

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL IN YEAR SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Moving to a new school is an important step for all children. It can affect children in many ways and decisions by parents to change school should therefore always be carefully considered.

There are instances where a change of school is essential ie for families who have moved into or relocated within Lancashire.

In situations where a school move is not absolutely essential all parents are strongly urged to carefully consider the implications for their child.

All applicants for in year admissions to Lancashire schools do however have the right to express up to three school preferences.

WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER?

Some of the things which you must think about if you are considering a change of school for your child for convenience rather than necessity are:-

Curriculum – this is especially important for secondary aged children, and particularly for those in Years 9, 10 or 11. A new school may not necessarily be able to exactly match a child's existing curriculum commitments.

Achievement – on average statistics show that school moves lower examination results.

Behaviour – it can be helpful for a child who is presenting challenging behaviour to move to a new school. However this is normally only where the behaviour is linked to the existing school. If strategies to assist a child have already been put in place these can be disrupted by a school move. This can lead to further difficulties.

It is usually better for the child if the family work with the existing school to help to address and resolve any difficulties.

Where a school move is a strategy to address challenging behaviour there is often a requirement for the child to be on the roll of both schools for an interim period. If the change of schools is not successful the child would be expected to remain on roll and attend the original school.

Peer Group / Friends – if there are difficulties consider if these would be

resolved by a school move? There could be similar issues, even in a new school. Again it is often better to work with the existing school to address matters. Moving a child away from an established peer group may adversely affect achievement.

Timing – a change of schools during the school year can disrupt a child's education if they are already in the middle of a specific piece of coursework.

Uniform – schools set their own uniform requirements and Lancashire does not generally provide financial assistance with uniform costs.

Transport – schools set their own start and finish times. You need to consider the implication of these on your child and in relation to your personal day to day schedule.

TRANSFER PROTOCOL

The majority of Lancashire schools operate a first day of term transfer protocol.

This does not apply if you are new to the area and the child does not already have a school place.

If however the child is changing schools during the year the start date will normally be at the beginning of the next school term. The child would have to continue to attend the existing school until that date. This can also apply where a parental appeal for a school transfer is allowed by an independent admission appeal panel.

OFFERS FOR SCHOOL PLACES

The LA will assist with in year school admissions (new to area and transfers) The LA is responsible for admission to all community and voluntary controlled schools. The Governing Bodies of voluntary aided (church) and foundation schools and academies are responsible for admissions to their schools.

Lancashire will provide you with information in order to assist you with your in year application.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORMS (SIFs)

Voluntary aided and foundation schools usually have a SIF which allows the school's Governing Body to assess applications against certain criteria within

their admission arrangements. It is not always necessary for parents to complete a SIF. If this is appropriate you will be given the option. It is not a legal requirement but the lack of a SIF may lower the priority of an application.

FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL (FAP)

FAP operates outside of the normal in year admission arrangement.

The Local Authority will carefully examine individual applications and in liaison with schools will determine if they fall within the agreed FAP for that locality.

FAP places can be offered at Lancashire secondary schools even where a school is full in the required year group (subject to quotas agreed with schools).

CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE (CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER - CLA)

Children who are in public care have top priority for admission to Lancashire schools. In some cases the preferred school (s) may already be full and places cannot normally be offered. The Local Authority will however look at each CLA application and determine if discretion is possible (in liaison with other admission authorities where necessary).

This process will also apply to children who were previously in care and who have been adopted.

STATEMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

In year applications for children with full statements for SEN are dealt with separately (outside of the normal in year arrangements). These will be referred to Area based SEN Teams who will liaise with the family and other professionals involved about a school place for your child. You should contact the relevant SEN Team if your child has a full statement for SEN:-

North (Lancaster, Wyre and The Fylde)
SEN Team - 01524 581200

South (Preston, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Chorley)
SEN Team - 01772 531836

East (Ribble Valley, Hyndburn, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale)
SEN Team - 01254 220562

APPEALS FOR SCHOOL PLACES

If none of your preferred schools can be offered an alternative offer will always be made (unless the child already has a place at a nearby school). The LA will also issue appeal information and an appeal form.

If you are unhappy with any school offer you can appeal for any other school (s) which at that time have no available places. Information and advice is available from Area Pupil Access Teams (see below). Parents are advised to visit an offered school prior to going to appeal.

CONTACT POINTS FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION INFORMATION

The contact points are the Area Pupil Access Teams based in Lancaster, Preston and Accrington (see contact details below), although parents can contact schools directly for in year admissions.

NORTH (Lancaster, Wyre and The Fylde)
pupilaccessteam.north@lancashire.gov.uk
Education Office
PO Box 606
White Cross
Lancaster
LA1 3SQ
Tel: 01524 581163

SOUTH (Preston, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Chorley)
pupilaccess.southadmissions@lancashire.gov.uk
Education Office
East Cliff
Preston
PR1 3JT
Tel: 01772 531813

EAST (Ribble Valley, Hyndburn, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale)
pupil.accesseast@lancashire.gov.uk
Education Office,
The Globe
Accrington
BB5 0RE
Tel: 01254 220718