

# ADMISSIONS POLICY

## Policy Overview

BeyondAutism Schools are Independent Special Schools approved by the Secretary of State for Education under s.41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Admission to BeyondAutism Schools will be by way of the school being named within an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of SEN for those not yet transferred to an EHCP. We may also accept applications from privately funded sources when the pupil is not a UK citizen; these applications can also be supported by an institution or employer (e.g. foreign embassy).

These will be considered on a case by case basis and state-funded students will be offered a place as a priority. The School Admission Code December 2014 and the Equality Act 2010 underpin the approach taken in this policy and BeyondAutism Schools seek to comply with both to the extent required by law and in order to ensure best practice in our admission arrangements.

This policy will be published on the BeyondAutism Schools' website.

All statutory references below are to the Children and Families Act 2014.

As part of the EHCP the parents/carers will have the right to request the Local Authority that maintains the Plan to name the school of their choice (s.38 (2) (b) (ii)). The local authority will be required to consult with the proprietor of BeyondAutism Schools (s.39 (2)) and to determine if the proposed placement is:

- a) suitable for the particular needs of the child (s.39(4)(a));
- b) incompatible with the efficient education of other children (s.39(4)(b)(i)) and
- c) an efficient use of resources (s.39(4)(b)(ii)).

The proprietor is BeyondAutism and the Trustees of BeyondAutism have delegated decisions regarding admission to the Admissions Committee, a sub-Committee of the BeyondAutism Schools' Governing Body.

The Admissions Committee will respond to requests to name a BeyondAutism School within 15 days.

Assuming these conditions are satisfied then the local authority must secure the educational provision specified (s.42 (2)) and BeyondAutism will then admit the child or young person for whom the EHCP is maintained (s.43 (2)).

## Admission Criteria

### Essential Criteria

To determine if a place at a BeyondAutism School is suitable within the meaning of s.39 the Governing Body of BeyondAutism Schools has agreed the following essential criteria must be satisfied.

The child or young person must:

- Be between 4 and 19 years of age
- Have a diagnosis of autism or a related communication disorder within the triad of impairments
- Have an EHCP or Statement of Special Educational Needs or be in the process of gaining one
- Have the appropriate age, skills and behaviour for the vacancy that exists.
- Live within a feasible commuting distance. A feasible distance is defined as a journey time of no more than 90 minutes in accordance with Google Maps.

If a pupil is funded privately at the school, the need for an EHCP is negated. However, BeyondAutism school's will still carry out a baseline assessment and will use the structure of EHCP targets from which to build the Personal Curriculum Plan and the Individual Education Plan.

### **Additional Factors**

The following factors will further inform whether a BeyondAutism School is suitable for the child or young person and whether their admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other pupils:

- Whether other children attend BeyondAutism Schools with a similar level of ability and range of skills
- The dynamic of the class group anticipated for the particular child
- For Children and Young People with a physical disability whether accessible places are available or whether it would be possible to make reasonable adjustments within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. At Park House School there are 16 ground floor places available and this is deemed more than adequate to meet the needs of current and prospective pupils. Tram House School has lift access to all floors.
- If there is a secondary diagnosis, including but not limited to Down's syndrome, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Mental Health Needs and Genetic Disorders whether these needs can also be met within the school.
- Whether medical needs can be accommodated within current staffing arrangements. Medical needs requiring on site nursing care cannot usually be accommodated.

### **Funding**

All pupils who are UK citizens are funded by the Local Authority in which they reside, and it is therefore essential to have agreement (in writing) from the Local Authority or another public source to fund the placement. We may also accept applications from privately funded sources, including

via funding from an institution or employer. A funding agreement will need to be agreed and signed.

## The Admissions Process

There are many ways to start the process of referral.

If a local authority recognises that a child's needs will best be met by our expertise they will make a referral to us.

Alternatively, you can contact us directly to book a place on one of our open days.

If you are interested in a place for your son or daughter, we would need to see their EHCP or their Statement of Special Educational Needs and any relevant professional reports. If you are applying for a privately funded place we will need to see professional reports and a letter of support from your sponsoring body, if applicable.

The child or young person will then visit for an informal assessment which is a chance for us to assess whether we can meet their needs.

We are looking to get an understanding for how the child or young person reacts to the environment. Occasionally the placement may not be suitable if a pupil does not have an appropriate peer group.

