



**Cumberland  
Council**



# **Transfer to secondary school in Cumberland September 2026**

The closing date to apply for a Year 7 secondary school place is 31 October 2025

[cumberland.gov.uk](https://cumberland.gov.uk)

If you need help in understanding this booklet or support in applying for a school place please contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team on: **01228 221582**.

**Or by email at: [school.admissions@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@cumberland.gov.uk)**

**Please make sure that you apply by: 31 October 2025**

If you have difficulty applying online you can ask your child's current school or your local library to help you, or ring the number above and we will send you a paper copy of the form.

**If you require this document in another format (e.g., audio, braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone 01228 221582.**



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## About the School Admissions and Appeals Team and this booklet

### Hello

We are Cumberland Council's School Admissions and Appeals Team. Our job is to manage all the applications for a school place at maintained schools and academies for children living in the local authority area of Cumberland, ensuring that all parents/carers who apply are offered a school place. This booklet will tell you how to apply for a school place, give you information about how the admissions process works and explain more about admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools where the Council is the admissions authority. You will find that throughout the booklet there are some sentences that tell you what you **must do**. If the law says you must do something, we have to make sure that you understand that. We have tried throughout this booklet to keep the information simple, clear, and easy to understand.

We talk about **preference** rather than **choice** because you can say on the application form which school you would like your child to attend, **but this is not the same as choosing the school your child will go to**. It does, however, encourage you to say which schools you would prefer.

Throughout the booklet we refer to 'schools'. This always includes academies unless otherwise stated. Every year we receive late applications, and it is a shame that some children may miss out on their preferred school just because an application form is late. The law says that we must not allow for late applications unless there are exceptional reasons. So please do make sure your application is on time - why not start thinking about it and complete the online application form?

### Important dates to remember

Application process opens	3 September 2025
Application closing date	31 October 2025
National Offer day	2 March 2026
Reallocation deadline	23 March 2026
Reallocation offers	20 April 2026

## Myth-busters about applying for a Junior school place

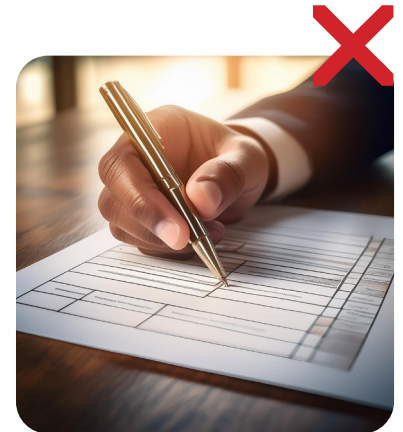
**Myth** - If I put one preference on my application form, then the council will have to offer my child a place at that school.

**Fact** - This is not true. If you only put one preference on your application form and we are unable to offer a place at that school, then your child will be offered a place at the nearest school with spaces available (this could be a school that is a number of miles from your home address or a faith-based school). We always advise parents to submit three preferences as this may reduce the chances of being offered a place at a school chosen by the council rather than yourself.



**Myth** - If I put a school down as my first-choice school, then this will improve my chances of getting a place there.

**Fact** - This is not true. All councils must use an “Equal Preference” scheme whereby all preferences for a school (whether first, second or third) are ranked in order of the school admissions oversubscription criteria irrespective of the preference order. For example, if you submit a first preference application for “School A” and you live three miles from the school, and someone else lists “School A” as a second preference application but live just two miles from the school, then in line with the admissions oversubscription criteria that child’s application would be ranked higher than your child’s application.



**Myth** - We live in the catchment area for this school, so we are guaranteed a place.

**Fact** - This is not true. If you have named your catchment school as a preference and that school is oversubscribed, then the oversubscription criteria will be used to allocate places. If you do not get a place at any of your preferred schools, you will be determined a place at the next nearest school with a place available this will include faith-based schools.



**Myth** - I have just moved into the area and know you keep places spare for families in our situation.

**Fact** - This is not true. We do not keep places available on the off chance a family may move into the area in the future. All school places are allocated in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria and if a school is oversubscribed then all places will be offered. If you move into an area and there are no places available at your preferred school, then you should add your child's name to the waiting list and ask about the school appeals process.



**Myth** - I can submit my application over the telephone.

**Fact** - This is not true. You cannot apply over the telephone. You must either submit an online application by using our Citizen Portal service or you can ask for a paper application form to be sent to you in the post or by email. Any application for a school place must be submitted in writing.



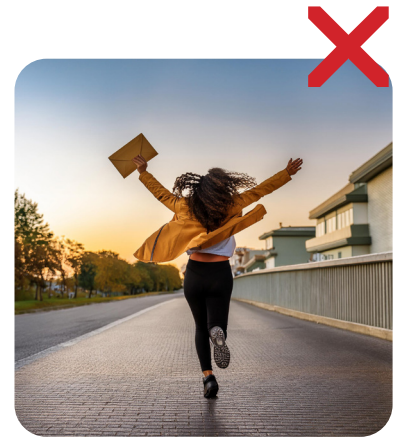
**Myth** - My child is on the waiting list so we will be offered a place at the school soon.

**Fact** - This is not true. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee a place will ever become available from a waiting list. By adding your child's name to a waiting list, you are waiting for other children who were originally offered a place at that school to give up their place. If a place does become available, it will be offered to the child who is at the top of the waiting list at that time. Waiting lists are not held on a first come, first served basis, and are ranked in the order of the school admissions oversubscription criteria for that particular school.



**Myth** - We submitted our application form as soon as the application process opened, so that means we will be one of the first to be offered a place.

**Fact** - This is not true. School places are not offered based on how early you apply, so if you submit your application form before the closing date it will be processed as on-time. It doesn't matter if it is submitted on the day the application process opens or the last day before the closing date, it will still be processed.



**Myth** - If my child attends a feeder primary school, then this guarantees them a place at a secondary school.

**Fact** - This is not the case for schools that use our council's School Admissions oversubscription criteria as we do not have feeder schools. Some schools in Cumberland have their own admissions oversubscription criteria and this may prioritise feeder schools, however the council does not use this oversubscription criteria. Please check your preferred school's oversubscription criteria before you submit your application as this may give you an indication of your chances of being offered a place.





## Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)

If your child has an Educational Health Care Plan the school application and placement process will be dealt with by the Special Education Needs Team for your area.

