

# **Pele Trust**

# **Admissions Policy**

**(The Duchess's Community High School)**

**2026-27**

## **Admissions Procedure - How and when to apply**

The standard admission points for Pele Trust schools are entry to the primary phase in the Reception year and entry to the secondary phase in Year 7. These places are allocated for the start of the academic year in September.

Northumberland residents should apply through the Northumberland County Council's admissions online portal. The deadline for secondary place applications is 31 October 2025. Applications received after these dates will be classed as late applications and will be processed after all of the applications received on time.

Applications for places in other year groups, or after the start of the academic year, can be made at any time. These are referred to as in-year transfers.

### **Applications for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school must be given admission to that school before other applicants.

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

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group if

- They feel their child is ready to start school early (primary or secondary), or
- They feel their child is not ready to start school (primary or secondary) with their peers.

Requests must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher of the relevant school and include any supporting evidence from relevant professionals. The agreement to accept this request will be made by the Board of Directors; please note that this is not a guarantee of a place in school and a new application must be made for Reception or Year 7 the following year. Applications will be ranked against the Trust's oversubscription criteria for admission.

## **Planned Admission Number (PAN)**

The Board of Directors of Pele Trust is the Admission Authority and is obliged to admit all applicants to a particular school within Pele Trust provided these do not exceed the school's Published Admission Number.

The Published Admission Number of The Duchess's Community High School is **210**.

## **Oversubscription: secondary school admission applications**

The Pele Trust welcomes applications from all students and we are obliged to admit all students provided our Published Admission Number (PAN) for each school is not exceeded. However, where there are places for some, but not all applicants, priority is given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

### **Oversubscription criteria (Pele Trust secondary school)**

Applicable to The Duchess's Community High School

#### **1. Looked After Children**

- a. Children in Public Care (and as deemed under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) including a child who was previously "looked after" but immediately after being "looked after" became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. 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

Note: 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. 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 Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.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. See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

#### **2. Catchment area**

- a. Children living in the catchment area of the school (as defined by Pele Trust) on whose behalf firm evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area by the appropriate admission date. This includes the catchment of Wooler First/Glendale Middle School, which will become Glendale Primary School as part of the Berwick Partnership reorganisation.

#### **3. Exceptional medical or social need**

- a. Students on whose behalf evidence of exceptional medical or exceptional social need is presented. For example, where one or both parents of the child have a disability that may make travel to a school that is further away difficult. Evidence must be supported by a written statement by a professionally involved third party, such as a doctor or a social worker

#### **4. Siblings**

- a. Students who have an older brother or sister who already attends the same Pele Trust school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission. [For the purpose of admission siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.]

#### **5. Children of staff employed within the Pele Trust secondary school applied for**

- a. Children of staff employed within the Pele Trust school applied for where the member of staff has worked in that school for two 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.

#### **6. Distance**

- a. Distance from the front door of the child's home to the main gate of the school will be the deciding factor with preference being given to those whose home address is nearest to the school as measured in a straight line ('as the crow flies'). The distance checker is contained within the EMS school admissions software using GIS data. Distance checking is an integral function within the school admissions software ensuring consistency in measurement. This will be based on the child's address.

Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group, i.e. twins, triplets, or other multiple birth sibling groups would be split, the sibling will be accepted as an excepted pupil. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two applicants live equidistant from the Academy, the LA's system of random allocation will apply as a tie-breaker.

#### **Proof of Residence**

- Parents will be asked to provide proof of residency in the case of oversubscription
- The address given must be where the child lives permanently. It must not be that of a childminder, grandparent, or other relative's address. If parents/carers share custody of a child then the Trust may request to see the court order, medical card or other evidence to establish where the child is resident for most of the time during weekdays.
- Pele Trust also reserves the right to withdraw a place at a school if information relating to address or any other matter is found to be false.

### **Additional information**

1. Children with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be treated no less favourably than other applicants for admission. In respect of children with disabilities, schools are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage, and no child will be refused a place on the grounds of disability. A pupil has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
2. In cases where an application for a place has been unsuccessful, parents may request that the child's name be placed on a waiting list for the school in question. Waiting lists can only apply to transfer year groups and will only be maintained until 31 December of the year in question. A place on the waiting list does not affect your right to appeal.
3. Those parents whose application to a school has been unsuccessful will be notified of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 gives this right to all parents whose application for a school has been unsuccessful. The decision of an Appeal Panel is binding on both the Admission Authority and the school. The School Admissions Appeals Code 2022 can be found on the DfE website at <https://bit.ly/3qLraNs> .

### **Late applications for a Northumberland School Place**

If an application is late and is not considered as exceptional, a place will not be offered on 1 March 2027 (secondary school). This will be the case even if you live in the catchment area for the school.