Following an informal assessment, if it is felt that we can meet the needs of the child, a letter and report will be sent to parents/carers detailing this. Within the letter it will stipulate time requirements for parents to accept the placement and for Local Authorities to agree or decline the placement. In the event that a Local Authority does not agree to the placement, then parents will need to evidence they are lodging proceedings to appeal such decisions. If the timings for this procedure expires, then the place offered will be withdrawn.

Our admissions process is set out in the appendices attached and we will help and support parents every step of the way.

## Numbers

BeyondAutism Schools will resist admission where it is considered such admission would be incompatible with the efficient education for other children (s.39 (4) (b) (i)).

Following an assessment by the school of the potential impact of admission, applications will be considered on a case by case basis. Where the school's agreed and preferred maximum number of pupils in any one year group is exceeded we will not accept further admissions for that year group.

This may mean that children of certain age groups cannot be admitted even when there are vacancies in other parts of the school.

The Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) for Park House School is 56 and for Tram House School it is 50 (September 2019). BeyondAutism Schools aim to have no more than ten pupils in each academic year, except in exceptional circumstances. Any requests for school places in excess of 106 will be dealt with in accordance with the oversubscription criteria below.

Where the school is named in an EHCP or Statement (whether by a Local Authority or as a result of SEND tribunal proceedings), we acknowledge that the child shall be admitted to the relevant BeyondAutism School.

## The Admission Committee of the Governing Body

### Composition and Conduct of Meetings

The Admissions Committee of the Governing Body includes the:

- CEO of BeyondAutism
- Heads of School
- Chair or Vice Chair of Governors (The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors should not both be on the Admissions Committee in order to be available in the event of any appeals)
- MDT Representative (via report if needed)
- Admissions Officer.

The Admissions Committee shall meet not less than once per term and more frequently if needed to consider all applications for a place at a BeyondAutism School. Meetings may be held by telephone and decisions may be formed by email in the event that time limits do not permit face to face meetings.

### Determining Applications

The criteria listed in section 2 above will be used to determine each application.

### Reserve List

In the event of the school being full, applicants will be offered the chance to go on the reserve list. When further school places become available all applicants on the reserve list will be ranked according to this policy and places offered to those who meet the criteria. In the event of there being more applicants who meet the criteria than there are available places the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

## **Oversubscription Criteria**

When there are a greater number of applicants for a place than the PAN, who meet the admissions criteria, the Admissions Committee will offer places based on the following priority order:

- a) Looked after children or previously looked after children
- b) Children with siblings already attending a BeyondAutism School. For this purpose, sibling includes step sibling, foster sibling and adopted sibling permanently living at the same address.
- c) Children with a medical or social need as evidenced by a letter from GP or Social Services

## **Tie Breaker**

In the event of there being two or more equally ranked applicants after the oversubscription criteria have been applied a tie break process will be applied by the Admissions Committee.

This is then determined by those candidates living closest to the relevant BeyondAutism School (by School we mean Park House School at 48 North Side, Wandsworth Common, SW18 2SL or Tram House School at 520 Garratt Lane, Earlsfield, SW17 0NY).

Distances are measured by a straight line from the address seed point (determined by Ordnance Survey data) of the child's home address to the main school gate as measured by Google maps. Where it is necessary to differentiate between applicants living in flats using the same street entrance, priority will be given to the applicant(s) living closest to the ground floor and then by ascending flat number order.

## **Naming a BeyondAutism School in an EHCP**

Where a local authority intends to name a BeyondAutism School in an EHCP and have notified BeyondAutism of this, the Admissions Committee will respond to this request within 15 days. The Admissions Committee, on behalf of BeyondAutism must consent to the relevant School being named. Such consent will only be given for suitable children (see Admissions Criteria above) and where it is not incompatible with the efficient education of others.

In considering incompatibility the Admissions Committee will have regard to, whether any reasonable steps might be taken to avoid incompatibility, relevant statutory guidance and the health and safety of other pupils and staff.

Where the considered view is that the naming of a BeyondAutism School is not appropriate, whether on grounds that we are unable to meet need or that the admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other pupils, our decision and reasons will be sent in writing to the relevant local authority.

Should a parent or guardian of a child appeal to the SEND Tribunal to request that a BeyondAutism School is named in the EHCP, BeyondAutism agrees to be bound by the decision of the Tribunal.

## Appeals

Should a parent or guardian be dissatisfied with the decision of the Admissions Committee in relation to offering a place to a child at a BeyondAutism School an appeal may be made in writing to the Chair of BeyondAutism Schools' Governing Body stating the grounds for the appeal.