Most children with an EHCP can, with appropriate support, have their needs met in any local school. Occasionally, a child's needs are such that they can only be met at a particular school. This may, for example, be a school which has been adapted to cater for children with mobility problems. In these circumstances it is the Local Authority's responsibility to offer your child a place in a school that is best able to meet their needs. This school will be named in your child's EHCP, and your child would be given priority when allocating places.

### If your child has special educational needs

Not all children with special educational needs require an education, health and care plan (EHCP). If this is the case, you will need to follow the admissions process for mainstream applications and complete an application by **31 October 2025**. This is because your child will have their special educational needs met by their mainstream school through the graduated response outlined in the SEND code of practice 2015.

### If your child is in the process of obtaining an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

Your child will access the admissions process for mainstream applications, so you will need to complete an application by **31 October 2025**. Should your child receive an EHCP before National Offer Day, the application process will be taken over by the SEND team.

### If your child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) in place

Your child's school will let you know that an annual review will be held in the autumn term, where a discussion will take place about the school places you wish to consider. They will consult with those schools and also make any amendments to the EHCP. If you have any questions about this, please contact our SEND team directly. For children with an EHCP the phase transfer process needs to be completed by **15 February 2026**.

If you need further information about the school named in your child's EHCP, you can contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team:

Email: **[SEND@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:SEND@cumberland.gov.uk)**

Telephone: **01946 506 211 (West)**

Telephone: **01228 226 842 (Carlisle)**

## How to apply for a secondary school place

If you live in the Local Authority of Cumberland and your child is in Year 6 at a primary or junior school, you must apply to Cumberland Council for a secondary school place, under the Local Authority's Coordinated Admissions Scheme.

**Read this booklet carefully before making an application. You can find details about each secondary school, including individual schools' admissions policies, and whether you also need to complete a supplementary form.**

**Please apply online.** If your child lives in the local authority of Cumberland and attends a primary or junior school within the local authority, the School Admissions and Appeals Team will send a letter to you through your child's school. This letter will arrive in schools during the first week of the new academic year and it will give you information on how to make an online application.

The online application form can be found on Cumberland Council's website at:

[www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)

The advantages of applying online are:

- You will receive an email confirmation to say your application has been received.
- You will be able to find out which school your child has been offered by 9am on National Offer day. Letters are sent out to those who apply on a paper form.

If you are unable to apply online, you can download a form (SA3) from our website at:

[www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk) If you do not have access to a computer, you could ask your child's current school or your local library to help or ring the number on **page 2** and we will send a paper copy of the form to you. If you are completing a paper form, please write in **BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS**.

However you decide to apply, **you must state the address where your child lives. You must not use a business address, childminder's address, or any address other than your child's home address.**

We ask you to name **three different preferences** of school that you would be happy for your child to attend because **we cannot guarantee that you will get your first preference**. If you do not name three preferences and your choices are oversubscribed then you will be determined a place at the next nearest school with a place regardless of if that school is faith-based, this may be some miles from your home address.

On the application you should give your **first, second and third** preferences. If you complete the application in such a way that the ranking of two or more schools is not clear, we will rank them for you.

To rank schools for you, we will use the Local Authority's GIS mapping system to measure the distance, using the shortest walking route by road between the pupil's home address and the nearest entrance on the school site available. The nearest school will be taken as the highest preference.

Some schools ask you to fill in a **supplementary form** with **additional information** they might need, for example a faith school may ask you to prove that you are a regular worshipper. Copies of these supplementary forms are available from the relevant schools and should be available on the school's website. **You must return supplementary forms direct to the schools to which you are applying.** Please remember that if you are completing a supplementary form, you must also apply online or complete and return the paper application form (SA3).

If we receive more than one application from you by the closing date and you have not withdrawn any earlier applications in writing, we will use the one with the latest date.

If you are applying using a paper form, **you must sign and date it.** In signing your form, you are agreeing that you have read this information booklet, and that the information you have provided is accurate and truthful and that you agree, if it is necessary, for the Local Authority to seek independent verification of your child's residence. If you are at all unsure about any of the above information, please do not hesitate to contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team.

**Make sure that you submit your application online, or if you use the printed version, return it to your child's current school by the closing date of 31 October 2025**

On National Offer day we will send you an email by 9.00am (if you applied online) or post a letter to the address you have given us (if you have used a paper form). The email or letter will tell you where your child has been allocated a place. We will also explain what you must do next. If you are not happy with the place you have been allocated the letter will explain how you can appeal against the decision.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you submit an application to school admissions and it is found that your child has an EHCP, your application will be withdrawn and processed by the SEND Team, if you have any queries, please contact your EHCP coordinator.

**Children with an EHCP will not receive an email or offer letter from school admissions on National Offer Day as your allocated school will be named in your Education, Health and Care Plan.**

## **In summary:**

- **Please read this booklet carefully before you make your application.**
- **You can apply online, or complete a paper application, but please do not do both.**
- **Make sure your application is submitted by the closing date.**
- **The online application service will be available from 3 September 2025 until the closing date of 31 October 2025 at 11.59pm.**
- **If one of your preferred schools has a supplementary form, complete and return the form, to the school by the 31 October 2025.**
- **We will email you the outcome of your application on National Offer day, if you applied online or we will post a letter to you if you applied using a paper form.**
- **If you or someone you know needs general advice about admissions, please contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team (contact details on page 2).**



## Information about applying for a secondary school place

### What is the Coordinated Admissions Scheme?

The scheme explains how the Local Authority coordinates (manages) admissions with other neighbouring authorities and schools that are their own admission authority (foundation and voluntary aided schools, free schools, and academies). The purpose of the scheme is to ensure that each pupil living within the Local Authority receives only one offer of a school place, whether that is at a school within the Local Authority, or one maintained by a neighbouring authority.

### What are the different types of school?

The type of school you apply for affects the way decisions are made. For all types of school, you must apply to the Cumberland Council's School Admissions and Appeals Team for a place.

For **community** and **voluntary controlled schools** Cumberland Council is the admission authority - it decides the admissions policy and makes decisions about the allocation of places.

For **voluntary aided** and **foundation schools**, each school's governing body is responsible for the admissions policy and decisions about the allocation of places.

For academies and free schools, the academy trust is responsible for the admissions policy and decisions about the allocation of places.

**The Local Authority is not responsible for allocation decisions made by voluntary aided, foundation or free schools or academies.**

You can find out more about individual schools and what type they are in the school's information on pages.

