

Academic Year 2025-2026

# Transferring to Secondary School

Allocation and Appeals Guide for Parents and Carers



**ROCHDALE**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## Introduction

This booklet has been created to assist parents and carers where their child has not been offered a place at their preferred school for the September 2025 intake. It provides information related to appeals and waiting lists and provides additional information for a parent or carer to better understand why it has not been possible to comply with their request.

***Please note, this information does not relate to children who are subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) as their applications follow a separate process. Appeals by the parent or carer of a child with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan against the choice of school named in the EHC plan, or the fact that no school has been named, are considered by the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) not a school admission appeal panel.***

On an annual basis, as part of determining their admission arrangements, each admission authority must set an admission number for each 'relevant age group'. This is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN) and this is the number of school places that the admission authority must offer where there is sufficient demand.

Once a school has reached its PAN, the school reaches its capacity and offering any additional pupils would be detrimental to the school and would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

A parent/carer has a legal right to express a preference for a place at the school at which they would like their child to attend. Wherever it is possible, an Admission Authority is required to comply with this request and offer the child a place. Although most children are able to attend at their preferred school, this is not always possible. You will only be refused a place at a school in Rochdale if:

- Your preferred school received more applications for places than there were places available and it was not possible to offer a place when the published oversubscription criteria was applied to the applications; or
- Your application was submitted after the closing date for applications and all available places at your preferred school had already been offered to children whose applications were submitted on-time.

In accordance with the School Standard and Framework Act 1998, if you are refused admission to a school, you have the right to submit an appeal against this decision to an independent appeal panel. You have the right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place at any school you applied for where your application was rejected however if you wish to appeal for more than one school, you are required to submit a separate, individual appeal related to each decision.

At the appeal hearing, you are given the opportunity to present your case for admission to a panel of people who are independent of the school and the local authority and explain why you wish for your child to attend your preferred school. Before deciding to submit an appeal, we recommend that you read the information provided within this booklet as it will provide you with additional information that you may find helpful when submitting your appeal.

## Understanding the admission decision

Wherever possible, an Admission Authority is required to comply with your request for admission however where more applications are received than there are places available, this is not always possible. The school must apply its published oversubscription criteria to the received applications in order to determine in which order the available places are offered. You can find details of your preferred school's oversubscription criteria in our [Transferring to Secondary School guide](#) and they are also published on the school's website.

You will only be refused a place at a school if either:

- a) More applications for places are received than there are places available at the school and it was not possible to offer your child a place when the published oversubscription criteria was applied; or
- b) Your application was received late and all available places at the school had already been offered when your application was considered.

In the following pages, you can find details of the number of applications received for each of the schools within Rochdale Borough and a breakdown of how the places were allocated when the oversubscription was applied. This should help provide you with details of why it was not possible to offer your child a place at your preferred school.

### **Pupils subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan**

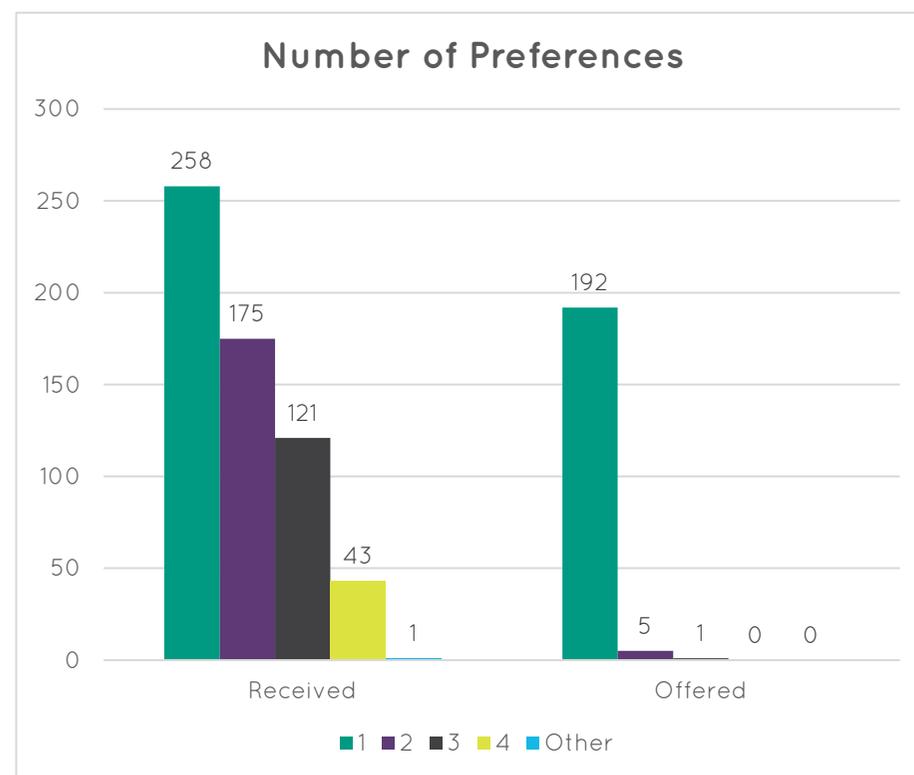
All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school **must** be admitted. As such, these children are allocated places before the oversubscription criteria is applied to the remaining applicants. In the breakdown of applications detailed in the following pages, children subject to an EHCP are not detailed in the number of preferences received but they are included in the number of places offered at the school.

### **Out of preference referral offers**

An out of preference referral is a place that has been offered to a child where it was not possible to offer them a place at any of their preferred schools and this school was the nearest to the home address that had available places remaining after all the on-time applications had been processed.

