

Admissions Policy

Primary 2025 -2026

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		✓	
Agency Staff	Other	a	a
	✓		

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Version	Reviewer	Revision Date	Nature of Change	Adopted/ Approved by	Approval Date
VI	TM/MG/MI	February 2023	New layout, updated with dates for 24/25. No change to criteria that would require consultation.	Chair of BOT	February 2023
VI		No revision	Board of Trustees Approval	Board of Trustees	March 2023
VI.1	BG	November 2023	Updates to all AE Admissions policies following feedback and review against Admissions Code and ready for consultation.	Board of Trustees	TBC

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1. Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for a place at Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School. This policy is designed to provide clear guidance on the admission arrangements for a place at the academy including information on timescales, deadlines and contact details for queries.

It also provides guidance on how applications are administered, the criteria used to prioritise applications (where necessary), waiting lists and the appeals process.

Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School is a non-selective primary academy without a nursery, which has a Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception of 30.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the academy
- Set out the academy's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

3. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance and underlying legislation:

- School Admissions Code 2021.
- Schol Admissions Appeal Code 2022.
- The academy is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Definitions

4.1 Looked After and previously Looked After children

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to an academy, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

4.2 Normal round and In-Year Applications

There are two different routes for applications – 'normal round' and 'in-year round'; each round has a slightly different application process and timescales. Both application routes are detailed separately in this policy.

'Normal round' is relevant to all applications for a place in Reception Year starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

'In-Year round' is relevant to applications for all year groups (including reception) other than reception starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

4.3 Admissions Authority

Aldridge Education is a Multi-Academy Trust and is the admissions authority for all academies in the Aldridge Education Trust, including Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School, Aldridge Education, in accordance with its funding agreement, is responsible for the admissions policy of each academy and co-ordinates with the relevant Local Authority for the administration of admissions applications. For Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School the relevant Local Authority is Blackburn with Darwen.

5. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the academy is in). Parent/carer(s) resident in Blackburn with Darwen can apply online at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/admissions> or contact the Local Authority to request a hard copy of the form. You can use the admission form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

The academy publishes information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria in February for the following September (e.g. in February 2024 for admission in September 2025)

5.1 Application timetable

Autumn Term: The school provides opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents/carers to visit the school.

15th January: National closing date for Primary applications. Deadline for the Common Application Form to be completed and submitted to the relevant Local Authority.

January-March: The school and Local Authority coordinate to process all applications. If more applications are received than places available they will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria published in this policy (see section 7.2).

28th February: Deadline for the school to publish its appeals timetable on their website.

16th April: Offers made to parents/carers by the Local Authority.

5.2 Open Events

The academy provides opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents and carers to visit the academy via open day events. For further information please contact the academy directly, contact details are available in section 12.

5.3 Submission of Applications

1st September 2024 – 15th January 2025: Applications can be submitted for September 2025 start.

If more applications are received than places available, they will be ranked according to the over-subscription criteria published in this policy (see section 7.2).

PLEASE NOTE: Academies are not able to provide any information regarding specific applications during this process.

Applications may still be submitted for a place in September 2025 after 15th January but any applications made from 16th January to 31st August will be considered a "late application". This means that it will normally be considered after all the applications that were submitted on-time are allocated a place.

6. Deferred Places, requests for Admission Outside the Normal Age Group and Admissions of Children Outside their Normal Chronological Year Group

Depending on their child's date of birth, places may be deferred until the start of term 3 or 5 but not later than the term following the child's fifth birthday and cannot be deferred until the start of the following academic year. Parents should make any request to the school for a deferment once they have received an offer of a school place. The school place will be held for that child and will not be available to be offered to another child.

If you decide to delay your child starting school until the September following their fifth birthday but do not request admission out of their normal age group at this time, your child will start school in year 1.

You will need to make an in-year application for a school place for your child and the school admissions team at your local authority can advise you on when it would be best to make such an application.

Some schools are likely to be full at this point and unable to offer you a place. Schools are unable to hold a place for your child from the previous year.

Parent/carer(s) are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

You need to apply for a primary school place a year before your child starts school. Applications open in September and close on 15 January.

You should apply to your local authority for a school place as normal – as if your child were going to start school at age 4 – even if you think you want to delay their start until age 5. If you do not want your child to miss their reception year, you should submit a request for admission out of the normal age group to the school's admission authority at the same time. This means you will need to decide whether or not you want to request admission out of the normal age group in the autumn following your child's third birthday.

Applications for delayed or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group that is not the chronological age year group, will be considered. The admissions authority for the school will make the final decision.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parent/carer(s) views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The principal's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered based on the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 7.2. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents and carers will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents and carers do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the academy, but it is not in their preferred age group.

7. Allocation of places

7.1 Admission number

The academy has a Published Admission Number of 30 pupils for entry in Reception.

