



Duke's Secondary School

Enabling everyone in our community to let their light shine



Admissions Policy

Policy Preface

Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its communities. We promote care and respect, and expect high standards in all aspects of our Trust life.

As a Church of England Academy Trust, we aim to build communities clearly based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution, protect the weak and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy Trust.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

Lead Person:	Principal
Creation date:	October 2018
Version	v1
Last updated and approved:	October 2019
Next review due by:	September 2020
Approved by:	CEO
Statutory Requirement:	Yes
Linked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Admission Procedure for Secondary Admissions● Admission Procedure for 6th Form



Duke's Secondary School is part of
Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust



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Admissions Policy

Introduction

Admissions Authority

The Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority and follows the Northumberland County Council admissions procedures for admission to the Duke's Secondary School. The Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust complies with the School Admissions Code issued by the Department for Education in December 2014.

Arrangements for applications for places at the Duke's Secondary School will be made in accordance with the local authority's (LA) co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form (CAF) provided and administered by the LA.

Published Admission Numbers (PAN)

The Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust intends to admit up to **190 pupils to Year 7** Duke's Secondary School in **September 2021**. **For Post 16**, the Trust intends to admit **up to 125 students to Year 12 in September 2021**.

In any specific year the NCEA Trust Governors may set a higher admission number than the agreed admission number for an applicable year group. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, governors will consult all relevant parties.

The Duke's Secondary School is not obliged to admit children into a year group other than that of the child's chronological age. However, Parents may submit a request in writing for their child to be admitted outside of his or her normal age range together with supporting reasons for doing so. This should be discussed with the Principal as soon as possible.

Admissions Criteria

If in any year group the Duke's Secondary School is not oversubscribed then the School will offer children who apply to that year group a place.

Children who have either a statement of educational needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) plan that specifically names the Duke's Secondary School will be admitted to the School.

In determining admissions, priority would be given to those applications where the parental application form is received by the published deadline date. Once a place at the Duke's Secondary School has been offered and accepted, the School requires sight of the child's birth certificate or passport to verify the identity of the child. Where a birth certificate may not be available for children arriving from overseas, the Border Agency may be contacted to verify the child's details.

Equal Preference System

NCEA Duke's Secondary School operates an equal preference system which means that all first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the following criteria:

- a. **A "Looked after Child"** or a child previously accommodated by a Local Authority following which they immediately became subject to an adoption, child arrangement orders, or special guardianship order. (See note 1).
- b. **Children who have a sibling link** and are residing at the same address (brother or sister including adoptive siblings, half siblings, step siblings, and long term fostered children) attending the Duke's Secondary School at the time of application. **[N.B. This criterion includes older siblings who will be in the sixth form at the time of admission]** The Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust will not consider any "reverse sibling links" i.e. a younger child gaining entry to the school will not mean an automatic place for an older sibling.
- c. **Pupils attending the NCEA Bishop's Primary School.**
- d. **Children living in the catchment area** of the Duke's Secondary School and who can provide firm evidence that this will be the case on the appropriate admission date.
- e. **Children on whose behalf evidence of exceptional medical need is presented.** Evidence must be supported in a written statement by a professionally involved third party, for example, a doctor. The supporting evidence should be submitted at the time of application and should set out the particular reasons why the Duke's Secondary School provision is the most suitable provision and the difficulties that would be caused by the child attending an alternative provision.
- f. **Children living outside the catchment** area of the Duke's Secondary School.

Oversubscription Criteria for Admissions to NCEA Duke's Secondary School

Where the number of applications for admission to the Duke's Secondary School is greater than the published admission number (PAN) for that year group, applications will be considered against the criteria applied in the order in which they are set out above.

For children who live at two addresses the criteria apply to the address where the child spends the majority of their time. Where there are more applications than places available, children from multiple births will be given priority within criteria a, b, c and d above and treated together as a single group.

Within each of the above criteria, in the event that there is still an oversubscription after the criteria above have been applied and a tiebreaker is required, then the child living closest to the Duke's Secondary School will be admitted. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the front door of the child's home to the front gate/main entrance of the School. (See Note 2)

Sixth Form Admissions

The following admissions policy and over-subscription criteria apply to external candidates only and are provided as information for students currently attending NCEA Duke's Secondary School. Places will be allocated to students of the Duke's Secondary School first.