Process:

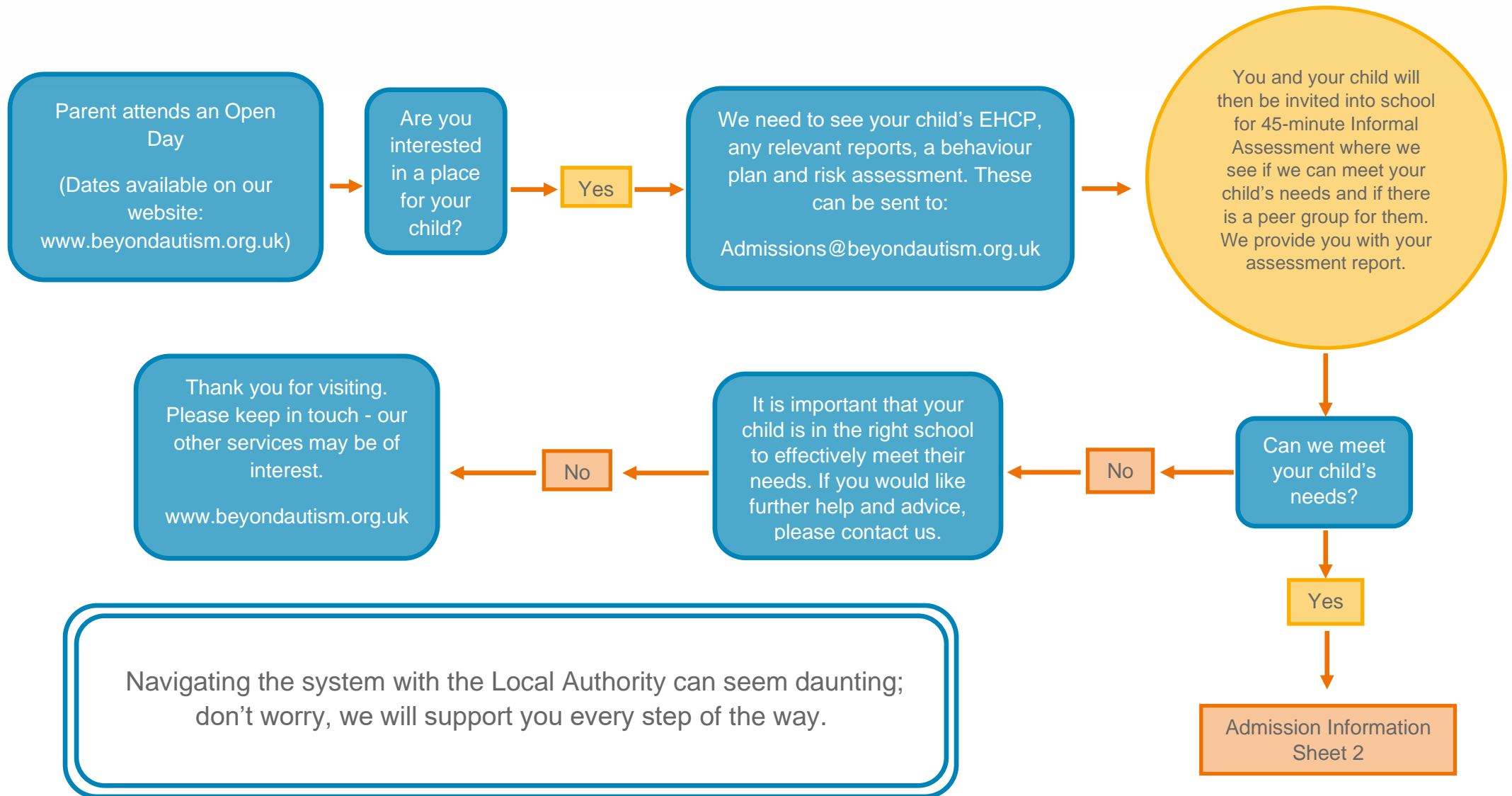
1. Appeal to a decision offering a place to a child at a BeyondAutism School received
2. Appeal is shared with the CEO and the Chair of Governors
3. A hearing will be convened within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal
4. Appeals will be heard by an appeal panel comprising 2 Governors of BeyondAutism not members of the BeyondAutism Schools' Admissions Committee and one independent panel member.
5. The hearing will examine in further detail
  - a. The context of the original decision
  - b. Any additional evidence that may support the appeal (parent, LA, medical professional etc)
  - c. A short recess may be required to consider any additional evidence
  - d. The appeal panel will then form a final response, after consideration of all supporting evidence. The decision of the appeal panel will be final.
6. The minutes from the appeal hearing will be sent to the parent and local authority within 10 working days.