## How the available places were offered – Cardinal Langley Roman Catholic High School

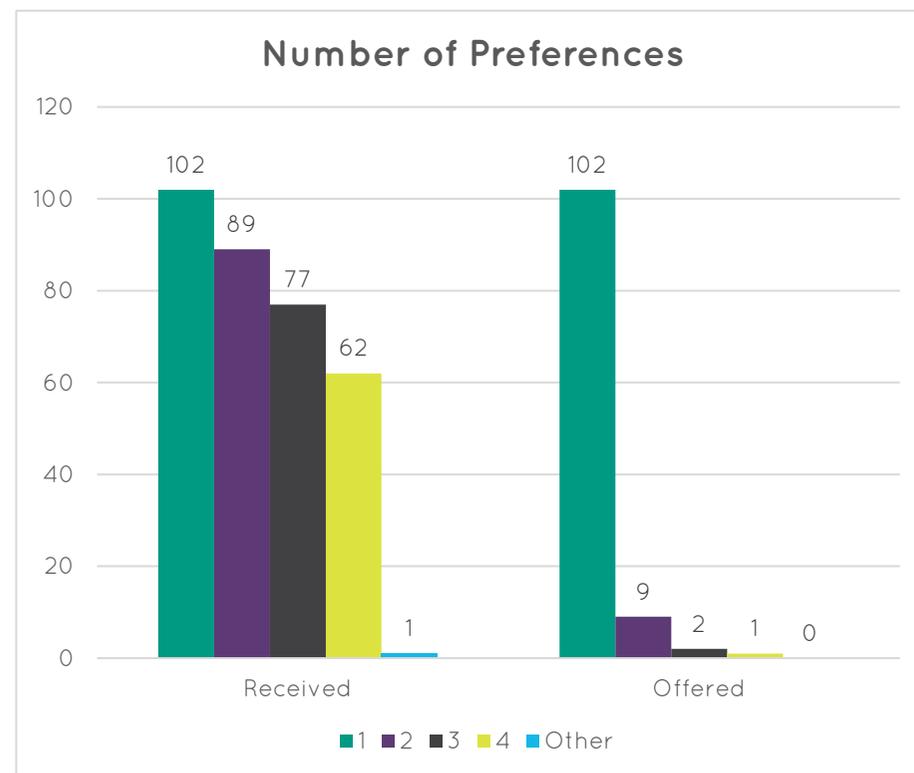
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	12
1. Baptised Roman-Catholic Cared-For Children	0
2. Baptised Roman-Catholic children from the Roman-Catholic partner primary schools	119
3. Baptised Roman-Catholic children who have a sibling in school	19
4. Baptised Roman Catholic children living in a contributory parish	21
5. Other Baptised Roman-Catholic children	33
6. Other Cared-For Children	2
7. Other children from the Roman-Catholic partner primary schools	4
8. Other children who have a sibling in school	0
9. Other children	0
<b>Total places offered</b>	<b>210</b>
Published Admission Number	210
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 0.899 miles and was calculated as a walking distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – Edgar Wood Academy

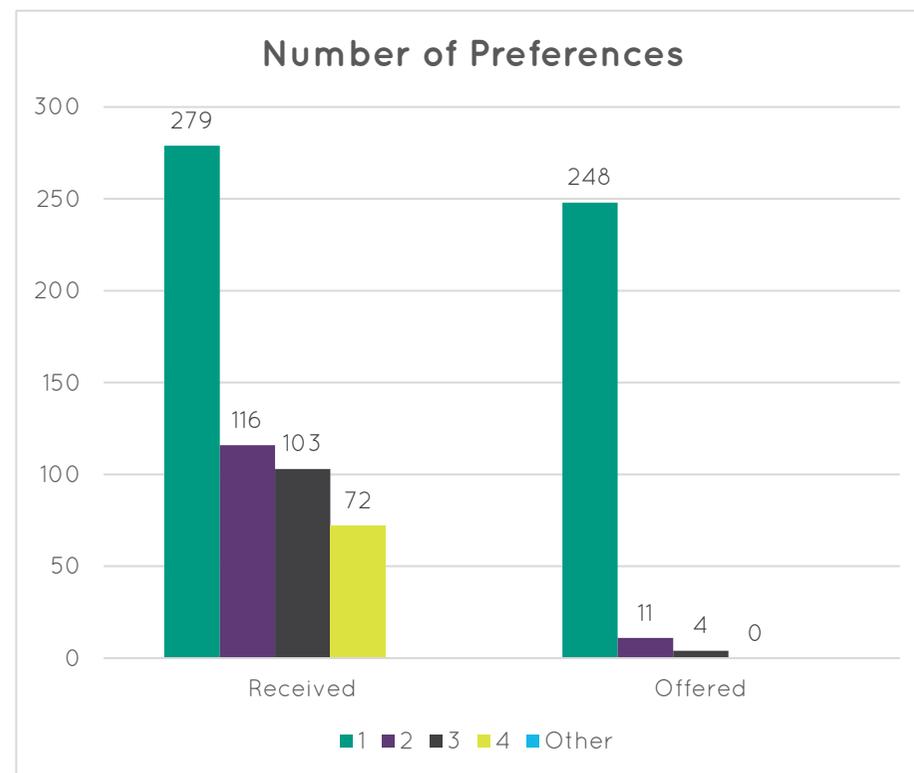
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	<b>4</b>
1. Looked After and previously Looked After Children	<b>1</b>
2. Children with exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to Edgar Wood Academy	<b>0</b>
3. Children with an older sibling at Edgar Wood Academy at the time of admission	<b>44</b>
4. Children eligible for the service premium	<b>0</b>
5. Children of staff at the school	<b>0</b>
6. Children living nearest to the school	<b>69</b>
Out of Preference referral offers	<b>32</b>
Total places offered	<b>150</b>
Published Admission Number	<b>180</b>
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	<b>30</b>



All children who expressed a preference for this school were offered a place where required.

## How the available places were offered – Falinge Park High School

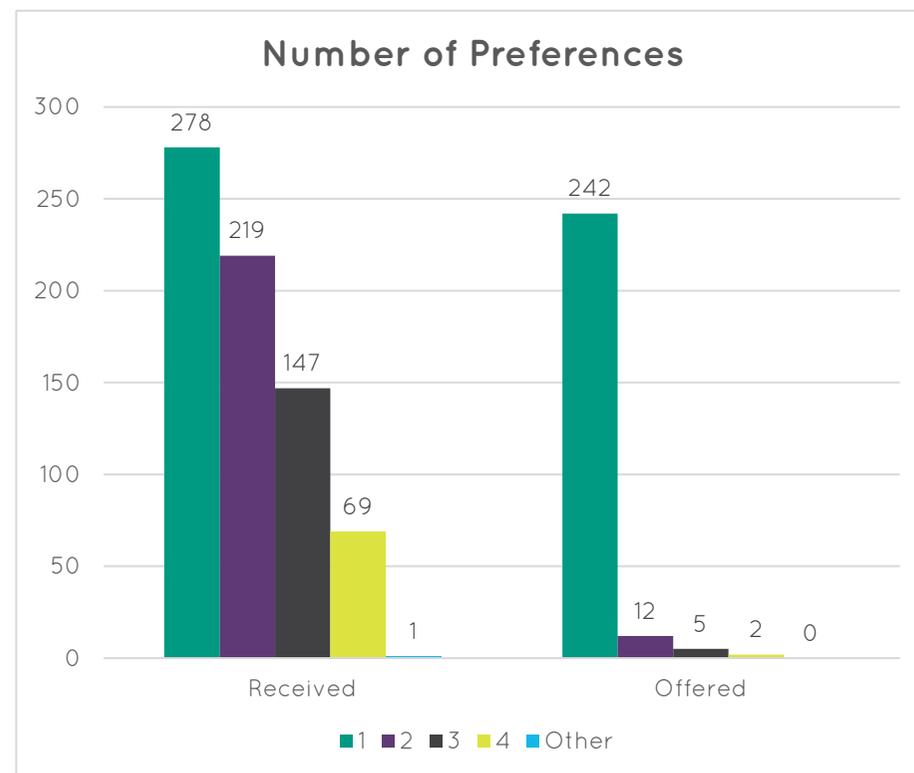
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	7
1. Looked After Children, previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Looked After Children	4
2. Exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to the school concerned	0
3. Children with a sibling attending the school	106
4. Children eligible for the Service Pupil Premium (SPP)	0
5. Distance to school	153
Total places offered	270
Published Admission Number	270
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 1.036 miles and was calculated as a direct straight-line distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – Hollingworth Academy

Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	9
1. Looked After Children, previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Looked After Children	2
2. Children with exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to Hollingworth Academy	0
3. Children with an older sibling attending Hollingworth Academy at the time of admission	80
4. Children eligible for the service premium	0
5. Children of staff at the academy	1
6. Any other children	178
<b>Total places offered</b>	<b>270</b>
Published Admission Number	270
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0

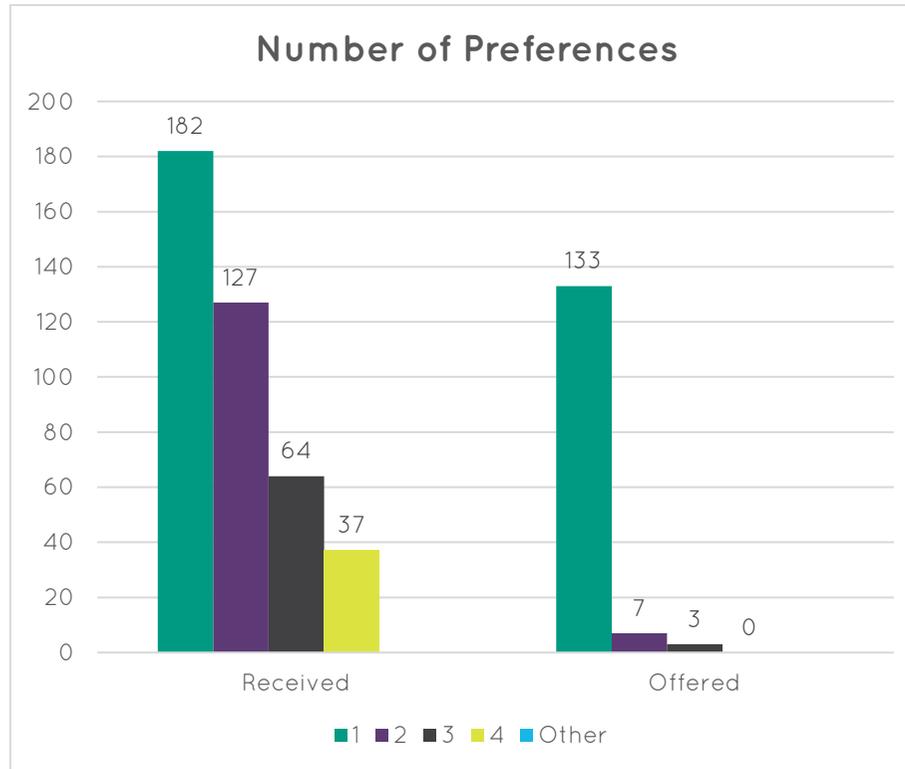


The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 2.523 miles and was calculated by the school's GIS method.

## How the available places were offered – Holy Family Roman Catholic and Church of England College

Category 1 – Roman Catholic and Church of England Children		Category 2 – Other Children (if places remain after the admission of children under Category 1)	
Criteria	Number of places offered	Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	7	I. Any other cared for children and previously cared for children	2
I. Looked after children and previously looked after children who are baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children	0	II. Any other children who are eligible for the service premium	0
II. Baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children who are eligible for the service premium	0	III. Any other children whose medical or social circumstances mean that their needs can only be met at this school	0
III. Baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children whose medical or social circumstances mean that their needs can only be met at this school	0	IV. Children who worship regularly in other Christian churches	6
IV. Baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children who attend one of the feeder primary schools and worship regularly at Our Lady and St Joseph's Parish, Heywood or one of the Church of England churches in the Parishes named	57	V. Other baptised children who attend one of the associated feeder Roman Catholic or Church of England primary schools	0
V. Baptised RC and CE children who worship regularly at Our Lady and St Joseph's Parish, Heywood or one of the Church of England churches in the Parishes named but do not attend one of the feeder primary schools	29	VI. Other children who attend one of the associated feeder Roman Catholic or Church of England primary schools	4
VI. Baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children who attend one of the associated feeder primary schools	16	VII. Children who attend places of worship belonging to other faith communities, confirmed by their faith leader	0
VII. Baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children who will have a sibling attending the school at the date of admission	11	VIII. Any other children who will have a sibling attending the school at the date of admission	0
VIII. Other baptised Roman Catholic or Anglican children	18	IX. Any other children, with priority given to those living nearest to the school	0
Total places offered			150
Published Admission Number			150
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025			0

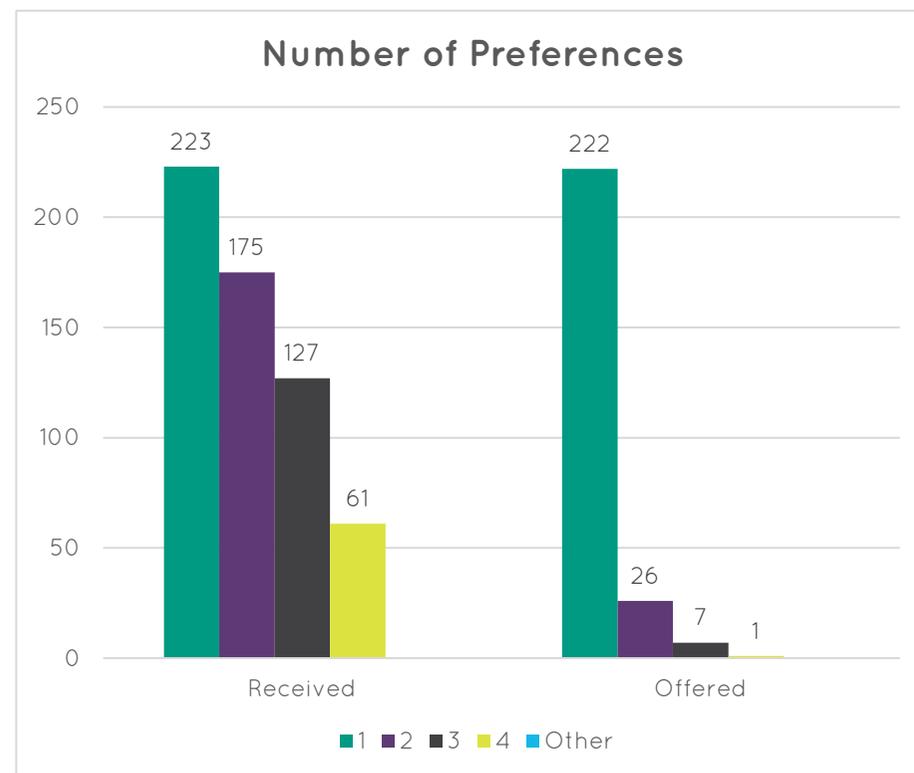
## How the available places were offered - Holy Family Roman Catholic and Church of England College (continued)



