

HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS – 2026/27 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into year 7 at secondary schools in September 2026.
- 2.0** Following consultation Halton Local Authority has determined the admission arrangements for the statutorily required co-ordinated scheme which will apply to all secondary schools in the authority's area for the September 2026 intake.
- 3.0** The Scheme will apply to the following schools in the table below. The table also details the proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) for each school, and the type (category) of school:

School	PAN	Type
The Grange	180	Academy
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic High	280	Voluntary Aided
Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic and Church of England Academy	120	Academy
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	180	Academy
Ormiston Chadwick Academy	190	Academy
The Heath School	240	Academy
Wade Deacon High School	330	Academy
Sandymoor Ormiston Academy	120	Academy

It should be noted that at the time of writing some schools may be in the process of determining their PAN for 2026, providing they have consulted in accordance with the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code.

Each Academy School has a Trust who is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for its school. The Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools are the admission authorities for these schools.

Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools are required to undertake their own consultation regarding admission arrangements.

- 4.0** From September 2025 Halton residents will be given the opportunity to complete a common preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 secondary schools using this form for a school place in September 2026. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfE School Admissions Code. This form will be available on-line and parents/carers are required to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Parents/carers should only complete one application form and preferences may include Halton schools and schools maintained by other LAs. Paper forms are available by request only.
- 5.0** Admission authorities i.e. governing bodies for voluntary aided and academy schools **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code. All admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within an equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered, if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place, the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place, parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
- 6.0 APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026**
- 6.1** Halton LA publishes online an "Admission to Secondary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). A letter and information leaflet will be issued to all year 6 pupils attending Halton Primary Schools and Halton resident pupils who attend schools in other LAs, advising parents of the online booklet and application process, and will be available at the Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the Council's website, and from the Admissions Team. The booklet will be published online at the start of the Autumn Term, **September 2025**, and the on-line application system will be available at the same time.
- 6.2** The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order (regardless of which LA the school preferences are for). Applications from Halton resident parents, either on-line submissions or hard copy (by request only), must be returned no later than **31st October 2025**.

- 6.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring LAs but **must** complete their preferences on the Halton form. Halton LA will work with its neighbouring authorities: Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley, and St Helen's, together with any other admission authority where a parent has applied for a school place.
- 6.4** On-Line Admissions: LAs are required to have a facility for parents to apply on-line for a secondary school place. This facility is in place for Halton residents via Halton Borough Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. This is the preferred method of application. Residents who cannot apply online may request a paper copy of the preference form from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team.
- 6.5** Halton LA will record all preferences on the admissions database, including those received from neighbouring LAs whose children are seeking a place at a Halton School and will forward, week beginning 10th November 2025, details of all first, second, and third preferences for admission to aided schools and academies, for consideration in accordance with their published admission criteria.
- 6.6** The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools and academies should note that they must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admission criteria and **must** place in ranked order, against their criteria, the details of all pupils applying to their school, and must return the ranked list to the Admissions Team by Friday 5th December 2025.
- 6.7** When all preferences have been considered and allocations finalised, Halton residents will be able to view their allocated school place online on Monday 2nd March 2026, together with details of the appeal process if applicable. Letters advising of the allocated school place will be posted to parents submitting a paper copy of the preference form on this date. Parents/carers who applied online will also receive an email confirming the allocated place.
- 6.8** If none of the parent's preferences can be met, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school, with places available, to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect the parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

7.0 EARLY AGE TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Children of exceptional ability and maturity can be considered for transfer to secondary schools one year earlier than normal. It is the responsibility of the Head teachers of primary/junior schools to put

forward the names of any pupils whom they consider are physically, intellectually, and emotionally suitable to benefit from such a transfer, and who might be educationally disadvantaged by remaining in the primary sector for a further year. However, as a first step, head teachers will discuss possible candidates with parents, the school's link adviser, and the Educational Psychologist. Parents who consider that early transfer might benefit their child should discuss this with the head teacher.

8.0 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community schools received after the closing date will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place for all those applications received on time. If an application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) of preference are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 14 below.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with. Late applications **must** be made on a paper copy of the preference form which can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team. The online application system is not available after the deadline for application, **31st October 2025**.