### How are places allocated?

The School Admissions and Appeals Team collate all applications for school places from parents and carers of children living within the local authority area of Cumberland.

We then start a process of liaising with foundation and voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools, and with neighbouring Local Authorities where necessary (for example if a family live close to the county boundary and want their child to attend a school in the neighbouring county).

This process is called **coordination**.

Each admission authority (in the case of community and voluntary controlled schools, this is Cumberland Council) then looks at **all** applications for their school, regardless of whether they have been named as a first, second or third preference. This is because **all preferences must be treated equally**.

This is known as the **equal preference scheme** and means that each of your preferences are treated as a separate application.

Each school has a **Published Admission Number (PAN)** which is the number of places that a school has available to offer. The allocation process is straightforward when a school is not oversubscribed - you are likely to get a place at your first preference school. Unfortunately, schools are sometimes oversubscribed, and in this case, admissions authorities need to work out who has highest priority for the places in a fair and consistent way. They do this by using the oversubscription criteria contained in their admissions policy to rank all the applicants in order of priority.

If it is possible to offer a place at more than one of your preferred schools, we will offer a place at whichever of those schools that you ranked the highest.

**If it is not possible to offer you a place at any of your preferred schools**, you will be offered a place at the next nearest school with a place available, this will include faith-based schools. We will decide which is the nearest by measuring the shortest walking route by road using the Local Authority GIS mapping system.

## How likely am I to get my first preference?

In Cumberland Local Authority you are likely to get your first preference. Last year over **97%** of parents applying for secondary school places were offered their first preference. You cannot however assume you will be offered your first preference of school. **There are always schools that are very popular for many different reasons and those schools tend to have more applications than there are places available. This is why it is important to put the names of three different schools on your application form.**

**If we cannot offer you any of your preferred schools, we will offer an alternative school, this will include faith-based schools, so naming three preferences means that you have a better chance of being offered a school you have selected yourself.**

The law says that we must only do this after all applications from parents who have included the school as one of their preferences have been considered. This means that if you name only one school and we cannot offer a place, you will not be considered for a school place at an alternative school until places have been identified for other parents.

It is unlikely that you will not get any of your three preferences but nevertheless this has happened for a very small number of families in recent years. There is no advantage in listing fewer than three schools or including the same school more than once. This does not increase your chances of admission to a particular school. In fact, you are wasting one or more of your preferences and are more likely to be offered a place at a school some distance away from your home.

Information about the number of applications received and the number of places allocated at secondary schools last year is available within each school's information. Please be aware, however, that this does change from year to year, and just because a school has been undersubscribed one year does not mean that it will be the next year.

## Is the admissions policy for each school important?

Yes. Deciding which school to give as your first preference is not just about which school you would prefer your child to attend. You also need to **consider your chances of being offered a place at the school**. This is very important if you are considering naming popular schools as your preferences, and these are not your catchment school.

You should check the admissions policy for the schools you are considering to see what level of priority you would have. If a school has been consistently oversubscribed in the past and you would have a low priority under the oversubscription criteria, you should think seriously about whether you want to apply for this school. Think carefully about naming popular schools for all three preferences, particularly if you have a low priority under the admissions policy. Other applicants that rank more highly using the school's admissions policy may be allocated all the available places.

## How could this affect me?

If you do not get a place at any of your preferred schools and these do not include your catchment school, you may then be disadvantaged in getting a place at your catchment school. All the places may already have been allocated to children whose parents have named the school as a preference.

## What are catchment areas?

The Local Authority's Admissions Policy for community and voluntary controlled schools and the admissions policies for many voluntary aided and foundation schools and academies refer to **catchment areas**. A catchment area is a defined geographical area, which gives priority for admission to families who live within its boundary. Catchment areas defined by the Local Authority are also used in deciding on school transport entitlement. In some limited cases, foundation and voluntary aided schools and academies have a different catchment area defined for admission purposes from that which the Local Authority has defined for transport purposes. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team.

Where an area does not form part of a catchment area the "catchment" school will be the nearest school, measuring the shortest walking route by road using the Local Authority GIS mapping system.

## How do I find out which is my catchment school?

You can check with the School Admissions and Appeals Team by telephone or email. You can also ask for a map of the catchment area (for academies, voluntary aided, foundation and free schools, you will need to contact the school directly). Please be aware that children from your area may be attending a school which is not the catchment school. **You should not make assumptions**, so it is advisable to check with the School Admissions and Appeals Team.

## Do I need to send anything with my application?

You should check with the schools you are intending to state as a preference to see whether any **supporting evidence** should be sent with your application, or a **supplementary form** completed. For example, it may be that the policy gives priority to families of a particular faith and asks for evidence of this. **If you do not send the evidence this may affect the priority your child is given in the process.** Make sure that any supporting evidence or supplementary forms are submitted by the closing date.

## What do I need to do if my child was cared for (previously looked after) by a Local Authority/or children who were previously looked after outside of England?

If you are applying for a foundation or voluntary aided school, or an academy or free school and you want your application to be considered on the basis that your child was cared for (previously looked after), please contact the school to find out what evidence you will need to provide. Information about what to do if you are applying for a community or voluntary controlled school can be found on **page 20**.

## Is school transport something I should consider?

Yes. The transport policy is explained on **page 34** under '**Home to school transport**'. If home to school transport is a factor in deciding on your preferred schools, you should give this very careful consideration.

## What happens to applications received after the closing date?

**It is vital to get your application in on time.** There is less chance of getting a place at your preferred school if your application is late.

At the initial offer stage of the admissions process, we do not consider applications which are either submitted late or changed after the **closing date** until we have dealt with all applications received on time, unless there are exceptional reasons that prevented you from submitting the form on time and you have provided independent proof to confirm your circumstances with your application.

We will deal with these applications differently depending on the date we receive them.

If you submit an application after the closing date but before the exceptional circumstance deadline of the **5 January 2026**, you must provide at the time of submission **independent 3rd party evidence/documentation** to justify a late application, or your application will be considered as late.

Application forms received after the published **closing date**, will only be considered if it has been agreed by School Admissions that there are extenuating circumstances justifying a late application.

These may include

- a) Parents moving into Cumberland Local Authority Area after the closing date.
- b) Parent/carer illness which required hospitalisation for a major part of the period between the publication of the composite prospectus and the closing date for application



If you cannot provide the information required, or it is not received until after the exceptional circumstance deadline, we will not be able to consider your circumstances during the initial allocation process. However, we will be able to use it at a later stage, such as the reallocation process.