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 0.329 miles and was calculated as a walking distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – Kingsway Park High School

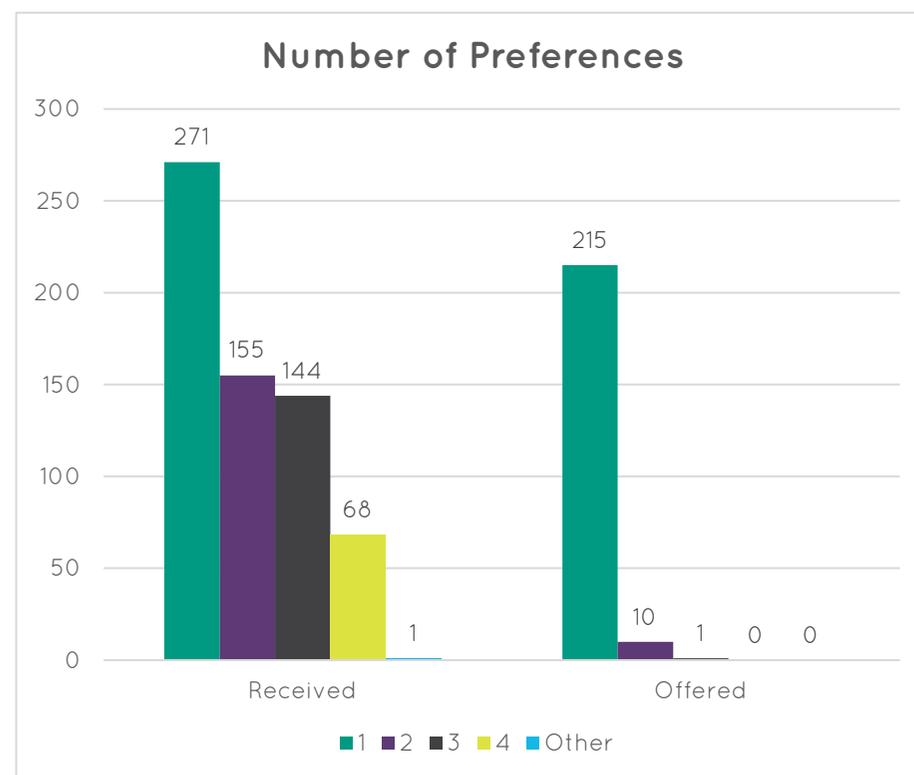
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	14
1. Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	5
2. Exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to Kingsway Park High School	0
3. Children with an older sibling attending the school at the time of admission	89
4. Children eligible for the service premium	0
5. Children of staff at the school	0
6. Relative proximity and ease of access	162
<b>Total places offered</b>	<b>270</b>
Published Admission Number	270
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 1.724 miles and was calculated by the Local Authority's GIS system using the relative proximity method whereby the distance to the nearest or next nearest school is deducted from the distance to the preferred school to provide the relative proximity calculation.

## How the available places were offered – Matthew Moss High School

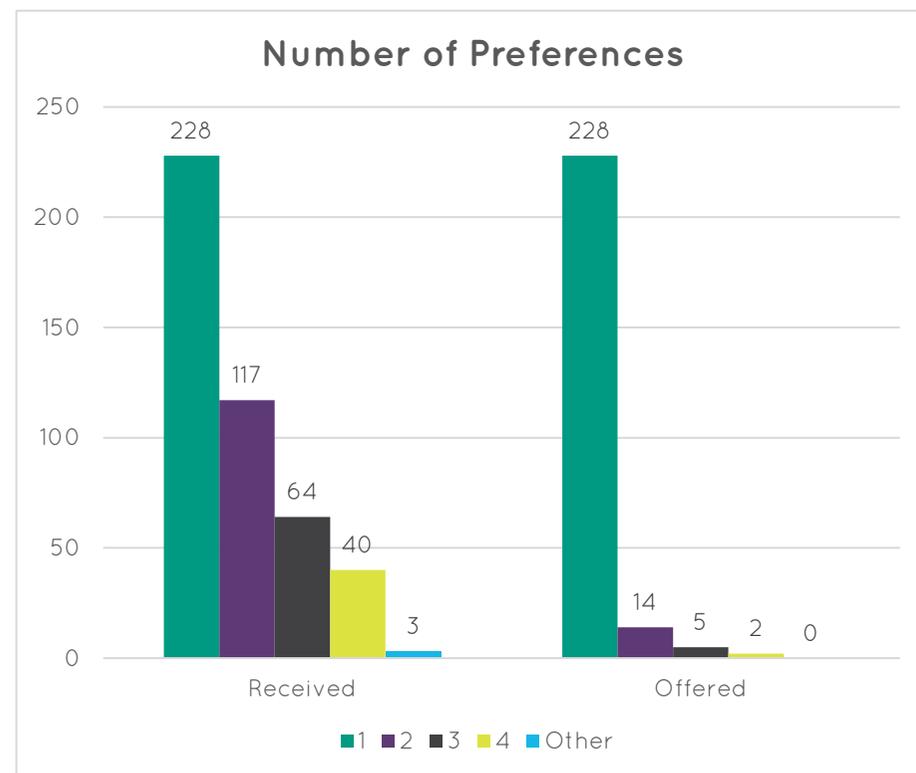
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	<b>14</b>
1. Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Looked After Children (LAC, PLAC and IAPLAC)	<b>3</b>
2. Social and Medical need	<b>0</b>
3. Siblings	<b>75</b>
4. Service Pupil Premium (SPP)	<b>0</b>
5. Children of staff	<b>2</b>
6. Distance from school	<b>146</b>
Total places offered	<b>240</b>
Published Admission Number	<b>240</b>
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	<b>0</b>



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 1.098 miles and was calculated as a direct straight-line distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – Middleton Technology School

