

Darlington Local Authority Determined Admissions Arrangements 2020/21

Admission at the Normal Point of Entry

Darlington Borough Council, is the Admissions Authority for the following community and voluntary controlled schools:

Harrowgate Hill Primary
Red Hall Primary
Whinfield Primary

The Local Authority will consider all preferences for each school if stated on the Primary School Application (PSA) form, against the relevant oversubscription criteria as set out below. 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. If there are more applications than the number of places available in a particular school, then the school is deemed to be oversubscribed and the oversubscription criteria will be applied. In determining admissions, priority will be given to those applications where the (PSA) is received by the published deadline. Applications received after the deadline ('late' applications) will then be considered.

Admissions Oversubscription Criteria

After the admission of children with special educational needs where a school is named on the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and where the number of applicants is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below, in the following order:

- (i) Looked After & Previously Looked After Children**
Looked after children and previously looked after but immediately after becoming looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangement order or special guardianship order.
- (ii) State Care outside of England**
Children who appear to Darlington Local Authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see further explanation)
- (iii) Medical Reasons**
Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to the school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional practitioner (see further explanation).
- (iv) Family Links**
Children who have a brother or sister already attending the school and who are expected to be on the roll at the time of admission (see definition]
- (v) 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).

- (vi) **Distance (Rural 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, via the shortest route which is paved/tarmaced*. 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.
- (vi) **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, 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.

*In the rural wards, the Council is aware that the shortest route may not be a safe route to walk. Therefore, if a child living in a rural ward, is successful in gaining a place at a school; where the route taken when measured by the Local Authority, is paved/tarmaced but not also lit at regular intervals, then the Local Authority will provide assistance with transport, even if it is less than the statutory duty for a child of the appropriate age.

A copy of the map is available in the Guide for Parents and on the Council's website.

Definitions/Explanations

Looked After & Previously 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.

State care outside of England

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.

Medical Criterion

If a parent states a preference for any of the 3 maintained schools and indicates their reason for doing so is 'medical', then they will be required to send a supporting letter from a professional health care practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the preferred school is the most suitable and why other schools could not provide the appropriate support for the child. Where further information is sought by the local authority to understand how the child's condition may affect their admission into school, permission will be sought from the child's parent.

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 their 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). Similarly where parents/carers are separated and the child lives for periods with both, then the home address will be where the child mainly resides Monday to Friday or where a court has determined it should be.

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.

Consideration of late applications

If parent/carers believe that there are exceptional/individual circumstances which prevented submission of an application form by the stated deadline, e.g. families who have moved into the area after the closing date or if they are a single parent and have been ill for some time or have been dealing with the death of a close relative, then they must provide clear evidence for the LA.

The Authority will then consider each application on an individual basis subject to verification. If the Authority decides that the reason given is unacceptable then the application will be considered after the applications received by the deadline and the decision of the LA will be final. These applications will be considered up to and including the stated deadline in January in the Guide for Parents. Further applications received after the January date will only be considered once the process for allocating places has been applied to those applications received by the deadline.

Offer Day

Darlington Borough Council will inform parent/carers of the offer of a school place on 16 April of the year of entry (or the next working day to this date).

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.

Withdrawal of a place offered

The Local Authority would only look to withdraw the offer of a place having once established it had been obtained fraudulently or offered in error by the local authority or a parent had not responded within a reasonable period of time. Once a child had started at the school, only if the place had been obtained fraudulently would the local authority consider withdrawing the offer and the length of time in attendance would be taken into account.

Waiting Lists

Darlington Local Authority as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools will maintain a waiting list at all times. 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 of the relevant year of entry.

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 a child's name has been on the waiting list, nor whether the application was received by the closing date or thereafter.

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. After the point of entry in September, normal transfers/in-year admission arrangements will operate.

Appeals Process

Darlington Local Authority will issue appeal papers if requested to a parent/carer who has been unsuccessful in their application to gain a place at their preferred school(s) as stated on their form, for their child(ren).

Admission of Children outside of 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 or parents can defer the date their child is admitted until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the academic year of entry.

In-Year Applications Forms

Families who move into the area who require a place(s) at a Darlington school must contact the Schools Admissions Section at the Town Hall. Parent/carers will be sent an In-year Application Form (IYAF) out and directed to the Council's website for a copy of the Guide for Parents.

Should a place be available at a school requested by a parent, a meeting with the Head Teacher must take place before a start date is agreed. The Schools Admissions Section in agreement with the parent/carers and the Head Teacher of the school will arrange this meeting. Should however a parent/carer request a place at a school that has no places available, then they will be informed about the appeals process and the availability of alternative school places.

Harowgate Hill Primary
Thompson Street West
Darlington
DL3 0HZ
Tel No. 01325 253300
Email: admin@harrowgatehillpri.darlington.sch.uk
Published Admission Number = 90
Co-Educational Establishment – Age Range 4-11

Head Teacher: Mrs Amanda Abbott

Red Hall Primary
Headingley Crescent
Darlington
DL1 2ST
Tel No. 01325 254770
Email: admin@redhall.darlington.sch.uk
Published Admission Number – 30
Co-Educational Establishment – Age Range 4-11

Head Teacher: Mrs Julie Davison

Whinfield Primary
Augusta Close
Darlington
DL1 3HT
Tel no. 01325 240499
Email: admin@whinfieldprimary.net
Published Admission Number = 90
Co-Educational Establishment – Age Range 4-11

Head Teacher: Mrs Shirley Welsh