

CLEARSPACE LEARNING LTD

REFERRALS POLICY

Company Registration	15950890
Policy Owner	Stuart Knox (Director)
Version	1.0
Date of Issue	October 2026
Review Date	October 2027
Approved by	Stuart Knox, Director

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out how Clearspace Learning accepts, assesses, and responds to referrals for places on our Alternative Provision (AP) and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) programmes, whether the referral comes through a local authority's commissioning process, a school, or directly from a family.

It exists so that every referral is handled consistently, quickly, and safely — and so that commissioners and families know what to expect and by when.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all routes by which a child or young person (CYP) comes to Clearspace Learning, including:

- Referrals via Oxfordshire County Council's e-brokerage system (Start Well Brokerage), under the Alternative Education Provision Open Framework
- Referrals from commissioning schools, where the CYP remains on the school's roll
- Direct referrals from other local authorities or commissioning bodies
- Direct approaches from parents/carers, including personal-budget or privately funded arrangements

2. WHO CAN REFER

- Oxfordshire County Council (SEN team, Start Well Brokerage, or Virtual School)
- Other local authorities commissioning AP/EOTAS provision
- Commissioning schools, where a pupil remains dual-registered
- Parents/carers, including where funded through a personal budget or privately
- Other professionals (e.g. SENCo, EP, social worker) with parental/carer and, where applicable, LA agreement

3. OXFORDSHIRE E-BROKERAGE REFERRALS

3.1 How Referrals Arrive

Where Clearspace is approached through Oxfordshire's Start Well Brokerage e-brokerage system, a referral will typically include the CYP's location, needs, the hours/package sought, and a proposed start date.

3.2 Expression of Interest — Response Times

In line with the AP Open Framework Contract, Clearspace will respond to an e-brokerage referral within:

- 2 working days for a standard referral
- 4 hours for a referral flagged as an emergency placement

Response means confirming whether Clearspace can offer an expression of interest in principle, based on capacity and an initial read of the stated needs against what we can safely and appropriately deliver.

3.3 Holding Capacity

Once an expression of interest is given, Clearspace will hold the offered capacity for 5 working days, unpaid, while the Council completes its own assessment and confirms the placement. If the Council has not confirmed within that window, Stuart Knox (Director) will contact the referrer to check progress before releasing the capacity.

3.4 Information Received at Referral

Oxfordshire's own referral template (Alternative Provision Support Plan — Initial Referral) sets out the fields a referral should contain. Clearspace expects to receive, as a minimum:

- CYP's name, school, and year group
- School representative and parent/carer details
- Other professionals involved
- SEN status and safeguarding status
- Assessment of need: the CYP's own views, parental views, academic progress and barriers to learning
- Risks identified (e.g. absconding) and whether a separate risk assessment is required
- Reason for referral and desired outcomes
- Proposed intervention type, hours, and start date
- How the home school will maintain links with the CYP and parents during the placement
- Arrangements to report and monitor attendance
- Agreed actions, any other referrals, and transition arrangements

If any of the above is missing from an incoming referral, Clearspace will request it before confirming the placement — in particular safeguarding status, risk information, and SEN status, which directly affect whether the placement can be accepted safely.

4. ASSESSING A REFERRAL

4.1 What We Check Before Accepting

Before confirming any placement, Stuart Knox (Director/DSL) considers:

- Capacity — do we have the hours, and the right practitioner, available for the proposed start date?
- Fit — does the CYP's profile (age 8–25, neurodivergent, EBSA, PDA, autism, ADHD, twice-exceptional) sit within what Clearspace is set up to deliver?
- Safeguarding information — has safeguarding status been disclosed, and is there anything that changes how the placement should be set up (e.g. a current child protection plan, known risks, prior incidents)?
- Risk — are there identified risks (e.g. absconding, home environment, behaviours that challenge) that call for a specific risk assessment before the first session, per our Health and Safety Policy (Section 3.4)?
- EHCP/SEN status — does an EHCP exist, and does the referral tell us what outcomes it specifies?
- Location and delivery mode — home-based, community venue, or mobile learning hub, and whether that's practical and safe for this CYP

4.2 Declining or Deferring a Referral

Clearspace may decline, or ask to defer, a referral where:

- We do not have capacity for the hours or start date requested
- The information provided indicates a level of risk or need beyond what one-to-one, non-residential AP can safely manage
- Essential information (in particular safeguarding status or risk information) has not been provided despite being requested

Any decision to decline is communicated to the referrer in writing, with reasons, within the response windows set out at 3.2.

5. DIRECT AND SCHOOL REFERRALS

Where a referral comes directly from a school or family rather than through Oxfordshire's e-brokerage system, the same assessment in Section 4 applies. Stuart Knox will request the same categories of information as the Appendix A template, even where the referrer does not use that template, so that the same safeguards apply regardless of referral route.

For a privately funded or personal-budget referral, the family is asked to provide (or to consent to Clearspace requesting from the school/LA) current EHCP content, any safeguarding or SEN status, and relevant risk information, before a placement is confirmed.

6. SETTING UP A CONFIRMED PLACEMENT

Once a referral is accepted, Clearspace will, before or at the first session:

- Confirm the agreed support plan — intervention type, hours, start date — in writing to the referrer and parent/carer
- Complete or request any individual risk assessment flagged as necessary at referral (Health and Safety Policy, 3.4)
- Set up attendance recording and the agreed reporting cadence with the commissioning school or OCC (see Attendance Policy, Section 6.3)
- Agree arrangements for home-school links during the placement (shared time in school, visits, review meetings, phone calls, as applicable)
- Record the agreed review meeting date

7. REVIEW AND TRANSITION

Placements are reviewed at the agreed review meeting date, and at any earlier point a change in need or circumstance requires it. A review considers:

- Whether the assessed need has changed
- Whether the desired outcomes or timescales have changed
- Whether the support plan needs to change, including arrangements for reintegration to school where that is the goal
- Whether the placement should be extended, and if so the new finish or off-roll date

Outcomes of each review are recorded and shared with the referrer, in the same format used at referral so the two documents read together.

8. SAFEGUARDING AT THE POINT OF REFERRAL

Safeguarding status disclosed at referral is treated as live information from day one of the placement, not a historic flag. Where a referral discloses a current safeguarding concern, child protection plan, or children-in-need status, Stuart Knox (DSL) will, before the first session:

- Confirm what information-sharing arrangement applies with the lead agency/social worker
- Check whether any specific safety arrangements are needed for sessions (location, lone-working considerations, emergency contacts)
- Note the case on Clearspace's own safeguarding records, per the Safeguarding Policy

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the SEND Policy, both of which govern how information received at referral is used and protected thereafter.

9. DECLINED PLACEMENTS AND WAITING LIST

Where Clearspace cannot accept a referral due to capacity, a waiting list is kept with the referrer's consent, and the referrer is contacted as soon as capacity becomes available. Clearspace does not hold waiting-list information longer than necessary and reviews it termly.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually, and sooner if Oxfordshire's referral process or template changes, or following any referral that exposes a gap in this process.

- Reviewed annually (October 2027)
- Updated in response to changes in the AP Open Framework Contract or Oxfordshire's referral process
- Shared with commissioning schools and local authorities on request

11. RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy

12. KEY CONTACTS

Clearspace Learning:

- Stuart Knox (Director): 07986 622049
- Email: info@clearspacelearning.com

POLICY APPROVAL

This Referrals Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Stuart Knox

Director, Clearspace Learning Ltd

Date: October 2026

Next Review Date: October 2027

Company Registration: 15950890

Contact: info@clearspacelearning.com | 07986 622049