



Admissions Policy – Benfield School

School year:	2025-26	
Applicable to:	✘	All individual schools within NEAT Academy Trust
	✔	Specified schools only within NEAT Academy Trust: Benfield School
	✘	Central Team within NEAT Academy Trust
Approval body:	NEAT Academy Trust Board of Directors	

Statutory policy	Yes
Publish on website	Yes – trust and school

Review Date	
Frequency	Next Review Due
Annually	December 2024 (or earlier if new guidance or legislation issued and/or business need for earlier review identified)

Version Control:

Author	Date	Version	Status	Notes
Head of Governance (SH)	18/10/23	0.1	Draft	Reflects proposal to amend oversubscription criteria to include NEAT primary schools
Head of Governance (SH)	20/10/23	0.2	Draft	Amended proposal for wording of oversubscription criteria and tiebreaker following discussion with Newcastle City Council

1 Purpose

NEAT Academy Trust (NEAT) is the admissions authority for all schools within the trust. We welcome pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The purpose of this policy is to set the arrangements about how children will be admitted to Benfield School, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school.

The Trust's Board of Directors has made every effort to ensure these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation.

Any objections to the admissions arrangements should be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

2 Scope

This policy sets out the arrangements for normal round admissions to Year 7 and in-year admissions from Year 7 to Year 11 that come within the statutory guidance in the School Admissions Code 2021.

3 Roles and responsibilities

- **NEAT Academy Trust Board of Directors:** The Board is responsible for approving the admissions policies for the schools within the trust and undertaking any public consultation required including when changes are proposed. It is also responsible for establishing an independent appeals panel to hear any appeals. The Board delegates day-to-day decision-making about admissions to a committee with responsibility for admissions or the headteacher, as set out in the relevant Scheme of Delegation.
- **Newcastle City Council:** The local authority is required to have a scheme in place each year for co-ordinating admission arrangements for maintained schools and academies within their area.

4 Published Admission Number (PAN)

The number of places available in Year 7 in 2025-26 is 207.

5 How and when to apply for places

All applications for school places must be made through the local authority the applicant lives in (pays council tax to). Applications for Year 7 transfer places (the entry year for the school) for September 2025 must be submitted **by midnight on 31 October 2024**. Applications received after the closing date will be classed as **late** and processed **after** all of the applications received on time.

Applications for school places in other year groups or after the start of the school year, known as in-year admissions, can be submitted at any time. Applications for in-year admissions must be made via the School Admissions Team at Newcastle City Council.

6 How places will be allocated

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school will

be admitted.

If there are enough places at the school then all applicants will be offered a place.

If more applications are received than the number of places available, the following oversubscription criteria will be used in the order set out below to decide which children will be allocated places. Priority within each category will be based on the distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line.

1. Children who are currently looked after by a local authority in England, children who were previously looked after by a local authority in England or who appear to have been in state care outside of England, and immediately afterwards became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence of the appropriate order. For normal round admissions this must be submitted before the closing date for applications.
2. Children attending one of the following schools: Byker Primary School, Central Walker Church of England Primary School, Tyneview Primary School, Walkergate Community School, West Walker Primary School. Priority within this category will be given to children who have a sibling who will be on roll at the school on the date that the child will be admitted in September 2025.
3. Children not attending one of the schools set out in 2 above who have a sibling who will be on roll at the school on the date that the child will be admitted in September 2025.
4. Children with an exceptional medical reason that means they can only attend the specific school (for example, where the child or one or both parents has a disability that means that the child can only attend this school). Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a healthcare professional who is independent of both the family and the school. The evidence must relate specifically to this school and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.
5. Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line.

Tiebreak:

- In the event that more than one child has an equal right to an available place once the above has been applied, the place will be offered based on random allocation.

Additional notes:

- In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet etc, the school will admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this means exceeding the agreed admission number for Year 7 or the number of places in other year groups.
- Parents who share responsibility for the care of their child are expected to reach agreement to a school placement between them. If conflicting applications are received by the local authority or their admissions team is made aware of a dispute between parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will not be processed until written agreement is provided from both

- parents or a Court Order is obtained confirming which application has priority.
- When stating your choice of school, you must give the child's permanent address at the time of application. The address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of your child must not be quoted as the home address.
- If the child lives at more than one address Monday to Friday (for example, due to a separation), the child's address should be the address where the child lives most of the time. Only one address can be used. If the child lives at two addresses, the local authority will decide which address to use based on child benefit, child tax credit, Court Orders and/or GP registration.
- The school may ask to inspect evidence of the address listed on the application in the form of a recent bill e.g. the most recent council tax bill, a utility bill that is no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. The school may seek further evidence if there is any doubt that the parent and child are not living at the address given on the application form.
- Parents have two weeks to respond to an offer of a school place. If an acceptance is not received it may be assumed that a place is no longer required and the offer may be withdrawn.

7 **Waiting lists**

Waiting lists will be ranked using the oversubscription criteria above regardless of the date the application was received.

For applications for Year 7 places, waiting lists will be kept until 31 December 2025 and will then be cleared. Waiting lists will be ranked using the oversubscription criteria regardless of the date the application was received. From January 2026 and then on a termly basis, waiting lists will be cleared and parents will need to re-apply each term if they still want their child to be considered for a place at the school.

8 **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group if they feel their child is not ready to be admitted with their peers, for example because the child has suffered ill health or has previously been educated outside of their normal age group.

Requests must be submitted in writing to the local authority and include any supporting evidence from relevant professionals.

Requests must be submitted **before** the closing date for applications in the child's normal age group in good time for the local authority to notify the trust, which will consider the request and inform the parent of the outcome before the closing date for the normal age group. In other words, for children due to start Year 7 in September 2025 where the parent wishes the child to delay admission until 2026, requests must be submitted well before 31 October 2024.

Decisions will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;

where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

A parent's right to appeal set out below does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

. 9 Right of appeal

Parents who are refused a place for their child have a statutory right of appeal to an independent appeals panel.

Appeals relating to Year 7 transfer places should be submitted **by 2 April 2025** to ensure they will be heard before the end of July 2025.

Newcastle City Council's School Appeals Team can provide more information about the school places appeals process (phone 0191 277 7427 or email schoolappeals@newcastle.gov.uk). Information is also available at <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/schools-learning-and-childcare/about-our-schools/appeals-school-places>

The trust will establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.

Definitions

Distances are measured in a straight line from a single fixed central point at the school to a point in the centre of the home address of the child, using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and British National Grid Easting and Northing co-ordinates.

Parent is defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as including any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

Sibling can be a brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, as long as the children live at the same address.

A **Looked After Child** is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions, in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989, at the time the application for admission to school is made and whom the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the date of admission.

An **Adoption Order** is an order made under Section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976 or Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A **Child Arrangements Order** (previously known as a **Residence Order**) is an order made under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 14 of the Children Act 2014, outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live.

A **Special Guardianship Order** is an order made under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

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