

Admissions Consultation - Academic Year 2025/2026 Academies with the North East Learning Trust located in the administrative area of County Durham

Executive Summary

It is a mandatory requirement of the National School Admissions Code that all schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at an Academy.

The Trustees of the North East Learning Trust are required to determine their school admissions arrangements every year and consult on those arrangements once every seven years.

The purpose of this report is to enable the Trust to consult on the published admission numbers and over-subscription criteria for the academic year 2025/2026.

The consultation will take place for a period of seven weeks between Monday 16 October 2023 and Friday 1 December 2023.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

The PAN is the number of places we intend to make available for the normal admission round. Once the PAN has been set for an Academy, we will not refuse any applications submitted during the normal admission round for where the PAN has not been exceeded.

The PANs for Academies within the Trust that are located in the administrative area of County Durham are as follows:

Academy	Local Authority	Phase	PAN
Browney	Durham	Primary	25
Easington	Durham	Secondary	150
Hermitage	Durham	Secondary	200
Sacriston	Durham	Primary	30
Teesdale	Durham	Secondary	140
Shotton Hall	Durham	Secondary	230

Oversubscription criteria for Browney Academy and Sacriston Academy

1. Children who are 'looked after' or a child who was previously looked after including those children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

A looked after child is a child who is, at the time of making an application to a school, is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions. (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. Medical reasons

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement (for example the child or one or both parents/carers has a disability that means the child can only attend one school).

Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a professional body involved with the family or child. A letter from the child's GP, parents/carers GP or other relevant professional **MUST** be submitted with the application. The evidence must relate to the school for which the application is being made and must demonstrate clearly why the Academy 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 school place.

3. Sibling links

Children who have a sibling already attending the Academy and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission. This includes step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

4. Children of staff employed at the academy

Children of all staff employed at the Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and/or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post at the Academy where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Distance

Children who live nearest the preferred Academy measured by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the child's address. Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group i.e., twins, triplets, or other multiple birth sibling groups, would be split, the sibling group will be given priority over other children. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two or more applicants live equidistant from the Academy, random allocation (names out of a hat or other suitable container) will be used. This process will be supervised by a person independent of the Trust.

In assessing home to Academy distance, the measure will be by the shortest walking route. Routes are measured from the centre point of the applicant's house, or in the case of a flat from the centre point of the building to the nearest Academy entrance. A Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to identify and measure the shortest walking route. The GIS identifies routes on the Ordnance Survey Integrated Transport Network and Urban Paths Network, which are national recognised datasets. The routes include all man-made paths i.e., those that are metalled or surfaced.

Tie Breaker

Where an Academy is oversubscribed within categories 1,2 3 and 4 distance from home to school will be the deciding factor, with preference given to those whose home address is nearest to the school when measured as the crow flies from the front door of the child's home address to the main gate of the school using the local authority's computerised measuring system.

Oversubscription criteria for Easington Academy, Hermitage Academy, Teesdale School & Sixth Form and the Academy at Shotton Hall

1. Children who are 'looked after' or a child who was previously looked after including those children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

A looked after child is a child who is, at the time of making an application to a school, is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions. (See definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. Medical reasons

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement (for example the child or one or both parents/carers has a disability that means the child can only attend one school).

Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a professional body involved with the family or child. A letter from the child's GP, parents/carers GP or other relevant professional **MUST** be submitted with the application. The evidence must relate to the school for which the application is being made and must demonstrate clearly why the Academy 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 school place.

3. Sibling links

Children who have a sibling already attending the school and who is expected to be on roll at the time of admission. Children who have a sibling already attending the Academy and who is expected to be on roll at the school in years 7 – 11 at the time of admission. This includes step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

4. Children of staff employed at the Academy

Children of staff employed at the Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and/or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage, and/or the member of staff has relocated.

5. Distance

Those children who have applied for a place at the nearest school to their home address measured by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the child's address. Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group i.e., twins, triplets, or other multiple birth sibling groups, would be split, the sibling group will be given priority over other children. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two applicants live equidistant from the Academy, the LA's system of random allocation will apply. (names out of a hat or other suitable container) will be used. This process will be supervised by a person independent of the Trust.

