



Accrington Academy

Admissions Policy 2025/26

Date of last review:	October 2024	Review period:	1 year (minimum)
Date of next school level review:	October 2025	Owner:	VP Student Culture (Behaviour) JFA
Type of policy:	Statutory	Local Governing Body	Approves school policy adheres to UL Policy

Preamble

1. This document sets out the proposed arrangements for Accrington Academy, throughout this document referred to as “the Academy”. These arrangements are without prejudice to the provisions of Annex B to the Master Agreement. The document forms an annex to the Supplemental Agreement between United Learning Trust (‘ULT’) and the Secretary of State. References in this document to “parents” include guardians and carers.
2. The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes on admissions (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to ULT. References to “the LA” shall be deemed to be references to Lancashire County Council and references to “the Admissions Forum” to be to the Lancashire admissions Forum. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by the LA and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the LA.
3. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named pupil to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

Admission Arrangements to be Approved by Secretary of State

4. The admission arrangements for the Academy, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, are:
 - a) The Academy has an agreed admission number of 200 students. The Academy will accordingly admit at least 200 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.
 - b) The Academy may set a higher admission number as its published admission number for any specific year. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academy will consult those listed in paragraph 19 below. Students will not be admitted above the published admission number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

Process of Application

5. Accrington Academy is run by the Academy sponsor United Learning. The Governors are responsible for the admission of pupils. For entry into year 7 the admissions application and offer process will be co-ordinated by Lancashire County Council. All pupils are admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the LA’s co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form provided and administered by the LA. The Academy will be using the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Admissions Forum or LA:

- a) September – The Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2024 for admission in September 2025). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. The Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- b) September/October – The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;
- c) October – Common Application Form to be completed and returned to the LA to administer;
- d) November – LA sends application details to the Academy;

e) The Academy returns ranked list, based on admissions criteria, of all applications to LA within the agreed timescale.

f) February – LA applies agreed scheme for local schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents;

g) 1st March offers made to parents.

Consideration of Applications

6. The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 200 applications are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

7. Notwithstanding paragraph 6 above, the Academy may refuse admission to particular applicants, in cases where fewer than the published admission number have applied. These are applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools and the ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose. This applies to admissions at all age levels.

8. Places in years 7-11 will be allocated at Accrington Academy in the following order of category (*this order also applies if/when a year group is oversubscribed*):-

- Category 1 – Children who are “looked after” by a Local Authority or a child who was previously looked after but immediately following being looked after subject to an adoption or residency order but ceased to be so because they were adopted, including children who are legally adopted from overseas (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order). (See note 10)
- Category 2 – Children who have specific medical needs, social needs and special needs where the application is supported by written specific medical evidence as to why admission to the Academy is necessary (See note 11)
- Category 3 – Children who have an older brother or sister at Accrington Academy at point of admission into the Academy - the priority only applies to students who are in main school, in Years 7-11 at point of admission. This does not apply if the older sibling is in the Sixth form in the September of the start date (See note 12)
- Category 4 – Children who have received an education within Peel Park Primary School and Mount Pleasant Primary school which are both within the linked learning family federation of schools for Accrington Academy (See note 14)
- Category 5 – Children with a parent employed by Accrington Academy on a permanent, teaching or support staff contract, either on a full or part-time basis for at least two year prior to 1st September in the year of application (See note 15)
- Category 6 – Distance from the applicant’s home address to the Academy. The distance measurement will be calculated using a Geographical Information System in a straight line from the centre of the Academy to the centre of the applicant’s home in accordance with the definition below. The applicants will be ranked nearest to furthest (See note 16)

9. The Academy will apply the above criteria to applicant’s subject to the following exceptions:

(i) Where a child has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and for whom there is a legal requirement to admit to the Academy as it is named in the EHCP.

(ii) Where an applicant is seeking admission for the September entry of the Academy entry year, applications received before the closing date will initially be given priority over those received after the closing date. Under exceptional circumstances a late application may be considered as received on time. Exceptional circumstances could be illness involving hospitalisation or a bereavement or as prescribed within the co-ordinated admission arrangements.

Admission Criteria - Notes

10. 'A "Looked After Child" means any child who is in the care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "previously a Looked After Child" means a child who, after being Looked After, became subject to an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976 or under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Child Arrangement Order under Page 3 of 7 Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 (as amended) or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.'

11. In the case of over subscription in categories 1 - 3, priority will be given within category to children: (i) where a placement is recommended for medical reasons and seen as essential by the child's General Practitioner (family doctor) or where there are exceptional reasons supported by evidence from a Social Worker, Educational Psychologist or Education Welfare Officer employed by the Academy or working in collaboration with the Academy which in the view of the Multi Academy Trust and governors (United Learning) require placement at Accrington.

(ii) The distance criterion will be used as the tie breaker if there is oversubscription within any of the admission criteria; it is a straight line (radial) measure. Details of this process are outlined below in note 11.

12. Sisters or brothers are defined as half or full sister/brother, adoptive sister/brother and the children of parents who are cohabiting, where the parents and children live together in the same household.

13. When considering twins, triplets or other multiple births places, where the final place available was offered to a twin, triplet or multiple birth, a place will be offered above the published admission number to the other twin, triplet or multiple birth children whose twin, triplet or multiple birth was offered a place within the admission number.

14. Children who have received education with either Peel Park Primary School or Mount Pleasant Primary School which are linked within the learning family federation of schools for Accrington Academy. The applicant would need to have been at Peel Park Primary or Mount Pleasant for the start of Year 6 in the year they made their application.

