissioning the place at A21 must retain overall responsibility for the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the personalised plan.
- At enrolment, we ask physical schools to share information about a student's specific interests, aptitudes and needs. This includes any details of any special circumstances relating to the student's health, allergies, disabilities, or special educational needs which may be relevant to their participation in the education provided by A21. Early notification of any additional needs or disabilities is of great value, as it will enable all staff to consider whether reasonable adjustments are needed during the admissions process and what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made to support the pupil's future education. In order that Inspired Online Schools is fully compliant with the Equality Act, all staff are made aware of the duties towards children who are disabled and the 'reasonable adjustments' needed for particular children.
- We are a completely inclusive and welcoming provision, which enrolls students from varied backgrounds and with varied need profiles. Our setting allows us to support students so that they can thrive. As a responsible institution, we check our provision is right for each child to ensure that we can support them fully. It needs to be a good fit for them to ensure success. The nature of our provision means that in all but a few circumstances, we are a good fit for a young person and can offer them a place in our alternative provision.
- It is important to note that we are not able to be a named provider on an EHCP (section I): this must be the physical school or authority with statutory responsibility for the outcomes of that EHCP, as this gives protection and continuity to a child with SEND. We are an alternative provision engaged by a named provider in concert with the family to help achieve outcomes on an EHCP – in many cases by providing a full taught curriculum. A21 is not eligible to be a named school or provider as we are not listed in section 38(3) of the Children and Families

Act 2014. A named provider can use funding agreed with their LA for an EHCP to pay for our provision and we are commonly used to meet the outcomes of an EHCP.

- We are guided by the principles and practices of the SEN Code of Practice 2014, applying them where they are relevant to an online independent school. However, we are not bound by the SEN Code of Practice that relates to the statutory responsibilities of LAs and state-funded 'bricks and mortar' schools.
- Information regarding a student's special educational needs, especially where they have an EHCP, will be made available to staff. The EHCP and related information will be stored securely on our student management information system for access by relevant staff.
- A21 can offer students access to the teaching of the National Curriculum through an online learning platform. Our teachers make adaptations to their day-to-day practice that benefit individual students with specific needs. We also protect and promote the health and well-being of each student, ensuring sensitivity to the welfare of those learners with an EHCP. Our school environment is accessible and inclusive educational practices feature in our development plans.

## Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Protocol - Out of Year Study Protocol (Academy21)
- Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy