

SPARK EDUCATION TRUST SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

ADOPTED IN LINE WITH REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR ENTRY IN SEPTEMBER 2027

Introduction

Spark Education Trust is the admission authority and has formally adopted Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's admissions arrangements for the 2027 intake for schools in the Borough. This policy applies to **secondary school admissions** for schools within Spark Education Trust for entry in September 2027. These arrangements mirror those consulted on by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council. No separate consultation was required as no changes have been made.

All governing bodies are required by Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to admit to the school a child with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion. This relates only to children who have undergone statutory assessment and for whom a final Education, Health and Care Plan has been issued.

Where there are more applications for a school than there are places available, places will be allocated in order using the oversubscription criteria in this policy.

| CRITERIA (In priority order) | EXPLANATORY NOTES |
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| 1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). | A 'looked after child' is a child 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. 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. |

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| | <p>This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).</p> <p>Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.</p> <p>Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a <u>child's special guardian (or special guardians).</u></p> |
| <p>2. Children who are permanently resident in the admission zone defined for the school.</p> | <p>For the purposes of determining whether a child lives within the admission zone, only the address at which the parent / guardian ordinarily resides and with whom the child normally lives will be taken into account. If parents are separated and the child lives for periods of time with both parents, the address used will be of the parent who receives child benefit for the child (if eligible). If neither parent is eligible for child benefit, the address used will be that on the child's medical registration card (proof may be required). Short term tenancies entered into with the prime objective of securing admission for a child at a particular school will not qualify as places of ordinary residence. The local authority will take action should false information be submitted in order to secure a place at a <u>particular school.</u></p> |
| <p>3. Children who have elder brothers or sisters attending the school in the 2027/28 school year.</p> | <p>Brothers and sisters and stepbrothers and sisters will qualify under this criterion as long as they both live at the same permanent address and the elder sibling is still attending the preferred school in the 2027/28 school year. 'Sibling' refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or 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 <u>family unit at the same address as that sibling.</u></p> |
| <p>4. Children who have exceptional social and/or medical reasons for attending a</p> | <p>Social reasons generally do not include domestic circumstances such as parents'</p> |

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| <p>particular school, professionally supported by an independent third party and sustained by the Authority's professional advisors.</p> | <p>working commitments, childcare arrangements, or separation from friends. In the case of medical reasons, evidence would need to demonstrate the exceptional long-term nature of the condition. All mainstream schools are able to cater for a wide range of medical needs which may be encountered by children. You are strongly urged to provide independent third-party information (e.g., from a professional person who knows or is involved with your child) in support of any exceptional long-term medical or social reason why you think your child should be given special consideration for placement in a particular school. This written support must make clear why the preferred school is the only school which could meet your child's needs. The submission of independent information will not automatically guarantee a place under this criterion. However, the evidence will be carefully considered by the local authority's professional advisors as to whether or not your <u>application falls into this category.</u></p> |
| <p>5. Children living closest to the school</p> | <p>The distance from home to school will be measured by computer on a straight-line basis using the number and postcode of the house and the postcode of the school.</p> |

Tie-Break

If it is necessary to distinguish between children within categories 1 - 4, places will be offered using the criteria listed above in priority order and determined by criteria 5 - measurement on a straight-line basis using the number and postcode of the house and the postcode of the school.

In the case of a tie break in category 5 the final allocation will be determined using the shortest walking route using the number and postcode of the house and the postcode of the school.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will be considered after applications that were received on time unless there was good reason for their lateness. An example of this would be a new family moving to the area after the closing date.

Waiting List

Any unsuccessful applicants will be automatically placed on a waiting list and ranked in order as per the oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term 2027.

Requests for mid-year transfer/in-year school admission

Applications will be co-ordinated by the Redcar and Cleveland School Admissions Team on behalf of all schools within the Borough. Any requests for transfer should be made to the School Admissions Team via email at schools_admissions@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk or telephone on 01642 837740.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND TIMETABLE FOR ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 7

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| 6 Sept 2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application window opens • Send out application information. • Online application website opens. |
| 31 October 2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date for receipt of online and paper applications. |
| 1 March 2027 | <p>NATIONAL OFFER DAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will be notified of their school offer by their Home Local Authority |
| May/June 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeals to be heard by Independent Panels. |
| End of Autumn Term 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission round ends. • Waiting lists close. |

Appeals

The student and/or parents of students who are not offered a place, have the right to appeal against non-admission. For information on the appeals process and for the appeals timetable please see <https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-admissions-appeals>