



WENSLEY FOLD CE PRIMARY ACADEMY ADMISSION POLICY 2025 – 2026

MISSION STATEMENT

The school values and recognises the uniqueness of each individual child and acknowledge their fundamental right to be educated to their full potential in a safe, secure and caring environment. The school, which has a Christian heritage, will, in partnership with parents and the extended community, aim to make each day count for all.

Making an application

Applications for admission to the school for September 2025. You now apply using the online application at www.blackburn.gov.uk/admissions stating three preferences. Please ensure you submit your application form by the national closing date, which is 15 January 2025. It is not normally possible to change the order of your preferences for schools after the closing date.

For families who are unable to apply online, application forms can be requested from the Schools Admissions Team, telephone 01254 666605 or email admissions@blackburn.gov.uk

Letters/emails informing parents of whether or not their child has been allocated a place will be sent out by the Local Authority on or after 16 April 2025. 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, and the Local Authorities and other admissions authorities in the area.

Children to be admitted

Age and Entry of Admission to Reception

The law does not require any child to start school until the start of the term following the fifth birthday. In Blackburn with Darwen a start date in September is used for admission of all children who will become 5 during that school year. All children who have their fifth birthday between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026 may start school in the Autumn term 2025. Parent(s) can delay their child starting school until the term after their fifth birthday ("deferred admission") but should still apply for a place in the normal admissions round (15 Jan 2025). The offer of a reception place will be kept open, even if the child does not take it up until later in the summer term in their Reception year. If the child's start is delayed beyond that point, the original offer of a place in the Reception class will be withdrawn and the parent will have to re-apply for a place at this school. Parents may also request that their child attends school part time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

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

Parent(s)/carer(s) will need to submit an online application form for admission into the normal school year. At the same time parent(s)/carer(s) will need to submit a request for admission for their child out of their child's normal age group.

The admissions authority will respond to the request for a full year delayed primary start before the primary national offer date.

If their request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, parent(s)/carer(s) must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an In-year application for admission to year one for the September following their child's fifth birthday.

Parent(s)/carer(s) should note that if their request is agreed, they must make a new application for the next main admission round the following year.

The admissions authority will not honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parent(s)/carer(s), therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference school.

Parent(s)/carer(s) whose child is refused a place at this school have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint about an admission authority's decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group.

Admission Arrangements 2025/26 Academic Year

All preferences expressed will be considered equally. Wensley Fold CE Primary Academy is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for making decisions on applications for admissions. Admission to the school will be decided by the Wensley Fold CE Primary Academy in accordance with the stated parental preferences it receives, subject to the following set of criteria which will be used to form a priority order if there are more applications for admissions than the school has places available.

Late applications will only be considered after all on-time applications have been allocated places.

Determined Admission Criteria

Children with an education, health and care plan, for whom the preferred school is named in the plan will be admitted first. The remaining applicants who have named this school as a 1st 2nd or 3rd preference will then be considered equally against the Academy's admission policy, in the priority order given below:

(a) 'Looked after' children and previously looked after children, including those 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. ('Previously looked after children' means children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after, and those 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. ('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).

(b) Children with an older sibling (sibling means a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, (not cousin) or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and

in every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address) who will still be attending the preferred school when the younger child is admitted;

(c) Children with proven and exceptional medical, social or welfare needs which are directly relevant to the school concerned. If you wish to be considered under this category there is certain evidence you must provide. Please see the note below headed **NOTE-Criterion (c) Medical, social, welfare reasons** which provides full details regarding the application of this criterion.

(d) Children who live nearest the school (geographical proximity). Under this category, the remaining places will be offered to children who live nearest to the preferred school. The distance will be measured in a straight line between the home front door and the main gate of the school using a computer.

NOTE – Criterion (c) Medical, social, welfare reasons

If you feel that there are exceptional medical/social/welfare needs relating to your child which support the need for your child to attend a particular school, and wish your application to be considered under criterion (c) you must state this on your application form AND provide appropriate written supporting evidence for your application from a doctor, social worker or other professional. This evidence must explain why the preferred school is the most suitable and what difficulties would be caused if the child had to attend another school.

