

Admissions Policy for Darlington Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools 2017/18

Corporation Road Primary – PAN 45
Harrowgate Hill Primary – PAN 90
High Coniscliffe CE Primary – PAN 15
Mount Pleasant Primary – PAN 30
Northwood Primary – PAN 60
Red Hall Primary – PAN 30
Whinfield Primary – PAN 90

Indicated Admission Limits

When setting the admission number for community schools, Darlington Local Authority has taken into account the indicated admission limit for each school – a suggested admission number based on an assessment of the teaching space in the school.

Oversubscription Criteria

If there are more applications than the number of places available in a particular school, then the school is deemed to be oversubscribed. When stating a preference parents are entitled to state a reason for doing so. However the only criteria used to allocate places are those detailed below.

After the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where a school is named on the plan the following criteria will be applied in order of priority, for deciding how places will be allocated:

Priority 1 - Looked After Children

A ‘looked after’ child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority, adopted; subject to a child arrangement order or a residency order (see explanation).

Priority 2 - Medical Reasons

Children with exceptional medical factors directly relating to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional practitioner (see explanation).

Priority 3 - Family Links

Children who have a brother or sister already attending the school and are expected to be on roll at that school at the time of admission (see explanation)

Priority 4 - Rural

Children living within the Rural Wards of the Borough of Darlington who have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place at one of their preferred schools AND for whom the nearest alternative school would otherwise be more than two miles from their home will be given priority over other children for places at certain schools (see “Rural Wards” explanation under Home to School Transport).

Priority 5 - Distance

Urban Wards of Darlington Borough Council - Children who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) to the main school gate as designated by the Authority, by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the home address of the child. To remain consistent the Authority uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances. The Authority’s priority when measuring a route is to identify the shortest route judged to be safe (safe is lit at regular intervals, paved/tarmaced). The Local Authority accepts there may be exceptions and will treat each case on its merits.

Explanations

Tie-Break

In the event of a tie-break in any criteria, distance will be the deciding factor. The Authority will carry out a thorough investigation, which may involve an Officer walking the route using a *pedometer* as distance will be the deciding factor.

Multiple Births

For multiple births where only 1 place remains, infant classes will be allowed to exceed the statutory limit where the 31st child is a twin or from multiple births. The 'excepted' pupil will be allowed for the time in Key Stage 1 or until the class numbers fall back to current class size limit.

Medical Criterion

If a parent states a preference for a school and indicates their reason for doing so is 'medical', then they will be required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if the child had to travel to another school. The Local Authority reserves the right to make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding the child's condition. We may also seek advice from other qualified professionals, e.g. Psychologists or other specialist where necessary.

Family Links

Children have a family link if:

- They are half or full brother or sister;
- They are adoptive brother or sister;
- They are a foster brother or sister;
- Their carers are married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household;
- They are children of the same household (e.g. carers have special guardianship/child arrangement order)

Home Address

The home address is used for applying the admissions criteria. This means that when a parent states a school preferences they must give the home address at the time of application. Parent/carers must not give the address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of their child. For parents/carers who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside (Monday to Friday).

Where parents/carers are separated and the child lives for periods with both, then the home address will be that of the parent that receives the child benefit. Where childcare arrangements are shared jointly between both parents, the LA will consider the mother's home address to be the relevant address when considering the application unless legal documentation is provided to the contrary.

If the main address has changed temporarily, for example where a parent/carer resides with extended family during a period of sickness or takes up temporary accommodation due to building works/renovation, then the home address remains that at which the parent/carer was resident before the period of temporary residence began. However, if they have sold your property (exchanged contracts) and have moved into temporary accommodation, then they will be required to provide evidence of their situation and a decision will be made based upon the evidence provided.

Waiting Lists

A child's position on a waiting list(s) will be determined by the oversubscription criteria. If a parent wishes for their child's name to be added to a waiting list for any school that they stated a preference for, then they must complete the 'options' form attached to the refusal/offer letter issued in April 2016.

The Local Authority holds waiting lists only for schools within Darlington Borough and names can be added to a waiting list at any time. When pupil numbers fall below the published admission number, children will be admitted from the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The Local Authority does not take into account the length of time on the waiting list.

Vacancies often arise at short notice and those on the waiting list should be prepared to accept a place as soon as it occurs. Places will not be held for later consideration. The Local Authority will maintain waiting lists for Reception Year pupils only until the end of July 2017 (the end of the first year of admission). Thereafter, normal transfers/in-year admission arrangements will operate.

Looked After Children

A **looked after child** is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989):

An **adoption order** is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A **child arrangement order** is an order outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989.

A **special guardianship order** is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

In-Year Admissions

Parents wanting to apply for a place in a year group other than at the normal point of entry (reception or Year & 7) should contact the Local Authority direct to request an in-year application form, if moving into the Authority. If transferring from one Darlington primary school to another, then request an application form from the school the child is attending.

Admission of children outside their normal age group and deferred entry

If a parent seeks a place in a year group outside of their normal age group, they should complete an application form and attach a covering letter along with an accompanying documentation that details the circumstances behind their request, for example if their child has missed a significant amount of time due to ill health or they believe their child to be gifted and talented. This should be forwarded to the School Admissions Manager, Children, Families & Learning, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT who will then contact the head teacher of the school/s concerned and ask for their views. Once a decision has been made the LA will write to the parent(s) informing them of the decision and setting out reasons for such.

Parents of summer born children can also make a request to apply for their child to start school in the next academic year after they reach five and should follow the same process but should start the process in the September of the year prior to the of entry.

Admission of children below compulsory school age

Schools within Darlington Local Authority have a single point of entry in September each year for pupils starting school in Reception. However children may attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age and parents can defer the date their child is admitted until later in the school year.