Branston Church of England Infant Academy

Admissions Policy 2026/27

'We welcome children of all faiths and none'

Policy Co-ordinator: Headteacher/Business and Operations Partner
Original Policy Dated: 2017
Presented to Local Council: December 2024

'The Best we can Be'

Branston C of E Infant Academy

A member of LAAT (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust)

Admission Arrangements for 2026 Intake

The Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (hereafter, LAAT or Trust) is the admission authority for this school. They are ultimately responsible for setting the admission number and determining the oversubscription criteria that apply when applications exceed places. The LAAT delegates this responsibility to the Academy Committee but monitors and advises where necessary. Our policy was last determined in February 2023.

Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school in 2026 is 45

Arrangements for applications for places in the normal year of intake will be made in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements.

Lincolnshire residents can apply online via the parent portal at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions, by telephone, or by requesting a paper application form by telephoning 01522 782030. Residents in other areas must apply through their home local authority. Community and voluntary controlled schools will use the Lincolnshire County Council co-ordinated admissions scheme published online for these applications and the relevant Local Authority will make the offers of places on our behalf as required by the School Admissions Code (2021).

Places will be allocated first to those who make an application by the admissions deadline, before other children are considered.

Attending a nursery or a pre-school does not give any priority within the oversubscription criteria for a place in a school. Parents must make a separate application for the transfer from nursery to a primary or infant school. Parents must also make a separate application for the transfer from infant to junior or primary school.

In accordance with relevant legislation, the allocation of places for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named on the plan will take place first. Remaining places will be allocated in accordance with this policy.

The intended overall effect of the proposed oversubscription criteria is to maximise the likelihood that local children will gain places at their local school in an oversubscribed year but this is not guaranteed.

The oversubscription criteria are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie-breaker is used.

Definitions of terms indicated by numbers are given separately below.

A. Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (1).

B. Children with a brother or sister attending the school at the time of application, or who will be attending the school at the expected time of admission. In addition, in the case of infant schools, a brother or sister

attending Branston Junior Academy, or who will be attending Branston Junior Academy at the expected time of admission (2).

C. Children for whom this school is the nearest school to the home address (3a, 3b, 4).

D. Distance of the home address to the school. Places will be allocated to those living nearest to the school first. Measured by straight line distance (3b, 4)

Tiebreaker

If it is not possible to distinguish between one or more applicants for the last remaining place(s) then a lottery of those children will be drawn by an independent person, not employed by the school or working in the Local Authority Children's Services Directorate to allocate the last remaining place(s).

Notes relating to the over subscription criteria

(1) Looked after and previously looked after children

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.

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). 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's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.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. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

(2) Brother or Sister

Included in this criterion are:

- a brother or sister who shares the same biological parents.
- a half-brother, half-sister, step-brother or step-sister.
- A foster sibling.
- a legally adopted child, a child legally adopted by a biological or step-parent.

(3a) Nearest school

The nearest school is found by measuring the straight line distance from the child's home address to all state funded mainstream schools admitting children in the relevant year group.

Distances are measured in a straight line and are calculated to three decimal places (for example 1.543 miles) by the Lincolnshire County Council school admissions team, using Servelec's "Synergy" system. Information about the address used for each application is taken from the Ordnance Survey AddressBase database, which provides 12-figure X and Y coordinates for each individual property. Details of which school is the closest school to your home address can be found at Find your nearest school – Lincolnshire County Council

(3b) Home Address

The home address is considered as the address where the child lives for the majority of term time with a parent (as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996).

Where a child lives normally during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address accepted for the purposes of school admissions will be the one where the child spends the majority of term time. If a parent can show that their child spends an equal amount of time at two addresses during school term time with a parent, they can choose which address to use on the application.

If a parent has more than one home, we will accept the address where the parent and child normally live for the majority of the school term time as the home address.

We do not take into an account an intention to move when considering a home address unless this is for members of the UK armed forces or a returning crown servant as outlined in the relevant section below.

4) Distance criterion

The nearest school is found by measuring the straight line distance from the child's home address to all state funded mainstream schools admitting children in the relevant year group.

Distances are measured in a straight line and are calculated to three decimal places (for example 1.543 miles) by the Lincolnshire County Council school admissions team, using Servelec's "Synergy" system. Information about the address used for each application is taken from the Ordnance Survey AddressBase database, which provides 12-figure X and Y coordinates for each individual property. Details of which school is the closest school to your home address can be found at Find your nearest school – Lincolnshire County Council

Other Information

Twins and other Siblings from a Multiple Birth

If twins or multiple birth children are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children. Multiple birth children are 'excepted pupils' to infant class limits if allocated in this way.

Brothers and Sisters in the same Year Group

If brothers and sisters in the same year group are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children or when this would breach infant class size limits. Siblings in the same year group are not 'excepted pupils' to infant class limits.

Reserve List

For admission into the intake years (reception at infant and primary schools and year 3 at junior schools) where

the school is oversubscribed the councillors will keep a waiting list – called a reserve list. If your child is refused a place at a school they are automatically added to the reserve list of the school, unless you have been offered a higher preference school. This list is held in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and therefore names can move up and down the list depending on the number of other applicants and where they are ranked against the oversubscription criteria. No account is taken of the amount of time a child has been on the list when allocating places.

For the intake year the list is held by the Local Authority School Admissions Team until the end of August. After this the school admissions code requires that schools keep the reserve list until the end of the school year.

The school will clear the reserve list at the end of each school year. If you wish your child to be placed on the reserve list after August of the admitting year or after the list has been cleared at the end of the year, you should contact the school directly.

If your circumstances change you must let the school know so that they can rank the list accurately and allocate places in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If you do not wish to be added to the reserve list you must inform the school. If it is before the 1st September of the admitting year you should also inform Lincolnshire County Council School Admissions Team.

Appeals

In all cases where a place is refused at a school the applicant will be informed of their right of appeal to an independent panel. The decision of the independent panel is binding on all parties. Details of how to appeal a decision to refuse admission will be communicated to the applicant at the time of the refusal and will also be available on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

In-Year Admissions

Arrangements for applications for places in-year will be made in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council's coordinated admissions arrangements. Applications should be made via Lincolnshire County Council or directly to the school. In the event of there beingmore applications than places available, the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine which places to offer.

If it is necessary to refuse a place, then you will be informed of your right of appeal. Parents can apply online at School admissions – Lincolnshire County Council or call 01522 782030 for a paper form.

Fair Access Protocol

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children who live in the home local authority, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. Children allocated under fair access protocols will take precedence over those on a waiting list. Branston C of E Infant Academy will participate in Lincolnshire County Councils fair access protocol.

Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that an application has been made based on fraudulent or misleading information, for example if a false address was given which resulted in an offer of a place to a child which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

In order to support the military covenant aimed at removing disadvantage for UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces), and Crown Servants returning from abroad the following arrangements will apply;

If an application is supported by an official letter declaring a posting and a relation date then an intention to move to a confirmed address or quartering within the UK will be accepted for a child for the purposes of implementing the oversubscription criteria.

Where an application is not supported by an official letter declaring a posting and relocation date, or is not being made due to a new posting then the child's current address will be used to examine the application against the oversubscription criteria until the child is formally resident in the new address.

Proof of intended occupation of the residential address such as mortgage statement, exchange of contracts or signed tenancy agreement will be required. For applicants participating in the Future Accommodation Model trial, a letter accepting an address under the scheme will be accepted if a signed tenancy agreement cannot be provided.

An offer may be withdrawn if a child does not reside at the address listed on the application form if the school is oversubscribed and use of an incorrect address has resulted in a place being denied to another child who would otherwise have been offered the place.

If a confirmed address cannot be provided and a family have provided the required proof of posting, a unit postal address will be accepted for the purposes of operating the oversubscription criteria. This will be for the base to which the parent has been posted.

In all cases where an applicant is considered after national offer day of the admitting year and parents can demonstrate that the child is a child of a crown servant returning from abroad or is a child of a serving member of the armed forces, the Governors will consider whether to offer a place at a school even if the school has reached its official PAN. When making the decision whether to offer over PAN the Governors will consider the circumstances of each case including,

- If the applicant would have been offered a place had they applied on time in the admissions round of the year of entry.
- Whether there is any child on the reserve list with higher priority under the oversubscription criteria.
- Whether admission of a further student would prejudice the efficient education and efficient use of resources and this prejudice would be excessive.

The Academy Committee have discretion to admit above the admission number in these circumstances but they are not obliged to do so. If a place is refused, parents will be informed of their right of appeal.

Deferring admission and part time attendance

Schools provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Where a child has been offered a place:

- That child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- The child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made, whichever is the sooner;
- Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

- Parents interested in deferring admission or arranging part-time attendance must contact the school to discuss this.
- Parents of summer born children deferring admission until the child starts Year 1 must reapply through the In-year process and risk losing the offered school place if the school is oversubscribed or becomes oversubscribed in the school year.

Admission of Children outside of their Normal Age Group

Children are typically allocated places according to their chronological age but parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced issues such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than Year 1 in September 2026. Parents wishing to make these requests must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow.

It is important for parents to note that they will have the opportunity and responsibility to provide whatever evidence they wish to support their request.

Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned taking into account:

- the parent's views;
- any available 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;
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the head teacher of the school concerned
- If the child enters school for the first time at statutory school age, would it be in the child's best interest to join Reception or Year 1.

Parents and carers will be informed of the decision in writing setting out clearly the reasons for the decision. In the case of those requesting delayed admission. If this is agreed, the parents and carers must decide whether to withdraw their application and apply in the next admissions round or proceed with an offer for 2026 admission. If the request is refused, parents must decide whether to accept the offered place for Reception 2026 or refuse it and make an in-year application for Year 1 in the summer term.

The decision made by our school is not binding on any other school and therefore schools may come to different decisions based on the information submitted.