

Darwen St James' CE Primary Academy

Darwen St James'
C of E Primary Academy



ADMISSION POLICY 2024/25

Making an application

Applications for admission to the academy for September 2024 should be made on either the on-line application form on the Council's website, or the common application form enclosed with the Local Authority's brochure between **1st September 2023** and **15th January 2024**.

Parents must complete the Local Authority application form. It is not normally possible to change the order of your preferences for schools after the closing date.

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

Parents who wish their application to this Church academy to be considered against the faith criteria **MUST** also complete the church questions on the on-line or common application form. If the academy is oversubscribed, a failure to answer these questions may result in your application for a place in this academy being considered against lower priority criteria as the Governing Body will have no information upon which to assess the worship attendance.

Applications may also be made on-line by using the common application form.

Letters informing parents of whether or not their child has been allocated a place will be sent out by the Local Authority on **17th April 2024**. Parents of children not admitted will be informed of the reason and offered an alternative place by the Authority.

Admission procedures

Arrangements for admission have been agreed following consultation between the Governing Body, the Diocesan Board of Education, Local Authorities and other admissions authorities in the area.

The number of places available for admission to the Reception Class in the year 2024 will be a maximum of 30.

The Governing Body will not place any restrictions on admissions to the Reception Class unless the number of children for whom admission is sought exceeds their admission number. By law, no Reception or Key Stage 1 class may contain more than thirty children. The Governing Body operates a system of equal preferences under which they consider all preferences equally and the Local Authority notifies parents of the result. In the event that there are more applicants than places, after admitting all children with an Education, Health and Care plan, a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Individual Pupil Resource Agreement (IPRA) naming the academy, the Governing Body will allocate places using the criteria below, which are listed in order of priority.

Please note that a place in the Nursery Class does not guarantee a place in the academy.

Admission Criteria

1. a) Children in public care and previously looked after children.

This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after children" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 'Looked after' means that the child was (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.

This criteria also includes looked after children and all previously looked after children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

b) Children with special medical or social circumstances affecting the child where these needs can only be met at this school.

Professional supporting evidence from a professional, eg a doctor, psychologist, social worker, is essential if admission is to be made under the criterion for special medical or social circumstances, and such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the academy is the most suitable academy and the difficulties which would be caused if the child had to attend another academy.

1. Children who have a sibling attending the academy on the date of application and on the date of admission.

Siblings include step, half, foster, adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address.

2. Children whose parents live within the ecclesiastical parish of Darwen St. James' Church, Darwen.

A map showing the parish boundaries is available in the academy.

3. Children with a parent/guardian worshipping in a church in full membership of Churches Together in England.

The list of Churches can be found on the Churches Together in England website at cte.org.uk; lists are taken as on 1st September 2023. Churches in membership of the equivalent bodies to CTE in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are equally accepted.

Parental worshipping is normally taken to mean a minimum of monthly attendance at church at public worship for over at least six months between the 1st January and 1st September 2023.

The governors will request confirmation of this from the relevant member of the clergy or church Officer. Where a family has changed churches, then information about all of them will be required.

"In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship".

4. Other children.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child^[1] may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Admission authorities **must** make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

Admission authorities **must** make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent'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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. *They **must** also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned.*

*When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **must** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.*

Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age

group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority **must** process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They **must not** give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. *This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.*

^[1] The term summer born children relates to all children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children reach compulsory school age on 31 August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on 31 August). It is likely that most requests for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group will come from parents of children born in the later summer months or those born prematurely.

Deferred admission

If your child is due to start school during the next academic year, it is important that you apply for a place for September. If your child's fifth birthday is between the months of September and December, then, if you wish it, admission may be deferred until January; if it is between January and April, then admission may be deferred until the start of the summer term though it is likely to be in your child's interest to start no later than January. You may also request that your child attend school part time until he/she reaches his/her fifth birthday.

Tie-breaker

Where there are more applicants for the available places within a category, then the distance between the Ordnance Survey address points for the school and the home measured in a straight line will be used as the final determining factor, nearer addresses having priority over more distant ones. This address point is within the body of the property and usually located at its centre. Where the cut off point is for addresses within the same building, then the single measure between address points will apply and the Local Authority's system of a random draw will determine which address(es) receive the offer(s).

Information about previous years admissions

In 2023, there were 36 applications for 30 places.

Late applications for admission

Where there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and it is before the governors have established their list of pupils to be admitted, then it will be considered alongside all the others.

Otherwise, applications which are received after the last date will be considered after all the others, and placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.

Waiting list

Where we have more applications than places, the Admission Criteria will be used. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on this waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admission criteria. Since the date of application cannot be a criterion for the order of names on the waiting list, late applicants for the school will be slotted into the order according to the extent to which they meet the criteria. Thus it is possible that a child who moves into the area later to have a higher priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted.

This waiting list will operate throughout the Autumn Term.

Address of pupil

The address used on the academy's admission form must be the current one at the time of application, ie the family's main residence. If the address changes subsequently, the parents should notify the school.

