# Blue Coat C.E. (Aided) Junior School

# Admissions Policy

**Adopted: September 2026**

**To Review: September 2027**

# BLUE COAT C.E (AIDED) JUNIOR SCHOOL

# ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026

The Governing Body of Blue Coat C. of E. Aided Junior is the Admissions Authority for the school.

Durham Blue Coat Junior School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from all members of the community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we ask all parents applying for a place at our school to respect the Christian ethos of our school. The school welcomes pupils from all backgrounds regardless of gender, disability, race, religion or language.

We intend to admit up to 60 pupils to the Year 3 classes in September. Governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that on class sizes and equal opportunities. This arrangement follows consultation between the governing body, the Local Authority, all other schools in the area and all other Admission Authorities in the area.

At Blue Coat School we are pleased to accept children between the ages of seven and eleven years whose parents apply for admission. Most children are admitted to the school on direct transfer from Newton Hall Infants' School. Parents *(see Note 1),* who would like their children to attend Durham Blue Coat CE Aided Junior School must complete an admissions application form. Applications must be made on the Local Authority Common Application Form which must be returned to the Local Authority, which is Durham County Council. Applications received after the closing date will only be considered **after** all those received by the closing date. Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA.

*Note 1: "Parent" is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:*

- *any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or*
- *any person who has care of the child or young person.*

*If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.*

Children who have an Education Health Care Plan, which names Durham Blue Coat CE (Aided) Junior School, will be allocated a place as a statutory entitlement and therefore overriding the subscription criteria. The Local Authority will decide if the school is appropriate for a child with an EHCP following consultation with the child's parents and the school. The school will comply with a parental preference unless the school is unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs, or the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated, or with the efficient use of resources.

Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) whose parents have a confirmed posting to the area or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area. This is provided that the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares the relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address.
Parents may submit a request in writing for their child to be admitted outside of his or her normal age range together with supporting reasons for doing so. This should be discussed with the Head Teacher as soon as possible

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

**Oversubscription Criteria**

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, then the following criteria will be considered in the allocation of places:

1. ***Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after****, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. (see Note 2)* ***including children previously in state care outside of England*** *who have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted (See Note 3)*

*Note 2: By a "looked-after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).*

*Note 3: Children previously in state care outside of England means children who have been looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious organisation or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The care may have been provided in orphanages or other settings. In the case of children adopted from state care overseas, the admissions authority will require evidence that a child is eligible by asking the child's parents or carers for appropriate evidence of their previously looked-after status.*

2. **Children who have a sibling attending Blue Coat School at the time of their admission**. *Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.*

3. **Medical criteria.** Pupils with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. Applications must be supported by written evidence from a doctor or other professional practitioner, setting out the particular reasons why our school is the most suitable school, and will be considered on a case by case basis.

4. **Any other children**

**Distance Criteria**

Where there are places for some children, but not all, in a category then a distance criterion will be applied as follows:-

In assessing home to school distance the school employs the LA to measure distances by the shortest walking route. Routes are measured from the centre point of the pupil's house, or in the case of a flat from the centre point of the building, to the nearest school entrance. A Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to identify and measure the shortest walking route. The GIS identifies routes on the Ordnance Survey Integrated Transport Network and Urban Paths Network, which are national recognised datasets. The routes include all man-made paths, i.e. those that are metalled or surfaced. Those children living closest to the school will receive priority.

When measuring distances, the measurement is accurate to 3 decimal places and this will be used if there are multiple children appearing to live equidistant from the school.

Pupils who live nearest the school will be based on the parents' address. The parental address is classed as any person who has the legal parental responsibility of the child. The address of child minders or other family members, who share in the care of the child, **should not be used**. If parents have more than one property, the only property which can be used for admissions purpose is the property where the child actually lives and spends most time during the school year. If parents are separated and the child lives for periods of time with each parent, the parental address used will be the property where the child is mainly resident during the school year.

We are unable to consider temporary addresses as being the parental address. This means that if, for example you live temporarily with other family members or move to temporary accommodation for any reason, the parental address remains the address at which you were living before the temporary move took place.

If the permanent address changes you must notify the Admissions, Appeals and Transport Entitlement team at County Hall immediately, as this may affect the offer of a place made to your child.

The school reserves the right to seek proof of address and withdraw any offer of a place made on the basis of any fraudulent or intentionally misleading information that you provide.

Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group i.e. twins, triplets or other multiple birth sibling groups, would be split, the sibling group will be given priority over children adjacent to the group when ordered by distance.

**Tie Breaker**

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight-line distance *(see Note 4)* between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 1 to 4 should the need arise. In the event that two distance measurements are identical, the school will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place in order to ensure that individual children are not discriminated against. The process will be conducted in the presence of a person independent of the school.

*Note 4: The straight-line distance used to determine proximity of the home to the school will be measured by the geographical measuring system as described in the LA admissions booklet.*

**Waiting List**

The school will maintain a waiting list for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription, and does not depend on the date on which an

application is received. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list. Waiting lists will be maintained until 31st December of the admission year.

**Appeals**

If you are not successful in obtaining a place for your child at our school, you have a statutory right of appeal. Appeals against a decision may be made to the Legal Department of County Hall who act on behalf of the Diocese and should be addressed to the Chair of Governors of the school. Appeal information will then be forwarded to the legal department of County Hall.

It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September – 31 August), unless there has been a material change in circumstances.

**Visiting the School**

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are most welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the school office.