



ADMISSIONS POLICY

Make sure you understand the admissions criteria fully before you complete the form and remember that circumstances can change from year to year, for example there may be an unusually high number of children living in the catchment area.

1. Admission to First/Primary Schools

- 1.1 The County Council's admission arrangements reflect the requirements of the School Admissions Code which can be found on the DfE website.
- 1.2 Admission will be once a year on a full time basis in September if the child is four by 31 August.
- 1.3 The County Council is obliged to admit all applicants to a particular school provided these do not exceed the school's Published Admission Number (PAN).
- 1.4 The Published Admission Number of each school for entry in September is published in the Admissions Handbook.

This publication will be available in September and can be provided by the School Admissions team on request. Full admission arrangements can be found on the Northumberland County Council website.

- 1.5 In accordance with the School Admission Code, children with a Statement of Special Educational need or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the Statement or EHC Plan will be given priority of admission.

In addition, those children who are deemed to be 'looked after' or who have previously been 'looked after' will be given priority of admission.**

The priority order for considering the remaining applications is as follows:

- Children living within the catchment area of the school and those on whose behalf firm evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area by the appropriate admission date.
- Children with an exceptional social or medical reason that means that they can only attend that specific school (for example, where the child or one or both parents has a disability that means that the child can only go to one school).

- Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a professional body involved with the family or the child.
- The professional must be independent of both the family and the school.
- The evidence must relate specifically to the school for which the application is being made and must demonstrate clearly why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

No assumptions should be made that the submission of the relevant evidence will, in itself be sufficient to allocate a place.

NOTE: Supporting evidence **must** be submitted at the time of application. If you apply online you must post your information to the School Admissions Manager by the application deadline. **You will not be allocated a place under this criterion if you omit to send to the School Admissions Manager a written statement from a professional third party by the application deadline.**

- Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership who have siblings already in the school and who are expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission. Evidence must be presented to confirm that the child will be living in the greater catchment area by the appropriate admission date.

For the purpose of admissions siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.

- Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership. Evidence must be presented to confirm that the child will be living in the greater catchment area by the appropriate admission date.
- Children who have a sibling who already attends the school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.
- Children on whose behalf preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.

1.6 Parents may be asked to provide evidence of residency if the requested school is oversubscribed. The Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw a place at a school if information relating to address or any other matter is found to be false.

1.7 Where there are more applications than places available, children from multiple births will be given priority within each criterion. If a further tie break is necessary distance between home and the school will be used to prioritise applications (see below).

1.8 Should it prove necessary, because places are limited, to distinguish between pupils in any given category priority will be given to those who live nearest to the school, measured in a direct line ('as the crow flies') from the front door of the home to the main gate of the school. The distance checker is contained within the EMS school admissions software using GIS data. Distance checking is an integral function within the school admissions software ensuring consistency in measurement .

1.9 Applications on behalf of children who are resident in other Local Authority areas will be considered in the same way as applications from Northumberland residents.

- 1.10 Children with special educational needs and disabilities will be treated no less favourably than other applicants for admission. Schools are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with SEND are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- 1.11 The County Council reserves the right to vary these criteria to take account of revisions to legislation or its interpretation by the courts.
- 1.12 In cases when an application for a place has been unsuccessful, the child's name will be placed on a reserve list for the school in question under the appropriate Co-ordinated Scheme. Reserve lists will be maintained until the end of the school year to which they relate.
- 1.13 Those parents whose application to a school has been unsuccessful will be notified of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, gives this right to all parents whose application for a school has been unsuccessful. The decision of an Appeal Panel is binding on both the Admission Authority and the school. The School Admissions Appeals Code can be found on the DfE website at: www.gov.uk/dfes.

Definitions used under the policy

'Parents' include all those people who have a parental responsibility* for a child as set out in the Children's Act 1989. Where responsibility for a child is 'shared', the person deemed to be the person responsible for completing the application is the person receiving Child Benefit and whose address will be used for admission purposes.

* Parental Responsibility, unless otherwise determined by a court order:

- Mothers automatically have parental responsibility.
- Fathers also have parental responsibility if the father is married to the mother at the time of the child's birth. This continues after any divorce/separation/remarriage even if the child lives apart from them.
- An unmarried father can obtain Parental Responsibility by:
 - Marrying the mother
 - Having his name registered or re-registered on the birth certificate if his name is not already registered**
 - Entering into a Parental Responsibility Agreement with the mother.
 - Obtaining a Parental Responsibility Order from the court.
 - Having obtained a Residence Order prior to 22.4.2014.
 - By being named as the resident parent under a Child Arrangements Order.
 - Becoming the child's guardian on the mother's death.

** The law has changed so that unmarried fathers who registered or re-registered their name on their child's birth certificate after 1st December 2003 will have Parental Responsibility for their child.

Therefore:

- If an unmarried father has a child after 1st December 2003 and he is registered on the birth certificate he WILL have Parental Responsibility.
- If a child's birth was registered before 1st December 2003 and the father was not named on the birth certificate, the birth can be re-registered to include the father's name. Once this has been done, the father WILL have Parental Responsibility.*

- If an unmarried father's name is already on the birth certificate and the child was registered before 1st December 2003, the law has not changed this situation so the father WILL NOT have Parental Responsibility. (Unless obtained by other means).

In case of dispute between parents, where more than one parent has parental responsibility and they do not agree to an application being made to a particular school, a temporary school place will be offered until any dispute is resolved by both parents as a personal matter.

'Siblings' are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.

** Minister of State for School Standards intends to amend the School Admissions Code but in the meantime, he asks that children adopted from care outside of England are given the second highest priority for admission in oversubscription criterias. Once the code has been updated, admission authorities will have the opportunity to consult upon and publish any formal changes.

Publication of the Local Authorities Information for Parents booklet

The Information for Parents publication for a September entry will be available from the beginning of September of the previous year.

Admissions timetable

1 November: E-admissions portal opens.

1 November: Information, Handbooks and application forms available at:
admissions.northumberland.gov.uk

15 January: Closing Date for Applications: E-admission portal closes

16 April: Parents notified of the outcome of their applications for school places

1 May: Last date for offers to be rejected by parents.

Signed:Chair of Governors

On behalf of the Governing Body

Dated: