

FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL



Admissions Policy

Date policy approved	October 2019
Review frequency	Annual
Review date	October 2020

The governing body of Firthmoor Primary is the Admissions Authority for this school. The Admissions Policy Criteria will be applied on an Equal Preference basis and works in association with the Co-ordinated Scheme for Darlington Authority. Application for places are made on the Primary School Application (PSA) available from and administered by Darlington Borough Council. To apply for a school place, visit <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-years/admissions/>

The governing body intends to admit up to 45 pupils are eligible to start school at the beginning of September. This number will apply to the Reception Year and to every other year group in the school.

Admissions over subscription criteria

After the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where a school is named on the plan, the following criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

Priority 1 - Looked After Children

A 'looked after' child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority, adopted; subject to a child arrangement order or a residency order (for more in depth definitions see Section 22(1), Section 8, section 14A of the Children's Act 1989 and Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Priority 2 - Medical Reasons

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly relating to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional practitioner

Priority 3 - Family Links

Children who have a brother or sister already attending the Academy and are expected to be on roll at that Academy at the time of admission

Priority 4 - Rural

Children living within the rural wards of the Borough of Darlington who have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place at one of their preferred schools AND for whom the nearest alternative school would otherwise be more than two miles from their home will be given priority over other children for places at certain schools

Priority 5 - Distance

Children who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the home address of the child. To remain consistent the Authority uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances. The LAuthority's priority when measuring a route is to identify the shortest route judged to be safe (safe is lit at regular intervals, paved / tarmaced).

*In the rural wards, the Council is aware that the shortest route may not be a safe route to walk. Therefore, if a child living in a rural ward, is successful in gaining a place at a school; where the route taken when measured by the Authority, is paved / tarmaced but not also lit at regular intervals, then the Authority will provide assistance with transport, even if it is less than the statutory distance for a child of the appropriate age.

Tie-Break

Firthmoor Primary School is an exempt charity. It is a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (Registered no: 8028789) whose registered office is at Ingleby Moor Crescent, **Darlington**, DL1 4RW

In the event of a tie-break situation in any oversubscription criteria, the distance will be the deciding factor. The Local Authority will carry out a thorough investigation, which may involve an Officer walking the route using a *pedometer* or a GIS (Geographical Information System). If the GIS is unable to differentiate between the two measurements the LA will make a decision.

Multiple Births

For multiple births where only 1 place remains, infant classes will be allowed to exceed the statutory limit where the 31st child is a twin or from multiple births. The 'excepted pupil' will be allowed for the time in Key Stage 1 or until the class numbers fall back to current class size limit.

Medical Criterion

If you state a preference for a school and indicate your reason for doing so is 'medical', then you are required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if your child had to travel to another school.

The Authority reserves the right to make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding your child's condition. We may also seek advice from other qualified professionals, e.g. Psychologists or other specialists where necessary.

Family Links

Children have a family link if:

- They are half or full brother or sister;
- They are adoptive brother or sister;
- They are a foster brother or sister;
- Their carers are married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household;
- They are children of the same household (e.g. carers have special guardianship/child arrangement order)

Home Address

The address is used for applying the admissions criteria. This means that when you state your school preferences you must give the home address at the time of application. You must not give the address of child minders or other family members who may share in the care of your child. For parents/carers who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside.

Where parents/carers are separated and the child lives for periods with both, then the home address will be that of the parent that receives the child benefit. Where the childcare arrangements are shared jointly between both parents, the admission authority will consider the mother's home address to be the relevant address when considering the application unless legal documentation is provided to the contrary. The Schools Admissions Team will check addresses against other records held by Darlington Borough Council, such as the electoral register and council tax records. The Authority reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an inaccurate or misleading address.

Right of Appeal

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Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Parents should contact the School Admissions team with the Local Authority to submit an appeals application.

Waiting List

If your child's application has been refused due to oversubscription, you may want to consider putting their name on a waiting list for the school. Completing the 'options' form, which accompanies the offer/refusal letter, can do this. Offers off the waiting list will be made in accordance with the oversubscription criteria based on the information provided at the time of application.

Vacancies often arise at short notice and those on the waiting list should be prepared to accept a place as soon as it occurs. Places will not be held for later consideration. Thereafter, normal transfers/in-year admission arrangements will operate. Waiting lists for Academy Schools will be held until the end of December, it will then be at the discretion of each Academy School to decide whether they continue to hold a list.

Admission of Children outside Their Normal Age Group and Deferred Entry

If a parent seeks a place in a year group outside their normal age group, they should complete an application form and attach a covering letter along with accompanying documentation which details the circumstances behind their request, for example if their child has missed a significant amount of time due to ill health or they believe their child to be gifted and talented. This should be forwarded to the Schools Admissions Manager, Children, Families and Learning, Town Hall Darlington, DL1 5QT who will contact the Head Teacher of the school concerned and ask for their views. Once a decision has been made the Authority will write to the parent/carer informing them of the decision and setting out the reasons for such.

Parents of summer born children can also make a request to apply for their child to start school in the next academic year after they reach five and should follow the same process but should start the process in the September of the year prior to the year of entry.

Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age

Schools within Darlington Local Authority have a single point of entry in September each year for pupils starting school in Reception. However, children may attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age and parents can defer the date their child is admitted until later in the school year.

In-year admissions

An in-year admission application is one that is made outside of the normal time of transfer between schools, for example when a family moves house part way through a school year. The local authority co-ordinate admission applications in the normal admissions round. Parents are required to contact the School Admissions Team within the Local Authority to apply for an In-year school place.