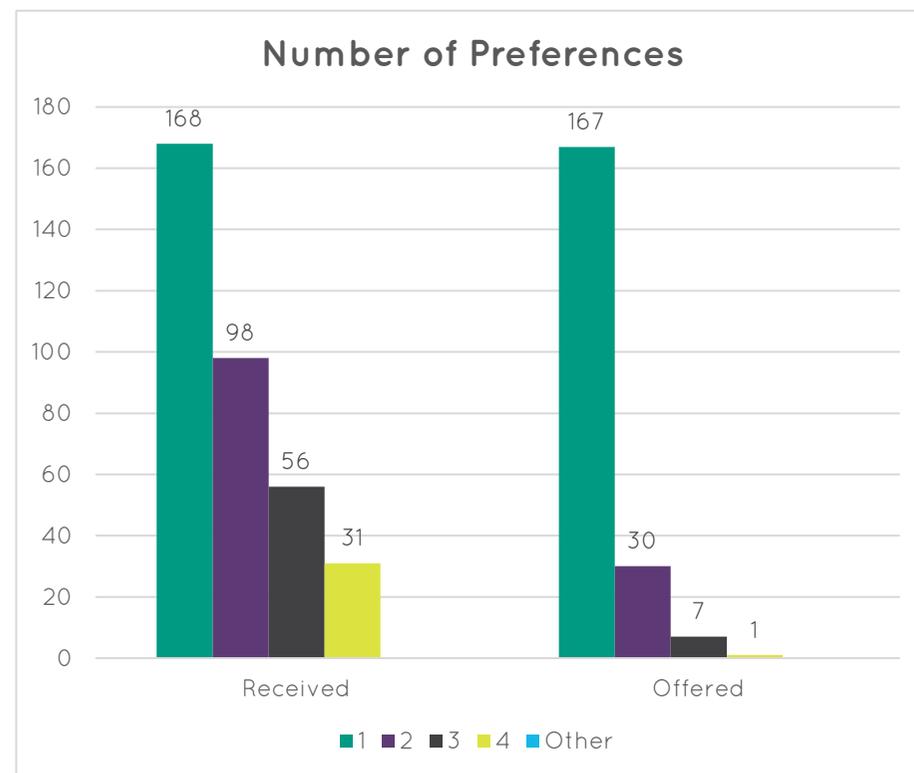
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	7
1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted	3
2. Children on the basis of social or medical need.	2
3. Children with siblings at the academy at the time of admission	77
4. Children eligible for the service premium	1
5. Distance of residence from the school	166
Out of Preference referral offers	9
Total places offered	264
Published Admission Number	270
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	5



All children who expressed a preference for this school were offered a place where required.

## How the available places were offered – Newhouse Academy

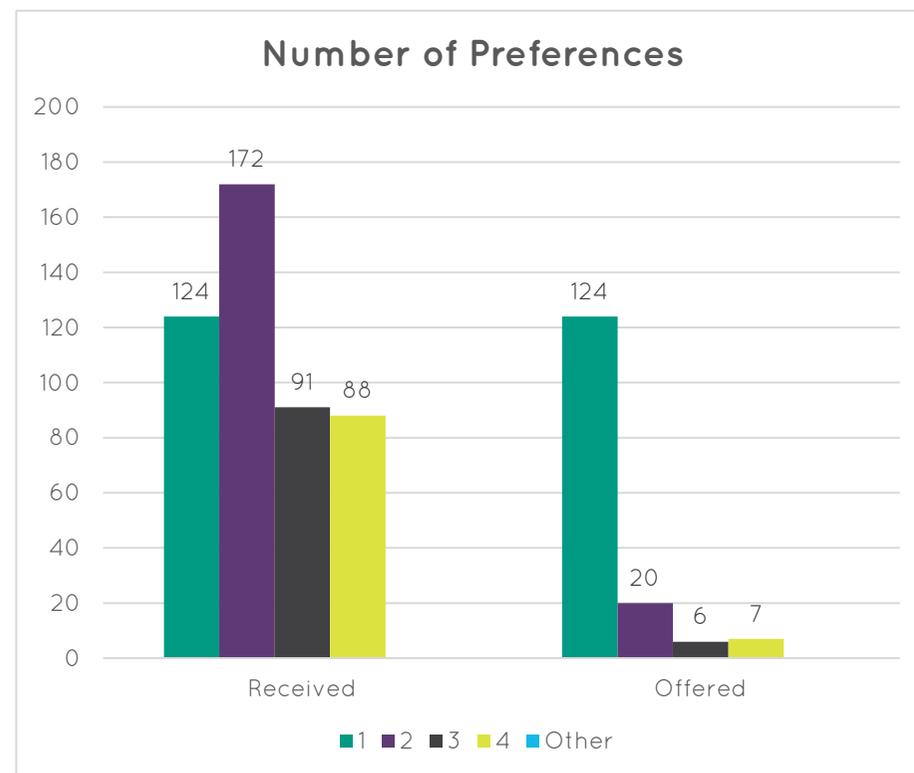
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	5
1. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children	0
2. Children with exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to Newhouse Academy	3
3. Children with an older sibling attending Newhouse Academy at the time of admission	51
4. Children eligible for the service premium	1
5. Children of staff at the academy	0
6. Other children	150
<b>Total places offered</b>	<b>210</b>
Published Admission Number	210
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 3.191 miles and was calculated as a direct straight-line distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – Oulder Hill Leadership Academy

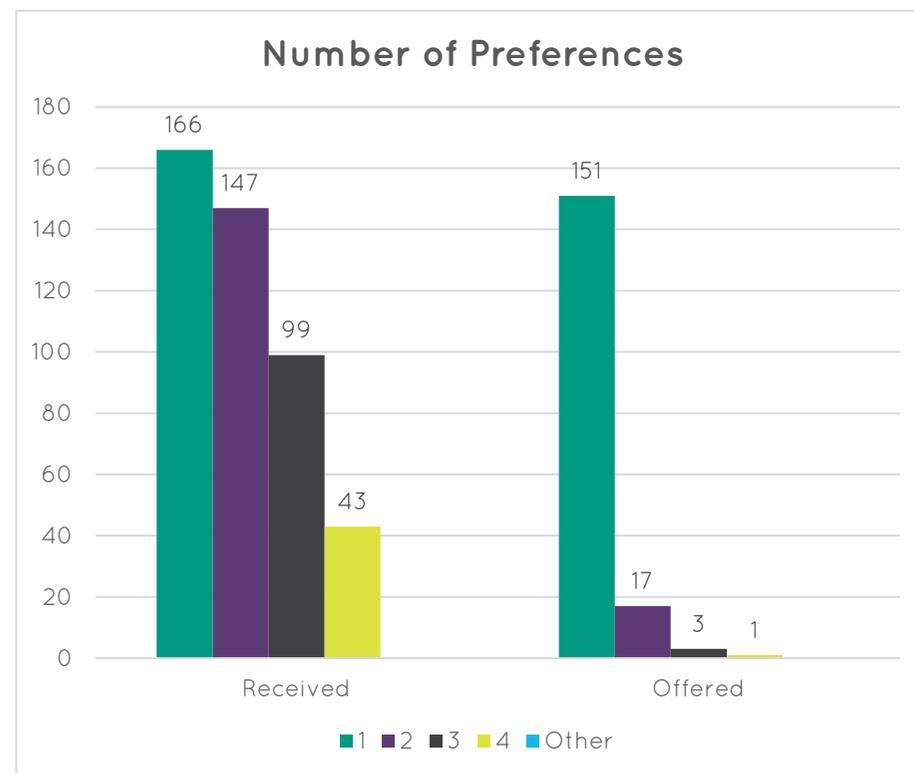
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	2
1. Looked after children or a child who was previously looked after or those children who appear to the school to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted	0
2. Children of staff employed at Oulder Hill Leadership Academy for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made, and / or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage	2
3. Children with proven, exceptionally strong special, medical or social circumstances, which are directly relevant to attendance at Oulder Hill Leadership Academy	0
4. Children with older siblings attending Oulder Hill Leadership Academy in Years 7 to 11 at the time of application and offer of a place	56
5. All other children who live nearest from home to school	99
Out of Preference referral offers	69
Total places offered	228
Published Admission Number	300
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	72



All children who expressed a preference for this school were offered a place where required.

