

Alnwick hub schools

Admissions consultation

Consultation on Admissions Arrangements for the 2027-28 academic year for the following schools

- Branton Primary School and Nursery
- Ellingham Church of England Primary School
- Embleton Vincent Edwards Church of England Primary School
- Longhoughton Church of England Primary School
- Shilbottle Primary School
- Swansfield Park Primary School

Consultation period (6 weeks)

Start date: 13 October 2025
End date: 30 November 2025 (midnight)

Pele Trust Directors welcome comments on the Admissions policy

Responding to the consultation

Email responses to: k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk

Written responses to:
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Background

Pele Trust is the admission authority for all schools within the Trust and this duty now comes into force following the schools' successful conversion to academy status on 1 April 2025 or 1 June 2025, in the case of Shilbottle Primary School.

This is the first opportunity to set the admissions arrangements therefore, the Board of Directors are formally consulting on their proposed admission arrangements. This reflects their desire to ensure a reasonable, clear, objective and procedurally fair Admissions Policy that supports the aims of the Trust, serves the local community and complies with all relevant legislation.

Consultation proposals for the 2027-28 academic year

To agree on the Admissions Policy

Consultation Process

Admission Authorities have a duty to consult on their admission arrangements in advance of the year of intake. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 provides the DfE with the right to issue a statutory School Admissions Code, setting out statutory guidance and imposing mandatory requirements and guidelines in relation to school admissions (known as the "Code"). The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.

As a multi-academy trust, Pele Trust is the Admission Authority and must ensure that its determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code and the law relating to admissions. To promote fair access to educational opportunities, admission arrangements are subject to scrutiny by the Schools Adjudicator who has the power to impose arrangements on those authorities that do not meet the requirements of the Code.

Consultation must take place for a minimum of 6 school weeks between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year, therefore, consultation on our proposal will begin on Monday 13 October 2025 and end on Sunday 30 November 2025 (midnight).

The following groups are being consulted;

- Northumberland County Council (School Admissions team)
- Parents with children in all Alnwick Partnership schools
- Headteachers and Governing Bodies in all Alnwick Partnership schools

All consultation documents are displayed on each school's website and on Pele Trust's website at www.peletrust.org.uk.

Northumberland County Council operates a coordinated scheme for Voluntary Aided Schools, Trust Schools and Academies by acting as a clearing house for school admissions. Pele Trust will remain part of these coordinated arrangements.

Applications for all school places should therefore continue to be made via Northumberland County Council.

Copies of documents relating to Voluntary Aided schools, Trusts, Academies and other foundation schools will be published on the County Council website

Link: [School admissions, places & appeals | Northumberland County Council](#)

Consultation proposal: to agree the Admissions Policy

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 Northumberland County Council's admissions online portal. The deadline for secondary place applications for the 2027/28 academic year is **31 October 2026**. For reception places, the deadline for applications is **15 January 2027**. 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.

Primary schools also offer nursery places. Parents and carers should note that the allocation of Reception places does not take into account attendance at any specific nursery class or school. Children in the nursery class of the school will not be given priority nor are they guaranteed a Reception place in the main school.

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.

Published 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 each school is:

Branton Primary School:	6
Ellingham Church of England Primary School:	15
Embleton Vincent Edwards Church of England Primary School:	12
Longhoughton Church of England Primary School:	15
Shilbottle Primary School:	15
Swansfield Park Primary School:	45
Duchess's Community High School ¹ :	210 (Year 7 entry)

¹ Note that Duchess's High School has already adopted Pele Trust's admissions policy effective September 2026.

Oversubscription: primary school admission applications

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 primary schools - Alnwick hub)

Applicable to Branton Primary School and Nursery, Ellingham C of E Primary School, Embleton Vincent Edwards C of E Primary School, Longhoughton C of E Primary School, Shilbottle Primary School, Swansfield Park Primary 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 within the catchment area of the school (as defined by Pele Trust and available on the Northumberland County Council's 'school catchment area digital maps' [here](#).) Catchment maps are also contained in Appendix 1 (p9-13).

NB: Guidance on accessing the digital maps can be found [here](#).

3. Exceptional medical or social need

- a. Children 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. The Trust Board will make decisions based on the professional evidence submitted.

4. Siblings

- a. Children 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 primary school applied for

- a. Children of staff employed within the Pele Trust school applied for admission 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 or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage

6. Faith consideration (Ellingham and Embleton CE Primary Schools only)

- a. Children whose parents are committed members of the Church of England, or any other Christian Church, and who regularly and frequently attend.

