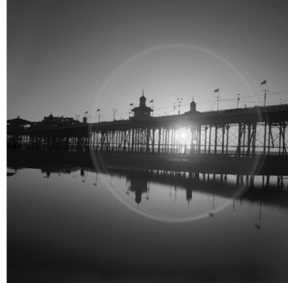


# BLACKPOOL COUNCIL



## **Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2017-2018**

### **POLICY DOCUMENT**

# **Blackpool Council Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2017/18**

## **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to those Blackpool Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for which Blackpool Council is the Admissions Authority.

The Governing Boards of Voluntary Aided Schools, Academies and Free Schools in Blackpool are responsible for setting their own admissions criteria and for determining the allocation of school places in accordance with their published admission policy.

## **Legal Framework**

Blackpool Council has formulated its admission policy for 2017-2018, and for subsequent years, subject to any review, as it relates to Blackpool Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. The policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of:-

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the Education and Inspections Act 2006; the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008; the Schools Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012; the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012; the Admissions Codes 2010 and 2012 and 2014.

## **Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements**

In accordance with the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2006, Blackpool's Co-ordinated Schemes for Primary and Secondary Admissions allows for an inter-Blackpool co-ordinated approach, which is also fully co-ordinated with Lancashire County Council.

## **Admission to Nursery Class**

This policy does not apply to children being admitted to nursery education, including nursery provision delivered in schools/academies or co- located children's centres.

All providers must publish nursery admission arrangements separately.

Attendance in any nursery class that is attached to a primary school or academy does not guarantee admission to the school for primary education. Likewise, schools cannot insist that children attend any nursery class in order to guarantee admission to the school for primary education. Schools may, however, give priority to children in their nursery, but parents are advised to check individual admission policies.

Admission details for other pre-school settings, including those for nursery aged children, are available from the Blackpool Family Information Service, telephone 0800 092 2332.

## Starting Primary School

The Education Act 1996 states that a child is required to attend primary school from the start of term following his or her fifth birthday.

A child would be eligible for a place in a school reception class from the beginning of the Autumn Term if they were born on or between 1st September 2012 and 31st August 2013.

### Deferred entry

(This information is correct at the time of publication, and will be reviewed in the light of any change in legislation)

Primary admission may be deferred by up to two school terms. Where parents/carers wish to defer entry this must be agreed with the school and the Children's Services Department. Where deferred arrangements are agreed, school places will be reserved.

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

## Infant Class Sizes

The Education (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1973) as amended by SI 2006/3409 prescribed that infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher. (The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 introduces certain exceptions relating to children of multiple births and children of UK service personnel).

## Factors not taken into account in Blackpool's admission policy

Blackpool Council does not operate a 'catchment area' policy.

Blackpool Council does not operate a 'feeder school' system.

## Applying for a School Place

If the applicant is a Blackpool resident, application must be made to Blackpool School Admissions Team. If an applicant resides in the Lancashire County Council area or in any other area, application must be made to their "home" Local Authority.

Applications can be made online via the Blackpool Council website - [www.blackpool.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Alternatively, a paper application form can be completed, which will be available on request from Blackpool primary schools/academies or the School Admissions Team.

Submission of a late application could reduce the chance of a place at a preferred school.

## All Through School

Unity Academy is an 'All Through' School. Pupils already in Year 6 at Unity Academy at the time of secondary application, are already on roll at the Academy, so are guaranteed a place in Year 7, should they wish to continue their education at the Academy.

## Allocation of Places

Blackpool Council operates an Equal Preference Scheme.

After the published closing date for the return of the admission applications, Blackpool School Admissions Team will complete the process of allocating school places to pupils. Wherever possible, pupils will be allocated to a school in accordance with parental preference.

The limitation on this will be the statutory limitation contained in Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which states that a Local Authority need not comply with parental preference, "if compliance with the preference would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources".

Parental preference will be met provided that the demand for places does not exceed the agreed admission number.

Where demand for a school exceeds the available places the Local Authority will allocate places fairly and objectively using its published oversubscription criteria.

## Published Admission Numbers

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) defines the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the relevant year.

When setting the Admission Number, the Local Authority has due regard to the available space within the school as defined by the school's net capacity.

Where a school is oversubscribed, the Local Authority's admission arrangements must specify how it will determine the allocation of places.

Governing Boards of Voluntary Aided Schools, Academies and Free Schools in Blackpool are responsible for setting their own Admission Number.

## Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (formerly a Statement of Special Educational Needs)

When a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan that names a particular school, all Admission Authorities are required by Schedule 27, Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit the child to that school. Schools must admit these children whether they have places or not.

## Equal Preference Scheme

Blackpool Local Authority operates an 'Equal Preference Scheme', which the Department for Education (DfE) considers maximises parental satisfaction with the admissions arrangements.

Applicants are invited, to express a preference, in priority order, for three schools, and to give reasons for their preference.

All preferences will be treated equally, and if more than one school can potentially be offered, a single offer will be for the school or academy that the applicant has ranked highest.

The Local Authority will make a single offer of a place in accordance with Blackpool's Co-ordinated Admission arrangements. The Local Authority will make the offer in writing on the published national offer date.

Expressing a preference does not guarantee that an applicant will receive an offer of their highest ranked school/academy. Furthermore, a small number of applicants may not receive an offer of a place at a lower ranked school.

## Oversubscription Criteria

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) determines the number of available places.

Where there are more preferences for a particular school than there are places available, the Local Authority employs its oversubscription criteria to objectively determine which children should be offered a place at that particular school.

In the event of the admission number being reached within any one of the oversubscription criteria in the order listed below, the distance criteria will be used as a 'tie breaker'. In the event of equal distance, a random allocation will be used to determine who takes priority for a place.