If you have plans which mean you may not need a school place, you should apply anyway and withdraw your application when your plans are confirmed.

Even if there are exceptional reasons for a late application or a change of preference, it will not be possible to consider any applications received after the exceptional circumstance deadline until places have been allocated to all timely applications. If your application is late (i.e. received after the closing date) and is not considered as exceptional (as above), your application will not be dealt with until after the initial allocation of places.

If your application is late and any of the schools you express a preference for are oversubscribed from the applications that we received on time, it is highly unlikely that you will be offered a place at those schools. This will be the case even if you live in the catchment area and/or have older children already attending the school.

## What happens if I move house?

If you are planning to move house, you must still make an application by the closing date, using your current address, even though you may need to ask to change your preferences later because of your change of address.

We can't accept a temporary address if you still possess a property that was previously used as a home address.

**If you move house after applying, you must notify us. It is your responsibility to make sure you do this - if you do not it could affect the offer of a place at one of your preferred schools.**

We normally require two forms of evidence to confirm a house move. It may on occasions be necessary to request additional documentation, depending upon individual circumstances.

Documents accepted to evidence a house move

- Proof of purchase or tenancy agreement
- Evidence of disposal of previous property
- Council Tax document, evidencing the end of residency in previous home.
- Council Tax document, evidencing the residency within your new home.

If we offer you a place at an oversubscribed school based on an address you moved away from before places were allocated, we may withdraw it. If you move house after a place was allocated but before the start of the autumn term and we have reason to believe that your intended move was planned before places were allocated, we may withdraw the offer of a place.

## How do I apply from outside Cumberland Local Authority?

If you live outside the local authority area of Cumberland, you must make your application for a school place on the application form for the Local Authority where you live. You should contact the Local Authority for your area and ask for their information pack and application form.

## How do I apply to another Local Authority?

One or more of the schools you apply for could be in the area of a neighbouring Local Authority. If your home address is in the Local Authority area of Cumberland, you should name your preferred schools on form your application the same way as a Cumberland Local Authority school.

School Admissions will then work with the relevant Local Authority regarding your application. If you live near the Local Authority border you may want to contact a neighbouring Local Authority for information about their schools. Details of neighbouring Authorities are provided on **page 38**.

If you give a school in a neighbouring Local Authority as your first preference and it can be offered, you would not be offered a Cumberland Local Authority school. If it cannot be offered, you would be considered for your alternative preferences.

## What happens if both parents/carers cannot agree about where they would like their child to go to school?

Sometimes, separated parents or carers submit separate application forms for their children naming different preference schools. We are unable to process both applications because the law says that only one offer per child can be made. It would not be appropriate for the School Admissions and Appeals Team to become involved in these situations. If we receive applications in these circumstances, we will write to both applicants to explain the situation.

It is best if parents/carers can resolve issues between themselves and inform us, in writing, which application should be used. However, we do know that sometimes agreement cannot be reached, and the School Admissions and Appeals Team then need to decide as to which form to use. When this happens, we will try to establish the child's permanent address, using the address of the parent/carer who claims child benefit and process that parent/carer's application. If child benefit is not being claimed other legal documentation may be required.

As with all applications, the School Admissions and Appeals Team will only discuss the content or progress of any application with the applicant themselves.

## What can I do if I am not happy with the school that I am offered?

**Usually, your child will be offered a place at one of your preferred schools, applicants who followed the recommended process of providing more than one preference, are typically allocated one of their preferred schools.**

If you are not offered a place in your preferred school or if you are unhappy with the school place allocated for whatever reason, you have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. Information about admission appeals can be found on **pages 35 and 36**.

## What happens if my child does not get a place and then one becomes available?

If you have not been offered a place at one of your preferred schools on National Offer day because the school was oversubscribed, your child will be considered for any places which become available. The Local Authority will **reallocate** any available places **within four weeks after the reallocation deadline**. All outstanding applications will be considered, including any late applications, using the school's oversubscription criteria to prioritise.

## Can my child's name go on a waiting list?

After the reallocation process, it is up to the admission authority for the school or academy to maintain their waiting list.

For oversubscribed schools, the admission authority must maintain a waiting list until at least the **31 December** in the academic year of admission.

## How do I apply for a school place at another time? (i.e., in year)

From the first day of the school term all applications received will be treated as in-year admissions

You can contact your preferred school directly, and in most cases, it will be able to deal with your request. If you are offered a place, you can arrange an admission date with the school. If your request is refused, this should be done in writing with the reason for refusal, and you will be informed of your right of appeal against this decision.

If you prefer, you can also contact the School Admissions team to make an application and for more information about admission to school.

Some schools may also refer you to the School Admissions team to handle your application (i.e., community and voluntary controlled schools, , where the LA is the admissions authority).

## Children of UK Service Personnel (UK) Armed Forces and Crown Servants

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants If you are a UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) family with a confirmed posting to Cumberland Local Authority, or a Crown Servant family returning from overseas to live with the Cumberland Local Authority area, **we will offer places in advance of the move provided the application is accompanied by:**

- An assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for UK service personnel or
- An official letter declaring a relocation date for crown servants. Evidence of a future address may also be required.

## Information about admission to community and voluntary controlled schools

### How do I find out if my preferred school is a community or voluntary controlled school?

You can find out if a school is community or voluntary controlled in the individual school's information.

### How are places allocated at community and voluntary controlled schools?

If a community or voluntary controlled school is oversubscribed, places will be allocated using the oversubscription criteria contained in the Local Authority's Admissions Policy, detailed on **pages 25 and 26**.

### Does the junior or primary school my child is attending affect how places are allocated?

No, a child's current school is not a factor in allocating places at community and voluntary controlled schools.

### What do I need to do if my child was cared for (previously looked after) by a Local Authority/ or children who were previously looked after outside of England?

If your child was cared for (previously looked after), and you wish to be considered under category 1 of the Local Authority Admissions Policy on **pages 25 and 26**, you will need to provide some evidence with your application. If your child was adopted, this will be a copy of the Adoption Order. If your child became subject to a Residence/Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order, you will need to provide copies of these. **If you are unsure of what you need to do, or whether your child can be considered under this category, please contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team.**

### Will younger brothers and sisters be able to go to the same school?

Siblings of children attending their catchment area school have a higher priority for admission when places are allocated at oversubscribed community and voluntary controlled schools. If you choose a school other than your catchment area school, places may not be available for your younger children as catchment children will have higher priority.



