



JAMES MARKS ACADEMY

ADMISSION POLICY

THIS IS A STATUTORY POLICY which was created by the academy and must be published on the school website

This policy was last revised in September 2025

It was ratified by the Trustees on 15th October 2025

REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed annually

Under the public sector equality duty, all academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.

This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

Introduction

The James Marks Academy is a day, co-educational special school for pupils whose primary, or main presenting needs, relate to their mental health as a result of high anxiety.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's admission statement.

The James Marks Academy curriculum is based on a mainstream model. The justification for this is it provides our pupils with breadth of access to a range of subjects, which will then allow for a seamless return to mainstream, during years 7-9, should individual pupil's mental health improve to the extent that they feel able to. Once a pupil starts year 10, the expectation is they will remain in the academy for at least the next two years, to provide them with the greatest chance of success, in examinations at the end of year 11.

Hertfordshire County Council Local Authority commissioned 20 places in 2023/2024, 45 places in 2024/2025, 65 places in 2025/2026 and 72 places in 2026/2027 at which time it will be full to capacity.

These places are for:

- a) Pupils of both sexes in the age range 11-19 with SEMH needs, with the emphasis on mental health and high anxiety. In the words of the LA 'those pupils for whom a traditional SEMH school would be inappropriate'.
- b) Pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)
- c) Pupils who are able to access a typical secondary curriculum.

Referral to the provision is through [Hertfordshire's Requesting a Special School Place](#) process. Pupils are considered for placement following unsuccessful placement in either/or both a mainstream and/or a special school setting. The panel assesses individual needs against what James Marks Academy is able to provide. Pupil ability range is broadly average, which means they can access a typical mainstream curriculum.

Initially, pupils join us on an integration programme, which lasts for 4 – 6 weeks. The intention is that this will build to a full-time programme within 6 weeks. This may be sooner if there is capacity and new entrants are engaging with our offer. On occasions, integration can be longer as we adjust our offer to support the individual needs of each pupil. A full-time programme involves 25-hours a week and takes place on the school site.

Once the school has year 11 pupils, a small number of Post 16 places will be available. The criteria for allocation of these places is outlined on the school's website.

Exit Guidance

Some pupils are so successful in this specialist setting that transition to a mainstream school or post 16 colleges is often the outcome. The key to a successful placement in a school or college is that it meets the hopes and aspirations of the pupil and parents/carers.

The aim is for pupils to leave James Marks Academy with the qualifications, skills and attributes to succeed in their adult lives along with an agreed onward placement that matches their interests and aspirations. This includes the ability to:

- Build relationships with peers and adults.
- Make positive choices.
- Operate in various social contexts.
- Cope with different situations and transition successfully (e.g. from smaller to larger groups).
- Overcome resistance to and fear of learning.
- Maintain relationships as adults.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints regarding this policy should be dealt with in accordance with James Marks Academy Trust (JMAT) complaints procedure.