If a place cannot be offered at any one of the applicant's preferred schools/academies, a place will be offered at the nearest community school with an available place, or at the nearest academy that is able to offer a place.

The child's name may be added to a school's waiting list and applicants will be advised of any schools/academies at which there are vacancies.

The over subscription criteria is applied in the following order:

### **Children Looked After**

Blackpool Council gives the highest priority to Looked After Children, as required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.

A Looked After child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority, as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, at the time of application and allocation.

Under legislation, children who leave public care through adoption, a residence order or special guardianship order, will continue to be given the same priority although they are no longer looked after by the state.

### **Medical Conditions**

Places will be given to children where they, or their parent(s) or carer(s), have a serious exceptional medical condition, where they contend that attendance at a particular school is appropriate.

Supporting evidence will be required. This must set out the particular reasons and the level of risk to the child or family's health, why the school in question is the most suitable school, and the difficulties that 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, diabetes.

There must be substantive medical evidence e.g. in the form of a letter from a specialist/consultant doctor (not a General Practitioner).

It will not be possible to consider an application within this criterion if appropriate supporting evidence has not been produced at the time of application.

### **Social or welfare reasons for admission**

Where there are exceptional sensitive individual and compelling family circumstances, which are directly relevant to the preferred school, these may also be considered at the time of application.

Requests for consideration within this criterion will require appropriate professional reports e.g. from a social worker, police officer or educational psychologist. The report must demonstrate exact reasons and the impact on the child or family's circumstances and why this is the only suitable school compared to other schools available. Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to a particular school will be considered. Priority will be given to the child for the preferred school only if the submitted report unequivocally proves the circumstances and demonstrates why an alternative school is unsuitable.

If supporting evidence is not provided, it will not be possible to consider the application under the social and welfare criterion.

All information which is submitted will be considered as being confidential.

### **Siblings**

Priority will be given to brothers and sisters of children already attending the school at the time of application and who will still be attending at the time of admission.

This includes full brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who are living within the same family at the same address.

Full brothers and sisters who do not live at the same address will still be given priority as a sibling.

Half, step and foster brothers and sisters who do not live at the same address will not be classed as siblings.

## **Distance criterion**

Blackpool Council determines the distance from the applicant's home address to the school on the following basis.

The distance between the applicant's home and school is taken as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address point of the applicant's home address and of the school. The LLPG is a point within the boundary of the property and is usually located at its centre.

Distances are measured using the Council's Geographic Information System.

If the Local Authority is unable to determine eligibility on distance, i.e. two or more addresses are equal distance from the school, a random allocation will be carried out. In the event of a random allocation, someone independent of the Children's Services Department and of the school would supervise the process, and parents/carers would be invited to attend.

NB. The shortest safe walking route continues to be a consideration for assisted transport purposes.

## **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 that 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.

For under subscribed schools it may be possible to consider late applications up to the school's published admission number.

Late applications for Voluntary Aided Schools, Academies or Free Schools will be referred to the Governing Body for the necessary consideration in liaison with the Local Authority.

## **Change of Preference**

Applicants may not change their preference once the closing date has passed, unless there is a significant reason for doing so, for example a house move. Any requests must be made in writing, with evidence to demonstrate the reasons.

## Waiting Lists

The School Admissions Team will establish and maintain a waiting list for each school for which it is the admissions authority. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year.

Parents/carers may request that their child's name is placed on the waiting list for any school/academy that is ranked higher than the one they have been offered. Parents/carers may also request that the child is placed on the waiting list for a school/academy that was not an original preference.

If a vacancy occurs, which will take the school below its published admission number, the place will be filled from the waiting list.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, places on the waiting list are maintained according to the pupil's priority against the school's admission criteria, not simply the length of time that they have been on the waiting list. A new applicant, who has a higher priority according to the admission criteria, would be ranked higher than those that have been on the list for some time.

Parents/carers who intend to appeal against the Local Authority's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school(s) should do so irrespective of having their child's name placed on the waiting list. For those parents/carers who proceed to an independent appeal, no consideration is given to the child's position on the waiting list.

## Appeal Arrangements

Any applicant whose child is not offered a school/academy place, for which they have expressed a preference, has the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

Applicants can also appeal for a school/academy that was not an original preferred school.

Applicants who intend to appeal for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school must complete a Blackpool Council Appeal Form, which is available from the School Admissions Team.

This form should also be completed when appealing for an Academy or Free School that has delegated the responsibilities relating to appeals to the Local Authority.

Applicants who wish to appeal for a place in a Voluntary Aided School/Academy, or certain Academies and Langdale Free School, should contact the school/academy direct to request an appeal form. The School Admissions Team will offer advice on the appeal application process.

## Fraudulent Applications

Where the Local Authority discovers that a child has been allocated a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application, for example, where a false address has been provided, then the Local Authority is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will then be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.



## Admission to Blackpool Schools after 1st September

All applicants requesting a school place, either because they are new to Blackpool, or because they are wishing to transfer schools within Blackpool, are required to complete an In-Year Application Form, allowing them to express up to three preferences. By agreement with its schools, the admission of all pupils to Blackpool schools will be co-ordinated by the Local Authority.

### In-Year Fair Access Protocol

Blackpool Council operates an In-Year Fair Access Protocol, which ensures that access to education is secured quickly for children who have complex needs, and that all schools in the area admit equally under these arrangements.

**BLACKPOOL COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS**  
**(Details are correct at the time of publication)**

Community Primary Schools	Admission Number
Boundary Primary School	60
Claremont Primary School	60
Kincraig Primary School	30
Layton Primary School	90
Mereside Primary School	60
Moor Park Primary School	60
Stanley Primary School	90

Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Admission Number
Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School	60

Community Secondary School	Admission Number
Highfield Humanities College	240