



## **GARSTANG COMMUNITY ACADEMY**

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# *Garstang Community Academy* An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

## **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026 / 2027**

***Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) is the admission authority for the academies within the Trust and the allocation of school places has been delegated to the Local Authority School Admissions Team, in line with the FCAT admissions criteria.***

Garstang Community Academy operates an equal preference scheme and welcomes all children.

The planned admission number for 2026/27 is 174

### **Application Procedures**

Applications must be made using the Common Application Form which will be made available by the Local Authority's School Admissions Team. Applications can also be made online via the Local Authority's website: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/>

Applications must be made direct to the Local Authority no later than **31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**.

All places will be offered by the Local Authority's School Admissions Team on behalf of FCAT within the secondary co-ordinated admissions scheme operational in the Local Authority's area.

You must apply to the authority where you live. If you are unsure, for example if you live near council boundaries, please check with the Local Authority's Admissions Team. You can apply for a secondary school in any area, but you must apply to your home authority.

All places will be offered by the Local Authority on behalf of FCAT, within the secondary coordinated admissions scheme operational in the Local Authority's area. The national offer date for admissions to Year 7 will be **1<sup>st</sup> March 2026**.

### **Transfer outside of the normal age group**

Where a child has been educated outside of their normal age group until the transition point into secondary education, the agreed deferral by one admissions authority does not apply to other admissions authorities. If you would like your child to remain outside of their age group, you will need to apply once again. It is possible that the new admissions authority will decide that it is in your child's best interests to return to their normal year group and so your child would miss a school year.

An application should be made when the child's normal year group are making applications for a school place. This means that a summer born child that started in reception a year later than is usual would apply for a secondary school place and for an out of year group place when they are in Year 5 rather than Year 6.

Parents should read the following government guidance prior to making an application: [DfE Summer Born Children](#). Application and further guidance can be sought from the appropriate local authority school admissions teams.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plan where Garstang Community Academy is named, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. **Looked after children and previously looked after children.** This includes any "looked after child" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. This criterion will also apply to children who were previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as they have been adopted.
2. **Medical, Social or Welfare reasons.** Where there are exceptional serious, sensitive and compelling circumstances that are directly relevant to the academy, priority may be given. Professional evidence to demonstrate exceptional or compelling reasons why only this academy can cater for a particular child's needs on any of these grounds must be provided with the application. The evidence must set out the reasons and level of risk to the child or family and why the academy is the only suitable school; plus any difficulties which would arise if the child had to attend an alternative school.

It should be noted that all schools can make provision for special educational needs, and can also manage common conditions e.g. asthma, epilepsy and diabetes.

Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to the academy will be considered. Priority will be given to the child only if the submitted evidence unequivocally proves the circumstances and demonstrates why any alternative school would be unsuitable. Parents are responsible for providing the evidence.

3. **Children who will have a sibling** in attendance at Garstang Community Academy at the time of transfer. The term "sibling" includes stepchildren, half brothers and sisters and adopted and foster children who are living with the same family at the same address.
4. **Children of staff employed by Garstang Community Academy:** this applies to all staff, full and part time who have been employed by the Academy for two or more years, or who have been recruited meet a skills shortage.
5. **Distance:** All other pupils, with priority given to those that live nearest to Garstang Community Academy. The measurement will be taken in a straight line from the

centre point of the residence to the centre point of the Academy, using the Local Authority's geographical information system (GIS). Where a child lives with one parent for part of the week and another for the rest of the week only one address will be accepted for a school admission application. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of school days (Monday to Friday). Proof of residence may be requested at any time throughout the admissions process.

### **Tie Break**

Where there is oversubscription within any of the determined criteria, then priority for places will be decided in a straight line distance measure, (home to academy,) using the local authority's measuring system. The nearest to the academy will have priority for admission.

**There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for external applicants refused admission. Parents have 20 school days to compile and lodge hearings.**

### **Late Applications**

Applications received after the published closing date will be treated as late applications.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate evidence is provided, will those applications received after the closing date (but before offers of places have been made) be considered concurrently with those applications received on time.

The circumstances which might justify a late application include, but are not restricted to, the illness of a single parent/carer which might have reasonably impinged upon their ability to submit an application on time or where a family has just moved into the area.

### **Change of Preference**

You can only request a change of preference, in writing, prior to the closing date.

Once an application has been submitted and the closing date has passed, a change of preference can only be actioned if there is a significant change in circumstances, i.e. a house move.

It may not be possible to action any changes after the offer date in March.

### **Fraudulent Applications**

If it is found that a child has been allocated a place due to misleading information having been provided, for example an incorrect address, then the offer of a place may be withdrawn and the offer of an alternative school will be made by the Local Authority.

## **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists will be set up in the week following the notification being sent to parents. As places become available, the child highest on the waiting list will be offered the place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted.

Children will be placed on the waiting lists using the oversubscription criteria. Late applicants will be slotted into the list according to where they meet the oversubscription criteria. Therefore a child who moves into the area later can have a higher priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time.

Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

The School Admissions Team will maintain the Waiting List on behalf of the Academy until the end of the Autumn Term.

## **Appeal Arrangements**

All appeals will be co-ordinated by Lancashire County Council in conjunction with the Academy.

Where the Academy Trust is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002.

You should contact the School Admissions Team to request an appeal form. You will have the opportunity to submit your case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present your case. You will receive 10 school days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

## **In Year Applications**

If you move into the area after the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, or wish to transfer your child from another school, you must complete an in-year application form, available on request from the Academy.