



One minute guide

School Admissions

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What does school admissions involve?

In Leeds, school admissions relates to four processes to facilitate the allocation of school places: applications for primary and secondary school places; the transfer process for children and young people moving schools; the Fair Access Protocol for vulnerable children and young people; and appeals, which can apply to any process if parents are not satisfied with the offer.

Applications for primary and secondary school places

Each year, the local authority school admissions team allocates school places to those children and young people who will be starting either [primary](#) or [secondary](#) school the following September. Parents and/ or carers receive letters inviting them to apply for places, and informing them of their nearest school. They are asked to rank up to five schools in order of preference. Applications can be completed online, which is recommended for ease of access and amendments, or they can complete a paper form.

It is important that applications are completed before the stated deadlines; if applications are late, parents may not get a school they have preferenced. The dates are similar year by year; for example, for a September 2015 start, the dates were as:

Primary - invitations to apply were sent at the end of October 2014. The application window was **1st November 2014 to 15th January 2015**, and the offer date (when parents receive their offer of a place) was 16th April 2015.

Secondary - invitations to apply were sent at the end of July 2014. The application window was **1st August to 31st October 2014**, and offer date 1st March 2015.

The school admissions team co-ordinate the admissions process for all schools and academies in Leeds. Community schools, as well as many foundation schools and academies, have admissions policies which offer a higher priority for children who have the school as their nearest school. Parents and carers are encouraged to include their nearest school as one of their preferences to reduce the risk of being allocated a school outside of their local area.

Voluntary Aided schools, and some Foundation schools and academies have admission policies based on different criteria, such as faith or feeder schools, and parents and carers need to take care to check carefully before they apply. All of the admission policies are available on the [Council website](#).

Transfer process for children and young people moving schools

If a child or young person is already in school and their parent and/ or carer want them to [move](#) during the academic year, or they are new to Leeds, it is the responsibility of the parent/ carer to approach the preferred new school directly and apply for a place. If the school has no places and refuses the application, the school will notify the school admissions team. They will send a letter to the family advising them of local schools with vacancies, and again the parents must approach the schools directly to apply.

Fair access protocol

Leeds has a [Fair Access Protocol](#) to ensure the most vulnerable children and young people in the city have an appropriate school place and that all schools contribute equally to meeting their needs. 'Vulnerable children' can include those who have been out of education, those with family involvement from the Children's Social Work Service and other services such as Probation, children with behavioural issues and children from a Gypsy Roma Traveller background. This list is not exhaustive; please see the protocol for further details.

For vulnerable primary aged children, there is a dedicated officer working with school and families to secure appropriate school places on a case by case basis. For vulnerable secondary pupils, there are five panels across the city where representatives from local schools review individual cases and school circumstances and offer appropriate school places.

Appeals process

If the parents/ carers of a child or young person are not happy with the refusal to offer a school place via any of the above three processes, they have the right to [appeal](#) the decision. It is important that families lodge their appeal as soon as possible, in order to prevent delays which may have an impact on their child's education.

Appeals are heard by a panel of people independent to both the school and the local authority. Parents can present as much information as they like to the appeals panels in support of their case, and can bring a friend to support them - though these people cannot be connected to either the school or the local authority. Schools are represented by a presenting officer. The panel hears both cases, asks relevant questions, and has the power to overturn a school's decision and instruct them to offer a place, even if to do so would mean the school's class sizes breach the legal limit. Schools with their own admission policies also have their own appeals processes; contact the school directly for details.

How can practitioners support families in securing school places?

If you are working with a family with a child approaching primary or secondary school age, you should check that the family have received their invitation to apply, and emphasise the importance of completing the application before the deadline. Please take note of the key dates in this guide, and support families to meet them. If you encounter a family that has not received an invitation to apply please contact the admissions team to request the application information.

For children who need to transfer schools, parents and/or carers deal directly with schools. Families may need support to navigate this, and to make the appropriate applications. If a family is unhappy with a refusal to offer a place to their child, or a child eligible under the Fair Access Protocol is refused a place at a preferred school, families may need support from practitioners to navigate the appeals process. Parents have a responsibility to secure education for their child.

The school admissions team are available to advise practitioners and families on all aspects of the process. They can be contacted by telephone on 0113 222 4414, via email at education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk (primary and secondary admissions), education.transfers@leeds.gov.uk or education.appeals@leeds.gov.uk. Parents can also speak to someone face to face at the One Stop Centre, 2 Great George Street, Leeds city centre, and there is information available via the [school admissions web pages](#).



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