



Private Assessment Policy

Name of Headteacher:	Tom Johnston
Date Policy approved and adopted:	Sept 2026
Date Due for review:	Sept 2029

Equality at Merdon Junior School

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. (See Initial Equality Impact Assessment)

Private Assessments and Requests for School Information Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the school's approach to supporting privately commissioned assessments, therapy, and requests for school information. It aims to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness in how such requests are managed, while safeguarding pupils, maintaining staff workload balance, and ensuring that teaching and statutory responsibilities remain the school's core priority.

The policy operates in line with the school's legal duties under:

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018

Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005

Children and Families Act 2014

Equality Act 2010

Scope

This policy applies to all pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff, and members of the Senior Leadership Team involved in requests for information or collaboration relating to privately commissioned assessments, therapies, or professional reports.

It also applies to any external professionals seeking to work with pupils in connection with privately arranged services. The policy covers:

Requests for school information to support private assessments

Absence requests for private appointments during the school day

Engagement of privately funded professionals within the school setting

Policy Statement

The school recognises that some families may choose to seek private assessments or therapeutic services to support their child's development. While we value collaboration with external professionals, the school's primary responsibility is to deliver high-quality teaching, uphold safeguarding standards, and meet statutory obligations. Within this, is the school's commitment to working with agencies within the local area and across the county in order to best support the physical, emotional and educational needs of all children where such support is agreed collaboratively between school and parents.

On such occasions when parents seek support from schools to support external assessments that are not agreed collaboratively, where references for private school places are sought and where absence is requested for private appointments not in line with agreed support plans, the school will follow the details within this policy by considering private reports as part of a wider evidence base, authorising absences for essential appointments only and not requiring staff to undertake such work that falls beyond their ordinarily contracted duties.

Provision of Information and Records

The school will comply fully with its statutory duties regarding access to information.

Subject Access Requests (SARs)

Requests for access to personal data relating to a pupil or parent will be treated as Subject Access Requests under UK GDPR.

These will be provided free of charge, unless a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive in line with legislation

Responses will be issued within statutory timescales

Educational Records

Requests for a pupil's educational record will be handled in accordance with regulation 5 of the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

➤ No charge will be made other than reasonable copying costs, where applicable

Curricular Record Transfers

When a pupil transfers school, the school will provide the pupil's curricular record free of charge to the receiving school, including independent or private schools, upon request.

The curricular record includes formal records of academic achievement, skills, abilities, and progress.

Information Provided by the School for Private Assessments

The school is committed to working collaboratively with families and will provide relevant factual information to support any privately arranged assessments.

The school will provide relevant factual information already held on record to support private assessments, which may include:

Attendance data

Assessment outcomes

Individual Support Plans

Current strategies or provision Staff are not required to:

Complete extensive bespoke questionnaires created by private providers

Duplicate reports already produced for statutory or school processes

Undertake assessments or therapeutic monitoring that would amount to delivering a private service during school time

Where parents request additional narrative commentary or bespoke documentation beyond statutory obligations, the school may consider such requests on a discretionary basis. The school may decline where workload impact is unreasonable or where information is already available through statutory disclosure.

Where the school agrees to provide this support, parents may be asked to pay an administration fee of £50 to cover staff time payable in advance. The school will not charge for any information parents are legally entitled to receive under data protection or education law.

SEND Duties and Evidence Consideration

The school will meet its duty under section 66 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to use its best endeavours to secure special educational provision for pupils with SEND.

Private professional reports will be considered alongside:

School-based evidence

Statutory advice

APDR cycle outcomes

Decisions regarding provision will be based on professional judgement, pupil need, and available evidence, not the funding source of assessments.

Private Assessments and Authorised Absence

Parents are encouraged to arrange private appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Absence during the school day for private assessments or therapeutic appointments will only be authorised by the headteacher where the appointment meets all of the following criteria:

The assessment or intervention is directly relevant to the child's health, wellbeing, or special educational needs, and provides a service or level of expertise that the school or Local Authority/NHS services are not able to offer within a reasonable timescale.

The appointment genuinely cannot be scheduled outside school hours, and parents have actively explored alternative times with the provider.

An initial discussion has taken place with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) so the school can explore whether existing provision or referral pathways might meet the need without disrupting learning.

Written confirmation is provided by the parent and/or practitioner, clearly outlining the purpose, timing, and expected outcomes of the appointment.

Safeguarding requirements are fully met. The school remains responsible for the child during school hours, regardless of their location, and must be satisfied that the child will remain safe throughout the appointment. This includes the school verifying the credentials of the private professional (e.g. professional registration, experience, and—where relevant—DBS status) before any leave of absence is considered.

A risk assessment may be required, depending on the nature of the appointment, the setting, the adult(s) supervising, and any individual vulnerabilities or medical needs. This may include a visit to the venue by school staff.

Each request will be considered individually in line with attendance legislation, SEND duties, and Equality Act responsibilities.

Routine, non-urgent, convenience-based, or repeat private appointments during the school day will not normally be authorised. All requests must be made in advance and will be considered by the Headteacher in line with statutory attendance regulations and safeguarding duties.

Parents are responsible for transporting and supervising their child during any approved appointment, and pupils must be signed in and out via the school office.

Any learning missed must be completed at home, and staff will not provide additional catch-up materials beyond standard classroom expectations.

Privately Commissioned Professionals in School

As a general principle, privately funded professionals will not deliver therapy or assessments on the school site during the school day unless agreed collaboratively with the school.

This is to ensure:

Safeguarding compliance

Quality assurance

Minimal disruption to learning

Clear accountability

However, in exceptional circumstances, where refusal could place a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage and no reasonable alternative exists, the school will consider requests individually in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Any such arrangements will be subject to safeguarding, insurance, supervision, and operational feasibility and do not create a general entitlement.

The school is not obliged to implement, deliver, or monitor private therapeutic programmes where this conflicts with professional judgement, statutory duties, or workload capacity.

This policy seeks to balance:

Parental choice

Pupil welfare

Legal compliance

Staff workload sustainability while ensuring that the school continues to meet all statutory responsibilities regarding data protection, SEND provision, safeguarding, and equality

Evaluation and Review

Date of Ratification	Sept 2026
Date for Next Review	Sept 2029
Comments:	