Last review: September 2019

Date of next review: September 2020

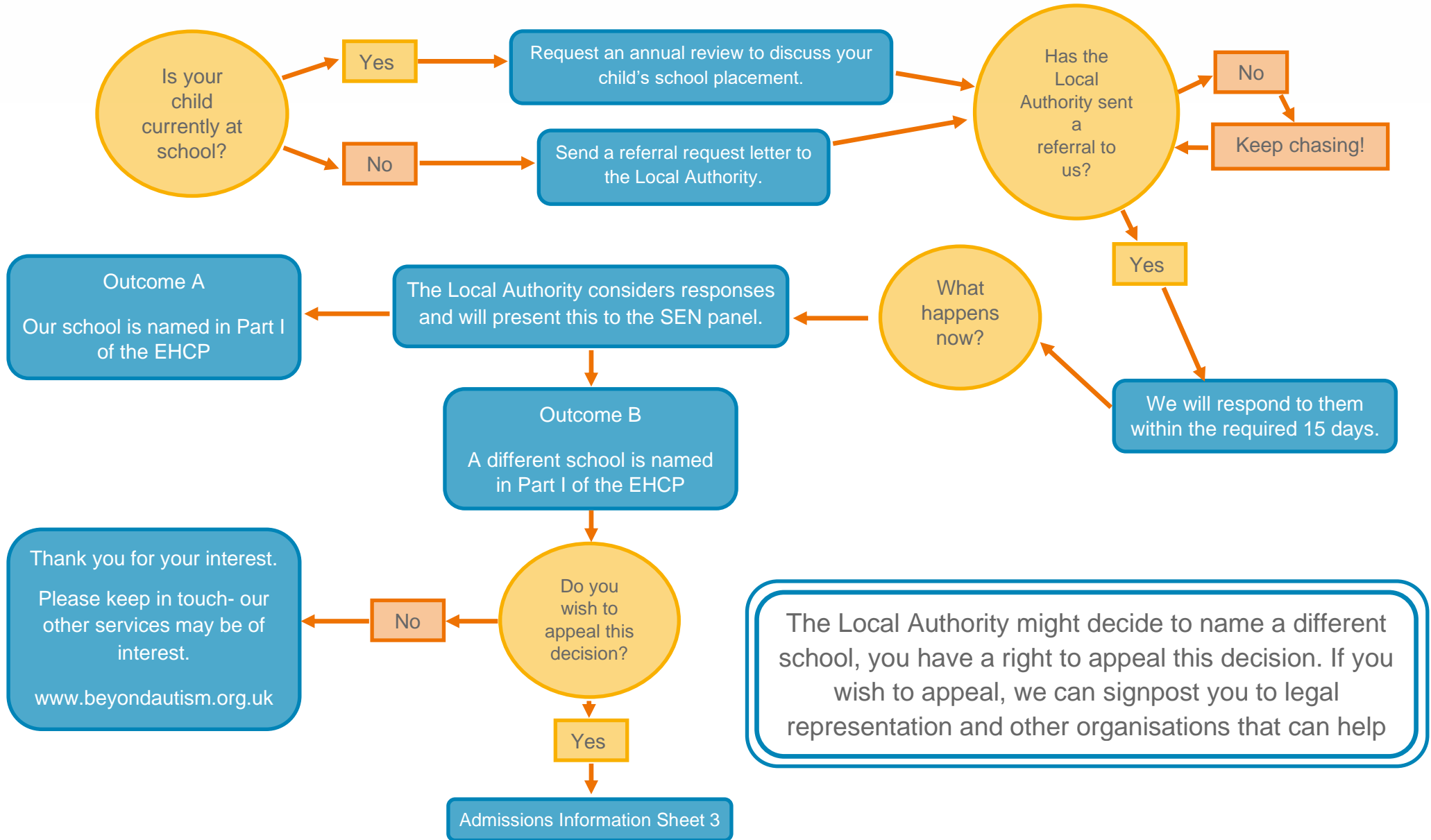
Review Group: Audit and Governance Committee

Admissions Information Sheet 1 – Is this the right school?





Admissions Information Sheet 2 – BeyondAutism School placement agreed



**Admissions Sheet 3 – Getting the support and representation you need**