NB: **Regularly and frequently** is defined as attendance at least once per month over the last twelve months immediately before the admission application deadline; it is sufficient for just one parent/carer to attend. Acceptable evidence would be a letter from the relevant minister/vicar attesting to regular attendance as outlined above)

7. 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
- b. 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.

Oversubscription: secondary school admission applications

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 - Alnwick hub)

Applicable to 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. Feeder schools (in descending order of priority)

- a. Children on roll in a Pele Trust primary school, i.e. Branton, Ellingham, Embleton Vincent Edwards, Longhoughton, Shilbottle and Swansfield Park) who also live in the catchment area (as defined by Pele Trust and available in Appendix 1 and on the Northumberland County Council 'school catchment area digital maps' [here](#)).

NB: Guidance on accessing the digital maps can be found [here](#).

Click the top right hand corner symbol (three horizontal lines) and then click 'Layer List' to highlight catchment areas by school phase.

- b. Children living in the catchment area on whose behalf firm evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area by the appropriate admission date
- c. Children who reside outside of the catchment area but have attended a Pele Trust primary school (Alnwick hub) for a minimum of two full academic years immediately before an application is made

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. The Trust Board will make decisions based on the professional evidence submitted.

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 admission 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 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.
- b. 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. The Trust will not discriminate on grounds of disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. 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. From 1 January, a fresh in-year admissions application can be made.
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 [School admission appeals code - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admission-appeals-code-2022) .

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) or 16 April 2027 (primary 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. Primary school applications: 16 April 2027
2. Secondary school applications: 1 March 2027

Waiting lists/appeals

Each school within Pele Trust will maintain a waiting list for the transfer year group, i.e. Reception and Y7 until 31 December. 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. From 1 January, a fresh in-year admissions application can be made.

In year admissions

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

Pele 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 a fraudulent or misleading application

Pele Trust Directors welcome comments on the Admissions policy

Responding to the consultation

Email responses to: k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk

Written responses to:

Kieran McGrane

Pele Trust

Prestwick Business Park

Prestwick

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE20 9SJ

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Consultation on Admission Arrangements for Pele Trust (Alnwick hub) schools for the 2027-28 academic year.

NAME (optional):

CONSULTATION GROUP (i.e. Primary school parent, Governor etc)

I agree / disagree with proposal 1 to reduce the Published Admission Number to 210 (delete as appropriate)

Comments:

Alternative ideas or suggestions?

I agree / disagree with the proposal 2 regarding the Admissions Policy (delete as appropriate)

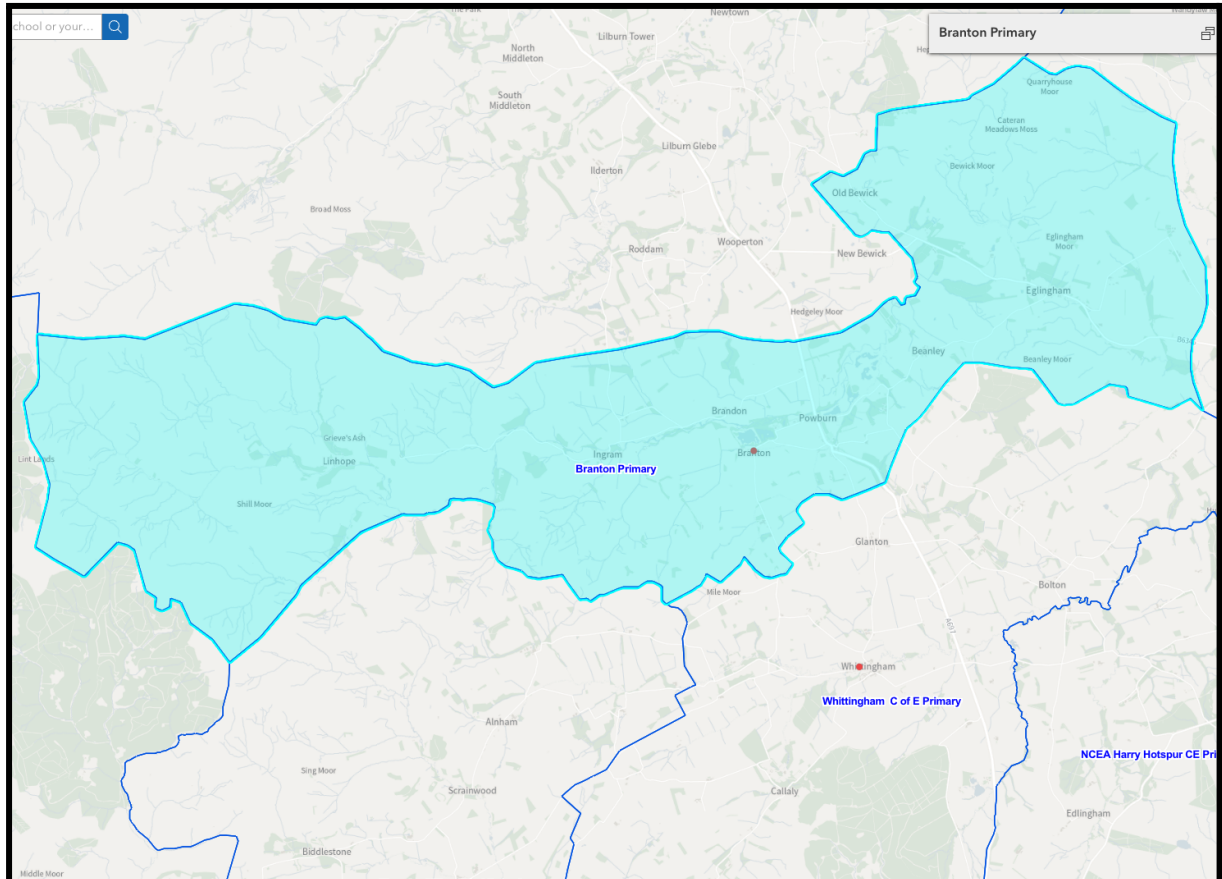
Comments:

