




The LETTA Trust

Policy for Pupil Admissions in 2026-2027 Columbia Primary School

Approved & adopted on:	Spring 2025	To be reviewed:	Spring 2026
Reviewed by:	Trust Board	Signed:	



1. Introduction

- 1.1. The LETTA Trust seeks to operate an admissions system that provides equal and fair opportunities to all applicants
- 1.2. This admissions policy has been determined following a public consultation and approval by the LETTA Trust's Board of Trustees. It is reviewed annually by the Trust Board
- 1.3. The LETTA Trust's admissions policy is in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Authority's admissions policy for community schools

2. Published admission number (PAN)

- 2.1. The PAN for Columbia Reception is 60. If there are fewer applicants than places available all applicants will be admitted.

3. Children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs)

- 3.1. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school will be offered a place. This process is separate from the standard admissions arrangements set out below.

4. Oversubscription criteria

Where the school is oversubscribed places will be filled in the following priority order:

- 4.1. Children looked after by the local authority including adopted children who were previously looked after and children who leave care under a special guardianship or residence order and adopted children who were previously in state care outside of England **(see Note 1)**
 - 4.1.1. Children for whom it is deemed there is a strong medical or social reason to attend the school applied to. This can include the parents', carers' or other family members' medical conditions and the family's social needs. Parents must complete the relevant section on the application form and attach supporting medical and/or social reports from a suitable professional (e.g. doctor or social worker) **(see Note 2)**
 - 4.1.2. Children living within the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school (including separate infants and junior schools) and who will continue to do so on the date of admission **(see Note 3)**
 - 4.1.3. Children whose parent is a member of staff who has been employed at the school concerned for two or more years at the time of application and/or children of a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage **(see Note 4)**
 - 4.1.4. Children who live within the catchment area of the school and for whom the school applied for is their nearest community school within the catchment area



4.1.5. Other children from within the catchment area of the school

4.1.6. Children living outside of the catchment area with a sibling at the school

4.1.7. Children living outside of the catchment area of the school

In the event of oversubscription within any of the categories 2 to 8 above, priority will be given to children who live closest to the school by the shortest walking distance. A digitised Ordnance Survey map is used to measure the distance from the home address to the school's designated official entrance.

Should two or more children live an equal distance from the school, including instances where more than one child lives in a multi-occupancy building, the offer of a place will be decided by random allocation.

Note 1

Confirmation of a child's looked after status will be required. 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. Parents must provide documentary evidence of both adoption and that the child was in state care for the local authority to consider.

Note 2

Applications under this category are considered by the Local Authority's Primary to Secondary Transfer Committee, comprising a Headteacher, a senior member of the Attendance and Welfare Service and a medical professional. The Committee will decide whether the application should be given priority under this category.

Note 3

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner resident at the same address. The address used should be the one that the child usually lives at and attends school from.

Includes the sibling of a child who does not live within the school's catchment area, but who was admitted on or before 24 July 2025.

Note 4

Priority will be limited to one place for each form of entry in any year, with an additional maximum limit dependant on the size of the school as follows:

Planned admissions number	Max per year group	Max per school
30 to 45 pupils	1	4
50 to 60 pupils	2	8
75 to 90 pupils	3	12



The staff applicant must complete the relevant section on the application form and attach documentation supporting admission on these grounds. It is the staff applicant's sole responsibility to provide this information. Without the provision of the relevant documents, the child will not be considered on these grounds.

5. Catchment area

The school catchment area is the defined area in which a school is located. It is generally bounded by major roads and/or railway/canal. The catchment area for each Tower Hamlets school is set by the Local Authority and is designed to ensure that each address in the borough falls into the catchment area of a local school. Details of the schools within the catchment area for a particular address can be viewed on the Local Authority's website: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/equalchance>.

