Lancaster Academy

Admission Policy for 2026/2027

Introduction

1. This Admission Policy forms part of the admission arrangements for Lancaster Academy (**Academy**), which is part of Learning without Limits Academy Trust (**Trust**), a multi academy trust.

2. The Academy is a co-educational, non-selective, publicly funded secondary school that welcomes applications for the admission of children regardless of aptitude, ability, special educational or other needs, disabilities or other protected characteristics. The Academy does not have a Sixth Form.

3. The 'admission authority' for the Academy is the Trust (via its Board of Trustees), who delegate some of its admission functions to an Admission Committee under a Scheme of Delegation. The trust also outsources some admission administration tasks to its Local Authority, Leicester City Council. These functions are carried out in compliance with the School Admissions Code 2021 (**Admissions Code**) and the School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (**Appeals Code**), along with other relevant law relating to equality, human rights and special educational needs.

4. In education law and this policy, a 'parent' means a natural or adoptive parent of a child (irrespective of whether they have care of, contact with or parental responsibility for, the child), as well as other persons who are not the natural or adoptive parent of the child but who have care of and/or parental responsibility for them.

Children with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)

5. Children with an EHCP are not admitted under this policy, they are admitted under separate statutory processes set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25. Their EHCPs are maintained by their home Local Authority, who are responsible for making decisions as to which educational setting will be named therein as the one the child will attend.

6. Where the parents of a child with an EHCP want them to be educated at the Academy, they must discuss this with SEN team at their home Local Authority. The home Local Authority may then consult the Academy on its suitability and compatibility, before deciding whether or not to name it in the child's EHCP.

7. Where the Academy is named in an EHCP, it will admit the child. Where this happens in the 'normal admission round' (i.e. admission to Year 7 at the start of September), their place will be allocated before others within the PAN, reducing the number remaining. Where it happens at any other time, they will be admitted regardless of numbers.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

8. The PAN for Year 7 is **180**.

Oversubscription Criteria

9. Where there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered a place. Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be:

9.1. Looked after and previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is one who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Admission Committee to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence, such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England, evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application. When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head (**VSH**) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and the Academy is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for evidence to be provided with the application.

9.2. Children with an exceptional medical and/or social need to attend Lancaster Academy

The child must have an exceptional medical and/or social need that means that only Lancaster Academy is suitable for them to attend, and no other local school would be suitable.

A completed Exceptional Medical and/or Social Need Form (published on the Academy's website or available from the Academy's main office) must be submitted with the application for admission for inclusion in this category to be considered.

The criteria in this category is designed to set a high threshold to meet. For the avoidance of doubt, simply having a medical or behavioural condition, or special educational or other needs, will not be sufficient, as these needs are generally able to be met by any school. There must be compelling satisfactory evidence that only Lancaster Academy is suitable for the child to attend and no other local school is suitable, which is caused by the exceptional need.

A decision will be made as to whether the child meets the criteria for inclusion in this category. If this is not the case, the child will be placed into the next category that applies to them.

9.3. Children living in the catchment area of Lancaster Academy who have a sibling at that school at the time of application and admission

The applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) must be located within the catchment area for the Academy, as defined in the Catchment Area Map which is published alongside this policy.

The sibling must be on the roll at Lancaster Academy at the time of application, and will still be on the roll in at the time of the applicant child's admission. This means children with a sibling in Year 6 at the time of application will not meet this definition if they will have transferred to secondary school at the time of admission.

A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents), a foster brother or sister on a long term placement (a looked after child), a step brother or sister (where one child's parent is married or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent) and a child of the applicant's parent's partner.

In all cases, the sibling must live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a family member (e.g. cousin, niece/nephew, grandchild) or of a friend will not meet this definition of a 'sibling', even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

9.4. **Other children with a sibling at Lancaster Academy at the time of application and admission**

The sibling must be on the roll at Lancaster Academy at the time of application, and will still be on the roll at the time of the applicant child's admission. This means children with siblings in Year 6 at the time of application will not meet this definition if they will have transferred to secondary school at the time of admission.