## How the available places were offered – St Anne’s Church of England Academy

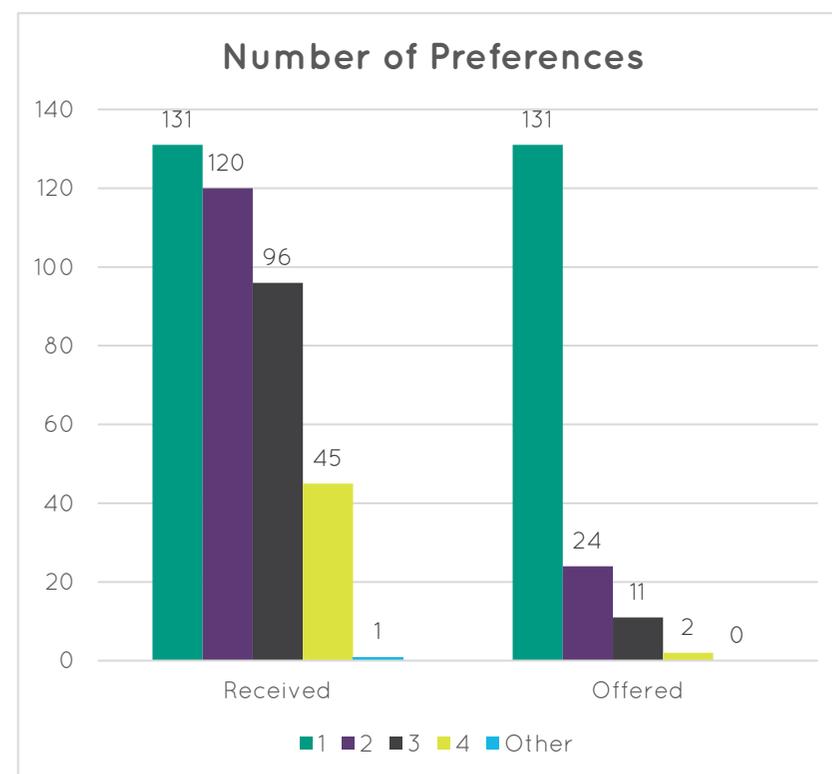
Criteria	Number of places offered
1. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	8
2. Children in Public Care, previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children	2
3. Children whose medical or social circumstances mean that their needs can only be met at this school	0
4. Children whose parents/carers live in the Heywood and Middleton Deanery or the Rochdale Deanery and who have a sibling attending the Academy at the date of admission	36
5. Children whose families are regular worshippers in an Anglican Church or other Christian Church	0
6. Children whose parents/carers live in the Heywood and Middleton Deanery or the Rochdale Deanery with priority given to those who live closest to the Academy	134
7. Any other children	0
<b>Total places offered</b>	<b>180</b>
Published Admission Number	180
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 2.345 miles and was calculated as a direct straight-line distance using the Local Authority’s GIS system.

## How the available places were offered – St Cuthbert’s Roman Catholic High School, a Voluntary Academy

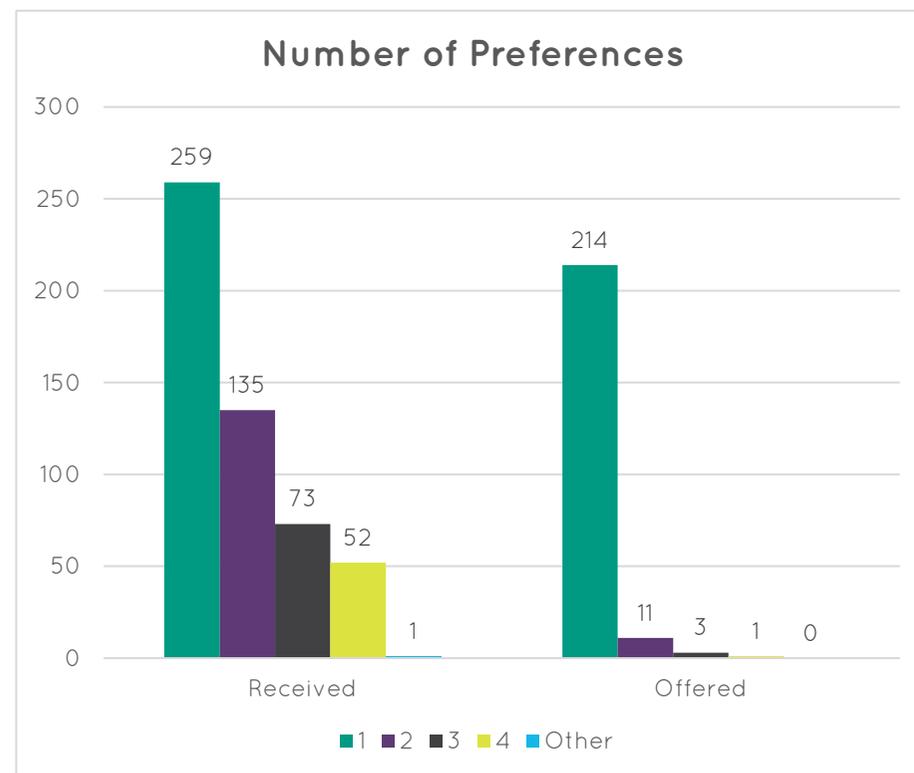
Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	5
1. Roman-Catholic Looked After Children (LAC) and IAPLAC (Internationally adopted previously Looked After Children) and adopted children previously in care	0
2. Roman-Catholic children with a sibling attending the school at the time of admission	20
3. Roman Catholic children living in a contributory parish and attending an associated primary school	33
4. Roman Catholic children living in a contributory parish and attending a Catholic primary school	0
5. Other Roman Catholic children living in contributory parishes	0
6. Roman Catholic children not living in a contributory parish and attending an associated primary school	0
7. Other Roman Catholic children	3
8. Non-Catholic Looked After Children and IAPLAC children	0
9. Non-Catholic children with siblings attending the school at the time of admission	35
10. Non-Catholic children attending other associated Catholic primary schools	25
11. Any other children	52
Out of Preference referral offers	15
Total places offered	188
Published Admission Number	210
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	22



All children who expressed a preference for this school were offered a place where required.

## How the available places were offered – Wardle Academy

Criteria	Number of places offered
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names this school	11
1. Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Looked After Children (LAC, PLAC and IAPLAC)	2
2. Social and Medical need	0
3. Siblings	83
4. Children eligible for the service premium	3
5. Children from Trust primary schools	68
6. Children from partner primary schools	73
7. Children of staff	0
8. Distance from school	0
Total places offered	240
Published Admission Number	240
Number of remaining vacancies as at 3 March 2025	0



The distance calculated for the final child offered a place at this school was 2.296 miles and was calculated as a direct straight-line distance using the Local Authority's GIS system.