9.0 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list. It should be noted that the online application process will cease on the closing date, so parents/carers will need to request and complete a paper copy of the application form.

10.0 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 31st October 2025 and before 14th January 2026, parents must notify the LA. The LA may require documentary evidence to confirm this change of address. For changes made after 14th January 2026, the address used for the initial allocation of places will be the permanent place of residence provided in application before this date. A new address may be submitted for purposes of waiting list position if required and documentary evidence will be necessary to confirm this change of address.

11.0 CHILDREN WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLAN (EHCP)

Children who have an Education, Health & Care Plan will be allocated a place at the school named in the Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). Where a child with an EHCP is allocated a place this will reduce the number of remaining places available to allocate within the advertised oversubscription criteria and PAN. All placements of children with an EHCP will be determined by the SEND Team and parents of children with an EHCP should discuss this with their child's SEND Coordinator, as an application does not need to be made.

12.0 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

The admission authority of any school in Halton LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

13.0 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for all oversubscribed secondary schools. The Local Authority, who are responsible for coordinating admissions, will maintain the waiting lists for oversubscribed schools and, if a place becomes available, will liaise with the relevant schools before reallocating any available place. Secondary schools must not reallocate any places, this is the responsibility of the Local Authority for the secondary transfer process. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria for the relevant school. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received up to the end of the Autumn Term (**31st December 2026**) will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as an in-year admission and the in-year admission process will be applied.

14.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel. Appeals will be conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. The decisions of independent appeals panels are legally binding on all parties.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools, Trust and Academy schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal. The deadline to submit an appeal will be Tuesday 31st March 2026.

15.0 SCHOOLS WITH SIXTH FORMS

Each school with a sixth form **must** include in its consultation paper the arrangements they propose to use to allocate places in Year 12. It is not intended that the LA will co-ordinate admissions to sixth form, therefore applications must be sent to the relevant admission authority (i.e. the school) for consideration. Parents and children above compulsory school age have the right to make separate applications for more than one school.

Each school **must** set an admission number for its sixth form, and should say in its published information what the anticipated sixth form capacity will be. However, the published admission number **must** only relate to those being admitted to the school for the first time and should be based on an estimate of the minimum number of external candidates likely to be admitted. It is not necessary for children already in the school to apply formally for places in year 12, but the admission arrangements **must** give details of any entry requirements. Children in care **must** be given highest priority within the criteria, schools **must not** interview children or their families for entry to year 12, although meetings can be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements. Entry **must not** be dependent on attendance, behaviour record, or perceptions of attitude or motivation. Where the admission authority has not admitted up to its PAN it cannot refuse to admit applicants who have met the minimum entry. Any other applicant refused must be given the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

TIMETABLE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026 SECONDARY ADMISSIONS

SEPTEMBER 2025 – APPLICATION PROCESS COMMENCES

31ST OCTOBER 2025 CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

WEEK COMMENCING 10th NOVEMBER 2025 LA PROVIDES DETAILS OF ALL 1ST 2ND AND 3RD PREFERENCES TO VA SCHOOLS

BETWEEN 10th NOVEMBER AND 5TH DECEMBER 2025 ADMISSION COMMITTEES OF OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST MEET TO CONSIDER ALL APPLICATIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

NO LATER THAN 5TH DECEMBER 2025 OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST HAVE RANKED ALL APPLICATIONS IN CRITERIA ORDER & SUBMITTED THIS LIST TO THE LA, FOLLOWING WHICH INTER-LA EXCHANGE OF DATA WILL ALSO OCCUR

PARENTS/CARERS HAVE UNTIL 14TH JANUARY 2026 TO UPDATE ADDRESS FOR APPLICATION AND PROVIDE SUITABLE EVIDENCE THAT CHILD IS RESIDING AT THAT ADDRESS BY THIS DATE

2ND MARCH 2026 ONLINE NOTIFICATION OF OFFER MADE TO PARENTS APPLYING ONLINE. LETTER POSTED TO PARENTS SUBMITTING A PAPER COPY OF THE PREFERENCE FORM

31st MARCH 2026 - DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO ENSURE IT IS HEARD WITHIN THE ADMISSION AUTHORITY'S TIMEFRAME FOR APPEALS