In assessing home to Academy distance, the measure will be by the shortest walking route. Routes are measured from the centre point of the applicant's house, or in the case of a flat from the centre point of the building to the nearest Academy entrance. A Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to identify and measure the shortest walking route. The GIS identifies routes on the Ordnance Survey Integrated Transport Network and Urban Paths Network, which are national recognised datasets. The routes include all man-made paths i.e., those that are metalled or surfaced.

6. All other applicants

Tiebreaker

Where an Academy is oversubscribed within any of the categories above the following tiebreakers will be applied:

- a) For those children who have applied for a place at the school nearest to their home address (category 5), priority will be given to those living closest to the nearest school measured by the shortest walking route.
- b) For other children (category 6), priority will be given to those children who live nearest to the school applied for. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two or more applicants live equidistant from the Academy, random allocation (names out of a hat or other suitable container) will be used. This process will be supervised by a person independent of the Trust.

In the unlikely event of the Academy being oversubscribed within categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 tiebreaker (b) will apply.

Admission Arrangements 2025/2026

Overview of application procedures for admission during the normal admission round to all Academies within the North East Learning Trust located in the administrative area of County Durham.

To apply for a place during the normal admission round in any Academy within the Trust parents should complete the common application form supplied by the Local Authority in which they reside. Application forms are obtainable from the County Council's website to download, if parents do not have this facility, they can contact the LA School Admissions team to request an application form. Parents/carers can also apply through the on-line admissions application system accessed via the relevant County Council website. Applications should be submitted to the LA by the published closing date. Places at any school are offered on the basis of equal preference rank order and where an offer is made it is for the highest ranked school at which the LA can offer a place.

The common application form must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 by parents' resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child:

- A. To be admitted to a maintained school and Academy within the LA area (including VA schools)
- B. To be admitted to a maintained school and Academy located in another LA's area (including VA schools).

Parents should express as many preferences as the form allows in the rank order in which they wish their child to receive an offer of a place.

If parents are separated and the child lives with periods of time with each parent, the address used must be the property where the child is mainly resident during the school year (such as Monday to Fridays, term-time only). If the child lives with each parent and equal amount of time during the school year, parents must agree between each other, or if this is not possible provide a Court Order as to which address should be considered as the main address. You are not allowed to apply for a school place from two addresses. An offer of a school place will not be made until only one home address has been agreed.

The LA will accept applications which are received late only when there is evidence of a very exceptional circumstance which prevented submission by the stated deadline and only if the application is received before offers of places are made. These will then be treated in the same way as all other applications. In the event of a late application not being accepted or receipt is after the offer of places has been made, then places will be offered at the nearest school with places available.

All applications for school places during the normal admission round must be coordinated by the maintaining LA.

The LA will make the offer of a school place in our Academies to parents who have applied for a place in Reception and Year 7 for September 2025. Parents will receive no more than one offer of a school from the relevant LA. Where the relevant LA cannot offer a place at any of the preferred schools, the offer of a place will be made at the nearest school to the child's home address that has a place available.

Waiting lists/appeals

The Trust will maintain the waiting list. Positions on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Unsuccessful applicants may also contact School Admissions, North East Learning Trust by telephone 0191 5634190 Option 1 or email schooladmissions@nelt.co.uk to be advised of their right to an Independent Appeal Panel and/or request to be included on the waiting list. Further advice and guidance is available in the NELT Admission Appeal Guidance on the Trust website.

The waiting list will be maintained until 31 December 2025.

Withdrawing an offer of a place

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if:

- It was made in error.
- Parent fails to respond to the offer of a place within the agreed deadline.
- It is established that the offer of a place was obtained through fraudulent or misleading application.

In-year admission to Academies within the North East Learning Trust

The Trust are responsible for managing in-year admissions, further information can be found in the Trust's In-Year Admission Policy which is published on the Trust website.

Responses to the Consultation

The North East Learning Trust welcome comments on:

- The number of pupils to be admitted in the normal admission round;
- The criteria to be used in the event of over-subscription.
- Admission arrangements

You can respond to the consultation [here](#) or responses can be sent by email to schooladmissions@nelt.co.uk or by post to Admission Consultation, North East Learning Trust, Traynor House, Traynor Way, Whitehouse Business Park, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 2RU. The deadline for responses is 5pm on Friday 24 November 2023.