

# **Admissions Policy Darwen Vale High School 2024 -2025**

Document Control Table	
Version no:	<b>1</b>
Date of last revision:	<b>February 2023</b>
Approval Required By: (Adoption and full 5 Year Review)	<b>Board of Trustees</b>
Date approved:	<b>February 2023</b>
Policy owner:	<b>Chief Growth and Development Officer</b>
Frequency of revision:	<b>1 year</b>
Next review date:	<b>October 2023</b>
Revision approval required by:	<b>Board of Trustees</b>
Policy family:	<b>Education Policies</b>
Policy status:	<b>Approved</b>

Applies to (Mark as appropriate)			
Staff	Pupils / Students / Adult Learners	Parents / Carers / Guardians	Contractors
✓	✓	✓	
Volunteers	Students on placement	Trustees / LGC / Members	Visitors
		✓	
Agency Staff	Other	a	a
	✓		

Published Locations				
Trust Website	Academy Website	Aldridge Intranet	Student/Parent planners	On-request
	✓	✓		✓

**Consultation (Complete as appropriate in line with master policy document)**

With	Reason for Consultation	Final Consultation Date	Version No

**Version History (please note below if a policy has been replaced)**

[illegible]

# Contents

1.	Introduction .....	5
2.	Aims .....	5
3.	Legislation and statutory requirements .....	5
4.	Definitions.....	5
	4.1 Looked After and previously Looked After children .....	5
	4.2 Normal round and In-Year Applications.....	5
	4.3 Admissions Authority .....	6
5.	How to apply .....	6
	5.1 Application timetable.....	6
	5.2 Open Events.....	6
	5.3 Submission of Applications.....	6
6.	Requests for admission outside the normal age group.....	7
7.	Allocation of places .....	7
	7.1 Admission number.....	7
	7.2 Oversubscription criteria.....	7
	7.3 Tie break.....	8
	7.4 Challenging behaviour.....	8
	7.5 Fair Access Protocol .....	8
8.	In-year admissions .....	8
9.	Reserve List.....	9
10.	Appeals .....	9
11.	Monitoring arrangements .....	9
12.	Further Information and Contact Details.....	9

## 1. Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for a place at Darwen Vale High School. This policy is designed to provide clear guidance on the admission arrangements for a place at the academy including information on timescales, deadlines and contact details for queries.

It also provides guidance on how applications are administered, the criteria used to prioritise applications (where necessary), waiting lists and the appeals process.

Darwen Vale is a non-selective secondary academy which has a Published Admission Number (PAN) for Year 7 of 240.

## 2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the academy
- Set out the academy's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

## 3. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance and underlying legislation:

- School Admissions Code 2021.
- School Admissions Appeal Code 2022.
- The academy is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 4. Definitions

### 4.1 Looked After and previously Looked After children

The normal admissions round is the period during which parent/carer(s) can apply for state-funded academy places at the academy's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a academy, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

### 4.2 Normal round and In-Year Applications

There are two different routes for applications – 'normal round' and 'in-year round'; each round has a slightly different application process and timescales. Both application routes are detailed separately in this policy.

'Normal round' is relevant to all applications for a place in Year 7 starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

'In-Year round' is relevant to applications for all year groups (including Year 7) other than Year 7 starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

### 4.3 Admissions Authority

Aldridge Education is a Multi-Academy Trust and is the admissions authority for all academies in the Aldridge Education Trust, including Darwen Vale High school. Aldridge Education, in accordance with its funding agreement, is responsible for the admissions policy of each academy and co-ordinates with the relevant Local Authority for the administration of admissions applications. For Darwen Vale High School the relevant Local Authority is Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

## 5. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the academy is in). Parent/carer(s) resident in Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council can apply online at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions>. You can use the admission form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Darwen Vale High School require no additional information, the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council admissions form provides all required information.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

The academy publishes information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria in February for the following September (e.g. in February 2023 for admission in September 2024)

### 5.1 Application timetable

**September/October:** The academy provides opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents/carer(s) to visit the academy.

**31st October:** National closing date for Secondary applications. Deadline for the Common Application Form to be completed and submitted to the relevant Local Authority.

**November – February:** The academy and Local Authority coordinate to process all applications. If more applications are received than places available they will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria published in this policy (see section 7.2).

**28 February:** Deadline for the academy to publish its appeals timetable on their website.

**1st March:** Offers made to parent/carer(s) by the Local Authority.

### 5.2 Open Events

The academy provides opportunities for prospective pupils and their parent/carer(s) to visit the academy via open day events. For further information please contact the academy directly, contact details are available in section 12.

### 5.3 Submission of Applications

1st September 2023 – 31st October 2023: Applications can be submitted for September 2024 start.