The minimum entry requirements for internal and external applicants will be:

1. For all Advanced Level (Level 3 type) courses the entry requirement will be a minimum of four GCSE grades 9-1.
2. For Level 2 courses the entry requirement will be an average of grade 3 at GCSE.

No applications for admission to the Sixth Form will be accepted after the 30th September in the year of entry. Applications received after this date will only be considered under exceptional circumstances.

Over-subscription criteria for admissions to 6th Form

Priority will be given in the following order:

- a. Students who are 'looked after' or were previously 'looked after' under the provision of the Children Act 1989 and School Admission Code February 2012.
- b. Students for whom places on appropriate course are available.
- c. Students living in the catchment area of the Duke's Secondary School and who can provide firm evidence that this will be the case on the appropriate admission date.
- d. Students on whose behalf evidence of exceptional medical need is presented. Evidence must be supported in a written statement by a professionally involved third party, for example, a doctor. The supporting evidence should be submitted at the time of application and should set out the particular reasons why the Duke's Secondary School provision is the most suitable provision and the difficulties that would be caused by the student attending an alternative provision.

In the event that there is still an oversubscription after the criteria above have been applied and a tiebreaker is required, then the young person living closest to the NCEA Duke's Secondary School will be admitted. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the front door of the child's home to the front gate/main entrance of the Duke's Secondary School. Random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same. This process will be independently verified.

Waiting Lists

Unsuccessful applications for a place at the Duke's Secondary School will, if requested, be placed on our waiting list. This list is ranked according to the same criteria as those used for Admissions to the relevant age group. When a child is added to the list, the list will be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria detailed above. Parents should notify the Duke's Secondary School that they wish to be held on this list and will be contacted directly a place is available.

Appeals

Parents may appeal against the decision not to offer a place and must do so in writing to the Duke's Secondary School within 14 days of being notified that they have not been offered a place. An independent appeal panel will hear the appeal. A copy of the appeals procedure is available from the Duke's Secondary School or through the School website.

Appeal where application is made outside of age range

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the Principal in advance of applying for a place. The governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Admission procedures:

Admission Procedure for Secondary Admissions

Admission Procedure for 6th Form

Note 1: "Looked after child" is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. An adoption order is an order made under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Under the provisions of Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders. 'Special guardianship order' is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians (Section 14A of the Children Act 1989). We give a "Looked after Child" priority in our oversubscription criteria. This means that when a place becomes available in the school year it can be offered to these children to ensure that they are quickly placed in an appropriate school. This is necessary as it is recognised that such children are a disadvantaged group who, because of frequent changes of school following their care placements, may have lower than average levels of attainment. It is also a statutory requirement that Admission Authorities give top priority to a "Looked after Child" in their oversubscription criteria.

Note 2: A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence, and is either:

- Owned by the child's parent(s) or the person with parental responsibility for the child; or
- Leased to or rented by the child's parent(s) or the person with parental responsibility under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than twelve months duration.

Evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, plus proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both

parents for part of the week then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives the majority of the week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used when offering places. The above distance measurement will also be used as a 'tiebreaker' within each criterion if necessary. Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion, distance from the shortest distance measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the main academy entrance, using Northumberland County Council's Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the Duke's Secondary School receiving higher priority will be used. The School will seek proof of residency.

Year 6 to Year 7 Transfer - Waiting Lists

If you have been refused a place at the Duke's Secondary School, you will have the opportunity to place your child's name on a waiting list if you have ranked the school as a higher preference than the one you have been offered. Waiting lists are established after 16th March 2021. (You should contact the Duke's Secondary School to request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list as this is not an automatic procedure). Children are placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria regardless of when their application was received and within each criterion their place is ordered by the shortest distance measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the main academy entrance, using Northumberland County Council's Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the Duke's Secondary School receiving higher priority. The School will request proof of residency for parents/carers who wish their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. If pupil numbers fall below the published admission number the place will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list. A child who is on the waiting list will move down the list if another late application is received that falls within a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists will be held for one term in the academic year i.e. September 2021 until 31st December 2021; no lists will be kept after this date.

Children who are the subject of a 'direction to admit' by a local authority or who are allocated to the Duke's Secondary School in full accordance with the agreed Local Authority In-Year Fair Access Protocol take precedence over those on the waiting list.