## Appealing a decision

If you have not been offered a place at your preferred school, at this stage, the Local Authority, Governing Body, Head Teacher or a Councillor cannot amend the offer of a school place unless a 'casual vacancy' becomes available. Only an Independent Appeal Panel has that power.

Examples of when a casual vacancy may become available are where a child who has been offered a place at the school is subsequently offered a place at a higher-ranked preference school via a waiting list or an appeal, is allocated at a place at an Independent School (where the admission procedure is different from that used for mainstream schools as they are not involved in the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme) or moves out of the area.

If a casual vacancy becomes available, it will be offered to the highest-ranked child on the waiting list for the school. An explanation of how the waiting list works is provided on page 26 of this booklet.

If you have not been offered a place at a school of your preference, you have the right to appeal this decision to an independent appeal panel.

You may submit an appeal for any school at which you applied but your preference was rejected. However, if you wish to submit an appeal for more than one school, you are required to appeal separately regarding each decision.

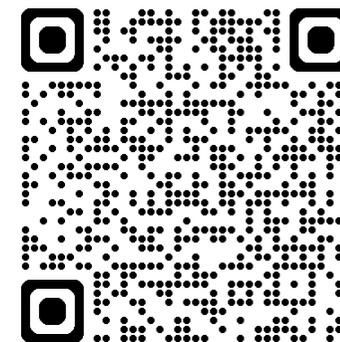
### How to submit an appeal

Appeals must be submitted in writing. If the school at which you would like to appeal is located within the Rochdale Borough, you can submit an appeal online by visiting [www.rochdale.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/schoolappeals). You can also access the online appeal form by scanning the QR code on this page.

### Appeal deadline

Your appeal must be submitted by **28 April 2025** or, if you have applied late, your appeal must be submitted within 20 school days of the date on which you were notified of the outcome of your application.

Any appeals submitted after this date will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for appeals (28 April 2025) or within 30 school days of being submitted, whichever is the later date.



## Schools in other local authorities

Unlike when you apply for a place where you are required to submit your application to the local authority in which you reside, appeals are submitted to the local authority where the school is located. If the school you wish to appeal for is located in a different borough, you should check with that local authority for details of their appeals procedure.

### Contact details for neighbouring local authorities:

#### **Bolton Council**

01204 333333

[admissions@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@bolton.gov.uk)

[www.bolton.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/admissions)

#### **Bury Council**

0161 253 6474

[admissions@bury.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@bury.gov.uk)

[www.bury.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.bury.gov.uk/admissions)

#### **Calderdale Council**

01422 392617

[cyps.admissions@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:cyps.admissions@calderdale.gov.uk)

[www.calderdale.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/admissions)

#### **Lancashire County Council**

01254 220707

[pupil.accesseast@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:pupil.accesseast@lancashire.gov.uk)

[www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

Lancashire Area Office East incorporates the areas of Ribble Valley, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale

#### **Manchester City Council**

0161 245 7166

[school.admissions@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@manchester.gov.uk)

[www.manchester.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/admissions)

#### **Oldham Council**

0161 770 4213

[ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk)

[www.oldham.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/admissions)

#### **Stockport Council**

0161 217 6022

[admissions.support@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.support@stockport.gov.uk)

[www.stockport.gov.uk](http://www.stockport.gov.uk)

#### **Trafford Council**

0161 912 5007 or 0161 912 5080

[school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk)

[www.trafford.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.trafford.gov.uk/admissions)

## **Submitting additional information**

You can provide additional information to support your appeal however you must ensure that any further information is received at least 3 clear working days prior to the hearing date in order that it may be shared with the other parties.

Additional evidence or information received after this date might not be considered at the appeal hearing. The Appeal Panel will decide whether it should be considered taking into account its significance and the effect of a possible need to adjourn the hearing.

It must be noted that it is not possible to ask the head teacher or other representative of the preferred school to provide supporting information for your appeal as this would be deemed as a conflict of interest and the appeals panel are unable to consider such information.

## **What happens after the appeal is submitted**

If you have submitted your appeal by the appeals deadline (28 April 2025), your appeal hearing should take place in May or June 2025. Appeals submitted after this date will be heard within 40 school days of 28 April 2025, or within 30 school days of being submitted, whichever is later.

The Council's Legal and Governance Service arranges appeals for places at schools in Rochdale and they will contact you to let you know the time and date of your appeal. You will be given at least 10 school days' notice of the date of your appeal unless you waive this right.

## **The appeal hearing**

Your appeal will be heard by a panel of three trained volunteers who are completely independent of you, the admission authority, the school you are appealing for, and the local authority. At least one panel member will be a layperson who has no personal experience in the management or provision of education in any school and at least one member will be someone who has experience in education or who has a child registered at a school.

You will be invited to attend the appeal hearing in person and you may also bring a friend or relative with you. Also present at the appeal hearing will be a representative of the admission authority for the school who will be there to present the case for non-admission and to answer any questions you or the appeal panel may have about the admissions process.

The meeting is clerked by a trained member of the Legal and Governance Service. The clerk provides procedural guidance to the appeal panel and they will also take notes of the appeal hearing. The clerk is also present when the panel makes their decision and is the person who will communicate the decision to you after the appeal hearing has taken place.

## Appeal hearing process

Appeal hearings used to be held in person however, since the pandemic, regulations were introduced which enabled appeals to be held virtually via video conference and this is the method that is generally used for all appeal hearings.

As it is a formal process, there is a set procedure that must be followed to ensure that everyone who submits an appeal is given a fair and equitable chance to present their case. As such, each appeal follows this process:

1. Welcome and introductions  
The Chair of the appeal panel will introduce you to the other panel members, the clerk to the appeal panel and the representative of the admission authority. They will also explain the appeals procedure. Although appeal hearings are formal, the Chair will try their best to put you at ease.
2. Case for the admission authority  
The representative of the Admissions Authority will present the case for the Admission Authority, explaining the reasons why it has not been possible to offer your child a place at the school of your preference and what the effect of having further children admitted to the school would be.
3. Questions for the admission authority  
You may ask questions about the Admission Authority's case and the appeal panel members may also ask questions regarding the Admission Authority's case.
4. Case for the appellant  
You will be asked to present your case to the Appeals Panel, explaining your reasons for the appeal and why you would like your child to attend at your preferred school.
5. Questions for the appellant  
The representative of the Admission Authority may ask you questions and the Appeal Panel members may also ask questions regarding your case.
6. Summing up for the admission authority  
The representative of the Admission Authority will sum up their case.
7. Summing up for the appellant  
You will sum up your case.

You and the admission authority representative will then leave the hearing as the appeal panel must decide whether to uphold or reject the appeal. Only the appeal panel makes the decision, the clerk is present and will record the decision but is not involved in the decision making process.

## After the appeal hearing – decision making

Once all submitted appeals for your preferred school have been heard, the appeal panel will convene to decide whether or not to uphold your appeal. Please note that where there are multiple appeals submitted for a school, the hearings may be held over multiple days so the decision about your appeal may not necessarily be made on the day of your appeal.

