



Mowden Schools

Admissions Policy

2027-28

Policy reviewed	February 2026
Review frequency	Annually
Next review date	February 2027
Approving Body	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements

Darlington has operated a co-ordinated admission arrangement since 2005. Co-ordinated schemes are intended to simplify the admission process for parents whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. Co-ordination establishes a mechanism that ensures that, as far as is practical, every child living in a local authority area who has applied in the normal admissions round receives only one offer of a school place on the same day. Mowden Schools admission criteria complies with this arrangement.

Published Admission Number

We will admit 60 pupils to Reception (year of entry) for the academic year 2027-28.

Admissions Oversubscription Criteria

After the admission of children with special educational needs where Mowden Infant or Junior School is named on the EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) and where the number of applicants is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below, in the following order:

1. *Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children including those from outside of England*

A 'looked after' child is a pupil who is in Local Authority care or provided with accommodation by that authority (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).

A previously 'looked after' child is a pupil who was looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

Children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. *Medical Reasons*

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to placement at Mowden Infant or Mowden Junior School.

Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional health care practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why Mowden school is the most suitable and why another school could not provide the necessary support for the child. Where further information is sought by Mowden to understand how the child's condition may affect their admission into school, permission from the child's parent will be assumed from application.

3. *Sibling Links*

- a. Either (a) Children who have a brother or sister already attending Mowden Schools and who are expected to be on the roll at the time of admission.

Or (b) In the case of associated schools a sibling link would exist if a brother or sister would be expected to be on roll of either Mowden Infant School or Mowden Junior School at the time of admission.

Children have a sibling 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/Residency Order)

4. Associated Schools

Children who are transferring from Mowden Infant School to Mowden Junior School will be given priority over pupils from other schools.

5. Rural*

Area D on Map

For children living in the area to the south of the B6279 road AND within the Ward of Heighington and Coniscliffe in 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 the alternative school is Mowden Infant School or Mowden Junior School.

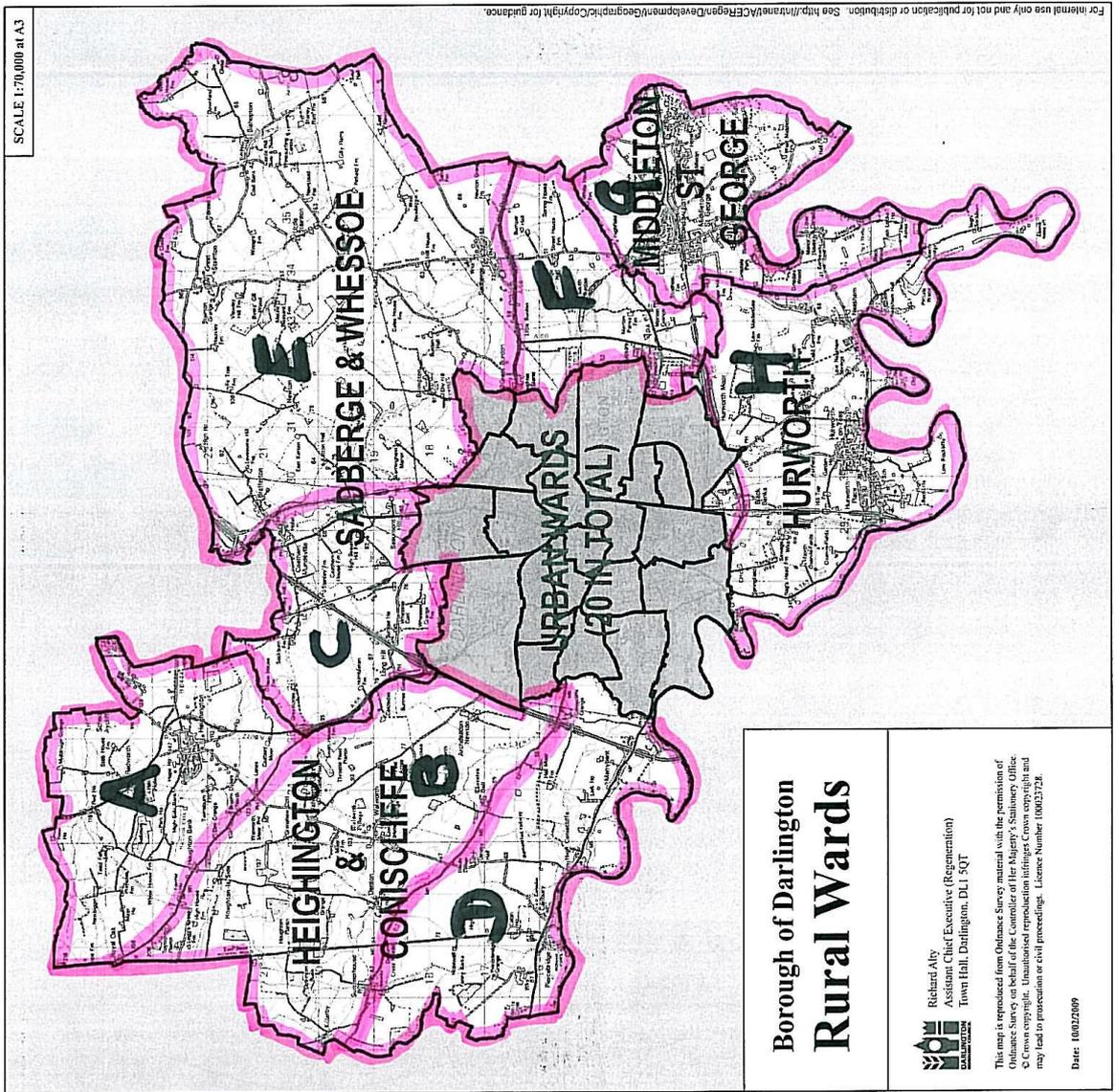
*In the rural wards, the Local Authority is aware that the shortest route may not be a safe route to walk. Therefore, if a child living in a rural ward, is successful in gaining a place at a school; where the route taken when measured by the Local Authority, is paved/tarmacked but not also lit at regular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