## Which address will be used in determining my child's priority for admission?

If a school is oversubscribed, **the address where the child normally lives will be used in the allocation process**. It is not possible to use an alternative address such as the address of your child's grandparents or child minder.

In some cases, for example where shared parental living arrangements are in place, the address where a child normally lives may be difficult to decide. In these circumstances, the address used for child benefit purposes, (i.e. the address for the parent claiming the child benefit) will be used. Residency at a particular address is a key factor in allocating places at oversubscribed schools.

If we offer a school place and then discover that the offer was made on the basis of fraudulent or misleading information (for example, a false claim to be living at an address), we may withdraw the place.

## What happens if I am moving house?

If you are about to move house or think you may do so in the near future, **you must contact us and tell us the address that you will be moving to**. For your application to be considered on the basis of your new address you will need to be able to provide evidence of your move as soon as possible - stating an intention to move to an area will not be enough.

Examples of evidence we will request are.

- Proof of purchase or tenancy agreement
- Evidence of disposal of previous property
- Council Tax document, evidencing the end of residency in previous home.
- Council Tax document, evidencing the residency within your new home.

Whatever evidence you provide, we will need to be satisfied that you will be resident at this new address at the time your child is offered a school place and also when they take up this place, in September. We may have to ask you for further evidence such as utility bills. If you cannot provide the evidence required, or we do not feel that your evidence is sufficient, or it is not received until after the exceptional circumstance deadline, then we will not be able to consider you for a school place based on your new address during the initial allocation process. However, we may be able to use it at a later stage (for example, for reallocation purposes).

**If you move temporarily during the admissions process, you must discuss the matter with the School Admissions and Appeals Team. Temporary addresses are rarely accepted for admission purposes**

You should always keep the School Admissions and Appeals Team informed of the progress with your move.

**This is your responsibility**; it could affect the offer of a place at one of your preferred schools.

## What happens if I provide false information?

Unfortunately, a small number of parents each year try to secure a place for their child by either providing false information or withholding relevant information on residency. Every place secured on the basis of false information potentially deprives another child of their rightful place, and the Local Authority takes allegations of falsified addresses very seriously.

All allegations will be investigated. Offers made for places in oversubscribed schools on the basis of false or misleading information will be withdrawn, as they have been in previous years.

The Local Authority will, as necessary, seek independent verification of your child's address, or of any other information provided on the application form. Local Authority officers may visit the address given as the child's residence in order to verify that they live at that address.

**This process may happen before or after places have been allocated.**

## Can my child's name go on a waiting list if they are not offered a place?

If your child does not get a place in the main allocation or reallocation process, they will continue to be considered for any places which may become available at this school until the end of the Autumn term.

If you still want your child to be considered for any vacancies in community or voluntary controlled schools from the start of the Spring term onwards, you should contact the School Admissions and Appeals Team to put your child's name on a waiting list.

From the Spring term, only children on the waiting list will be considered. Vacancies will always be allocated by applying the Admissions Policy. Length of time on the waiting list will not be a factor.

## Secondary schools in Cumberland

The government has enacted legislation to provide for maintained schools to become academies. This may mean that by 1 September some of the maintained schools detailed in this book will become academies.

### Finding your way around this section

This section contains information about secondary schools within the Local Authority of Cumberland.

### Admissions Policies

- The Local Authority Admissions Policy used to allocate places at oversubscribed community and voluntary controlled schools, is shown on **pages 25 and 26**.
- Some information about where to find the admissions policy for each voluntary aided, foundation, free schools, and academies (Including their oversubscription criteria) is provided under the entry for the school. If you want to read the full policy, you can look on the school's website, contact the school for a copy or look on the council website at [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk). Where relevant, if you are applying to a school on the basis of faith and wish your application to be considered under these criteria, you should complete the school's supplementary form which is available direct from the school.

### School information

- Important contact details for schools, including address, telephone number, email, and web addresses
- The type of school, whether this be community, voluntary controlled, foundation, voluntary aided, an academy or free school.
- The age range of children attending the school.
- The Department for Education reference number.
- The Published Admission Number.
- The number of first, second and third preferences that were expressed for places in the previous September Year 7 Intake. These only apply to applications which were received by the closing date and do not include late applications or late changes of preference.
- The number of places offered on National Offer Day, again, these do not include any late applications or changes of preference considered after the reallocation process, or any applicants admitted as a result of successful appeals or offered places once the Coordinated process had ended, such as in-year applicants.

**Please remember that the information provided about the number of applications and offers made should be treated with caution because the position can change from one year to the next. A school which is undersubscribed one year may be oversubscribed the next. Also, a school may have exceeded its Published Admission Number in the previous September in order to meet demand but may not be able to do so in this forthcoming September.**

You can find out if your preferred school has a supplementary form under each school's entry.

There are other ways to find out more about schools.

You could:

- Visit the school - attend any open evenings.
- Ask for the prospectus.
- Look at the school's website.
- Read the latest Ofsted report at [ofsted.gov.uk](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)
- Look at the performance data at [gov.uk/school-performance-tables](https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables)

More information about school admissions can be found at [\*\*gov.uk/school-admissions\*\*](https://www.gov.uk/school-admissions)





## **Cumberland General Admissions Policy 2026/27**

### **Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools**

Where there are more applications than places available at a community or voluntary controlled school for entry to all year groups (except Year 12), applications will be prioritised using the criteria below. They will be applied in conjunction with explanatory notes 1 - 7 which form part of the policy.

1. Children looked after, i.e. in public care, giving priority, if necessary, to the youngest child(ren); children who were previously looked after; and children who were previously looked after outside of England - see note 1.
2. Children living in the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of admission - see notes 2, 3 and 4.
3. Children living outside the catchment area who, at the time of their admission, have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) who were allocated a place at that school by the Local Authority either (a) in the absence of a place being available in the catchment area school due to oversubscription and the school was identified by the Local Authority as the next nearest with a place available or (b) the school is named in the sibling's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - see notes 2, 3 and 5.
4. Other children living in the catchment area giving priority to those living closest to the school, measured by a straight-line measurement between the centre of the pupil's home address and a common point on the school site as determined by the Local Authority - see notes 6 and 7.
5. Children living outside the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of their admission - see notes 2, 3 and 4.
6. Children living outside the catchment area, giving priority to those who live closest to the school, measured by a straight-line measurement between the centre of the pupil's home address and a common point on the school site as determined by the Local Authority - see notes 6 and 7.

