



**Northern Lights**  
LEARNING TRUST



**Venerable Bede CE Academy  
Admissions Policy for Entry in  
2025 - 2026**

**Review Date: Spring Term 2024**

**Next Review Due: Spring Term 2025**

**Person in Charge: Head of School**

**Governance: Chair of LGB**

**Northern Lights Learning Trust**

**Signed off by: Chair of Board**

**Date from: Spring Term 2024**

**Review Date: Spring Term 2025**

The quality of relationships between all members of school staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of the schools in our Trust. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. In the Church schools in our Trust, we follow the teachings of:

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.

‘This is my commandment: love each other’ – John 15:17.

In our schools we believe every pupil is an individual who is valued for who they are.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks including in our Church schools in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that both Christian and spiritual love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environments are created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the schools are organised and the policies are written and implemented.

Northern Lights Learning Trust will be the Admissions Authority for this academy.

Venerable Bede CE Academy intends to admit up to 180 pupils into Year 7 in September 2025.

We believe that our academy is inclusive and all children are welcome. We are a neighbourhood academy; open to all.

Although we are a Church of England academy with a distinct Christian ethos, you do not need to be baptised or be a practising Christian to apply for a place.

*“The needs of each pupil are carefully considered in the light of the academy’s motto ‘Soar to the Heights Together’. As a result, decisions are made in the very best interests of the individual so that he/she is enabled to succeed as a child of God in, and beyond, the academy community”.*

**Quote from SIAMS inspection June 2017**

All children who apply will be offered a place unless the academy is oversubscribed.

### **Application Process**

Applications must be made online via the City of Sunderland website or, alternatively on the Local Authority Application Form and returned to the Local Authority.

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names the academy, must be admitted. Oversubscription criteria must not disadvantage pupils from a particular social or racial group, or children with SEN or a disability.

If the academy is oversubscribed, then the following criteria will be applied:

#### **1. CHILDREN IN CARE/ADOPTED CHILDREN**

**A ‘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) and a **‘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. 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. SIBLING LINKS**

Children who will have an older sibling in the school at the time they join or children who have an older sibling in year 11 at the time of application. We define the term sibling to mean an older brother/sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother 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 family unit at the same address as that sibling.

**3. ATTENDANCE IN KEY STAGE 2 (AGED 7 – 10+) AT A DESIGNATED CLUSTER JUNIOR OR PRIMARY SCHOOL.** Our cluster primary schools are Benedict Biscop CE Academy, St Pauls CE Primary School, New Silksworth Academy and Ryhope Junior School.

## **4. CHILDREN OF MEMBERS OF STAFF**

Children of staff members (teaching and non-teaching) who have worked for NLLT. This is only applicable where the member of staff has been employed by the Trust for two years or more at the time of application, or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

## **5. OTHER CHILDREN**

### **Tie-Breaker**

Proximity of the child's normal home address (see note 1), as measured by the centre of the child's home address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system. With those living nearer being given the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 1 to 5 should the need arise. If the distance between two children's homes and the academy is the same, we will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place. The process will be conducted in the presence of a person independent of the academy.

### **Waiting Lists**

The academy maintains waiting lists **ONLY** for those children who are not offered a place in year 7, and the parents ask for their child's name to be added to the waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained **ONLY** until 31 December of the admission year. After this time, and for all other year groups, those seeking a place in the Academy should follow the "Sunderland In Year Application process".

### **Secondary School Transfer Process**

If your child is already of secondary school age and you want them to transfer to Venerable Bede CE Academy, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Parents/carers of the child should make an application to Venerable Bede CE Academy using the agreed applications procedure as outlined by Sunderland City Council (<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/schools-admissions>).
2. Upon receiving an application for admittance to the academy, an initial meeting will be set up with the appropriate member of the academy's senior leadership team. At this meeting, a decision will be made to determine whether the Managed Move Protocol should be followed to support the pupil's transition from their current secondary school.

### **Fair Access**

The academy participates in the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. This covers, for example, children who have moved into our area after the normal admission round, or who need to move school as a result of severe bullying or social issues. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any other child on the waiting list.

With regards to increased emphasis in the 2021 School Admissions Code ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1001050/School\\_admissions\\_code\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf)) in relation to Challenging Behaviour (3.8 – 3.13) and Fair Access Protocol (3.14 – 3.22) the Trust will follow the guidance.

### **Admission Outside of Normal Age Group**

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 or have been outside their normal age group throughout primary school. 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 Headteacher in advance of applying for a place. Parents should apply in the normal way together with a written request that the child is admitted outside of his or her normal age group to the requested year group in September the following year providing supporting reasons for seeking a place outside of the normal age group. The Trust 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.

### **Multiple births**

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other

multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number for Year 7 or the number of places in other year groups in the relevant admission year.

## Notes

### 1. Home Address

By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw

the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home LA must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place under the co-ordinated scheme.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

2. Where an application is found to contain false information, the Trust reserve the right to withdraw their offer of a place.

**RIGHT OF APPEAL:** if you are not successful in obtaining a place for your child at our school, you have a statutory right of appeal. Further details are available from the School Admissions Team via the school reception on 0191 523 9745 and an appeals form can be obtained from them. Please also see our Admissions Appeals Policy and Appeals Timeline for Entry.