

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How old should my child be when I apply for a reception class place?**

Most children start school the September after they turn 4. This means if your child was born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 you should apply for a reception class place to start in September 2019.

### **When can I apply?**

You can apply any time between 1 November 2018 and 15 January 2019.

### **How do I apply for a place?**

You can apply online by going to [www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions) If you need assistance with the application process you can call us on 0113 2224414 or email us at [education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk)

### **When will I find out what school my child has been offered?**

16 April 2019 is National Offer day. If you apply online, you will be sent an email with your offer letter. If you did not apply using the online system, a letter will be sent out by second class post on 16<sup>th</sup> April so you may receive the letter a few days later.

### **What are admissions policies?**

Admissions policies set out how schools will offer places. It describes who will be offered a place first if there are more applications than places available. The oversubscription criteria set out in the admissions policy will be used to rank all applications and places will be offered from the top of the list of applicants until the year group is full.

It is important that you look at the admissions policy for each of the schools you are asking for, as different schools have different admission policies.

Admissions policies for all kinds of schools (Community, Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academy schools) are available from schools directly, found on the school website, or on the Leeds City Council website at [www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions)

### **What does "nearest priority school" or "nearest school" mean in an Admissions Policy?**

Some schools offer a priority for those families who have the school as their nearest primary school. This might not always be at your closest schools, as not all schools are included in the calculation. To work out if you'd receive a nearest priority at a school, you need to carefully check the admissions policy for the school. You can also ask us for a list of your closest schools, which will be calculated in straight line distance order. The closest school to you which includes in their Admission's policy an oversubscription priority for "nearest priority school" or "nearest school" will offer you a higher priority for admission.

It is important that you look at each school admission policy and all other available information before making a decision about your preferences to consider whether you have a realistic chance of being offered a place.

### **How can I find out which schools are closest to my home?**

You should have received a letter in November which gave details of your five closest schools by distance. You do not need this letter to apply for a place.

You can contact the Leeds City Council Admissions Team on 0113 2224414 or send an email to [education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk) to ask for this information if you did not receive a letter. Please remember to include your address when contacting us.

Our measurements are based on a straight-line distance from the school to your address. Please note: most online mapping tools only use postcodes and not the full address, which means the distances may be different as the Local Authority computer system, which measures distance between coordinates at the home address to coordinates at the school.

Previous allocation maps for primary schools are on the Leeds City Council website [www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/admissions). These show the distances from home to school for the people who were successful in gaining places last year to give an indication of your chances of being offered a place. You can also look on the “Find a School” page on the Leeds City Council website [www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk) for maps showing the nearest priority areas for Local Authority schools.

### **How are places offered?**

The local authority is required to co-ordinate all applications for reception and Junior places. This means the Local Authority receive all applications centrally. We then work with schools who rank all their applications in line with their policy, and then we send out all the offer letters, making sure each child only receives one offer.

We consider all preferences at the same time and aim to offer your highest preference possible, but whether we can offer you the place you want for your child will depend on your circumstances, the schools you have asked for and their Admission policies, the number of applications they have received and the circumstances of all other applicants to that school.

### **I have good reasons why my child should attend my first preference school – so you have to offer them a place there don't you?**

Many parents have good reasons why they would prefer their child to attend a particular school, but while parents have the legal right to express their preference, this is not the same as free choice about where their child is admitted. School admissions policies provide very clear criteria about who can be prioritised over others for a place and you should review the policies to see whether your child meets any of these priority criteria. If they do, please tell us on your application (and complete and return any applicable supplementary information forms) so that the admissions policy can be applied to your application for each school correctly.

### **Does it matter what order I list my preferences?**

Places are not offered on a ‘first preference first’ basis – it is against the School Admissions Code for this to happen. When schools are ranking their applications in line with their admissions policy, they don't know which preference number you gave to that school.

Your preference order is only used by the Local Authority when they are making the offers on behalf of the school, and it only influences which offer is made where you could be offered more than one of your preferences.

The Local Authority is obliged to offer you the highest preference school which your child qualifies for so please put the schools in order of where you would like your child to attend.

**If I only provide one preference, do you have to offer me that school?**

No. Providing just one or two preferences does not in any way increase your chances of being offered a place at these schools as your application for each school is ranked in line with the admissions policy.

If the Local Authority is unable to offer a preferred school, you will be offered a place at any school with a vacancy available after all other applications have been considered, so not using all five of the available preferences actually decreases the chances of you being offered a preferred place.

**I have changed my mind about my preferences – what can I do to change them?**

First, log back into the online application system and check the status of the preferences. If the status shows as “preferences submitted” you can unsubmit them, change them and then resubmit. You should get a new automatic email reply confirming the application has been received.

If the status shows as “preferences received” this means the application has been downloaded by the Admissions team and you cannot change them online. You will need to send an email with your child’s name, address DOB and your new preference order to [education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk)

**What should I do when I receive my offer of a place?**

You should accept the offer of the school place directly with the school. Accepting a lower preference offer will not affect your position on a waiting list or your right to appeal against the refusal at any other school.

