



Think FAST Academy Admissions Policy **2025**

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Date written - May 2025

Reviewed - June 2026

Vision

To provide a high quality, personalised educational experience that meets learners' needs and leads to success for all.

The aims of this policy are:

- to set selection criteria and procedures that are fair to all applicants. No applicant will be treated less favourably during the application process or during assessment on the grounds of their race, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, religious faith or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic group, pregnancy and maternity, disability or special educational needs.

- to identify learners who will benefit from the programme that ThinkFast offers. Learners will benefit from the bespoke opportunities that are offered to them.
- to comply with the Academy's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Our focus is to build a constructive and co-operative relationship between Think FAST Academy and the student's current school and/or the local authority service managing the transition. At Think FAST we strive to provide the student with the best possible chance to integrate well and maximise the opportunities presented by the Think FAST team, during the ten week course.

Mission

A positive and inclusive community where young people are encouraged to achieve high standards of progress and succeed in a supported, safe environment.

Introduction

A ten week programme can be offered to High Schools within the local area. Pupils who are struggling to keep their place at High School or at risk of criminal exploitation. The School Pastoral Team and the ThinkFast Programme Manager will liaise. Students are selected through a process bespoke to them as individuals. Not all students will have the same issues and needs may be personal to each individual.

All local authorities have a duty in law to arrange suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who because of illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without this provision. The Alternative Provision Service has been commissioned by St Helens Local Authority to enable it to discharge this duty. There should be a policy for referrals or admission to alternative provision. There should be clear criteria for referring and admitting pupils, including those who are dual registered.

Admission Criteria

The criteria for admission to Think FAST Academy is detailed below:

- A referral from a school to undertake a structured short-term programme
- A referral from school to provide additional support through an Education Health and Care needs assessment
- Permanent exclusion from a school
- A long-fixed term exclusion, where school cannot make suitable arrangements for the young person, in which case the young person may be educated at the Academy from the sixth day of exclusion.
- Vulnerable pupils who move into the area and cannot be accommodated in a mainstream school including those transferring from another local authority's PRU.

Admission Arrangements

Children and young people aged 11-16 can obtain a placement at Think FAST Academy following a referral by a local authority, or from a maintained school or Academy. Placements are dependent on the needs of the student, and will generally be a fixed period of time and subject to review.

Students referred from a local authority (for example those who are permanently excluded from school) will be registered at the local authority PRU and also attend Think FAST Academy.

PLACES COMMISSIONED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND SCHOOLS

The school will assess a student's educational and additional needs and this will include a risk assessment. Schools will discuss potential referrals with Think FAST Academy. Where there is uncertainty that all the needs of a child or young person is met by Think FAST Academy then further discussions will be made. If a commissioner's assessment process concludes that a referral to Think FAST will appropriately meet a student's needs, the Commissioner will complete a Referral Form Link and submit this to Think FAST.

On acceptance of the referral by Think FAST the Commissioner will enter a contractual arrangement with Think FAST to secure the placement.

Once a referral is accepted, the student will be invited to Think FAST to discuss their induction programme.

Students transferring from other institutions/areas will be integrated into Think FAST within the following guidelines:

- The students and their parents/carers have a right to be heard and to participate in decision making about provision to meet their special education needs and that contact is established and maintained throughout the process.
- That coping strategies will be provided for the student and a key person (Liz or Gemma) appointed with whom the student can liaise.
- That there are opportunities for the student to visit Thinkfast and sample the atmosphere and environment, prior to starting the programme, if they wish