

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust



Balshaw Lane Primary School Admission Arrangements 2026/2027

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust is the admission authority for the academies within the trust and the allocation of school places has been delegated to the Local Authority School Admissions Team, in line with the trust's admissions criteria. Balshaw Lane Primary School operates an equal preference scheme and welcomes all children. The planned admission number for 2026/27 is 60.

Application Procedures

If your child is due to start primary school in September 2026, you can apply for a Reception place between 1st September 2025 and 15th January 2026.

Applications must be made using the Common Application Form which will be made available by the Local Authority's School Admissions Team. Applications can also be made online via the Local Authority's website: [Lancashire County Council School Admissions](https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/school-admissions/).

Applications must be made direct to the Local Authority no later than 15th January 2026.

All places will be offered by the Local Authority's School Admissions Team on behalf of the trust within the primary co-ordinated admissions scheme operational in the Local Authority's area.

You must apply to the authority where you live. If you are unsure, for example if you live near council boundaries, please check with the Local Authority's Admissions Team. You can apply for a primary school in any area, but you must apply to your home authority.

All places will be offered by the Local Authority on behalf of the trust within the secondary coordinated admissions scheme operational in the Local Authority's area. The national offer date for admissions to Reception will be 16th April 2026.

Infant Class Size

Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) Children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Education, Health and Care Plans specifying the school;
- b) Looked-after children and previously looked-after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- c) Children admitted after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admissions authority or local authority in the initial application process;
- d) Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds the appeal;
- e) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;

- f) Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- g) Children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

Deferred Entry and Admissions Outside of the Normal Age Group

Where a child has been offered a full time place in the September following their fourth birthday, parents may defer the date of admission until either the pupil's fifth birthday but not beyond the start of the final term of the school year. If you wish to defer entry this must be agreed with the school. Where deferred arrangements are agreed, school places will be reserved.

If your child has their fifth birthday during the summer term and you wish to defer entry until the September, you can opt to miss the reception year. School places cannot be reserved in these circumstances and you would have to apply for a Year 1 place during the summer term.

Alternatively, you may submit a request for your child to be admitted out of their normal age group in order to start in reception rather than in year 1. Parents should read the [government guidance](#) prior to making an application. Application and further guidance can be sought from the appropriate local authority school admissions teams.

Oversubscription Criteria

The trust will not place any restrictions on admissions unless the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of students with Education and Health Care Plans where Balshaw Lane Primary School is named, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. **Looked after children and previously looked after children.** This includes any "looked-after child" and any child who was previously looked-after but immediately after being looked-after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. This criterion will also apply to children who were previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as they have been adopted.
2. **Medical, Social or Welfare reasons.** Where there are exceptional serious, sensitive and compelling circumstances that are directly relevant to the school, priority may be given. Professional evidence to demonstrate exceptional or compelling reasons why only this school can cater for a particular child's needs on any of these grounds must be provided with the application. The evidence must set out the reasons and level of risk to the child or family and why Balshaw Lane is the only suitable school; plus any difficulties which would arise if the child had to attend an alternative school. It should be noted that all schools can make provision for special educational needs and can also manage common conditions e.g. asthma, epilepsy and diabetes. Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to the school will be considered. Priority will be given to the child only if the submitted evidence unequivocally

proves the circumstances and demonstrates why any alternative school would be unsuitable. Parents are responsible for providing the evidence.

3. **Children of staff** who are employed at Balshaw Lane Primary School on either a full or part time basis or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. **Children who will have a sibling** in attendance at Balshaw Lane Primary School at the time of transfer. The term “sibling” includes stepchildren, half brothers and sisters and adopted and foster children who are living with the same family at the same address.
5. **Distance:** All other pupils, with priority given to those that live nearest to the school. The measurement will be taken in a straight line from the centre point of the residence to the centre point of the school, using the Local Authority’s geographical information system (GIS). 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.

Tie Break

Where there is oversubscription within any of the determined criteria, then priority for places will be decided in a straight line distance measure, (centre point of the residence to the centre point of the school,) using the local authority’s measuring system. The nearest to the school will have priority for admission.

If governors are unable to distinguish between applicants, eg, siblings or those living the same distance (including living in a block of flats with the same postcode) the governors will do a random draw.

Additional Information - Reception Admissions - twins/multiple births

Where there are twins or multiple births wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the trust will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of infant class sizes. In exceptional circumstances we are now able to offer places for both twins and all multiple births even when this means breaching infant class size limits. This may also apply to children who are siblings within the same year group.

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for external applicants refused admission. Parents have 20 school days to compile and lodge hearings.

Late Applications

Applications received after the published closing date will be treated as late applications.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate evidence is provided, will those applications received after the closing date (but before offers of places have been made) be considered concurrently with those applications received on time.

The circumstances which might justify a late application include, but are not restricted to, the illness of a single parent/carers which might have reasonably impinged upon their ability to submit an application on time or where a family has just moved into the area.

Change of Preference

Once an application has been submitted, and the closing date has passed, a change of preference can only be actioned if there is a significant change in circumstances, i.e. a house move.

Any requests for a change of preference should be made in writing to the Local Authority Admissions Team, to include evidence demonstrating the reasons for your changes.

Fraudulent Applications

If it is found that a child has been allocated a place due to misleading information having been provided, for example an incorrect address, then the offer of a place may be withdrawn and the offer of an alternative school will be made by the Local Authority.

Waiting Lists

Our Waiting List is compiled in accordance with our Admissions Criteria and is kept until 31 December of the relevant year. Parents of children who are not admitted can request to have their names placed on the waiting list. Late applications for the school will be slotted into the order according to the extent to which they meet the criteria.

Appeal Arrangements

Where the trust is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002.

You should contact the School Admissions Team to request an appeal form. You will have the opportunity to submit your case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present your case. You will receive 10 school days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

For "in year" admissions

In-year admission is the process of applying for a school place during the school year. Any application for the intake made after the start of the autumn term will be treated as an in-year application.

The in-year admission process is managed by the school. Parents are required to complete the in-year application form, available on the school's website. Where a place cannot be secured, parents will be offered a legal right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. Lancashire County Council administers the appeals process on behalf of the school. Parents can complete the school's appeal form [Appeal for a school place](#) on Lancashire County Council's website.

For enquiries, please contact Mrs Haydock, School Business Manager, at the school on 01257 278722 or via email sbm@balshawlane.co.uk.