Applications will be prioritised on the above basis. An exception will be made under the Local Authority's policy for the education of children with special educational needs where a child holds an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), that names the school.

## Explanatory notes

These notes are part of the policy.

### Note 1

A child looked after is a child in public care, who is looked after by a local authority within the meaning of Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. Children previously looked after are children who were looked after but have ceased to be so because they were adopted (under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002) or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order (Children Act 1989).

Advice issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in July 2021 states that a child previously looked after outside of England is one that was looked after, outside England, by a public authority, a religious organisation, or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

For a previously looked after child to be considered under criteria 1, the parent or carer must provide appropriate written evidence to support the application. Without this evidence it will not be possible to consider the application under category 1 of the LA General Admissions Policy.

### Note 2

In criteria 2, 3 and 5, priority will be given to those children with the youngest siblings. Brothers and sisters are those living at the same address and includes step and foster children. Priority will only be given where it is known at the time of allocating places that a sibling will be attending the school (excluding a nursery class - see note 4) at the time of admission.

### Note 3

Where reference is made to 'associated' infant and junior schools this is to describe those situations where infant and junior schools share the same catchment area.

### Note 4

Brothers and sisters in the school at the time of admission does not include a brother or sister who will be attending a nursery class that is attached to the school.

### Note 5

If a parent or carer believes that they qualify for consideration under criterion 3, they should indicate this on their preference form in the place provided for this purpose.

### Note 6

Distance measurements will be undertaken using the Local Authority's computerised Geographical Information System (GIS). This measures a straight-line measurement between the centre of the pupil's home address and a common point on the school site as determined by the Local Authority.

### Note 7

Random allocation will be used as a tie-break in categories 4 and 6 to decide who has the highest priority for admission if the distance between the children's home address and the school is the same. This process will be independently verified.

## Information about all secondary schools

### Beacon Hill Community School

Market Square

Aspatria

Wigton

Cumbria

CA7 3EZ

t: 016973 20509

e: [beaconhill@beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:beaconhill@beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 16

DfE number: 4001

Published Admission Number: 70

Number of 1st preferences: 22

Number of 2nd preferences: 18

Number of 3rd preferences: 6

Offers made on National Offer Day: 22

**This is a Community School, so the LA's admissions policy applies. Please see pages 25-26.**

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### Caldew School

Dalston

Carlisle

Cumbria

CA5 7NN

t: 01228 710044

e: [office@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.caldew.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.caldew.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 5413

Published Admission Number: 174

Number of 1st preferences: 192

Number of 2nd preferences: 202

Number of 3rd preferences: 87

Offers made on National Offer Day: 174

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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### Central Academy

Victoria Place

Carlisle

Cumbria

CA1 1LY

t: 01228 822060

e: [info@rrca.org.uk](mailto:info@rrca.org.uk)

w: [www.rrca.org.uk](http://www.rrca.org.uk)

Age range: 11-18

DfE number: 6906

Published Admissions Number: 210

Number of 1st preferences: 199

Number of 2nd preferences: 140

Number of 3rd preferences: 79

Offers made on National Offer Day: 206

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Cockermouth School

Cockermouth School

Castlegate Drive

Cockermouth

Cumbria

CA13 9HF

t: 01900 898888

e: [admissions@cockermouthschool.org](mailto:admissions@cockermouthschool.org)

w: [www.cockermouthschool.org](http://www.cockermouthschool.org)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4103

Published Admission Number: 196

Number of 1st preferences: 199

Number of 2nd preferences: 102

Number of 3rd preferences: 63

Offers made on National Offer Day: 206

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Keswick School

Vicarage Hill

Keswick

Cumbria

CA12 5QB

t: 017687 72605

e: [admin@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.keswick.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.keswick.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 5414

Published Admission Number: 180 (172-day places and 8 boarding)

Number of 1st preferences: 172

Number of 2nd preferences: 144

Number of 3rd preferences: 68

Offers made on National Offer Day: 176

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Millom School

Salthouse Road

Millom

Cumbria

LA18 5AB

t: 01229 772300

e: [genenquiries@millom.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:genenquiries@millom.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.millom.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.millom.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4204

Published Admission Number: 145

Number of 1st preferences: 85

Number of 2nd preferences: 20

Number of 3rd preferences: 3

Offers made on National Offer Day: 92

**This is a Community School, so the LA's admissions policy applies. Please see pages 25-26.**

## Morton Academy

Wigton Road

Carlisle

Cumbria

CA2 6LB

t: 01228 822644

e: [info@rrma.org.uk](mailto:info@rrma.org.uk)

w: [www.rrma.org.uk](http://www.rrma.org.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 6905

Published Admission Number: 180

Number of 1st preferences: 219

Number of 2nd preferences: 58

Number of 3rd preferences: 39

Offers made on National Offer Day: 210

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Nelson Thomlinson School (The)

High Street

Wigton

Cumbria

CA7 9PX

t: 016973 42160

e: [admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4501

Published Admission Number: 210

Number of 1st preferences: 148

Number of 2nd preferences: 68

Number of 3rd preferences: 32

Offers made on National Offer Day: 153

**This is a Voluntary Controlled School, so the LA's admissions policy applies. Please see 25-26.**

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## Netherhall School

Netherhall Road

Maryport

Cumbria

CA15 6NT

t: 01900 813434

e: [office@netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4104

Published Admission Number: 186

Number of 1st preferences: 174

Number of 2nd preferences: 34

Number of 3rd preferences: 28

Offers made on National Offer Day: 181

**This is a Community School, so the LA's admissions policy applies. Please see pages 25-26.**



## Solway Community School

Liddell Street

Silloth

Wigton

Cumbria

CA7 4DD

t: 016973 31234

e: [office@solway.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@solway.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.solwayschool.co.uk](http://www.solwayschool.co.uk)

Age range: 11 - 16

DfE number: 4008

Published Admission Number: 59

Number of 1st preferences: 26

Number of 2nd preferences: 6

Number of 3rd preferences: 3

Offers made on National Offer Day: 26

**This is a Community School, so the LA's admissions policy applies. Please see pages 25-26.**

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## St Benedict's Catholic High School

