



Learning for Life

Admissions Arrangements Policy 2026/27

Approved by:	FGB	Date:	22.04.2025
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Last reviewed on:	Spring 2025
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Next review due by:	October 2025
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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Parents who wish to apply for a place at the school outside normal transfer times (ie at the start of Year 7) should initially contact the school.

4. Allocation of places

Admission number

The school has an agreed admission number of 157 for entry in each group

Walton le Dale High School participates in Lancashire CC Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

When the secondary school is oversubscribed, the following priorities apply in order:

1. Looked after children or a child who was previously looked after, but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangement order, or special guardianship order or those children who appear to the school to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note (x) below), then
2. Children for whom the Local Authority accepts that there are exceptional medical, social or welfare reasons which are directly relevant to the school concerned. (See note (i) below) then
3. Children eligible for Services Premium, [note xi] then,
4. Children living within the school's geographical priority area with older brothers or sisters attending the school when the younger child will start, (see note iii below).
5. Children living within the school's geographical priority area, then
6. Children living outside the school's geographical priority area with older brothers or sisters still attending the school when the younger child will start (See note (iii) below) then
7. Children living outside the school's Geographical Priority Area (see note (iv) below).

Notes

(i) The medical, social and welfare criterion will consider issues relevant to the child and/or the family. This category may include children without a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who have special needs. Parents are responsible for providing the professional supporting evidence with the application by the closing date from a consultant, doctor, psychologist, social worker or from another relevant independent professional.

(ii) As required by law, all children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC Plan naming a school will be admitted before the application of the over-subscription criteria. Children who have a Statement of special needs/EHC Plan have their applications considered separately.

(iii) Brothers and sisters includes full brothers and sisters, step children, half brothers and sisters, fostered and adopted children living with the same family at the same address; and full brothers and sisters living at different addresses. The priority does not apply to siblings whose brothers and sisters transferred into a sixth form at 16+.

(iv) The distance criterion will be used as the tie breaker if there is oversubscription within any of the admission criteria; it is a straight line (radial) measure. If the Local Authority is unable to distinguish between applicants using the published criteria (eg. siblings, those living the same distance from home to school, or families residing in the same block of flats) places will be offered via a random draw. The distance measure is a straight line measurement (radial) between the applicant's home address points and the address point of the school (co-ordinates provided by ordnance survey data). Where two addresses have the same distance, or the cut-off point of the addresses is within the same building, then a random draw will determine which address/es receive the offer/s.

(v) A child's permanent address is the one where he/she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from. Proof of residence may be requested at any time throughout the admission process, (including after a child has accessed a school place). If there is any doubt about this, then the address of the Child Benefit recipient will be used.

(vi) The Local Authority will keep waiting lists for all Lancashire primary schools until 31 August 2026. These are kept in priority order using the school's published admission criteria.

(vii) From 1 September 2026, waiting lists will be transferred to and retained by individual admission authorities (the Local authority for community and voluntary controlled schools and own admission authority schools will each retain their own list). To comply with the School Admissions Code the waiting lists must be retained until at least 31 December 2026.

(viii) Applications for school places which are received late will not necessarily be dealt with at the same time as those received by the set deadline. The reasons for a late application may be requested and where these are not exceptional the relevant admission criteria will be initially applied to all others received on time. The late application will be dealt with after this process.

Application forms received after the published closing date, will only be considered at that time if the following conditions apply:

- (a) if the number of preferences received for the school is below the published admission number or:
- (b) there are extenuating circumstances justifying a late application.

These may include:

- (a) parents moving into the County after the closing date;
 - (b) parent/carer illness which required hospitalisation for the major part of the period between the publication of the composite prospectus and the closing date for applications.
- (ix) Where a child lives with one parent for part of the week and another for the rest of the week only one address will be accepted for a school admission application. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of school days (Monday to Friday). Proof of residence may be requested at any time throughout the admissions process.
- (x) the highest priority must be given to looked after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order, child arrangement orders or special guardianship order). Further references to previously looked after children in the Code means children who were adopted (or subject to residence orders, child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after. This includes children who are legally adopted from overseas. Relevant, legal documents must be provided to evidence the adoption.

GEOGRAPHICAL PRIORITY AREA

The Borough of South Ribble comprising the areas and parishes of Bamber Bridge (part of*), Cuerdale, Samlesbury and Walton-le-Dale (part of*)

The Borough of Chorley comprising the parishes of Brindle (part of**) and Hoghton

*The area of Bamber Bridge and Walton-le-Dale to the east of London Way

**The part of the parish to the north of the M65 motorway

Normal admission round

All Lancashire schools and academies have equal preference admission policies. Your child's application is considered against a schools admission policy and places offered in accordance with this.

5. Applying for a school place

Normal admission round

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by Lancashire County Council local authority. The form will ask parents/Carers to state their preference for a minimum of 3 state funded schools in rank order.

Parents/carers will receive an offer of a school place directly from Lancashire County Council.

Parents/Carers have the right to appeal this offer. Further details can be found on our school website or On Lancashire County Council website

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-secondary-school/>

In year Admission

Please refer to the school website where there is a comprehensive site relating to all in year admission procedures. In-year admission is the process of applying for admission into an existing year group within a school.

The in-year admission process is managed by the school. Parents are required to complete the in-year application form, which is available from the school website. We will acknowledge receipt of your application and write to you with the outcome within a maximum of 15 school days (this does not include weekends or school holidays).

You should not use this process if you are applying for

- *a child who has an education, health and care (EHC) plan - please contact the Inclusion Service for guidance*
- *a Looked After Child - please apply directly through the local area education office*

6. Appeals

Where a place cannot be secured or if the parents/carers are unhappy with the decision they have a legal right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Lancashire County Council administers the appeals process on behalf of the school.

The appeals form can be found on our school website and on Lancashire County Councils website.

Further information and advice regarding appeals is available from the admissions team at your local area education office

7. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.