

# The Rydal Academy

## Admissions Arrangements 2025/2026

The Rydal Academy is a vibrant three form entry primary school.

The school is housed in an expansive building with a bright, purposeful learning environment. The school benefits from extensive grounds including a multi-use games area, nature garden, allotment, Early Years outdoor learning area, field, outdoor classroom and two playgrounds

The whole school community is passionate about pupils enjoying and engaging in their learning while having the resilience and passion to succeed. We believe that every child has the right to the very best education. We want to give each child the opportunity and skills to improve themselves and contribute fully to their community. In return, we expect each child to work hard, be tolerant and show respect for others.

We want whoever joins us, in whatever capacity, to feel that they belong to a happy, caring, hardworking and proud school community.

### **How to apply for a place**

The school will admit up to 90 students into the Reception cohort. Applications for places will be made in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated admission arrangements and must be made on the Primary School Application (PSA) form in the back of the Local Authority's Guide for Parents or by applying online on the Darlington Borough Council website.

In determining admissions, priority will be given to those applications where the Primary School Application (PSA) is received by the published deadline. Applications received after the deadline ('late' applications) will then be considered.

### **Admissions Policy**

The Governing Body of The Rydal Academy is the Admissions Authority for this school.

After the admission of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, where The Rydal Academy is named on the plan, and where the number of applicants is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below in the following order:

#### **(i) Looked After & Previously Looked After & Internationally Adopted previously Looked After Children**

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children but immediately after becoming looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Looked After & Previously Looked After Children are defined as:

- 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):
- An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002

- A child arrangement order is an order outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989
- A special guardianship order is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians
- A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society

#### **(ii) Medical Reasons**

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional practitioner (see definition)

#### **(iv) Family Links**

Children who have a brother or sister already attending The Rydal Academy and who are expected to be on the roll at the time of admission (see definition).

#### **(v) Children from The Rydal Academy Nursery School**

Children who are on roll at and have attended The Rydal Academy Nursery School for a minimum of one term.

#### **(vi) Distance**

Children who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe (lighting at regular intervals and paved/tarmacked). This will be based on the child's permanent home address. (To remain consistent the Local Authority uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances).

#### **Measurements**

For applications which require a measurement to be undertaken in order to apply the oversubscription criteria or to determine a tie-break situation, the Local Authority on behalf of the Academy will measure the distance using a Geographical Information System (GIS). This ensures consistency for all measurements. The main school gate is determined by the Local Authority in agreement with the Academy.

#### **Tie-Break**

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, using a GIS and may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer.

#### **Multiple Births**

For multiple births where only 1 place remains, infant classes will be allowed to exceed the statutory limit where the 31<sup>st</sup> child is a twin or from multiple births. The 'excepted' pupil will be allowed for the time in Key Stage 1 or until the class numbers fall back to current class size limit.

### **Medical Criterion - definition**

Children with exceptional medical factors directly relating to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a professional practitioner. If you state a preference for The Rydal Academy and indicate your reason for doing so is 'medical', then you are required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if your child had to travel to another school. Permission from parents must be given to share this information.

### **Family Links - definition**

Children have a family link if:

- They are half or full brother or sister;
- They are adoptive brother or sister;
- They are a foster brother or sister;
- Their carers are married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household;
- They are children of the same household (e.g. carers have special guardianship/Child Arrangement Order)

### **Home Address**

The home address is used for applying the admissions criteria. This means that when you state your school preferences you must give the home address of the child at the time of application, where they mainly reside Monday to Friday. You must not give the address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of your child. For parent/carers who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside. If the main address has changed temporarily, for example where a parent resides with extended family during a period of sickness or takes up temporary accommodation due to building works/renovation, then the home address remains that at which the parent was resident before the period of temporary residence began. However, if you have sold your property (exchanged contracts) and have moved into temporary accommodation, you will be required to provide evidence of your situation and a decision will be made based upon the evidence provided. Where there are shared care arrangements, the home address will be where the child lives for the majority of the week Monday to Friday or where a court has determined their home address should be.

### **Waiting Lists**

If your child has been refused admission, a waiting list will be held by the Local Authority. Priority will be given according to the oversubscription criteria stated for this school based on the information provided at the time of application. The waiting list will be open until the end of the Autumn term.

### **Late Applications**

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the home local authority coordinated admissions scheme.

### **In-Year Applications**

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside of the normal admissions round and the child will be admitted where there are available places and/or in conjunction with the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. Applications should be made by contacting the Darlington School Admissions Team on 01325 406333.

Where there are places available but there are more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out in this policy, will be applied. If there are no places available, a parent has a right to appeal.

### **Right of Appeal**

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the Local Authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by contacting Mrs A Galey, Assistant Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy.

### **False Information**

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place, or where a child is already attending the school, the place itself in the first term of attending where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained fraudulently.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group and whether they may naturally fall into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely, they must also take into account the views of the Head Teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

If a parent seeks a place in a year group other than the year that their child would 'normally' be in (i.e. outside of their chronological age), they need to put their request in writing with a clear explanation of why they are making their request, for example their child is gifted and talented, they have missed a significant part of their education due to a medical problem.

Any application will be forwarded to the Head Teacher, The Rydal Academy and will be considered by the Admissions Sub-Committee.

Once a decision has been made the Admission Authority will write to the parent/carers(s) informing them of the decision and setting out reasons for such, if parents do not agree with the decision, they have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the school. This does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group. In this instance parents must complete an In-Year Application Form.