### **Notification of Places**

The formal offer of a place will be issued by Northumberland County Council Admissions Team who will write to parents/carers on

1. Secondary school applications: 1 March 2026

### **Waiting lists/appeals**

Each school within Pele Trust will maintain a waiting list for the transfer year group, i.e. Reception and Y7. Positions on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

### **In year admissions**

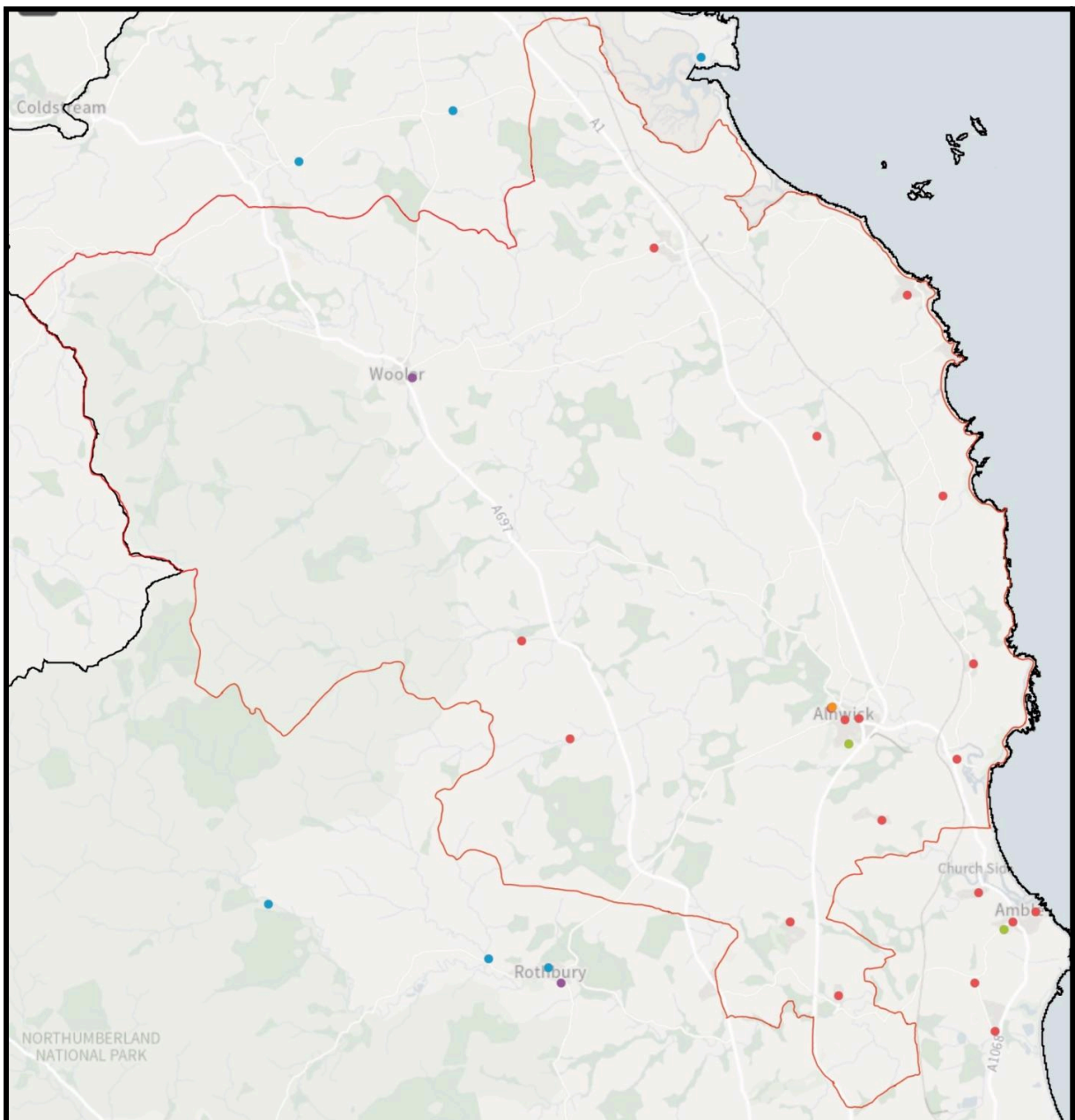
The Pele Trust has agreed to operate in accordance with Northumberland County Council's Pupil Placement Panel (Fair Access protocol). To apply for a place during the academic year, parents/carers should contact the Northumberland County Council Admissions Team and request an In-Year Transfer Form. If the year group is full or oversubscribed then a place will be refused, however, the applicant will be given the opportunity to appeal. If the parent/carer chooses to appeal for a place then an independent panel will be convened, and any decision made by the panel is legally binding.

### **Withdrawing an offer of a place**

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if

- Parent/carer fails to respond to the offer of a place within the agreed deadline
- It is established that the offer of a place was obtained through fraudulent or misleading application

## Appendix 1: Catchment map



### Catchment area of Wooler First/Glendale Middle (same catchment)

