



ADMISSIONS POLICY



THIS POLICY is a statement of the aims and procedures for admissions at Spittal Community First School. IT WAS DEVELOPED during the spring of 2013, through a process on consultation between teachers and Governors.

IT WAS APPROVED by the Governing Body in spring 2013, summer 2014 and September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020.

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED in the autumn of 2025.

Introduction

Our school is a community school and the Admissions Authority for our school is therefore the LA. The Council is responsible for allocating places at all Community schools and all requests for places are dealt with by officers of the Council. The LA publishes its entry regulations every year in a handbook available on the Northumberland County Council website.

Aims

The schools seek to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities. We encourage all parents and carers to visit the school and to discuss their children's needs before making an application for a place at the school through the Local Authority. The only restriction on admission is that of number. If the number of children applying exceeds the place available then the local authority applies the procedures below to determine whether a child will be accepted or not.

Safeguarding Statement

At Spittal Community First School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Spittal Community First School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

How parents and carers can apply for a child to be admitted to our school

The Local Authority Admissions Handbook informs carers and parents how to apply for a place in the school of their choice, Parents and carers have the right to express a preference for a particular school but this does not guarantee a place at that particular school.

Admission forms are available from the Northumberland County Council website. Completed forms should be submitted to the local authority.

All requests for school places are considered at the same time by the LA. Late applications are dealt with after all places have been allocated to pupils whose Admission Forms were submitted on time. Once a planned admission number for a school has been reached it is not possible to offer a place at that school. The local authority notifies parents and carers of the decisions when all applications have been considered.

Admission to our Reception Year

Spittal Community First School follows the admissions policy for Northumberland County Council

- Admission to our reception year will be once a year on a full time basis in September if your child is four by 31st August
- The County Council is obliged to admit all applicants to a particular school provided these do not exceed the school's Published Admission Number (PAN). Our school's PAN is 40, which means we will admit 40 children to our reception year. This will reduce to 30 from September 2025.
- In accordance with the School Admission Code, children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHC Plan will be given priority of admission. In addition, those who are deemed to be 'looked after' or who have previously been 'looked after' will be given priority of admission.

The priority order for considering the remaining applications is as follows:

1. Children living within the catchment area of the school and those on whose behalf firm evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area by the appropriate admission date.
2. Children with an exceptional social or medical reason that means that they can only attend that specific school (for example where the child or one or both parents has a disability that means that the child can only go to one school)
 - Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a professional body involved with the family or child
 - The professional must be independent of both the family and the school
 - The evidence must relate specifically to the school for which the application is being made and must demonstrate clearly why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs

No assumptions should be made that the submission of the relevant evidence will, in itself be sufficient to allocate a place.

Note: Supporting evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

3. Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership who have siblings already in the school and who are expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission who of the school partnership. Evidence must be presented to confirm that the child will be living within the greater catchment area by the appropriate admission date.

For the purpose of admissions siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.

4. Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership who are expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission. Evidence must be presented to confirm that the child will be living in the greater catchment area by the appropriate admission date.

5. Children who have a sibling who already attends the school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.

6. Children on whose behalf preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.

Where there are more applications than places available, children from multiple births will be given priority within each criterion. If a further tie break is necessary distance between home and the school will be used to prioritise applications (see below).

Should it prove necessary, because places are limited, to distinguish between pupils in any given category priority will be given to those who live nearest to the school, measured in a direct line ('as the crow flies') from the front door of the home to the main gate of the school. The distance checker is contained within the EMS school admissions software using GIS data. Distance checking is an integral function within the school admissions software ensuring consistency in measurement

Full admission arrangements can be found on the Northumberland County Council website.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Document-store/School%20admissions/FINAL-Admissions-Handbook-PRIMARY-School-2024-25.pdf>

Admission Appeals

Those parents whose application to a school has been unsuccessful will be notified of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, gives this right to all parents whose application for a school has been unsuccessful. The decision of an Appeal Panel is binding on both the Admission Authority and the school. The School Admissions Appeals Code can be found on the DfE website at: www.gov.uk/dfes

Admission to our Nursery Class

In our nursery we offer the following provision:

Universal entitlement- is for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. We offer 5 sessions, mornings or afternoons.

Extended entitlement- allows parents to access a further 15 hours per week, should they meet the eligibility criteria.

We offer 9.00a.m until 3.00p.m 5 days a week for 38 weeks of the year.

We have a limited number of spaces for this type of provision.

Admission Criteria

- Admissions to our nursery class will be three times a year on a part time basis
- Children are eligible to attend the term after their third birthday.

Three Year Olds Born Between	Month of Part-Time Admission	Term of Part-time Admission
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1 st April-31 st August	September	Autumn
1 st Sept-31 st Dec	January	Spring
1 st Jan-31 st March	After Easter	Summer

- Our school offers a Pre Start Programme which allows children to have a successful transition in to the nursery and helps children develop relationships with school staff and their peers. The programme consists of two sessions per week for 3 weeks.
- Our admission number is 26 for each morning or afternoon session
- Application forms are available in the school/nursery and once received are filed and recorded chronologically.
- Parents are informed, by letter if their child has a place in our nursery and are invited to attend our Pre Start Programme.
- A subsequent letter is sent out to parents confirming which session their child will attend, morning or afternoon along with a starting date.
- Parents receive a nursery information booklet, either during a visit or when the child begins nursery.
- Parents who are offered our extended entitlement will need to provide school with their 11 digit eligibility code and complete an additional application form

Allocation of Places - Universal

If there are not enough places for all applicants we will allocate places in the following order:

- Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHC Plan will be given priority of admission. In addition, those children who are deemed to be 'looked after' or who have previously been 'looked after' will be given priority of admission.
- Children who live in the schools catchment area who have brothers or sisters attending the school
- Other children who live in the school's catchment area
- Children who live outside the school's catchment area but have brothers or sisters at the school
- Other children by age order (admitting eldest first)

Allocation of Places – Extended Entitlement

If there are not enough places for all applicants we will allocate places in the following order:

- Children accessing the universal offer in the school
- Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHC Plan will be given priority of admission. In addition, those children who are deemed to be 'looked after' or who have previously been 'looked after' will be given priority of admission.
- Children who live in the schools catchment area who have brothers or sisters attending the school
- Other children who live in the school's catchment area
- Children who live outside the school's catchment area but have brothers or sisters at the school
- Other children by age order (admitting eldest first)

Address

For the purpose of deciding whether a child lives in the catchment area of a school we will use the parent or legal guardian's address who has parental responsibility for the child.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Governing Body who will always take due note of the LA regulations.

The policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances either in our school or in the local area.