

Admissions Policy

2025/2026

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Washington Academy seeks to provide an appropriate education for all young people between the ages of eleven and sixteen years. Its admissions policy is framed to ensure that the education of the majority is not adversely affected by the minority. It is also in line with LA policy and procedures. Washington Academy's Published Admissions Number is 900.

To this end certain criteria regarding admissions have been put in place.

Criteria for Student Admission to Washington Academy

The Local Academy Board of Washington Academy, as the admissions authority, will admit students to the school in accordance with the following criteria in the following order of priority:

1. 'Looked-after' child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residency/child arrangement or special guardianship order – a child that is looked-after' by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989 and a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so, because of adoption (or become subject to a child arrangements order, residence order or special guardianship order).
2. 'Looked-after' child who appears to the Admission Authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as result of being adopted – 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
3. Attendance in Key Stage 2 (age 7-10+) at a designated cluster primary school
4. A sibling link - an older brother/sister or older child (including adoptive, foster or step-children) that shares the same parent/carer and lives at the same address, who will still be attending the preferred school at the time of admission.
5. Exceptional medical or psychological reasons (you must include a medical or psychological report, prepared by a professional, to confirm information that you include in this section. This report should explain why only this school can meet your child's medical or psychological needs. Common childhood medical conditions such as asthma or giving a child's or giving a child's nervousness at starting new school as a psychological reason for choosing a particular school are unlikely to be accepted as exceptional). If you intend to use this criterion when expressing a preference, please contact the School Admissions Team before completing the application form. (Eligibility under this category will be considered by a meeting of Senior LA Officers).
6. Pupils for whom preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.

The Local Academy Board reserve the right to use an effective tie-breaker when dealing with over subscription. Children will be allocated a place based upon the shortest safest walking route from the centre of the parental home residence to the main entrance of the school, with priority being given to those children living closest to the school. Distance will be measured using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System (GIS).

At the first stage of allocations there will be no distinction between 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. preference applications. Therefore, all applications will be considered equally against the admission criteria. If a pupil then qualifies for a place at more than one school, the parent's highest ranked preference will be offered and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded.

In determining allocations, priority will be given to those applications where the parental preference is received by the published deadline date.

Where it is not possible to offer a place at a school, the child will be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list is sorted using the admission criteria and will be held until the end of the Autumn term, after the children start Y7 in September. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process will be included with the notification letter but are also available from the School Admissions Team.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health & Care Plan need naming a school, a place will be offered at that school (subject to confirmation by the SEND Unit).

Admissions will be deferred if:

- a) The child is in receipt of a statement of Special Educational Needs which recommends placement in a special educational setting outside of mainstream education.
- b) The child has a medical condition which prevents him/her from safely attending Washington Academy.
- c) The student has been permanently excluded from another school.

- d) The student has been temporarily excluded from another school, the background to that exclusion being unresolved.
- e) An off-site direction is requested as an alternative to a direct transfer.
- f) The admission transfer paperwork is inaccurate or is incomplete and requires further information/investigation. All students need to have a minimum of 2 emergency contacts listed.

Procedures

1. Parents or carers seeking admission on normal transfer from the primary sector do so by means of the Local Authority's arrangements for transfer.
2. All other cases of admission are dealt with by the Principal. An interview with the Deputy Principal will be organised before a student is admitted. A tour of the Academy by prospective parents/carers and students is available if requested.
3. On initial application by parents/carers to the Academy, an appointment will be made for the parents/carers to meet the Deputy Principal. This appointment will be arranged as soon as possible following the initial enquiry, thereby giving the Deputy Principal time to complete preliminary enquiries, by telephone, with the student's previous school and/or other agencies involved.
4. The Deputy Principal will arrange for contact to be made by telephone, with the child's previous school to receive background information and confirm the reason for application/transfer.
5. On completion of enquiries, when every effort will be made to comply with the previous school's wishes, the Deputy Principal will advise the parents that their child can or cannot be admitted.
6. The Deputy Principal will advise parents/carers that they must inform the School Admissions Team for Sunderland City Council of the school transfer, clearly stating their reasons.
7. The Deputy Principal will ensure that Heads of Year, Heads of Department and the Data Manager are given at least two days' notice of a new starter.
8. The Deputy Principal will pass on all relevant details to the new students Head of Year who, along with the Data Manager, will ensure the smooth admission and placement of the student.
9. The Deputy Principal will apply to the previous school for past records (including SEND) and any completed coursework, where appropriate. Information will be shared with the Head of Year, Heads of Department, SENDCO, and Designated Safeguarding Lead where applicable.