**What happens if I don’t get offered a place at the school I want?**

If you don’t get offered a place at the school you would prefer, you can request to go on the waiting list. You can also appeal against the decision to refuse a place at a school, although appeals can only be granted in specific circumstances. More information will be provided with your offer letter.

**Will my child transfer automatically from nursery into reception?**

No. You still need to apply for a place at the primary school. If your child goes to a nursery class this does not guarantee them a place at the primary school it is attached to. There are often more children in the nursery class than there are places in reception class. There may also be other local children who want a place at the school but do not go to the nursery. You will not be given priority just because your child attends the school nursery.

**What is the ‘furthest allocation distance’?**

Under the Leeds City Council Policy (which applies to just under 50% of the Leeds Primary schools) places are first allocated to pupils with Education Health Care Plans that name a specific school then the Leeds City Council Admissions Policy (for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools) prioritises pupils who:

- 1) Are Children Looked After,
- 2) Are pupils with Special Educational Needs or Medical needs that can only be met at a specific school
- 3) have a sibling(s) attending the same school.
- 4) Have the school as their nearest school (nearest priority) and then the distance to schools that are not nearest to the home address.

Furthest allocation distances are the distance the last pupil allocated a place at a school under one of the distance priorities (Priority 4 – Nearest Priority, Priority 5 – non-nearest priority) lived from the school. Further details of allocation data can be found at: [www.datamillnorth.org/dataset/primary-school-allocations](http://www.datamillnorth.org/dataset/primary-school-allocations)

### **Can I delay my child's start date at school?**

There are two ways in which the date a child is due to start school can be delayed. The first is by *delaying* the entry within the academic year and the second is by *deferring* the entry to the following year.

Delaying entry: Children should be in full time education from the age of 5. Some parents may feel that they would like to delay their child's entry to school, taking up their place later in the school year, for example after Christmas or Easter. The latest possible delayed start date is after the Easter holidays.

If the child is summer born and will not reach their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday until the summer term, they can start school in the following September. This would mean, however, that they start school in year 1 rather than in reception. All of these delays must be agreed between the school, the parent and the Local Authority.

Deferring entry: A parent also has the right to request that their child starts reception in the following year (*deferment*). This is a deferment out of chronological year group and means that the child will be educated out of their chronological year group. This is not an automatic entitlement and all requests will be considered on their merits. A copy of the Deferment Application Form and Guidance Notes if you are applying for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are available at [www.leeds.gov.uk/Admissions](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Admissions)

If any of your preference schools are Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Academy or Free schools, you need to read the individual admissions policy for the school to see how to apply for a deferment as the process may differ. Please be aware, you may need to apply to each school individually for a deferment and each school can reach a different decision.

### **What happens if I move into the area or change address?**

If you move into the area or change address between the closing date in January 2019 and the start of the new school year in September 2019, you must let us know as this could affect your application.

We will try our best to offer your child a place at the school you prefer. If there are no places left at any of the schools you wanted, we will offer your child a place at the school closest to your home with available places. Remember that we will find your closest school by measuring in a straight line. If you move to a new address, we will ask you to provide documentary evidence of your new address (i.e. council tax notice or a tenancy agreement) and proof that you have left your previous address (i.e. an exit utility bill).

### **How can I find out more about a particular school?**

Each school has its own prospectus which sets out how it is organised, its curriculum, statement of ethos, values and aims. You can get a free copy from the school itself and it will help you to make the best decision for your child.

Foundation schools, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies must display a copy of their admissions policy on their website. You can also look at the Leeds City Council website [www.leeds.gov.uk/Admissions](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Admissions) and follow the direct links to each school page.

## **Useful numbers and contacts**

**Leeds City Council website:** <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Admissions>

**Admissions team:** Phone 0113 222 4414 email [education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk).

**Transport:** Application forms, guidance notes, Leeds Children's Transport policy and information about bus travel can be obtained at: [www.metro.com/schools](http://www.metro.com/schools). If you need information on your 'Nearest Qualifying School' or have other general school transport questions please contact the Leeds Education Transport Assessment Team on 0113 348 1122 or [educationcustomerservices@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:educationcustomerservices@westyorks-ca.gov.uk).

**Elective Home Education:** Phone 0113 378 5028.

**Attendance Team:** Phone 0113 378 2480.

**School meals, refreshments and milk:** All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive free school meals. To apply for free school meals for older year groups, please contact 0113 222 4404.

**School uniforms and other expenses:** Parents should contact the school their child will be attending for information about help with school uniforms.

**Special Educational Needs Information:** For children with an existing Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) parents should contact their SEN casework officer phone 0113 378 5256. For general information, support and advice about SEN and disabilities contact the Leeds Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Service phone 0113 378 5020.