A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents), a foster brother or sister on a long term placement (a looked after child), a step brother or sister (where one child's parent is married or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent) and a child of the applicant's parent's partner

In all cases, the sibling must live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a family member (e.g. cousin, niece/nephew, grandchild) or of a friend will not meet this definition of a 'sibling', even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

9.5. **Other children living in the catchment area of Lancaster Academy**

The applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) must be located within the catchment area for Lancaster Academy, as defined in the Catchment Area Map published alongside this policy.

9.6. **Children of staff employed at Lancaster Academy**

The staff member must have been:

a) employed at Lancaster Academy for more than 50% of their working week during term time, on a permanent contract or consecutive fixed term one year contracts, for two or more years at the time of application;

and/or;

b) recruited to fill a vacant post at Lancaster Academy, for more than 50% of their working week during term time, on a permanent contract or fixed term one year contract, for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

The staff member may be full or part time, teaching or non-teaching staff. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not possible for staff to have priority for the admission of their children at more than one school within the Trust.

A 'child of a staff member' means their natural child, adopted child, long term foster child, step-child (the child of their spouse or civil partner) or the child of their cohabiting partner. In all cases, the child must live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time at the home address recorded for the staff member in their HR file (which will also meet the definition in this policy for the child's home address). For the avoidance of doubt, a child of another family member (e.g. niece/nephew, grandchild) or of a friend will not be a 'child of a staff member', even if they live at the same address as the staff member.

The staff member must be the parent whose details are given in the application form, as obtaining details for more than one parent during the application process is prohibited.

A signed and dated letter on headed notepaper from the staff member's HR Manager confirming that they meet (a) and/or (b) above must be submitted with the application for inclusion in this category to be considered.

9.7. **All other children**

All applicant children not included in any of the categories above will be included in this category.

Tie Breaker

10. Where there are more applicants than places in any of the oversubscription categories above, the order in which places are allocated will be determined by reference to the distance between the child's home address (as defined in this policy) and the Academy, with those living closer having higher priority.

11. Distance will be measured by Leicester City Council using their geographical information system (GIS) software which is dedicated for this purpose. The software accurately measures from the geo-code reference point for the child's home address (as defined in this policy) to the geo-code reference point for the Academy. Measurements taken by any other software will not be considered.

12. Where the distance between two or more applicant children is equal, random lottery will be used to determine the order in which places are allocated, which will take place in front of a person who is independent of the Academy.

13. Where applications are received for the admission of twins, triplets or siblings of higher multiple births to the same year group at the same time, but not all of them are allocated a place because of the application of the tie breaker for the final place(s), all of them will be allocated a place even where this means going over PAN.

Child's Home Address

14. The child's home address is defined in this policy. It is the address meeting this definition that must be stated in the application, and which will be used when processing the application.

15. The child's home address will be the residential (not business) address at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night each week during term time. Where the child lives at more than one residential address, and the pattern of overnight stays is irregular, this will be assessed over the five most recent term time weeks.

16. Where there is any doubt, parents are expected to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the child's home address, and/or the home address of others (e.g. siblings) where appropriate. This may include family court orders setting out child arrangements and/or proof of ownership and renting. Where the family owns or rents another property, additional documentary evidence confirming that the address stated in the application is and will be the applicant's permanent home address is likely to be requested.

17. If the child moves address during the course of the application process, Leicester City Council (and, if different, the child's home Local Authority for applications in the normal admission round) must be notified as soon as possible, and provided with satisfactory documentary evidence that the new address meets the definition, and of the expected moving date.

18. Applications are welcomed for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces personnel and Crown Servants. Where the family is relocating from overseas, the address used will be the address at which the applicant will live when they return, as long as the parents provide some evidence of this address. Alternatively, a Unit or Quartering address may be used, at the parent's request.

Application Process in the 'Normal Admission Round'

19. All local authorities are required to coordinate admission in the **'normal admission round'** for all schools in their area.

20. The 'normal admission round' for applications for admission to Year 7 in August covers all applications made by the statutory deadline for applications (**31 October 2025**), as well as applications made after this date but in time for the child's home Local Authority to offer a place by 'national offer day' (**1 March 2026**).