Red Lonning

Hensingham

Whitehaven

Cumbria

CA28 8UG

t: 01946 692275

e: [admin@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4622

Published Admission Number: 186

Number of 1st preferences: 172

Number of 2nd preferences: 149

Number of 3rd preferences: 41

Offers made on National Offer Day: 175

**This is a Voluntary Aided/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## St John Henry Newman Catholic School

Scalegate Road

Carlisle

Cumbria

CA2 4NL

t: 01228 404942

e: [office@newman.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@newman.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.newman.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.newman.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4630

Published Admission Number: 120

Number of 1st preferences: 118

Number of 2nd preferences: 72

Number of 3rd preferences: 62

Offers made on National Offer Day: 120

**This school may have a supplementary form or may require documentary evidence. Please see page 16 for further details.**

**This is a Voluntary Aided/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## St Joseph's Catholic High School

Harrington Road

Workington

Cumbria

CA14 3EE

t: 01900 873290

e: [office@sjchs.uk](mailto:office@sjchs.uk)

w: [www.sjchs.uk](http://www.sjchs.uk)

Age range: 11 - 16

DfE number: 4810

Published Admission Number: 120

Number of 1st preferences: 96

Number of 2nd preferences: 90

Number of 3rd preferences: 19

Offers made on National Offer Day: 109

**This school may have a supplementary form or may require documentary evidence. Please see page 16 for further details.**

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Trinity School

Strand Road

Carlisle

Cumbria

CA1 1JB

t: 01228 516051

e: [info@trinity.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:info@trinity.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.trinity.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.trinity.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 5402

Published Admission Number: 270

Number of 1st preferences: 249

Number of 2nd preferences: 195

Number of 3rd preferences: 113

Offers made on National Offer Day: 266

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## West Lakes Academy

Main Street

Egremont

Cumbria

CA22 2DQ

t: 01946 820356

e: [contactus.wla@changinglives.education](mailto:contactus.wla@changinglives.education)

w: [www.wla.education](http://www.wla.education)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 6907

Published Admission Number: 180

Number of 1st preferences: 158

Number of 2nd preferences: 56

Number of 3rd preferences: 75

Offers made on National Offer Day: 157

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Whitehaven Academy (The)

Cleator Moor Road

Whitehaven

Cumbria

CA28 8TY

t: 01946 595400

e: [schooloffice@whitehavenacademy.org.uk](mailto:schooloffice@whitehavenacademy.org.uk)

w: [www.whitehavenacademy.org.uk](http://www.whitehavenacademy.org.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4015

Published Admission Number: 180 (for 11-16)

Number of 1st preferences: 174

Number of 2nd preferences: 138

Number of 3rd preferences: 58

Offers made on National Offer Day: 177

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## William Howard School

Longtown Road

Brampton

Cumbria

CA8 1AR

t: 016977 45700

e: [mail@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:mail@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk)

w: [www.williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 5412

Published Admission Number: 240

Number of 1st preferences: 242

Number of 2nd preferences: 97

Number of 3rd preferences: 36

Offers made on National Offer Day: 240

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Workington Academy

Stainburn Road

Workington

Cumbria

CA14 4EB

t: 01900 873926

e: [office@workingtonacademy.org](mailto:office@workingtonacademy.org)

w: [www.workingtonacademy.org](http://www.workingtonacademy.org)

Age range: 11 - 18

DfE number: 4007

Published Admission Number: 208

Number of 1st preferences: 229

Number of 2nd preferences: 71

Number of 3rd preferences: 36

Offers made on National Offer Day: 208

**This is an Academy/Own Admission Authority School. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy of their Admissions Policy or see [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)**

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## Further help and advice

### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SEND IASS)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (which was formerly known as the Cumbria Information, Advice and Support Service) offers up to date information, impartial advice, and practical support to parents/carers of children with special educational needs or severe medical conditions (disabilities), which affect the way their child can access education. For further information please visit [sendiass.cumberland.gov.uk](https://sendiass.cumberland.gov.uk)

### Free school meals and school uniform grants

If you currently receive a school clothing grant and continue to be on benefits, your child's free school meals will continue also once they go into year 7. If your child is going into year 7 and you have not previously applied for free school meals or a school uniform grant, you can apply at any time so long as you are in receipt of one or more of the following qualifying benefits:

- Income Support.
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance.
- An income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit. Also, your annual gross income of no more than £16,190.
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit.
- Universal credit. If your household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get).
- Working Tax Credit run on - paid for 4 weeks after you stopped qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

To fill in an online application form, or to find out more information, please go to [www.cumberland.gov.uk](https://www.cumberland.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0300 373 3730**

Email: **[FSM.ClothingGrants@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:FSM.ClothingGrants@cumberland.gov.uk)**

## Home to school transport

Local Authorities must provide free home to school transport for pupils of compulsory school age who attend the nearest suitable school (Within the local authority area - this means the “catchment” or nearest suitable school) and meet the following requirements:

- Who live beyond the statutory walking distance.
- Where the pupil has mobility problems and is unable to walk to and from school.
- Where the pupil cannot be expected to walk because of the nature of the route.
- For some pupils from low-income families (defined as those families whose children are in receipt of free school meals or the parents/carers on the maximum level of Working Tax Credit).

The statutory walking distance is defined as two miles for a child under the age of eight years and three miles for children aged eight and over. This distance is measured along the shortest available route along which a child, accompanied by an adult, if necessary, may walk in reasonable safety.

For those families, whose children are of compulsory school age and are in receipt of free school meals or the parents/ carers on the maximum level of Working Tax Credit free home to school transport must be provided as follows:

- For primary age pupils aged between eight and ten years - they are eligible for free transport to enable them to attend the nearest suitable school where this is more than two miles from their home.
- Secondary age pupils aged eleven to sixteen are eligible for free transport as follows:
  - to one of the three nearest schools all of which must be more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from their home:
  - are attending their nearest faith school preferred by parents on the basis of religion and which is greater than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles from their home.

The legislation also requires Local Authorities to have regard to any wish of a parent/carer to have their child educated at a particular school where that wish is based on the parent's/carer's religion or belief.

Unless any of the above conditions applies you should not expect to receive home to school transport for your child.