Alternative ideas or suggestions?

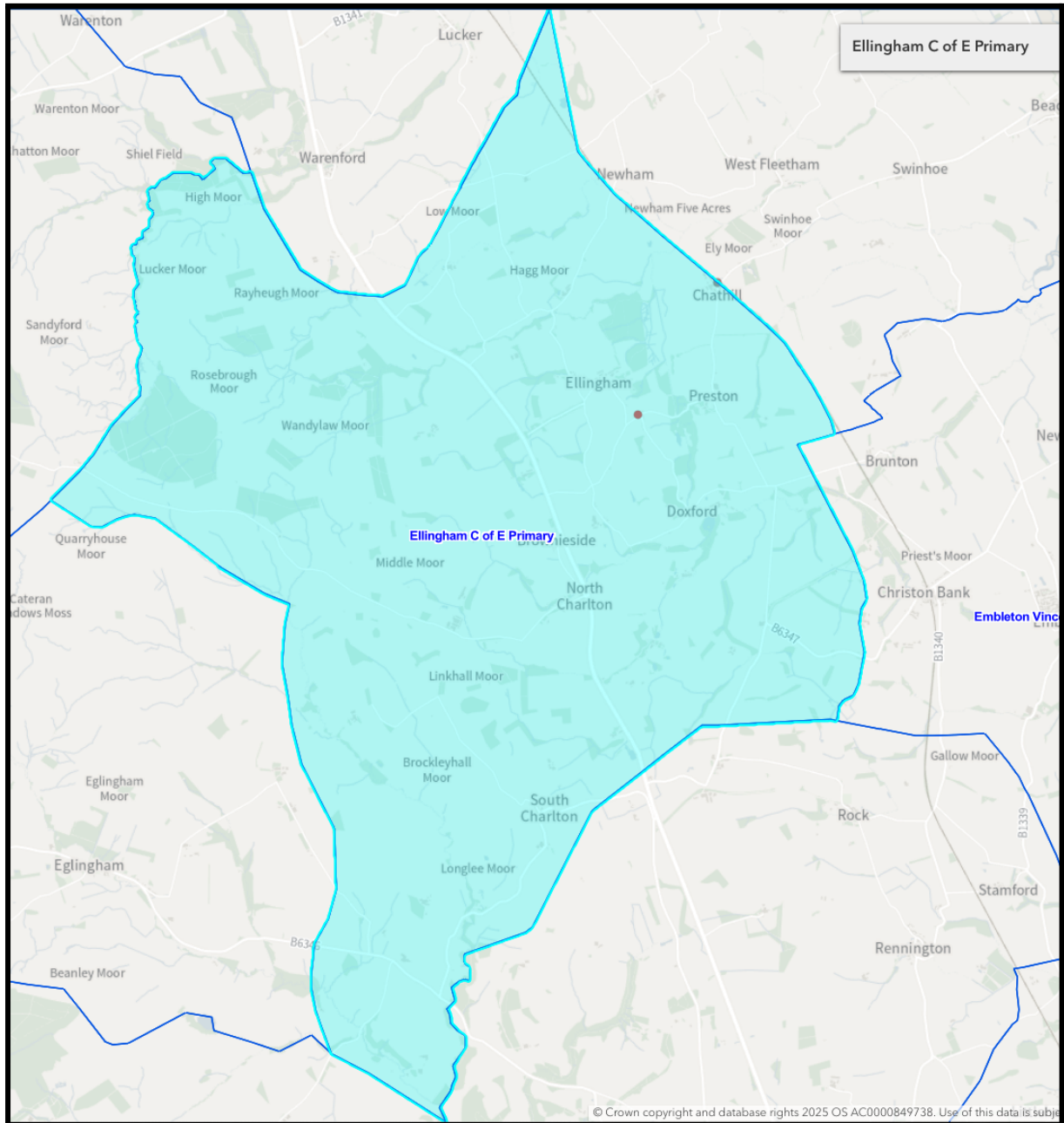
Completed forms can be returned to:
 Email responses to: k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk
 Written responses to:
 Kieran McGrane
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Appendix 1: Catchment map