This evidence should accompany the application form. If necessary, parents can submit the application form and send the supporting evidence at a later date but the supporting evidence **MUST** be received by the Local Authority on or before the closing date for applications (15 January 2025). It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the Local Authority receives the supporting evidence.

If you do not provide the supporting evidence on or before the 15 January 2025, then it will not be possible to consider your application under the medical/social/welfare criterion,

Please bear in mind the following points in relation to this criterion –

1. only *exceptional* reasons associated with the child and directly relevant to the suitability of that specific school (i.e. showing why the child needs to be admitted to that particular school) are normally accepted under this criterion.
2. all schools can make provision for special educational needs and can also manage common conditions – e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy.

After the closing date, during the early stages of the allocations process, all applications which have requested consideration on the grounds of medical/social/welfare need are considered separately by a panel from the Admission Authority. This involves considering all statements and evidence provided by parents to support the application. The panel may, at their own discretion, contact parents/carers and third parties (with parental consent) to request further information where this is needed to reach a decision.

The Panel's focus in assessing each claim for consideration under this criterion will be to assess whether the evidence provided (a) actually confirms that this child has an exceptional medical/social/welfare need AND (b) demonstrates a clear and exceptional need for this child to attend that specific school for reasons arising from the exceptional medical/social/welfare need.

Where the reasons claimed are not considered exceptional or do not disclose an exceptional need for the child to attend that specific school, then the application will be dealt with under the other admission criteria for the school(s) requested.

Tie-breaker

If category (b) or (c) is oversubscribed, geographical proximity (as set out in category (d)) will be used as the 'tie-breaker' to decide between the remaining cases. If after measuring distances it is still not possible to decide on the child/ren to be offered admission (for example two children living in the same block of flats or in the same house) the Local Authority's system of a random draw which is carried out automatically by the Local Authority's computerised system will determine which children receive the offer(s).

Admissions information

In 2024, there were 183 applications for 60 places.

Late applications for admission

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 admissions 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 admissions 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 until 31 December 2025

Address of pupil

The address used on the school's admission form must be the current one at the time of application, i.e. 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. If your family is moving house, your application (both for routine and non-routine applications) and any appeal will be considered as being made from your old address until you provide suitable evidence of a permanent change of address, eg exchange of contracts on your house purchase or the signed tenancy agreement and rent book for your new address.

Non-routine or in-year 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. They must then apply for a place online through www.blackburn.gov.uk/admissions. School will only be contacted by admissions if a place

is available for the child/ren. If there is a place in the appropriate class, then the governors will arrange for the admission to take place. If there is no place available, then information about how to appeal against the refusal will be provided. Please note that appeal forms will be provided by admissions@blackburn.gov.uk and must be returned to the same email address.

Priority for Twins/Multiple births

If an application has been made for places for twins/ triplets/2 or more siblings in the same year group and insufficient places are left within the published admission number (i.e. one of the siblings is the last child who can be admitted within that number) it may be possible for the Admission Authority to offer places to the other sibling(s) in the birth group as a permitted exception to class size regulations.

Notes:

- a) It is the duty of the admission authority to comply with class size limits at Key Stage One. This means that the school cannot operate classes in Key Stage one of more than 30 children.
- b) Where the admissions authority discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example a false claim of residence/home address) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the admissions authority 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.
- c) Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address will be that at which the child spends the majority of the working week (Monday – Friday).

Where the admissions authority are unable to offer a place because the school 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 school admissions at Blackburn with Darwen Authority by 18 May 2025.** 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.**

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 admission authority's decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

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.

As mentioned above, please note that appeal forms will be provided by admissions@blackburn.gov.uk and must be returned to the same email address. School **do not** keep appeal forms or return them to the authority.

Agreed by Governors – December 2024