

Title	Admissions Policy
Cross References	🍑 Teaching and Learning Policy 🍑 Educational and Welfare Provision for Students with an EHCP 🍑 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 🍑 Safer Recruitment Policy 🍑 Online Safety Policy
Date	October 2026

Apricot Online Statement

At Apricot Online, we engage students to reach for levels of success they may not previously have imagined. We deliver high-quality virtual educational experiences, fostering belonging, respect and the skills needed to solve real-world problems through a love of lifelong learning.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out the principles and processes used by Apricot Online when considering and accepting referrals and admissions to our online alternative provision. Apricot Online works with commissioning schools, local authorities, parents/carers and other professionals to identify an appropriate educational package for each student.

Admissions are considered on a rolling basis throughout the academic year and are subject to the student's needs, the suitability of online provision, safeguarding considerations, curriculum requirements and available staffing/capacity.

2. Admissions principles

- We are committed to equality of opportunity and to treating students fairly and with dignity and respect.
- We will not unlawfully discriminate because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.
- We will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled students and seek relevant information at referral so that barriers to access and participation can be identified.
- The best interests, safety, welfare and educational needs of the student will be central to admission and placement decisions.
- Admission to Apricot Online does not remove the commissioning school's or local authority's statutory responsibilities for the student.

3. Referral and admission process

1. Initial enquiry: schools, local authorities, parents/carers or other commissioners contact Apricot Online to discuss the proposed placement.
2. Information gathering: the commissioner/parent is asked to provide sufficient information about the student's educational, safeguarding, SEND, health and pastoral needs. Apricot Online may request further information before confirming suitability.
3. Assessment of suitability: Apricot Online considers whether online provision can safely and appropriately meet the student's identified needs and the intended outcomes of the placement.
4. Proposed package: where appropriate, subjects, hours, start date, review arrangements and any required reasonable adjustments are agreed with the commissioner.
5. Enrolment: the required enrolment/referral documentation and terms are completed before provision begins, unless an exceptional arrangement has been agreed.
6. Review: placements may be reviewed and adapted in partnership with the commissioner, particularly where a student's needs, engagement or intended outcomes change.

4. Information required at admission

- To plan safe and appropriate provision, Apricot Online will seek relevant information which may include:
- the student's legal and preferred name, date of birth, year group and contact details;
- current school/commissioner and key professional contacts;
- the reason for referral, intended outcomes and anticipated duration of the placement;
- current attainment, curriculum requirements, examination courses and awarding bodies where relevant;
- SEND information, including an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), SEN Support information and reasonable adjustments;
- relevant health, medical, allergy, disability, accessibility and pastoral information;
- safeguarding information necessary to keep the student safe, including involvement of children's social care or other agencies where relevant;
- information about attendance, engagement, behaviour and known barriers to learning; and
- the student's strengths, interests, aspirations and any strategies known to support successful engagement.

5. Students with SEND and/or an EHCP

Apricot Online welcomes referrals for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). At referral, commissioners and parents/carers should provide current and relevant information about the student's needs so that we can consider whether the proposed online provision is suitable and what reasonable adjustments may be required.

Where a student has an EHCP, relevant information from the plan will be made available to staff who need it to deliver and support the placement. The commissioning local authority and/or school retains its statutory responsibilities in relation to the EHCP, including review and securing the provision specified in the plan.

Where Apricot Online considers that the proposed package cannot safely or appropriately meet a student's identified needs, we will explain this to the commissioner and, where possible, discuss whether an amended package or additional support could make the placement suitable.

6. Safeguarding and welfare

Apricot Online is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Safeguarding is considered from the point of referral and throughout the placement.

- Relevant safeguarding information must be shared by the commissioner promptly and securely where it is necessary to safeguard the student or others.
- Apricot Online will maintain appropriate safer recruitment and vetting arrangements for its staff.
- Staff will follow Apricot Online's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy and associated safeguarding procedures.
- Concerns arising during provision will be recorded, managed and shared with the appropriate safeguarding lead(s) and/or statutory agencies in accordance with policy and legal requirements.
- Where a school commissions alternative provision, the school remains responsible for safeguarding the pupil and should satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding arrangements and checks are in place.

7. Equality, identity and reasonable adjustments

Apricot Online will obtain and use information about a student's identity and individual circumstances only where relevant to education, safeguarding, welfare, accessibility or legal obligations. Students will be treated respectfully and sensitively. Any safeguarding issues connected with a student's individual circumstances will be considered in accordance with current statutory guidance.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis. Examples may include adjustments to timetable, communication, lesson access, presentation of materials, pace, breaks or other aspects of online delivery where these are reasonable and appropriate.

8. Placement planning, attendance and review

The commissioner should clearly identify the purpose of the placement, expected outcomes and anticipated timescale. Apricot Online will work with the commissioner to monitor engagement and progress and to review the package where appropriate.

Attendance and engagement information will be recorded and shared in accordance with agreed arrangements. Concerns about persistent non-attendance, disengagement, safeguarding or the continuing suitability of the placement will be raised with the commissioner.

9. Declining or ending a placement

Apricot Online may decline a referral, or recommend that a placement is reviewed or ended, where the provision cannot safely or appropriately meet the student's needs; essential information has not been provided; the agreed provision is no longer suitable; or safeguarding, operational or capacity considerations prevent safe delivery. Decisions will not be based on unlawful discrimination.

Where practicable, concerns will be discussed with the commissioner before a placement ends so that appropriate next steps can be considered.

10. Data protection and information sharing

Personal information will be processed and shared in accordance with applicable data protection law, Apricot Online's privacy and data protection arrangements, and safeguarding information-sharing requirements. Information will be limited to what is relevant and necessary for the purpose for which it is used.

11. Related guidance and review

This policy should be read alongside Apricot Online's safeguarding, safer recruitment, online safety, SEND/EHCP and teaching and learning policies. It will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or Apricot Online's operating model.

Policy review note: Updated with reference to Department for Education guidance current at August 2026, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (effective 1 September 2026), Alternative Provision statutory guidance, and the non-school alternative provision voluntary national standards.

Authorised by: Jodie Phillips, Operations Director

Date: October 2026

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