Where the parents live at different addresses, and there is shared parenting, the address used will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings. If there is any doubt about this, then the address of the Child Benefit recipient will be used. Parents may be asked to show evidence of the claim that is being made for the address, e.g. identity cards of various sorts showing the child's address as the one claimed. Where there is dispute about the correct address to use, the governors reserve the right to make enquiries of any relevant third parties, e.g. the child's GP, Council Tax Office, Electoral Registration Officer, utilities provider. For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the posting is all that is required.

Non-routine admissions

It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the "normal" time; such admissions are known as non-routine or in-year admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this academy should arrange to visit the academy to discuss this and then submit an "In Year Application Form" to the Admissions Team. If there is a place in the appropriate class, then your child will be admitted. If there is no place, then the governing body will have to refuse the application but information will be provided about how to appeal against this refusal.

If your family is moving house, your application and appeal will be considered as being made from your old address until you provide suitable evidence of a permanent change of address, e.g. exchange of contracts on your house purchase or the signed tenancy agreement and rent book for your new address.

There is a local agreement in place in Darwen schools stating that children should move between Darwen schools at half term or the end of term, except in exceptional circumstances.

Please note that you cannot re-appeal for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

More information about changing schools is listed in the Council's "In Year Admission Form". The form is available from schools and the admissions manager, Children's Services and Education department, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, 10 Duke Street, Blackburn, BB2 1NH. Telephone (01254) 666605 or 666698 or 666602.

Appeals

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the academy is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, as amended by the Education Act, 2002. **Parents should notify the clerk to the governors at the school by 16th May 2024.**

Parents will have the opportunity to submit their case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present their case. You will normally receive 14 days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

If your child was refused a place in Reception or Key Stage 1 because of Government limits on class sizes, the grounds on which your appeal could be successful are limited. You would have to show that the decision was one which in the circumstances no reasonable Governing Body would have made, or that your child would have been offered a place if the Governors' Admissions Arrangements had been properly implemented.

Appeals which are received after the deadline will be slotted into the schedule where this is possible. There is no guarantee that this will happen and late appeals may be heard after the stipulated date at a second round of hearings. The schedule is subject to change depending upon the availability of appeal panel members, clerks, venues and the number of appeals for each school (which will vary year on year).

Please note that this right of appeal against the Governors' decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

Fraudulent applications

Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example, giving a false address in order to gain an advantage, or a false claim of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the Governing Body is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Deferred admission

If your child is due to start school during the next academic year, it is important that you apply for a place for September. If your child's fifth birthday is between the months of September and December, then, if you wish it, admission may be deferred until January; if it is between January and April, then admission may be deferred until the start of the Summer Term though it is likely to be in your child's interest to start no later than January.

Twins, etc

Where there are twins, etc wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the governing body will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of infant class sizes. If places for both twins or all triplets, etc cannot be offered, the family will be advised accordingly. This may also apply to siblings who are in the same year group. If only a single place can be offered for twins, then the Local Authority's system for a random draw will decide which child receives an offer.

For Admission to our NURSERY ONLY

Admissions will be limited to the following numbers per session:

4 x 2 year olds (morning session), 4 x 2 year olds (afternoon session)

13 x 3-5 year olds (morning session), 26 x 3-5 year olds (afternoon session)

Criteria

2. a) Children in public care and previously looked after children. .

This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after children" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 'Looked after' means that the child was (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.

This criteria also includes looked after children and all previously looked after children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

b) Children with special medical or social circumstances affecting the child where these needs can only be met at this school.

Professional supporting evidence from a professional, eg a doctor, psychologist, social worker, is essential if admission is to be made under the criterion for special medical or social circumstances, and such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the academy is the most suitable academy and the difficulties which would be caused if the child had to attend another academy.

2. Children who have a sibling attending the academy on the date of application and on the date of admission.

Siblings include step, half, foster, adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address.

3. Children whose parents live within the ecclesiastical parish of Darwen St. James' Church.

A map showing the parish boundaries is available in the academy.

4. Children with a parent/guardian worshipping in a church in full membership of Churches Together in England.

The list of Churches can be found on the Churches Together in England website at cte.org.uk; lists are taken as on 1st September 2023. Churches in membership of the equivalent bodies to CTE in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are equally accepted.

Parental worshipping is normally taken to mean a minimum of monthly attendance at church at public worship for over at least six months between the 1st January and 1st September 2023.

The governors will request confirmation of this from the relevant member of the clergy or church Officer. Where a family has changed churches, then information about all of them will be required.

“In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship”.

5. Children who live nearest to the Nursery.

The distance will be measured using a straight line distance from the child's home

Admission to Nursery **DOES NOT** guarantee admission into school

This form is for use of the School; it will be sent to the appropriate faith leader, to be returned direct to the school.

**Clergy Reference Form
Admission to Primary School, 2024**

Darwen St James' CE Primary Academy

Name of child:

Surname:

Christian names: **Date of birth:**

Boy

Girl

Name of Parent/Guardian:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

..... **Post Code:**

Contact Telephone:

This parent has given your name as a reference for his/her commitment to the church/place of worship.

Our criteria require the parent to have attended their place of worship at least once a month for six months prior to 1st September 2023.

Has this been the pattern for this parent? YES / NO

Signed:

Name:

Date: Position:

Church: