

Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Secondary Schools within the Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale for the 2026/2027 academic year

1. Introduction

This scheme for co-ordinated admissions has been prepared in accordance with The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements)(England) Regulations 2012 and The School Admissions Code.

Each Local Authority is required to have a scheme for co-ordinating the arrangements for the admission of pupils to Secondary schools within the LA area.

A co-ordinated admissions scheme seeks to ensure that every child living in a local authority area, who has applied in the normal admission round, receives one, and only one, offer of a school place on the same day.

It is a requirement of the local authority to enable the parent of a child in the area of the authority, to express a preference as to the school at which they wish education to be provided. The offer of a place should be the responsibility of the “home” local authority.

Every local authority is required to exchange information with regard to the expression of a preference for a school outside of the local authority in which the pupil lives.

The School Admissions Code requires admission arrangements to be as simple as possible for parents to use and admission criteria to be clear, fair and objective.

This scheme has been produced following advice taken from the Calderdale Admissions Forum and will be implemented from the academic year commencing September 2026.

The scheme is determined following statutory consultation where necessary.

The scheme shall apply to every maintained secondary school and academy in the Local Authority area (except special schools) and shall take effect in September 2026.

The Authority will fully coordinate admission arrangements with Bradford, Kirklees, Lancashire and Rochdale. However, information will be exchanged with other local authorities where appropriate.

2. Interpretation and Glossary

In this scheme –

- “The Local Authority” means The Borough Council of Calderdale acting in their capacity as Local Authority.
- “The Local Authority area” means the area in respect of which The Borough Council of Calderdale is responsible for maintaining schools.
- “Primary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

- “Secondary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996.
- “Primary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996.
- “Secondary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.
- “School” means an academy, community, foundation or voluntary school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the Local Authority.
 - “Admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the Local Authority. “Admission authority” in relation to a foundation or voluntary aided school means the governing body of that school. “Admission authority” in relation to an academy means the academy trust of that school.
 - “The specified year” means the school year commencing at, or about, the beginning of September 2026.
 - “Admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purpose of admitting pupils to the school.
 - “In Year Application (casual transfer)” means any application for a place within any year group received during the school year beginning September 2026.
 - “Eligible for a place” means that a child has been placed on a school’s ranked list at such a point which falls within the school’s published admission number.
 - “Parent” means parent or carer; a person with parental responsibility for the child.

3. The Application

Parents must make an online application which will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of secondary education in the year specified. The online application facility will be available from 23 June 2025 up until the deadline of 31 October 2025.

The online application will:

- invite parents to express up to five preferences in rank order. The schools listed can be within Calderdale, outside of Calderdale or a combination of both;
- invite parents to give any reasons for their preferences;
- specify the closing date for submitting their preferences and detail where any supplementary information forms must be returned.

The Local Authority will ensure:

- that the admission to secondary school information is available for parents on request from the Local Authority and from all maintained primary schools in the Local Authority area. This material will be widely publicised;

- that every parent resident in the Local Authority area, who has a child due to complete their last year of primary education in July 2026 and attends a maintained primary school within the Local Authority area, receives a copy of the Admission to Secondary School Leaflet. These will be provided to parent via the current primary school. Children who reside in the Local Authority area but who attend independent schools or attend a school in another Local Authority will also receive the leaflet direct to their home address.
- that all preferences expressed on the application are valid applications. The governing body/academy trust of a voluntary aided school or academy can request additional information on a supplementary form, where that school has been expressed as a preference. A supplementary form can only be requested where additional information is required for the governing body/academy trust to apply their oversubscription criteria. Any supplementary forms should be returned to the relevant school. Any supplementary forms received by the Local Authority will be passed to the relevant school;
- that where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also submitted an online application and the school has been expressed as a preference. Parents will not be under any obligation to complete a school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body/academy trust to apply their oversubscription criteria.

The closing date for applications is 31 October 2025.

The application and any supporting documents, where requested, must be returned to the Local Authority by this date.

Supplementary forms, where applicable, must be submitted by parents to the relevant schools. This should be by 31 October 2025 unless otherwise specified.

4. The Application Process

The Local Authority will act as an agent for foundation, voluntary aided schools and academies.

The Local Authority will make decisions with respect to the offer or refusal of a place where:

a child is eligible for a place at more than one school;

a child is not eligible for a place at any of the schools expressed as a preference.

The timetable for the process is as follows:

31 October 2025 – Close date for all applications to be submitted to the Local Authority. All applications received by this date will be classed as on time.

By 21 November 2025 the Local Authority will notify the admission authority for each academy of every preference made for their school, where necessary.

By 21 November 2025 the Local Authority will notify other local authorities of any parental preference for schools outside of Calderdale.

By 9 January 2026 the admission authority for each grammar school will have provided a ranked list of pupils based upon results taken from the admissions test.

By 9 January 2026 the admission authority for any academy will have considered the applications under specific criteria, specialism or church affiliation and have provided the Local Authority with a list of applicants in ranked order.

The Local Authority will then match this ranked list against all other ranked lists and:

- where a child is only eligible for a place at one of the preferred schools, that school will be offered;
- where a child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever one is ranked highest.

Where a child is resident within the Local Authority area and is not eligible for any of the preferred schools, they will be allocated a place at the school nearest to the family home that has a vacancy (this will be within a 3 mile walking distance wherever possible).

By 5 February 2026 the exchange of information with other local authorities in respect of provisional offers will have commenced.

By 19 February 2026 the Local Authority will have notified other local authorities of the final places in Calderdale schools that can be offered to their residents.

By 19 February 2026 the Local Authority will have made decisions with regards to the offer or refusal of a place where:

- a child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools;
- a child is resident in the Local Authority area and is not eligible for a place at any of the preferred schools.

By 26 February 2026 the Local Authority will inform all Calderdale secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their school.

On 2 March 2026 (National Offer Day) the Local Authority will inform parents of their allocation of a school place.

The offer information provided to parent will include:

- the name of the school at which a place is offered;
- the reason why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other schools listed as a preference on the application;
- information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other preferred schools;
- information on how to be considered for alternative school places that may become available after 2 March 2026.

5. Applications for children of UK Service Personnel

Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the Local Authority area will be considered in advance of the family moving into the area. Where possible an application must be included in the normal admission round.

An official letter, such as a posting notice or letter of support from the commanding officer, should be sent to the Local Authority as soon as possible. This should include the relocation date and the unit postal address.

Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.

The Local Authority will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area. It is also not permitted to reserve places for these children.

Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister (including step/half siblings living at the same address) have been formally offered and have accepted a place at the school. This will not apply if the sibling is in their final year at the school.

All applications will be dealt with in accordance with these admission arrangements.

6. Applications for children from overseas

Overseas nationals entering the UK, who wish to apply for a state-funded school place should check that they have a right of abode or that the conditions of their immigration status otherwise permit them to access a state-funded school.

Applications on behalf of children currently living outside the UK will be considered but until the child is resident in the country, their home address will be considered to be their place of residence outside the UK (exceptions to this would be instances where the children are of parents returning from foreign postings, such as UK service personnel).

If the application is for an oversubscribed school and parental preference cannot be met, an alternative school place within the Local Authority will not be offered until such time as the child is resident in Calderdale.

7. Late Applications

Late applications are those that have been received after the close date of 31 October 2025.

Late applications will be considered after all those received by the closing date. However, in some exceptional circumstances it may be possible for an application received after the closing date to be considered as on time.

The exceptional circumstances are:

- where a single parent living alone with their child has been ill for some time. The application must be supported by a doctor's note and evidence of being a single parent.
- where a house move over a distance of 3 miles (as determined by a straight line measurement) has been completed between 31 October 2025 and 31 December 2025. This applies to house moves into and within Calderdale. The

application must be supported by appropriate evidence (for example a solicitor's letter confirming the completion of a house purchase or a copy of a tenancy agreement).

- where a service family (or crown servants returning from overseas) is moving into the area after the closing date (see paragraph 5).

A move of less than 3 miles will not be considered as exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances will only be taken into account where an application form has been received before 31 December 2025 and where accompanied by all supporting evidence and any supplementary forms.

A late preference for a non-Calderdale school can only be considered if the appropriate admissions authority and relevant local authority determine that there is sufficient time to consider that preference.

Preferences cannot be amended after 31 October 2025, unless a house move over 3 miles (as determined by a straight line) has been completed between 31 October 2025 and 31 December 2025 and is supported by appropriate evidence.

Applications received between 1 November 2025 and 27 February 2026 will, as far as is reasonably practicable, receive the allocation of a school place on 2 March 2026 (National Offer Day).

Applications received between 28 February 2026 and 16 March 2026 will be processed along with any reallocation requests (see paragraph 8), with the allocation of a place being made by 30 March 2026.

Applications received after 16 March 2026 will be dealt with in order of date received, with the allocation of a place being made as soon as is possible after 30 March 2026.

8. Reallocation Process

Parents may ask for their child's name to be kept on a reallocation (waiting) list for any places that may become available after 2 March 2026.

Where reallocation is requested at a higher preference school than has been allocated, the place offered can be retained.

Where reallocation is requested at a lower preference school than has been allocated, or a school which was not originally listed on the application, the place at the higher preference school must be given up.

Where a school has been offered which was not originally listed on the application, parents can request reallocation to all of the preferred schools or a school which was not originally indicated on the application.

The reallocation (waiting) lists will be ordered in terms of the school's oversubscription criteria.

Reallocation (waiting) lists for schools will be kept by the Local Authority until the beginning of the new academic year commencing September 2026. Waiting lists will then be maintained by the appropriate admission authority until at least the end of the autumn

term (December 2026). For secondary schools where the Local Authority maintains the waiting lists, these will operate until the end of the academic year.

Parents wishing to apply for a place through reallocation should submit their request by 16 March 2026. All requests received by this date will be considered as on time reallocation requests and the individual schools oversubscription criteria will be applied.

Requests received after 16 March 2026 will be dealt with in order of date received on a weekly basis, with the relevant oversubscription criteria being applied.

The outcome of on time reallocation requests will be notified to parent by 30 March 2026.

9. Feeder Status

In order for a pupil's current school to be considered as a valid feeder school (where this forms part of an individual schools oversubscription criteria) it will only be considered valid where a pupil has been on roll and attending from the first school day of September, of the final year of primary school, until the date that the allocation of places takes place unless:

- a house move over a distance of 3 miles (as determined by a straight line measurement) has been completed between 1 September 2025 and 31 December 2025. This applies to house moves into and within Calderdale. The application must be supported by appropriate evidence (for example a solicitor's letter confirming the completion of a house purchase or a copy of a rental agreement for a property located within Calderdale).

10. Proof of Address

The Local Authority reserves the right to ask parents for proof of their address.

Parents/carers must give their child's permanent home address on their application. The allocation of a school place will be made using the child's permanent home address as at 31 October 2025.

A child's permanent home address is defined as being the main, or only, residence where the child usually lives with their parent.

Where parents share parental responsibility for the child but reside in separate properties the address provided on the application should be the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. In cases of equal shared care both parents must agree which address will be used on the application. If there is no agreement the Local Authority will use the address where the child is registered with the primary school. If the child is not registered at a primary school the Local Authority will use the address where the child is registered with their doctor at the closing date.

The Authority will investigate where there is a discrepancy between the address on the application and its records.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide information to prove the child's permanent home address, as requested by the Authority.

It is for the Authority to determine if, on the balance of probability, the address given on the application is the child's permanent home address.

It is recognised that a child may be residing at a temporary address as at 31 October 2025. A temporary address will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Examples include:

- the child's permanent home address has to be vacated due to structural damage;
- the child is homeless;

A parental relationship breakdown will not normally be regarded as an exceptional circumstance.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide evidence of their exceptional circumstance and evidence that their child is not residing at a temporary address to gain advantage in obtaining a school place.

If the Authority finds that a false address has been given the allocated school place may be withdrawn.

11. Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

The decision to admit outside of a child's normal age group is made on the basis of the circumstance of each case.

Parents must still apply for a school place in the normal round of admissions by the close date of 31 October 2025. In addition to this they must contact the Local Authority to request a separate application to apply for admission outside the child's normal age group. Parents must return the application to the Local Authority, along with any accompanying evidence, by the close date of 31 October 2025.

The Local Authority will provide, on request, an application for parents to apply for admission outside of the child's normal age group.

On receiving an application for entry outside of a child's normal age group, the Local Authority will forward the information to the relevant Admission Authority for consideration and they will follow their own policy to consider the request.

The Local Authority will consider requests for community schools and will convene a panel to consider the request. The panel may include, where appropriate, representatives from:

- The primary school the child attends;
- The Specialist Inclusion Team;
- The Admissions Team;
- The Special Educational Needs Team;
- Virtual Schools;
- the school preferred.

The panel will look at the following factors when considering the request:

- The parent's views;
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- the views of the headteacher of the school;
- information from any professional persons regarding the child's best interests.

The Panel will make decisions on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned.

If the parental request for admission outside the normal age group in the normal round of admissions is agreed, a separate application for a place in the next cohort would have to be made by 31 October 2026. There would be no guarantee that a place would be able to be offered at the preferred school. If the parental request for admission outside the normal age group is refused, the formal application which has already been submitted will be processed.

When informing a parent of the decision the Local Authority will set out clearly the reasons for the decision.

Parents who are refused a place at a school have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. They do not have the right to appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like.

Parents who wish to challenge a decision to refuse their request for admission out of the normal age group may submit a complaint using the Local Authority's complaints procedure for community and voluntary controlled schools.

If a parent is unhappy with the way the Local Authority has handled their complaint, once they have exhausted the local complaints process, they may complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

12. In Year Applications (casual transfers)

For parents requesting a transfer of secondary school an online 'In Year Application' must be submitted to the Local Authority, expressing a preference for up to a maximum of five schools.

A list of schools that the Local Authority co-ordinate in year admissions for will be listed on the website. For all other schools a link will be provided to the relevant school's application.

When the Local Authority has received an 'In Year Application' the application will be considered by the Local Authority or by the admission authority responsible for the school preferred.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of their request via the online portal within 15 school days

If a place is refused at any of the preferred schools the parent will be provided with the reason for the refusal and information relating to their statutory right of appeal.

Where an application has been submitted and a child, resident in the Local Authority area, is without a school place, in the event that one of the preferred schools cannot be allocated, an alternative will be offered.

If a parent wishes to request a transfer for a child who is in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (formally a Statement of Special Education Needs) they should, in the first instance, contact the Special Educational Needs Team.

In the case of children looked after an 'In Year Application' should be completed by the allocated Social Worker and the 'Child Looked After' status marked on the application.

Parents of children resident outside of Calderdale should approach their home local authority to apply for a place. If that authority does not coordinate in year applications then the parent can apply via the Calderdale 'In Year Transfer' form.

Where an application for a place has been refused at a school parent can request that the child's name is added to a waiting list, where one exists. The child's name will remain on the waiting list until the end of the academic year.

It is not a legal requirement for a waiting list to be held beyond the first term of the normal year of entry.

All waiting lists will be maintained in the order of the individual school's oversubscription criteria.

If the parent of an eligible child is unable to secure a place through the normal in year admissions procedures then the case may be referred for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol where applicable.

13. Fair Access Protocol

All Calderdale schools will participate in the Fair Access Protocol to ensure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible. Please see Calderdale's Fair Access Protocol for Secondary Schools.

Timetable for the Secondary Co-ordinated Scheme for the 2026/27 Academic Year

23 June 2025	Admission to Secondary School 2026 round opens
31 October 2025	Closing date. All applications to be submitted to the Local Authority by this date and any supplementary information forms to be submitted to the appropriate school by this date.
21 November 2025	Details of preferences to be sent to own admission authority schools, where necessary.
21 November 2025	Details of all applications to be sent to other local authorities.
9 January 2026	Lists of applications in ranked order to be returned to the Local Authority by own admission authority schools (where relevant).
5 February 2026	The exchange of data with other local authorities will commence.
19 February 2026	Other local authorities will be notified of final offers.
19 February 2026	The Local Authority will have made decisions with regards to all offers for on time applications.
26 February 2026	Calderdale schools will be provided with a list of pupils to be offered places at their school.
2 March 2026	National Offer Day. Parents will be notified of their allocation.
16 March 2026	Last day to request reallocation.
30 March 2026	Parents to be notified of outcome of reallocation.
June/July 2026	Appeals will take place.