15. Children with a parent employed by Accrington Academy on a permanent, teaching or support staff contract, either on a full or part-time basis for at least two year prior to 1st September in the year of application or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

16. The distance measure is a straight-line measurement (radial) between the applicant's home address points and the address point of the school (co-ordinates provided by ordnance survey data). A child's permanent address is where he or she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from.

17. A child's main residence will be the dwelling of the parent or carer in receipt of Child Benefit and proof of who is in receipt of Child Benefit may be required prior to offer of an Academy place. If Child Benefit payments are not made or suspended then the decision on which address to use for the child, for the purposes of admission to Academy only, will be made by the Governors based on the address of the child's General Practitioner (family doctor). The Academy will consider pertinent evidence from both parents to determine the property in which the child mainly resides.

Waiting Lists

18. Where there are more applications than the number of places available, a waiting list will operate until 31st December. The list will be kept in strict order according to the oversubscription admissions criteria. The waiting list does not give priority either to those that have been on the list longest or to those that applied after the

closing date. The waiting list will be open to any parent/carer to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting lists, following an unsuccessful application to the Academy and to parents/carers who have not previously applied for a place during the academic year but have been refused.

Co-ordination between Admission Authorities

19. In accordance with the law and the agreed schemes the offer of places at the main points of entry at the primary and secondary level will be co-ordinated by the Local Authority between all those who decide upon admissions to schools (admission authorities) in Lancashire.

Fair Access

20. Schools in the Hyndburn district together with Lancashire County Council operate an In-year Fair Access Protocol in accordance with the Code on Academy Admissions. This is reviewed by The Admissions Forum on a regular basis. All United Learning academies comply with local Fair Access Protocol arrangements.

21. Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy must consider all such applications and, if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child.

22. However, within the exceptional circumstances set out in paragraph 3.13 of the School Admissions Code, the Academy may refuse to admit a challenging child where there are places available on the grounds that admission would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

23. The possibility of refusing to admit on this basis only applies to applications made outside the arrangements of the local in-year Fair Access Protocol. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

24. A key point to note here is that United Learning are the Admissions Authority, not the local authority. As such, the only person who can direct any of our academies to take a student through FAP is the Secretary of State. Schools can refuse admission on the basis of the above if they have taken their fair share of children under FAP, if they believe there are behavioural issues for in-year admission requests which should be dealt with under FAP, or if they are full and believe admitting more students would prejudice the efficient education of others.

25. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal. A single application form in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme will be used for all applications for in-year admission.

Final Tie-Break Allocation Process

26. If there are insufficient places to accommodate all applicants and after using all tie break criteria applicants for the final place(s) cannot be split the remaining place(s) will be allocated using a random allocation process. The process will be electronically administered through the Multi Academy Chain (United Learning) IT system in use at this time and ratified by the governing body.

Academy Admission Appeals

27. Parents/carers have a right of appeal to an Independent Admission Appeals Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy. The arrangement for the appeal will be in line with the School Admission Appeal Code as published by the Department for Education. The determination of the appeal panel will be binding on all parties.

28. Accrington Academy will not consider repeat appeals by the same applicant for the same academic year unless the applicant is able to prove that there have been material changes in their circumstances since the

previous admission appeal. The final decision as to whether the material changes warrant a fresh appeal will be determined by the Governors of the Academy.

Withdrawal of an offer of a place

29. Accrington Academy may withdraw an offer of an Academy place where:

- a) A parent fails to respond to an offer within a reasonable timescale
- b) The place was offered based on a fraudulent or misleading application
- c) A place was offered by the Local Authority, not the Admission Authority, in error.

Publication of Admission Arrangements

30. The Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined by:

- a) Copies being sent to primary and secondary schools in the LA;
- b) Copies being sent to the offices of the LA;
- c) Copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy;
- d) Copies being sent to public libraries in the area of the LA for the purpose of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons.

31. The Published arrangements will set out:

- a) The name and address of the Academy and contact details;
- b) A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
- c) A statement of any religious affiliation;
- d) Numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and e) Arrangements for hearing appeals.

Representations about Admission Arrangements

32. Where any of those bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to the Academy about its admission arrangements, the Academy will consider such representations before determining the admission arrangements. Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies that it has consulted and any of those bodies object to the Academy's admission arrangements, they can make representations to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consider the representation and in so doing will consult the Academy.

Where he judges it appropriate, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to amend its admission arrangements:-

- a) Those consulted have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed published admissions number for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed published admissions number. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and will then determine the published admission number.
- b) In addition to the provisions at paragraphs 29 and 30 above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the Academy's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed published admissions number.

Proposed Changes to Admission Arrangements by the Academy after Arrangements Have Been Published

33. Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted under paragraph 19 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:

- a) The proposed changes;
- b) Reasons for wishing to make such changes;
- c) Any comments or objections from those entitled to object.

Need to Secure Secretary of State's Approval for Changes to Admission Arrangements

34. The Secretary of State will consider applications from the Academy to change its admission arrangements only when the Academy has notified and consulted on the proposed changes as outlined at paragraph 19 above.

35. Where the Academy has consulted on proposed changes the Academy must secure the agreement of the Secretary of State before any such changes can be implemented. The Academy must seek the Secretary of State's approval in writing, setting out the reasons for the proposed changes and passing to him any comments or objections from other admission authorities/other persons.

36. The Secretary of State can approve, modify or reject proposals from the Academy to change its admission arrangements.

37. Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

Monitoring and Review

38. This policy has been made in accordance with the most recent legislation (The Equality Act 2010). This policy will be administered fairly and impartially. The decision to admit, or otherwise, is the sole responsibility of The Governing Body.