7.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHCP) plans name the academy will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the academy is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If the academy receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in the order described below, until all places are filled.

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the academy.
2. Children of staff at the academy who have been recruited to a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage. Aldridge Education must approve the Principal's assessment process and designation of such posts to confirm the staff members' eligibility under this criterion. Priority will be limited to one place for each form of entry in any year group which means one for Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School.
3. Priority will next be given to children who, at the time of admission have a sibling who attends the school. For this purpose, 'sibling' means a whole, half or step-sibling, foster child or an adopted child any of whom must be resident at the same address.
4. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the academy where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made. Aldridge Education must approve the Principal's assessment process and designation of such posts to confirm the staff members' eligibility under this criterion. Priority will be limited to one place for each form of entry in any year group which means one for Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School.
5. Priority will next be given to those children who live closest to the school. The Local Authority measures distance on behalf of Aldridge Education, Blackburn with Darwen use Ordnance Survey Data to calculate **straight line distance** between the child's home and the main entrance to the school. Where a child resides in a block of flats, the distance will be measured to the main entrance of the building in which the flats are located. See section 7.4 regarding how the home address will be determined.

7.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the academy will use the Local Authority's system of random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants (which is carried out automatically by the local authority's computerised system).

In the case of multiple births or siblings in the same year group, where there is only one place available in the school, all will be considered together as one application, taking into account infant class size regulations.

7.4 Home Address

Where a child regularly lives at more than one address the Admissions Authority will have to reach a conclusion about which should be counted as the main address when allocating places, taking relevant evidence into account. Normally this will be the address where the child is registered with a medical GP. Where parents or carers are living separately and do not agree on the child's home address, they are urged to reach an agreement. If this does not happen evidence may be required by providing court documents or other legally binding documentation such a sworn affidavit confirming where the child resides for the majority of the school week. Where satisfactory evidence cannot be provided the Admissions Authority will determine the address be used for allocating a school place. Please note: if agreement is not reached or a legal decision is not made before the closing date, this may affect the chances of your child being allocated a place at the preferred school(s).

7.5 Children below compulsory school age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the academy, they will be entitled to attend the academy full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parent/carer(s) may defer their child's entry to the academy until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parent/carer(s) wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

7.6 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e., where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans naming the academy.

7.7 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Blackburn with Darwen's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

8. In-year admissions

Parents and carers can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHCP plans name the academy will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

Blackburn with Darwen holds information on which schools in their area have spaces for each year group. Contact Blackburn with Darwen via the link below for further information:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/admissions>

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 7.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

office@sudell.blackburn.sch.uk

Or alternatively posted to Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School, Ellison Fold Terrace, Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 3EB Parent/carer(s) will be notified of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary School will inform Blackburn with Darwen of any in year applications received as well as the outcome so that they can track vacancies across the area.

9. Waiting List

Where the Academy has been oversubscribed in the normal admissions round and places have been refused to some applicants, a waiting list will be maintained for any vacancies which subsequently occur in the Academy. A waiting list will be maintained until the end of the academic year after which it will be cleared.

The waiting list is maintained in the order of the oversubscription criteria only (not application date). This means that names can move down the list if, e.g., someone's criteria are higher placed under the oversubscription criteria.

Parent/carer(s) have the right to request their child is removed from the waiting list at any time. Once removed, the child cannot be reinstated on the waiting list without submitting a new application.

If a place becomes available it will be allocated to the first child on the waiting list, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If that offer is declined the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

The waiting list process does not apply to children with an EHCP. As section 7.2, children with an EHCP that names the academy will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol take precedence over those on a waiting list.

10. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the academy is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing. You can request an appeal form by calling Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (01254 666605).

You can find details of the appeals timetable on the following webpage:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-appeals/school-appeals-dates-and-deadlines>

The deadline for submitting an appeal will be at least 20 school days from the date of notification that an application was unsuccessful. This deadline applies to 'normal round' and 'in year' applications.

The decision of the Independent Appeal Panel is binding on all parties.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), Board of Trustees will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the academy's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

12. Further Information and Contact Details

For queries regarding this policy, admissions arrangements for the academy and the waiting lists and appeals process, please contact:

Principal: office@sudell.blackburn.sch.uk or 01254 703440.

Further information and links to all relevant forms for admissions and appeals are available on the academy website via the link below.

[Making an Application | Darwen Aldridge Sudell Primary \(sudellprimaryschool.co.uk\)](https://www.sudellprimaryschool.co.uk)

[Admissions | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](https://www.blackburn.gov.uk)

Further information on Blackburn with Darwen's Fair Access Protocol – [In-Year applications 2023 to 2024 | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](#)

The Department for Education website on school admissions – [School admissions: Choosing schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021 - [School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Department for Education School Admissions Appeals Code 2022 - [School Admission Appeals Code 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)