

# FAQs

## Frequently asked questions about school admissions in North Tyneside.

### **Q. Why should I apply for my child's school place?**

- A.** You must apply for a school place for your child. If you don't, we will offer your child a place and it may not be at a school you want. If your child attends Nursery in a school, you still must apply for a Reception class place. You won't automatically be offered a place in the school.

### **Q. When and how can I apply?**

- A.** From **10 September 2020** onwards you can apply for your child's school place online [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk) via the Citizens Portal. Please follow the instructions to log in if you have previously used the Portal, or register to create an account. If you cannot remember your password please email us at [school.admissions@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@northtyneside.gov.uk) and we can reset your password for you. If you have not used the Portal for some time you may need to re-register. If you do not have access to a computer, you can complete a paper application form. Forms are available from any First or Primary School in North Tyneside or from North Tyneside Customer First Centres. If you post the application form to us, you **MUST** get proof of postage. If we do not receive your application, you will need this to prove that you applied on time.

### **Q. How important is it for me to apply before the closing date?**

- A.** Very important. If you don't apply before the closing date, there is a risk that all available places in your preferred school will be taken and your child will be offered a place at another school. If you do apply after the closing date you must tell us why your application is late. We will consider your reasons and if they are exceptional we may consider your application along with those received on time.

### **Q. Do I have a right to a place at the school of my choice for my child?**

- A.** No. Parents do not have an absolute right to choose the school their child will attend. Parents have a right to state a preference for a school and the Local Authority and other admission authorities have a duty to take the preference into consideration, but this does not guarantee you will get a place at the school or schools you have chosen.

### **Q. How can I assess the likelihood of securing a place for my child?**

- A.** From the school's admission policy - available in the Essential Guide to North Tyneside Schools booklet at [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk), you will be able to work out how high up the list of admission criteria your child will be. You can find information about the number of children the school can admit in September, as well as the number of children admitted within each admission category last year. However, you must treat the information about previous years with some caution because circumstances can change from year to year. For example, if a new housing development opens in the catchment area of a small First or Primary School, it may affect the number of catchment and out of catchment applicants the school can admit.

### **Q. Will my child be guaranteed a place in the catchment area school?**

- A.** The Local Authority or Admission Authority cannot guarantee places in any school. If you apply to your catchment school the chances are usually high that you will be offered a place, but this cannot be guaranteed. Changes in the pattern of parents' preferences and changes in local population may mean that some schools will be oversubscribed from within their catchment area.

### **Q. Can I apply for a school place that is not year of entry?**

- A.** North Tyneside operates a 2 tier school system, and a 3 tier school system in the Whitley Bay.

#### **North Tyneside Transfer Groups:**

- Reception
- Year 4 to Year 5 (First to Middle)
- Year 6 to Year 7 (Primary to Secondary)
- Year 8 to Year 9 (Middle to Monkseaton High School or Whitley Bay High School)

You cannot apply for schools who aren't in the relevant transfer group. For instance, if your child is due to go into Y7 from a Primary school, you cannot apply for a Y7 place in a Middle school. If you do apply, your application will not be accepted. There is a separate process for applying for a school where the year group requested is not the year of entry at the school.

### **Q. How do I find out the catchment area school for my address?**

- A.** By logging onto [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk) and using the catchment area map or by contacting [school.admissions@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@northtyneside.gov.uk). Please note that your child's permanent address determines your catchment school and it is this address which must be used on the application form.

### **Q. Will my child be guaranteed a place in a school that their older sibling already attends?**

- A.** The Local Authority or Admission Authority cannot guarantee places in any school, especially if you want your children to attend a school that is not your catchment school. A sibling link is an older brother or sister residing at the same address (including adoptive siblings, half siblings, step siblings, and long term fostered children). For an older sibling to be taken into consideration, they must still be attending the school in September 2021. This does not include siblings who will be in 6th Form. Cousins are not considered as a sibling link.