21. Applications in the 'normal admission round' for must be made to the child's home Local Authority using their Common Application Form, which will be available on their website. For applicants resident in the Leicester City Council area, their secondary admissions webpage can be accessed by clicking here:

    Apply for a secondary school place | Leicester City Council

22. Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional documentation must accompany the application for inclusion in a particular category, as failing to do so is likely to prevent the right category being identified, which could result in lower priority and a place not being offered.

23. A **'late application'** is one received before the first day of term but not in time for the Local Authority to offer a place on 'national offer day'. As these applications cannot be processed until after the first round of place allocations has happened, this is likely to negatively impact on the chances of achieving a place at higher preference schools. Parents are therefore strongly encouraged to submit applications by the statutory application closing date.

Application Process for In-Year Admission

24. An 'in-year application' is one made for Year 7 on or after the first day of term in September, or for any other year group at any time.

25. The PAN set for Year 7 applies throughout the year of admission, but ceases to apply after that. This means that in-year applications made for Year 7 may be refused on the basis that there are no places available within the PAN.

26. In respect of all other year groups, a place must be offered unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources, at the Academy.

27. Where multiple in-year applications for the same year group are received and processed at the same time, and some but not all can be offered a place within the PAN/without causing prejudice, the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker will be applied to determine the allocation of the available places.

28. The Academy has opted into Leicester City Council's coordinated scheme for in-year admission. Applications for in-year admission must therefore be made to Leicester County Council (not the child's home Local Authority) by completing their In-Year Admission Application Form via their in-year admissions page on their website which is accessible here:

    Apply to move school | Leicester City Council

29. Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional documentation must accompany the application for inclusion in a particular category, as failing to do so is likely to prevent the right category being identified, which could result in lower priority and a place not being offered.

30. The outcome of in-year applications will be notified in writing to parents ideally within 10 school days, but in any event within a maximum of **15 school days** of receipt.

Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

31. Parents have a right to request permission for admission to a year group outside their normal age group, which may be above or below, however this is not an absolute right. The request must be considered by the Admission Committee which must decide whether to agree it in principle, or refuse it, taking into account the factors set out below.

32. These requests are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make these requests as early as possible, preferably well ahead of any deadlines for their normal age group, so that they make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A request must be made to the 'admission authority' for each school for which admission is sought outside normal age group, as the outcome may not be the same for all.

33. The Admission Committee make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, the Principals views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery 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. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any

matters or documents for consideration.

34. Parents must complete a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form (published on the Academy's website or available from the Academy's main office) and submitting it to the Admission Committee by email to admissions@lwlat.org.uk or by post/hand delivery to the Academy's main office, along with any supporting documentation.

35. The Admission Committee will notify parents of the outcome of their request in writing, and will explain its reasons in sufficient detail for them to understand why it came to that decision. Where the request is agreed in principle, the letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made.

36. Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, however they may complain to the Academy about the outcome if they wish.

Statutory Right of Appeal

37. Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel against the refusal of a place at the Academy. The refusal letter will set out full details of this right, including where the grounds of appeal must be sent and the deadline for doing so.

38. The Academy will publish an admission appeal timetable for appeals against refusals in the 'normal admission round' on or before 28 February after the admission arrangements are determined.

Waiting List

39. The Academy has a waiting list for each year group, throughout the whole of the school year. Names are not deleted at any point, unless parents contact the Academy to say that they no longer want their child's name to be included. Depending on the size of the waiting list, the Academy may write to parents at the end of each school year to ask them to confirm that they are still seeking a place.

40. Waiting lists are ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria above, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means a child's name can go up as well as down the waiting list, as more names are added. When a place becomes available, the tie breaker set out above will be used to determine which child in the highest category will be offered the place, if there is more than one in that category.

41. Children allocated a place under the Fair Access Protocol (which all schools are required to participate in) will take precedence over children on the waiting lists.

Review and Determination of Admission Arrangements

42. The admission arrangements for the Academy must be determined every year by the Board of Trustees. Where any changes are proposed from the criteria determined for the previous intake, these must be consulted on for a minimum of 6 calendar weeks between 1 October and 31 January, ahead of determination on or before 28 February.

43. The admission arrangements for the 2026 intake were determined on 7th February 2025