If more applications are received than places available, they will be ranked according to the over-subscription criteria published in this policy (see section 7.2).

**PLEASE NOTE:** Academies are not able to provide any information regarding specific applications during this process.

Applications may still be submitted for a place in September 2024 after 31st October 2023 but any applications made from 1st November to 31st August the following year will be considered a "late application". This means that it will normally be considered after all the applications that were submitted on-time are allocated a place – places in preferred option groups may already have been filled by on-time applicants.

## 6. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parent/carer(s) are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parent/carer(s) views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The principal's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered based on the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 7.2. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parent/carer(s) have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parent/carer(s) will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parent/carer(s) do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the academy, but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 7. Allocation of places

### 7.1 Admission number

The academy has a Published Admission Number of 240 pupils for entry in Year 7.

### 7.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHCP) plans name the academy will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the academy is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If the academy receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the academy.
2. Children of staff at the academy who have been recruited to a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage. Aldridge Education must approve the Principal's assessment process and designation of such posts to confirm the staff members' eligibility under this criterion. Priority will be limited to one place for each form of entry in any year group (e.g. 3 places in each 3-form year group).
3. Priority will next be given to children who, at the time of admission have a sibling who attends the academy. For this purpose, 'sibling' means a whole, half or step-sibling or an adopted child resident at the same address.
4. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the academy where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made. Aldridge Education must approve the Principal's assessment process and designation of such posts to confirm the staff members' eligibility under this criterion. Priority will be limited to one place for each form of entry in any year group (e.g. 3 places in each 3-form year group).
5. Priority will next be given to those children who live closest to the academy. The Local Authority measures distance on behalf of Aldridge Education, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council use Ordinance Survey Data to calculate **straight line distance** between the child's home and the main entrance to the academy. Where a child resides in a block of flats, the distance will be measured to the main entrance of the building in which the flats are located.

### **7.3 Tie break**

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the academy will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be independently verified.

In the case of multiple births or siblings in the same year group, where there is only one place available in the academy, all will be considered together as one application.

### **7.4 Challenging behaviour**

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e., where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans naming the academy.

### **7.5 Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

## **8. In-year admissions**

Parent/carer(s) can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHCP plans name the academy will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council holds information on which schools in their area have spaces for each year group. Contact Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council via the link below for further information:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions>

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a reserve list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the reserve list ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 7.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the reserve list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

[fair.access@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:fair.access@blackburn.gov.uk) or post to:

Fair Access Team,  
Children's Services and Education Department,  
10 Duke Street,  
Blackburn  
BB2 1DH

Parent/carer(s) will be notified of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

Darwen Vale High School will inform Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council of any in year applications received as well as the outcome so that they can track vacancies across the area.



## 9. Reserve List

Any child refused a place at the academy will automatically be put on a reserve list. A reserve list will be maintained until the end of the academic year after which it will be cleared.

The reserve list is maintained in the order of the oversubscription criteria only (not application date). This means that names can move down the list if, e.g., someone's criteria are higher placed under the oversubscription criteria.

Parent/carer(s) have the right to request their child is removed from the reserve list at any time. Once removed, the child cannot be reinstated on the reserve list without submitting a new application.

If a place becomes available it will be allocated to the first child on the reserve list, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If that offer is declined the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

## 10. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the academy is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-appeals>

You can find details of the academy's appeals timetable on the following webpage:

[https://www.darwenvale.com/\\_files/ugd/fdbd2b\\_8a6ce38460114c2b8a34782f9db3cf32.pdf](https://www.darwenvale.com/_files/ugd/fdbd2b_8a6ce38460114c2b8a34782f9db3cf32.pdf)

The deadline for submitting an appeal will be at least 20 school days from the date of notification that an application was unsuccessful. This deadline applies to 'normal round' and 'in year' applications.

The decision of the Independent Appeal Panel is binding on all parties.

## 11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees and moderated by the Local Governing Committee every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), Board of Trustees and moderated by the Local Governing Committee will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the academy's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

## 12. Further Information and Contact Details

For queries regarding this policy, admissions arrangements for the academy and the waiting lists and appeals process, please contact:

Andrew Bradley (Assistant Principal) [abradley@darwenvale.com](mailto:abradley@darwenvale.com) 01254 223000 ext. 205

Further information and links to all relevant forms for admissions and appeals are available on the academy website via the link below.

<https://www.darwenvale.com/admissions>

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions>

Further information on Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Fair Access Protocol – <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-appeals>

The Department for Education website on school admissions – [School admissions: Choosing schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

The Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021 - [School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/school-admissions-code)

The Department for Education School Admissions Appeals Code 2012 - [School Admission Appeals Code – 2011 Revised Code \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/school-admission-appeals-code-2011-revised-code)