



Mereside Primary School
An Academy within the
Fylde Coast Academy Trust

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR
2023 / 2024

Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) is the admission authority for the academies within the Trust and the allocation of school places has been delegated to the Local Authority School Admissions Team, in line with the FCAT admissions criteria.

Mereside Primary School operates an equal preference scheme and welcomes all children.

The planned admission number for 2023/24 is 40

Application Procedures

If your child is due to start **primary** school in September 2023, you can apply for a Reception place between 5th September 2022 and 15th January 2023.

Applications must be made direct to the Local Authority no later than **Wednesday 15th January 2022**, using the Common Application Form which will be made available by the Local Authority's School Admissions Team.

You must apply to the authority where you live. If you are unsure, for example if you live near council boundaries, it is whichever Local Authority you pay your council tax to. You can apply for a school in any area, but you must apply to your home authority.

If you live in Blackpool you can apply online at www.blackpool.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Alternatively, you can request a paper application form from Blackpool School Admissions or from the academy.

If you live outside Blackpool, you can apply online at Lancashire County Council School Admissions.

All places will be offered by the Local Authority on behalf of FCAT, within the primary / secondary coordinated admissions scheme operational in the Local Authority's area. The national offer date for admissions to Primary will be **Thursday 16th April 2022**.

Infant Class Size

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).



Deferred Entry

Primary admission may be deferred by up to two school terms. If you wish to defer entry this must be agreed with the school. Where deferred arrangements are agreed, school places will be reserved.

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

Admission to nursery classes

This policy does **not** apply to children being admitted to nursery education. A separate admission arrangement is published for entry to the nursery. The Principal and Governing Body manage admissions to the *Mereside Primary School* site's maintained nursery on behalf of the Academy.

Attendance in our nursery class at *Mereside Primary School* does not guarantee admission to the academy for primary education. Likewise we cannot insist that children attend our nursery class in order to guarantee admission to the academy for primary education.

Oversubscription Criteria

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Educational Health Care Plan which names this school, then the school must give your child a place. If you apply for a place in the middle of the school year, the school must give your child a place straightaway, even if classes are full.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of students with Education and Health Care Plans where *Mereside Primary School* is named, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children. This includes any "looked after child" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. This criterion will also apply to children who were previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as they have been adopted. This is in accordance with advice from the Minister of State for Schools.
2. Medical, Social or Welfare reasons. Where there are exceptional serious, sensitive and compelling circumstances that are directly relevant to the academy, priority may be given. Professional evidence to demonstrate exceptional or compelling reasons why only this academy can cater for a particular child's needs on any of these grounds must be provided with the



application. The evidence must set out the reasons and level of risk to the child or family and why the academy is the only suitable school; plus any difficulties which 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 and diabetes.

Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to the academy will be considered. Priority will be given to the child only if the submitted evidence unequivocally proves the circumstances and demonstrates why any alternative school would be unsuitable. Parents are responsible for providing the evidence.

3. Children who will have a sibling in attendance at *Mereside Primary School* at the time of transfer. The term “sibling” includes stepchildren, half brothers and sisters and adopted and foster children who are living with the same family at the same address.
4. The children of staff who have been employed by *Mereside Primary School* for two or more years, or who meet a skills shortage.
5. Other pupils with priority given to those that live nearest to *Mereside Primary School*. The measurement will be taken in a straight line from the centre point of the residence to the centre point of the Academy, using the Local Authority’s geographical information system (GIS).

Tie Break

Where there is oversubscription within any of the determined criteria, then priority for places will be decided in a straight line distance measure, (home to academy,) using the local authority’s measuring system. The nearest to the academy will have priority for admission.

Additional Information - Reception Admissions - twins/ multiple births:

Where there are twins or triplets wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the Trust will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of infant class sizes. In exceptional circumstances we are now able to offer places for both twins and all triplets even when this means breaching infant class size limits. This may also apply to children who are siblings within the same year group.

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for external applicants refused admission. Parents have 20 school days to compile and lodge hearings.

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 which might justify a late application include, but are not restricted to, the illness of a single parent/carer which might have reasonably impinged upon their ability to submit an application on time or where a family has just moved into the area.

Change of Preference

You can only request a change of preference up until the closing date – you must put this in writing. Once an application has been submitted, and the closing date has passed, a change of preference can only be actioned if there is a significant change in circumstances, i.e. a house move. It may not be possible to action any changes after **10th March 2022**.

You will be unable to access the online system after the closing date. Any requests for a change of preference should be made in writing, but evidence must be provided to demonstrate the reasons for your changes.

Fraudulent Applications

If it is found that a child has been allocated a place due to misleading information having been provided, for example an incorrect address, then the offer of a place may be withdrawn and the offer of an alternative school will be made by the Local Authority.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists will be set up in the week following the offers being sent to parents. As places become available, the child highest on the waiting list will be offered the place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted.

Children will be placed on the waiting lists using the oversubscription criteria. Late applicants will be slotted into the list according to where they meet the oversubscription criteria. Therefore a child who moves into the area later can have a higher priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time.

The School Admissions Team will maintain the waiting list until the end of the Autumn Term.

Appeal Arrangements



Where the Academy Trust is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002.

You should contact the School Admissions Team to request an appeal form. You will have the opportunity to submit your case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present your case. You will receive 10 school days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

In Year Applications

If you move into Blackpool after the 1st September 2022, or wish to transfer your child from another Blackpool primary school, you must complete an in-year application form, which is available from the School Admissions Team.