When making a decision about whether or not to uphold your appeal, there is a two-stage process the appeal panel must follow.

### Stage 1 – examining the decision to refuse admission

The panel must initially consider that

- a) Whether the admission arrangements comply with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code and Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; and
- b) Whether the admission arrangements were correctly and impartially applied in your case.

The panel must also decide whether the admission of additional children would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

If the panel finds that the admission arrangements were not followed correctly or don't comply with admission law, and your child would have been offered a place if they were, or if admitting more children wouldn't prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, they **must** approve your appeal and offer your child a place.

If the panel finds that the admission arrangements were followed correctly and do comply with admissions law, or if they weren't but your child still wouldn't have been offered a place, and admitting more children would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, they must move to Stage 2.

### Stage 2 – balancing the arguments

The panel needs to weigh the negative impact on the school against the reasons the appellant wants their child to attend. They should consider what the preferred school offers that others don't. If they consider that the appellant's reasons for admission of their child are stronger than the negative impact of admitting further pupils, the panel should uphold the appeal.

## After the appeal hearing – notification of the decision

Once all appeal hearings have taken place, the appeal panel will decide whether or not to uphold your appeal. Only the appeal panel is involved in the decision making process. The clerk will be present and will record the decision, The clerk is also the person who will advise you of the outcome of your appeal. This will be no later than 5 school days after your appeal has been heard, unless there is a good reason.

Decisions made by an appeal panel are binding on all parties. If your appeal is upheld (allowed), your child will be offered a place at the school who will be required to admit your child, even if this means exceeding their published admission number to do so.

If your appeal is refused, your child may remain on the waiting list for places as long as one is maintained but there is no right to a second appeal in respect of the same school in the same academic year, unless in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application because of a significant and material change in circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

## Frequently asked questions

### **On what grounds can I appeal the decision?**

There are no limits to the grounds on which you can base your appeal however you are advised to consider whether or not your case would be strong enough to outweigh any prejudice that would be caused by having further pupils admitted above the school's admission number.

However, you should remember that you are appealing the decision not to offer your child a place at your preferred school, rather than the school place your child has been offered

### **What if the school I would like my child to attend is located in another local authority?**

This process only relates to schools within the Rochdale Borough. If your application was for a school in an Authority other than Rochdale, you should contact the Local Authority where the school is located for details of how places have been allocated and for their appeals procedure

### **When will my appeal be heard?**

If your appeal is submitted before 28 April 2025, your appeal hearing should take place during May or June 2025.

Appeals submitted after 28 April 2025 will be heard within 40 school days of 28 April 2025 or within 30 school days of the appeal being submitted, whichever is the later date.

### **How much notice do I receive of the appeal hearing?**

Appellants will be sent notification of their appeal hearing along with a copy of the case for the Admission Authority at least 10 clear school days in advance of the hearing.

### **Do I have to attend the hearing?**

No. You will be invited to attend the appeal in person but you do not have to attend. It should be noted however if you do not attend the hearing, the Panel will make its decision based on the information you provided on your appeal form and you will not have the opportunity to elaborate on your appeal, ask questions of the admission authority or answer questions relating to your case.

### **Who can attend the appeal hearing?**

The appellant is invited to attend and you may bring a friend or relative to support you. However, representatives of the school you are appealing for are not able to attend the appeal or provide supporting information as it will result in a conflict of interest and the appeal panel is not able to consider such supporting information.

### **If I accept the alternate school place offered to my child, will it affect my chances at the appeal for the school of my preference?**

No. Although the appeal panel may be aware of the alternate place offered to your child, they are there to consider the appeal for and circumstances at your preferred school and the decision to accept the alternate place will not have a bearing on the decision of the panel.

It is recommended that you accept the offer made so that your child has that place guaranteed in case your appeal is not successful.

### **Can I provide additional information in support of my appeal?**

Yes. This should be provided when you submit the appeal form.

If you wish to submit further evidence which was not included with the initial appeal, you must make sure that it is received at least 3 clear working days prior to the hearing date. Any additional evidence or information received after this date might not be considered at the appeal hearing. The Appeal Panel must decide whether it should be considered taking into account its significance and the effect of a possible need to adjourn the hearing.

## **I've lost my child's school admissions appeal and want to complain. What can I do?**

The local government ombudsman can investigate complaints that an appeal against the refusal of a place at a maintained school has been mal-administered. Maladministration covers issues, such as failure to follow correct procedures or failure to act independently and fairly. The ombudsman can recommend a remedy, e.g. that the appeal is reheard, but they cannot overturn the appeal panel's decision.

The Education Funding Agency investigates complaints about appeals for academies and free schools.

### **Waiting lists**

Every admission authority must maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for any application where admission has been refused. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the waiting list must be maintained until at least 31 December. Beyond this date, we recommend you contact the admission authority for the school to see if they will continue to hold a waiting list.

Wherever an application for admission is rejected, an appellant may request that their child is added to the waiting list for places. Waiting lists must be maintained in accordance with the published admission criteria for the school and priority must not be given to children based on the date their application was submitted. As such, your position on a waiting list can go up and down as more applications are processed.

The waiting list process is completely separate from the appeals process, you will not improve your chances of being offered a place from the waiting list if you submit an appeal.

## Glossary of terms

### **Admission Authority**

The admission authority is who is responsible for allocating places at the school. The admission authority defines the admission policy, decides in which order the places should be allocated and maintains the waiting list. A representative of the admission authority will be present at an appeal hearing to present the case for the school.

### **Published Admission Number (PAN)**

The Published Admission Number is the number of children that are to be admitted to a school in a given year. The number depends on the amount and type of accommodation available at the school and is worked out using instructions set out by the Department for Education. It is agreed before the admissions process begins and normally the school will not offer more places than this number.

### **Oversubscription**

Oversubscription is what occurs where a school receives more applications for places than there are places available at the school. Where a school is oversubscribed, the places available within the PAN are offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

Often known as or referred to as the Admissions Policy, the oversubscription criteria are the published criteria used when allocating the available places at the school. Each admission authority has its own criteria and they are all published on the school's website and detailed in the "Transferring to Secondary School" booklet.

### **Waiting list**

The waiting list is a list of all pupils to whom it was not possible to offer a place. It is maintained by the Admission Authority and will be held for at least the duration of the first term of admission.

Places from waiting lists will be offered if a *casual vacancy* becomes available.

### **Casual vacancy**

A casual vacancy is a place that becomes available at a school after the initial places at the school have been offered. Casual vacancies are allocated from the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria for the school.

### **Other preferences**

Although Rochdale LA limits the number of preferences to be expressed to a maximum of four, other neighbouring Local Authorities allow parents to express more preferences.

**Out of Preference Referrals**

The Local Authority will always try to offer your child a place at a school of your preference; sometimes it is not always possible. In these instances, the LA will allocate your child a place at the nearest school to your home address that had a place available when the allocation of places procedure was completed. This is known as an Out of Preference referral.

## School Organisation and Development Team

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