If you wish to apply for home to school transport visit Cumberland Council's website [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk) and apply online

### Telephone:

0300 3031591, option 1

### Postal Address:

School Transport  
Cumbria House  
117 Botchergate  
Carlisle  
CA1 1RD





## Admission appeals

### Who has the right of appeal?

Parents who are refused a place at their preferred school or schools are given the right of appeal to a school admission appeals panel. The panel is completely independent of the Local Authority and the school who have no say over the panel's decisions. If this happens to you, we will send you a letter that will give you further information and will explain what to do next, including the deadline for appealing (if you want your appeal to be heard along with all of the other appeals for that school) and who to contact.

### Who is responsible for setting up appeals?

Individual admission authorities are responsible for making arrangements for admission appeals. For community and voluntary controlled schools, this is the Local Authority. For foundation and voluntary aided schools, free schools, and academies, it is the responsibility of the governing body or academy trust. Appeals must be arranged in line with statutory requirements. In all cases the appeals panel is completely independent of the admissions authorities who have no say over the panel's decisions.

### When will my appeal be heard?

Admission authorities must give anyone who wants to appeal at least **20 school days** from the date of the notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit their appeal. Appeals against decisions made in the 'normal admissions round' must then be heard within **40 school days** of the deadline for submitting appeals. For applications that were made by the closing date, admission authorities will usually try to ensure that the relevant independent appeals panel considers the appeal before the end of the summer term, but there are sometimes exceptions to this. Admission authorities are required to publish their appeals timetables on their websites by 28 February each year.

### Who sits on an appeals panel?

Independent admission appeal panel members are trained volunteers who are completely independent of the admission authority. The admission authority has no say over their decisions. At least one of the three panel members will have a background in education. They have the services of a clerk, who provides legal advice and takes notes at the hearing. Parents can choose to attend the hearing, or have the hearing heard in their absence if, for any reason, they are unable to attend.

## What happens at an appeal?

At the appeal hearing, the panel will hear information from the admission authority about why the application was refused - and then need to make a decision as to whether or not the admissions arrangements were legal and correctly applied and whether or not the school would be 'prejudiced' (i.e. disadvantaged) by the admission of another child.

If the panel does decide that the arrangements were legal and applied correctly, and that the school would be prejudiced by the admission of another child, they then hear the case of the parents. They will ask questions of the parents to try to get all the information they need to make a decision as to who would suffer the greater prejudice - the school if the child were admitted, or the child and family if they were not. This is a balancing exercise - the panels look at a wide range of factors when making their decision. If they find that the disadvantage to the child and family would be greater than that of the school, then the appeal will be successful, and the child will be admitted. The admission authority has no say over the panel's decisions.

## How can I challenge, or complain about an appeals panel's decision?

A decision of an appeal panel is binding on both the parents and the admission authority. If either side is unhappy with the decision of the panel and wants it overturned, they can make an application to the High Court to judicially review the decision. The High Court will only consider such an application if the decision of the panel discloses an error of law.

If a parent is unhappy with the decision of an appeal panel, they may also complain the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in respect of community, voluntary controlled, foundation or voluntary aided schools. The LGO has the power to investigate alleged or apparent maladministration in connection with an appeal and can make recommendations to the local authority, including that the appeal is reheard.

In respect of academies and free schools' parents can complain to the Education Funding Agency (EFA), instead of the LGO. If a school converts to an academy during the appeals process, the LGO is still able to investigate the complaint.

## Where can I find out more information?

More information about appeals will be made available if you are not offered a place at your preferred schools. You can also find information about school admission appeals on [www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision](https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision) or via the council's website [cumberland.gov.uk](https://cumberland.gov.uk) or by contacting the School Admissions and Appeals Team.

## **Useful contact details**

### **School Admissions and Appeals Team**

**Phone:** 01228 221582  
(Monday to Friday 8am - 12pm and 2pm - 3pm)

**Email:** [school.admissions@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@cumberland.gov.uk)

**Address:** School Admissions and Appeals  
Cumberland Council  
PO Box 415  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA1 9GU

**Website:** [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)

## How do I find out where the specialist services are based?

There are specialist services available to help you and your child. If you wish to find out where in your area the specialist services are based, you should contact your local Families Information Services, visit Cumberland Council's website [cumberland.gov.uk](http://cumberland.gov.uk) for more information.

Email: [families.information@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:families.information@cumberland.gov.uk)

Telephone: 07760 171 639

## Local Authorities neighbouring Cumberland

Families living close to the Local Authority border may wish to find out about schools in their neighbouring Local Authority. The addresses are:

### Northumberland County Council

County Hall

Morpeth

Northumberland

NE61 2EF

Tel: 0345 6006400

E-mail: [schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk)

### Westmorland and Furness Council

PO Box 305

County Offices

Kendal

Cumbria

LA9 9GZ

Tel: 0300 303 8144

Email: [school.admissions@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk)

## Useful websites

- Department for Education - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- Advice on Special Educational Needs gov.uk Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): Overview - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- OFSTED inspection reports [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)
- ACE Education Advice and Training [ace-ed.org.uk](http://ace-ed.org.uk)
- Information on school performance [www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables](http://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables)  
Find and check the performance of schools and colleges in England - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- Cumberland Schools and Education | Cumberland Council
- More information about school admissions and appeals can be found at [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk)

## Data Protection

As a Data Controller, Cumberland Council processes personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. You and/or your children have certain rights in respect of this information including requesting a copy and having inaccurate data corrected.

### **The information you provide on your preference form may be shared with:**

- Other teams within the Children and Families Services Directorate.
- Members of Parliament/Elected Members (where you have asked them to act on your behalf).
- Governing Bodies of own admission authority schools.
- Other Local Authorities

### **For the following purposes:**

- to allocate a school place for your children.
- to co-ordinate admission arrangements with neighbouring Local Authorities

Information you provide as part of the admissions process will not be used for additional purposes without your consent. You can find out more about how your data is handled in the council's Privacy Notice. (Go to [www.cumberland.gov.uk](http://www.cumberland.gov.uk) and search 'Privacy').



**If you require this document in another format (e.g. audio, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone 01228 221582.**

**আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01228 221582 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।**

**如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，  
请致电 01228 221582**

**Jeigu norétumėte gauti šią informaciją savo kalba, skambinkite telefonu 01228 221582**

**W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę zatelefonować pod numer 01228 221582**

**Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua, telefone para o 01228 221582**

**Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen 01228 221582 numaralı telefonu arayınız**