



**SENSE
INCLUSION**

COACHING – CREATIVE THERAPIES – ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Admissions, Referrals & Attendance Policy & Procedures

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Introduction

Sense Inclusion C.I.C. is a non-school alternative provision and therapeutic service supporting children and young people aged 5–25, including those with SEND, SEMH needs, developmental trauma, anxiety and disrupted experiences of education.

This policy sets out how referrals are considered, how placements are agreed and started, and how attendance is recorded and communicated. Our aim is to make sure that placements are safe, appropriate, well planned and able to offer meaningful engagement for each young person.

Many young people referred to Sense Inclusion have experienced reduced timetables, anxiety-based non-attendance, exclusion, placement breakdown or long periods out of education.

We therefore consider whether a young person can engage safely and sustainably with our relational, trauma-responsive approach rather than expecting immediate full-time attendance.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a clear, fair and consistent referral and admissions process.
- Ensure that we have sufficient information to understand each young person's needs, risks, strengths and interests before a placement begins.
- Make reasonable adjustments and avoid discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure that any placement is compatible with the safety and wellbeing of the young person, other learners and staff.
- Agree clear commissioning, attendance, transport, communication and review arrangements before provision starts.
- Record attendance accurately for every commissioned session and report absence promptly to parents/carers and commissioners.

Our Approach

Sense Inclusion offers a relational, low-arousal and trauma-responsive approach. We use small groups, high staff ratios, consistent adults, flexible activities, sensory and outdoor spaces and individualised support to help young people build trust, regulation and engagement over time.

We recognise that behaviour is often a form of communication. A history of complex behaviour, trauma, SEND or school avoidance does not in itself prevent admission. We consider whether identified risks can be safely managed through planning, staffing, reasonable adjustments and the environment available at Robin Hill.

Where a young person requires a phased start, reduced initial hours or a period of relationship-building, this can be agreed with the commissioner and reviewed as the placement develops.

Equality, SEND and Reasonable Adjustments

All referrals will be considered fairly. No person will be treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

We welcome referrals for children and young people with SEND and will consider reasonable adjustments to the referral process, environment, communication, activities, staffing and timetable. Decisions will be based on whether we can meet needs safely and effectively with the resources and expertise available, not on diagnosis alone.

Referral Routes

Referrals may be received from:

- Local Authorities, including SEND, EOTAS, Alternative Provision and High Needs teams.
- Schools, colleges and other education providers.
- Parents/carers making an initial enquiry. Educational placements will normally require confirmation of funding by the responsible school or Local Authority.
- Young people aged 16–25 making an enquiry about available provision, subject to appropriate funding or commissioning arrangements.

Information Required Before a Placement

Before a placement is agreed, Sense Inclusion will request information relevant to safe and effective support. This may include:

- EHCP and current outcomes, where applicable.
- Recent education, attendance and progress information.
- Relevant professional reports and support plans.
- Safeguarding information that is necessary for us to keep the young person safe.
- Known risks, behaviour support information and existing risk assessments.
- Medical needs, allergies, medication and emergency healthcare information.
- Communication, sensory, mobility and accessibility needs.
- Parent/carer and emergency contact details.
- Transport arrangements and any transport-related risks.
- The young person's strengths, interests, views and preferred ways of being supported.

Referrers are expected to provide information that is accurate and sufficiently complete for Sense Inclusion to make a safe placement decision. If important information is not available, the start of a placement may be delayed until it can be clarified.

Referral and Admission Process

The exact process will be proportionate to the young person and the proposed package. It will usually include the following stages:

- Initial enquiry or consultation with the referrer, parent/carer and/or young person.
- Review of available documentation by appropriate senior staff.
- Discussion with the current school, Local Authority or other professionals where appropriate.
- A visit, introductory session or low-pressure assessment at Robin Hill where this would help the young person and the service assess suitability.
- Consideration of needs, staffing, group compatibility, safety, transport and available capacity.
- Agreement of the proposed package, hours, location, start date, funding and review arrangements.
- Written commissioning confirmation before regular provision begins, unless otherwise agreed by a Director.

Placement Decisions

A placement may be offered where Sense Inclusion is satisfied that the young person's needs can be met safely and meaningfully within the provision available. The decision will consider the young person's needs and wishes, the impact on existing learners, staffing requirements, group compatibility and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

A placement may be declined or deferred where we do not have suitable capacity, where essential information is unavailable, or where risks cannot currently be managed safely within our environment or staffing model. Where possible, we will explain the reason to the referrer and identify whether a different package, staffing level or timing could make the placement suitable.

Starting a Placement

Before the first regular session, the key arrangements should be clear to the young person, family, staff and commissioner. These will include:

- Agreed days, session times and location.
- Named key staff and contact arrangements.
- Transport or collection/drop-off arrangements where applicable.
- Individual risk assessment and relevant support strategies.
- Medical and medication arrangements where required.
- Emergency contacts and consent information.
- How attendance, absence and safeguarding concerns will be communicated.
- Review dates and intended outcomes.

Starts may be phased where this is in the young person's best interests. A phased start is part of planned provision and should be agreed with the commissioner rather than treated as unauthorised non-attendance.

Attendance

Sense Inclusion records attendance for every commissioned session. Attendance information forms part of our safeguarding, quality assurance and reporting arrangements with schools and Local Authorities.

For each session we will record whether the young person:

- Attended as planned.
- Was absent or cancelled.
- Arrived late or left early where this is relevant.
- Was not expected because of an agreed change to the commissioned timetable.

Absence and Welfare Checks

If a young person does not attend an expected session and we have not been informed in advance, staff will contact the parent/carers or responsible contact promptly to establish the reason and confirm the young person's welfare.

Where a young person is on a school roll or commissioned by a Local Authority, unexplained or concerning absence will be communicated to the responsible school or Local Authority contact in line with the agreed placement arrangements.

Repeated absence, inability to make contact, or any concern about a young person's safety will be treated as a safeguarding matter and managed under the Safeguarding Policy.

Sense Inclusion is a non-school alternative provision and does not replace the statutory attendance or registration responsibilities of the school or Local Authority responsible for the young person. We will provide attendance information promptly to support those responsibilities.

Changes, Reviews and Ongoing Suitability

Placements are reviewed in partnership with the young person, family and commissioner. Reviews consider engagement, progress, attendance, wellbeing, risks, outcomes and whether the current package remains appropriate.

If a young person's needs or risks change significantly, we will review the placement and may adjust staffing, hours, activities, grouping, transport or location. Where we are no longer able to meet need safely, we will work with the commissioner to plan an appropriate transition rather than ending support without discussion, except where immediate safety requires a temporary pause.

Safeguarding and Information Sharing

Safeguarding is considered throughout referral, admission and attendance. Any safeguarding concern identified during the referral process or placement will be managed in accordance with the Sense Inclusion Safeguarding Policy and local safeguarding procedures.

Relevant information will be shared lawfully and proportionately with those who need it to keep the young person safe. Information will be stored securely in line with our Data Protection, Confidentiality and Information Sharing arrangements.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for ensuring that admissions and attendance arrangements are safe and appropriate. Day-to-day decisions may be delegated to the Managing Director, Alternative Provision Director/Case Manager, Therapeutic Services Director or other relevant senior staff.

All staff are responsible for recording attendance accurately, reporting unexpected absence and raising any safeguarding or suitability concerns promptly.

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Equality, Diversity, Disability & SEND Policy
- Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health & Safety Policy, Guidelines & Risk Assessments
- Lone Working Policy
- Transport Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Complaints Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance, commissioning requirements or the nature of Sense Inclusion's provision changes.