**Q. My child lives at different addresses during the week. Which address do I use when applying?**

**A.** When considering your application the admission authority will use the parental home residence of the Parent/Carer who receives child benefit or child tax credit. If the address on your application form is **not** your child's usual address, you must provide a child arrangement order issued by a court if you wish that address to be considered. Admission Authorities will not accept any other arrangements (where parents delegate parental responsibility to a grandparent or other family member) unless you have court documentation that supports the living arrangements.

**Q. What if I move house after the deadline?**

**A.** If you move into a particular schools catchment area and do not notify us by **11th January 2021** for **Middle and High School** applications and **26th February 2021** for **First and Primary** applications, your new address will not be considered before the 'offer day'. If you move or send evidence after 11th January 2021 (Middle and High Schools) and 26th February 2021 (First and Primary Schools) it will not be possible to process your child's application using your new address because the allocation process will have already started. However, please let us know because we can send your allocation letter with the offer of a school place to your new address.

**Q. What if I move into rented property?**

**A.** You **must** have a rental agreement of **12 months or more** or ends in the Autumn Term in 2021 (**31 December 2021**). We will require proof of your new address i.e. rental agreement and copy of council tax statement. Please note we will not accept tenancy agreements for a sixth month period.

**Q. Can the offer of a place be withdrawn?**

**A.** The Admission Authority reserves the right to withdraw places in certain circumstances i.e. where a parent uses fraudulent or intentionally misleading information such as a false address.

**Q. Will medical, social reasons or childcare arrangements be considered?**

**A.** Where a school is oversubscribed places are allocated according to the published oversubscription criteria which may not take into account individual reasons. Childcare arrangements will not be considered.

**Q. I live outside of North Tyneside and want to apply for a North Tyneside School which form do I use?**

**A.** You must apply to your **home** Local Authority. This is the Authority where you pay your council tax. For instance, if you live in Newcastle and want to apply for a North Tyneside school you must apply through Newcastle School Admissions. Your home Local Authority will pass your information to us securely using a government approved secure computer system. We will treat your request in the same way as applications from North Tyneside residents. However, we will not offer you another North Tyneside school if we cannot offer you a place in one of your preferred school(s).

**Q. What happens if I do not apply?**

**A.** On '**Offer Day**' your child will be allocated a place at your catchment area school if a vacancy exists, or at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

**Q. What happens if I want to change my school preferences after the deadline?**

**A.** You **cannot** change your preference(s) without a genuine reason i.e. you have moved address. You should send us a copy of your council tax statement to confirm you are residing at your new address.

**Q. What happens if I want to change my preferences after 'Offer Day'?**

**A.** Parents can have a maximum of 3 preferences including schools in and outside of North Tyneside. If you are not happy with the school you have been offered and want to apply for a school that was not on your original application you must complete a new application on a paper application form. **Amended preferences will overwrite your initial application.** Therefore, if you wish to retain any of your original preferences they must be included in your new application.

**Q. How is the distance measured?**

**A.** In a straight line from a single fixed central point of the home address (including flats) to the central point of the school using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and the Council's Geographical Information System (GIS/ONE).

**Q. My child attends the nursery at the school. Will I automatically be offered a place?**

**A.** No. Attendance at a nursery class does not guarantee a place at the Reception class of a school. You must make an application for a place in Reception class even if your child is currently attending the school's nursery class. Where the school receives more applications than places available the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

**Q. I only want to apply for one school**

**A.** We strongly advise that you name more than one school in case your choice of school is oversubscribed. If you do not name more than one school we will not know which other schools you may have been interested in. You will be allocated a place at the nearest school with a place available and this may not be a school you want your child to attend.

**Q. How do the waiting lists work?**

**A.** If you have been refused any of your preferred school(s) you will have the opportunity to place your child's name on the waiting list. You may place your child's name on a waiting list for more than one school but no more than 3 schools. However, you can only place your child's name on a waiting list for 3 schools that you have applied for and been formally refused a place at. Children are placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria regardless of when their application was received and within each criterion their place is ordered by shortest distance. If pupil numbers fall below the published admission number the place will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list. **This means a child who is on the waiting list may move down the list if another 'Late' application is received that falls within a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria.** Waiting lists for all schools will be held by School Admissions for one term in the academic year i.e. until **31 December 2021**.