

Determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary schools for 2024/2025

All districts

The purpose of the admission arrangements is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools are allocated and offered in an open and fair way. Lancashire County Council (LCC) must comply with the School Admissions Code, published by the Department for Education [DfE], which has 'a force of law'. When a school is oversubscribed, ie, it has more applicants than places available, a policy is required to allocate and offer places in an open and fair way, in line with the School Admissions Code. Listed below is the policy and associated procedures used by LCC when allocating places for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. The supplementary notes and Geographical Priority Areas [GPAs] which form part of the admission arrangements make it clear to parents how and why places are allocated in a fair, clear and objective way:

Determined admissions policy for community and voluntary controlled primary schools - 2024/2025

The determined policy for admission to community and voluntary controlled primary schools for 2024/2025 is listed below:

An admission number will be published showing the maximum number of pupils that the school will admit in the Autumn Term 2024. Parents are given the opportunity to express three preferences for a primary school. Published criteria are used to decide which children should be offered the available places. In primary schools, an equal preference scheme is operated to comply with the Schools Admission Code, whereby three parental preferences are given equal status and are considered equally against the admissions criteria. If a school is oversubscribed, the following criteria will be applied in priority order:

Primary Schools

When a school is oversubscribed on parental preferences, then 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 with older brothers and sisters attending the school when the younger child will start, (see note (iii) below), then
4. Remaining places are allocated according to where a child lives. Those living nearest to the preferred school by a straight line (radial) measure will have priority, (see note (v) below).

When a primary school with a GPA is oversubscribed the following priorities will be applied 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 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).
4. Children living within the school's geographical priority area, then
5. 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
6. Children living outside the school's Geographical Priority Area (see note (iv) below).

GPA's relate to:

Mayfield Primary School, Lytham

Moss Side Primary School

Edisford Community Primary School

Ribblesdale School

Crawshawbooth Primary School

Waterfoot Primary School

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 an EHC Plan/Statement 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/Education, Health and Care Plan naming a school will be admitted before the application of the over-subscription criteria. Children who have a Statement for Special Needs/EHC Plan will 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.

(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).

(v) A child's permanent address is the one where he/she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from. Proof of residency may be requested at any time throughout the admissions process, (including after a child has accessed a school place).

(vi) The Local Authority will keep waiting lists for all Lancashire primary schools until 31 August 2024. These are kept in priority order using the school's published admission criteria. From 1 September 2023, 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 2024.

(vii) 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.

(viii) 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).

(ix) 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.

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) at the

time of making an application to a school. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society (see Section 23ZZA(8) of the Children's Act 1989 (inserted by Section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangement orders are defined Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangement orders replace residence orders and any residence orders in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989, which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Shared Care Arrangements

When 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.

In the cases where a child lives with parents who have shared responsibility and the child's time is split equally between two homes, the address of the parent who receives child benefit will normally be used. The Local Authority reserves the right to request further proof, in order to establish the home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

Where agreement cannot be reached:

Where shared care arrangements are in place, and parents/carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the Local Authority requires parents to resolve matters between themselves, taking legal advice if necessary, and inform the Local Authority which application should be processed. The Local Authority will not become involved in private disputes.

The Local Authority has an obligation to process an application that has been submitted and signed by a parent with parental responsibility. We will consider the living arrangements and apply the shared care arrangement rules.

If there are any challenges to which address is to be used as a child's residency, individual admission authorities will be consulted. In cases where parents are separated and both have retained joint responsibility, the application will be

accepted from the parent who is in receipt of the child benefit and with whom the child primarily resides.

Where shared care arrangements are in place it may be necessary to establish the permanent home address for the child. In certain circumstances parent/carers will be asked to write to the Local Authority stating the number of days each week the child spends with them. The Local Authority may ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the Local Authority will ask for proof of benefit award notices; Tax Credit Award Notices and child's registered address with the GP at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the Local Authority reserves the right to request further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.

The Local Authority cannot release information or intervene where disputes or disagreements arise between parents in relation to any DETERMINED or submitted application for a school place.

We can only process applications from one address. If your child lives at another address from you or with another parent/carer from Monday to Friday, please provide the Parental Responsibility Order or Residence/Child Arrangements Order for the person the child lives with.

Further evidence can include:

- a copy of a court order.
- a letter from a solicitor setting out the arrangements;
- a joint statutory declaration (prepared by a Commissioner for Oath);
- a tax credit award notice (TC602) for current year.

Moving House

If you are about to move house, please contact the Area Education Office with your new address so that letters which are sent to you do not go astray. If you have already exchanged contracts on a house or have evidence of a confirmed offer of tenancy, you can ask for your child's application to be considered from the new address. It is required that a family does not just own a property, in a particular location, but that they are actually resident in the property. Evidence of your/the child's residency in the new property will be required.

We can't accept a temporary address if you still possess a property that was previously used as a home address.

If you make a permanent house move **after** applying, but **before** allocation procedures have been undertaken, you must contact the Area Education Office. You may be able to change your preferences if you are changing address to a more distant property and the allocation will be based on the new address. We normally require two forms of evidence to confirm a house move. It may on occasions be necessary to request additional documentation, depending upon individual circumstances.

Documents accepted to evidence a house move:

- Proof of purchase or tenancy agreement
- Evidence of disposal of previous property
- Council Tax document, evidencing the end of residency in previous home.
- Council Tax document, evidencing the residency within your new home.

Other forms of evidence may also be accepted at the discretion of the County Council to cover individual circumstances.

If you move temporarily during the admissions process you must also discuss the matter with the Area Education Office. Temporary addresses are rarely accepted for admission purposes.

If you are moving to another area of Lancashire, details of schools in the area can be obtained from any Area Education Office. Admission Authorities will check address details and may randomly sample applications.

You must contact the Area Education Office if there are any changes in your child's living arrangements during the application and allocation of places period.

Places offered for Lancashire schools may be subsequently withdrawn where misleading or inaccurate information has been discovered.

Applications from abroad (and other areas of the UK)

It is no longer required that families must be physically resident in Lancashire (or nearby) in order to apply within the annual intake processes.

Where families relocate or return to an address in Lancashire after a statutory closing date but during the allocation period (ahead of finalisation of offers) then there will be considered as a late application. Appropriate evidence must be provided of ownership and date of relocation and residence at that address.

Please note that late entry to the annual intake processes will not be possible after the statutory closing dates unless an exception is agreed by the Local Authority and / or the admission authority.

The Authority has a duty to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all Lancashire maintained schools. The Authority will ensure that all Lancashire parents whose children will attend a reception class receive the offer of primary school place on the agreed date.