6. Distance

Urban Wards of Darlington Borough Council - Children who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) 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 Authority's priority when measuring a route is to identify the shortest route judged to be safe (safe is lit at regular intervals, paved/tarmaced).

See further information sections Home address and Measurements.

Darlington Rural Wards



Further Information

Home Address

This is the child's permanent address where he or she generally resides. Temporary addresses may not be used in the application for admission to the Academy. For parents who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside.

If the main address has changed temporarily, for example, where a parent resides with extended family during a period of sickness or takes up temporary accommodation due to building works/renovation, then the home address remains that at which the parent was resident before the period of temporary residence began. Where the temporary change of address is due to the sale of property, evidence of the particular circumstances will be required to determine the home address for the purposes of the application. Any permanent change of address during the period from making an application to the offer being made, must be notified to the local authority immediately, as this may affect the admission offer made. In the event of a change of address affecting the application for your child to attend the Academy, the Academy will request a letter from a licensed conveyancer or a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts.

Measurements

For applications which require a measurement to be undertaken in order to apply the oversubscription criteria or to determine a tie-break situation, the Local Authority on behalf of the Academy will measure the distance using a Geographical Information System (GIS) this ensures consistency for all measurements. The measurement will take the shortest walking route judged to be safe**. However for some applications the authority recognises that the shortest route may not be a safe** route to walk in its entirety, but may be a combination of both the shortest safest** walking route and a road route which will determine the basis of the measurement. The main school gate is determined by the Local Authority in agreement with the Academy (**lighting at regular intervals and paved/tarmacked).

Tie Break

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer.

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 'accepted pupil' will be allowed for the time in Key Stage 1 or until the class numbers fall back to current class size limit.

For Key Stage 2, classes will be allowed to exceed the normal class size where the 'excepted' child is a twin or from multiple births.

Admission of children outside their normal age group and deferred entry

We admit children into Reception in the September following their 4th birthday. This is in line with all schools in Darlington, following national guidance. We do not admit children prior to this age. However if a parent feels there are exceptional reasons for delaying entry for a year, then an application for a delayed place may be granted:

- The child must be 'summer born', that is born between April 1st and August 31st.

- The parent must be able to demonstrate, with external verification where possible, that the child will benefit by starting Reception a year later, for example, for academic, social and emotional reasons. The Department for Education lists a child born prematurely as one possible reason.
- The child will remain with their younger age class throughout his/her whole time at Mowden Infant School. This is because Mowden is a well subscribed school and if a delayed entry place is accepted, the place in their normal year group will be offered to another child.
- Associated with the previous point, if a delayed place is accepted, the child will complete all Key Stage 1 national assessments at the same time as the younger age group, that is, a year after children of his/her same age. This applies to the Year 1 phonics assessment and the Year 2 English, maths and science assessments.
- A delayed entry place in Mowden Infant School does not automatically guarantee a similar delayed place in Mowden Junior School, or subsequently at secondary school. The arrangement for the junior school will be reviewed and agreed by the headteacher. Regarding KS2 assessments at the end of Year 6, just as with KS1, the provision for a child to take these tests a year after his/her age groups does exist. So if the delayed entry has been continued right through junior school, the child will take the tests alongside his/her younger age group.

If a parent seeks a place in a year group outside their normal age group, they should submit a letter of application accompanying documentation that details the circumstances behind their request. This should be forwarded to the School Admissions Manager, Children, Families & Learning, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT who will then contact the headteacher of the school/s concerned and ask for their views. Once a decision has been made the LA will write to the parent informing them of the decision and setting out reasons for such.

The final permission for such requests lies with the headteacher. Each case will be considered on its individual circumstances and any decision will not constitute a precedent. A request may be declined based on the business interests of the school even when the case for the child may be persuasive; whilst evidence shows that, statistically speaking, summer born children tend to perform less well in school tests, this does not mean that all children born in the summer term will struggle at school. Teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs.

Parents of summer born children who wish to apply for a delayed place must apply using the same timescales as if applying for a normal age place and apply for a normal age place at the same time. This avoids the child missing out on a preferred school placement in their normal age group, if their delayed entry application is unsuccessful. Information on Darlington Borough Council's coordinated admissions arrangements can be found online.

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.

Waiting lists

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the Local Authority's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list at all times. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, places will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list,

following an unsuccessful application. The position of children on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy.

In-Year Admissions

Applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry will be considered by the Academy and, if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

Arrangements for appeals

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the governing body. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. For details on how to appeal contact the School Admissions Team at the Local Authority.