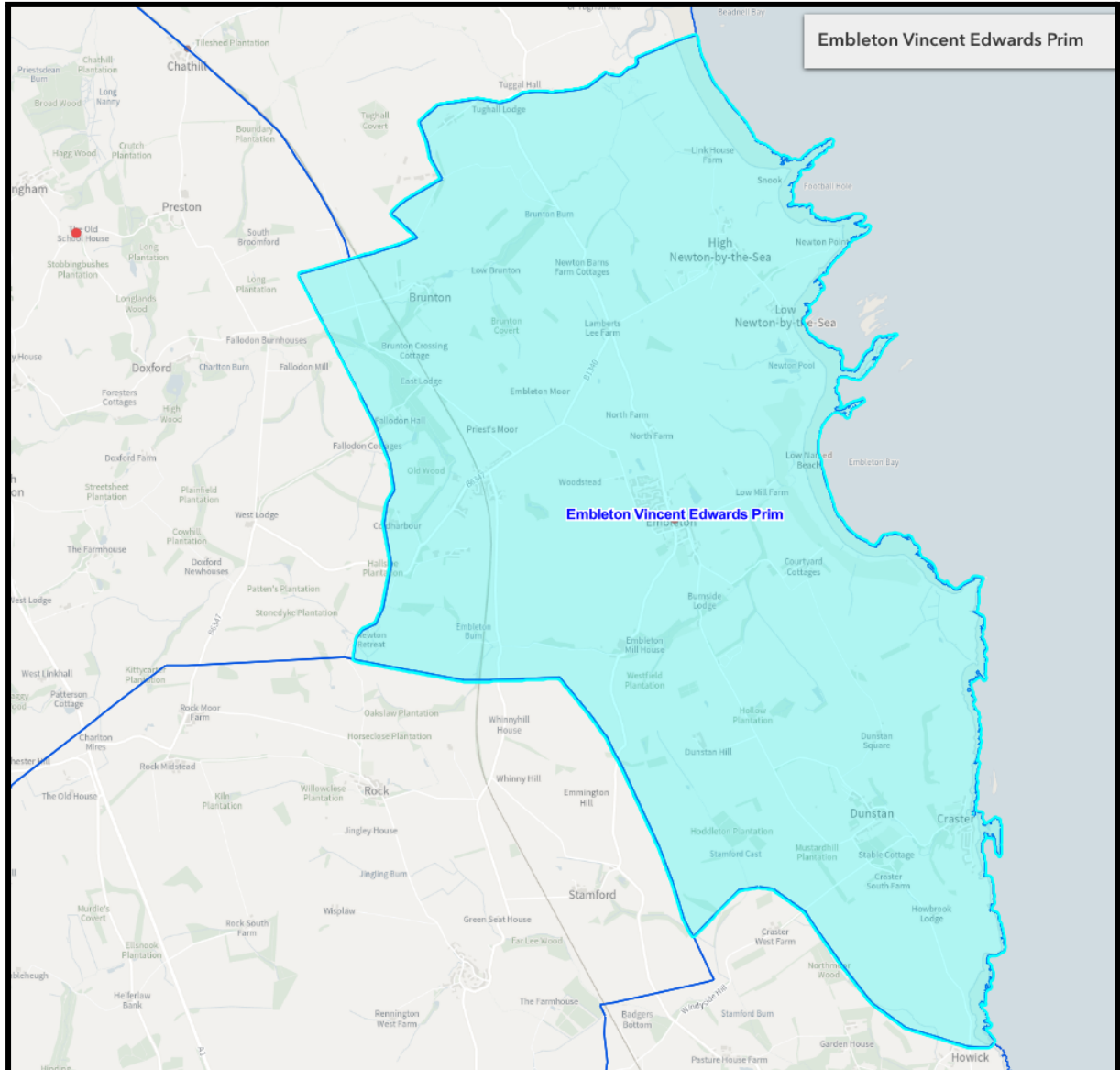
Branton Primary School



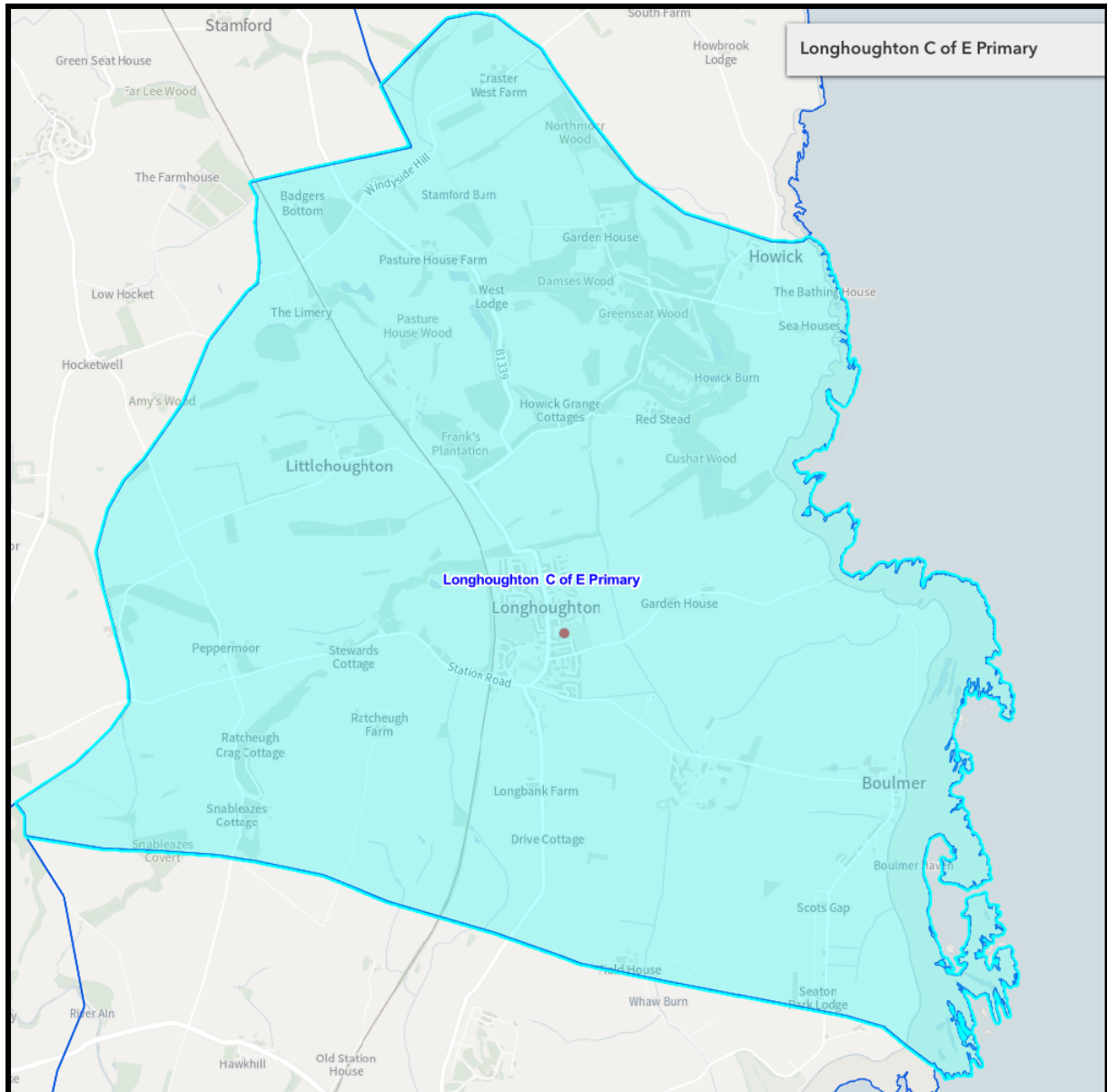
Ellingham C of E Primary School



Embleton Vincent Edwards C of E Primary School



Longhoughton C of E Primary School



Swansfield Park Primary School