6. Age of admission

- 6.1. Children born on and between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 would normally start primary school in Reception in the school year beginning in September 2026. Children are offered a place in Reception from the September following their fourth birthday.
- 6.2. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age during the school year. A child's attendance at school does not become compulsory until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the start of the summer term in the academic year for which the original application was accepted.
- 6.3. Where parents choose to defer entry, a school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term or half term. Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April - 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to re-apply for a place at the correct time.
- 6.4. At the LETTA Trust children start primary school with their normal age group. However, in exceptional circumstances, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child has been born prematurely. If parents wish for their child to be considered for admission to a year group which is outside their normal age group, then they should include a letter with their Reception application and also provide a report from an appropriate education or health professional.

7. Nursery provision

- 7.1. See nursery admissions policy document.
- 7.2. The admissions arrangements set out in this document do not apply to applications for the school's nursery. Parents of children who are admitted to the nursery provision at the



school must apply in the normal way for a place at the school, if they want their child to transfer to the Reception class. Attendance at the nursery will not guarantee admission to Reception.

8. Applying for a place

Applications can be made by parents or carers with parental responsibilities who are residents of Tower Hamlets and professionals with parents' agreement

- 8.1. How to apply for a primary school place is set out in the Local Authority's school admissions booklet, 'Starting Primary School in Tower Hamlets'. Applications are then coordinated for all the schools in the Tower Hamlets area in accordance with the Authority's published scheme. The scheme can be viewed on the webpage: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/education_and_learning/schools/school_admissions/primary_school_admissions.aspx
- 8.2. The closing date for applications is **15 January 2026** and the date on which families are sent notification of the outcome is **16 April 2026**

9. Late applications

- 9.1. Applications received after the 15 January 2026 closing date will be treated as late applications unless there is evidence to show that the application or amendment could not reasonably have been made on time. A new preference or change in the order of preferences will not be accepted after the closing date unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional. Late applications will be given a lower priority and will be dealt with after all on time applications in the first round of offers on 16 April 2026. Where a school is oversubscribed, late applications will be refused and placed on the waiting list in accordance with the admissions criteria.
- 9.2. Where the Admissions Authority has determined there are exceptional circumstances for the late submission of an application it will be treated as 'on time' and, where possible, considered alongside existing applications.

10. Twins and multiple births

For applications made in the normal admission round, if the last child to be offered a place is a twin and their sibling cannot be offered initially, the LETTA Trust will ensure both twins are offered a place. In the case of triplets or other multiple births, if the majority of children can be offered a place initially, the LETTA Trust will offer places to the remaining children. For example, if two triplets can be offered a place, the remaining child will also receive an offer of a place.

11. Waiting list

11.1. The Tower Hamlets Local Authority's Admissions Service holds waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in the Trust and continues to allocate places from these lists if



spaces become available. Applicants are ranked on these waiting lists in priority order, according to our admission criteria. If a vacancy arises, it will be offered to the first applicant on the waiting list.

11.2. If parents wish for their child to remain on the Reception waiting list **after December**, they must complete an [In-Year Application](#). Please note that transfers take place at the beginning of each term. Full details, including the timetable can be viewed on the [Council website](#).

11.3. The order of priority for the in-year waiting list will be:

1. Children looked after by the local authority including adopted children who were previously looked after, children who leave care under a special guardianship or residence order and adopted children who were previously in state care outside of England
2. Children without a school place who have a strong medical or social reason to attend the school applied to
3. Children who have a strong medical or social reason to attend the school applied to
4. Children without a school place with a brother or sister at the school
5. Children without a school place
6. Children with a brother or sister in the school
7. Children of staff
8. Children with a brother or sister at the school who would otherwise require travel assistance
9. Children who would otherwise require travel assistance
10. Children who live within the catchment area of the school and for whom the school is their nearest community school within the catchment area
11. Other children from within the catchment area of the school
12. Children living nearest the school
13. Distance

If a vacancy arises, it will be offered to the first applicant on the waiting list.

Proximity to school will determine priority where there are competing claims to a place under each of the criteria.

Distances will be measured by the shortest walking route from the home address to the nearest available pupil entrance in constant use to the school, using a computerised digitised map.

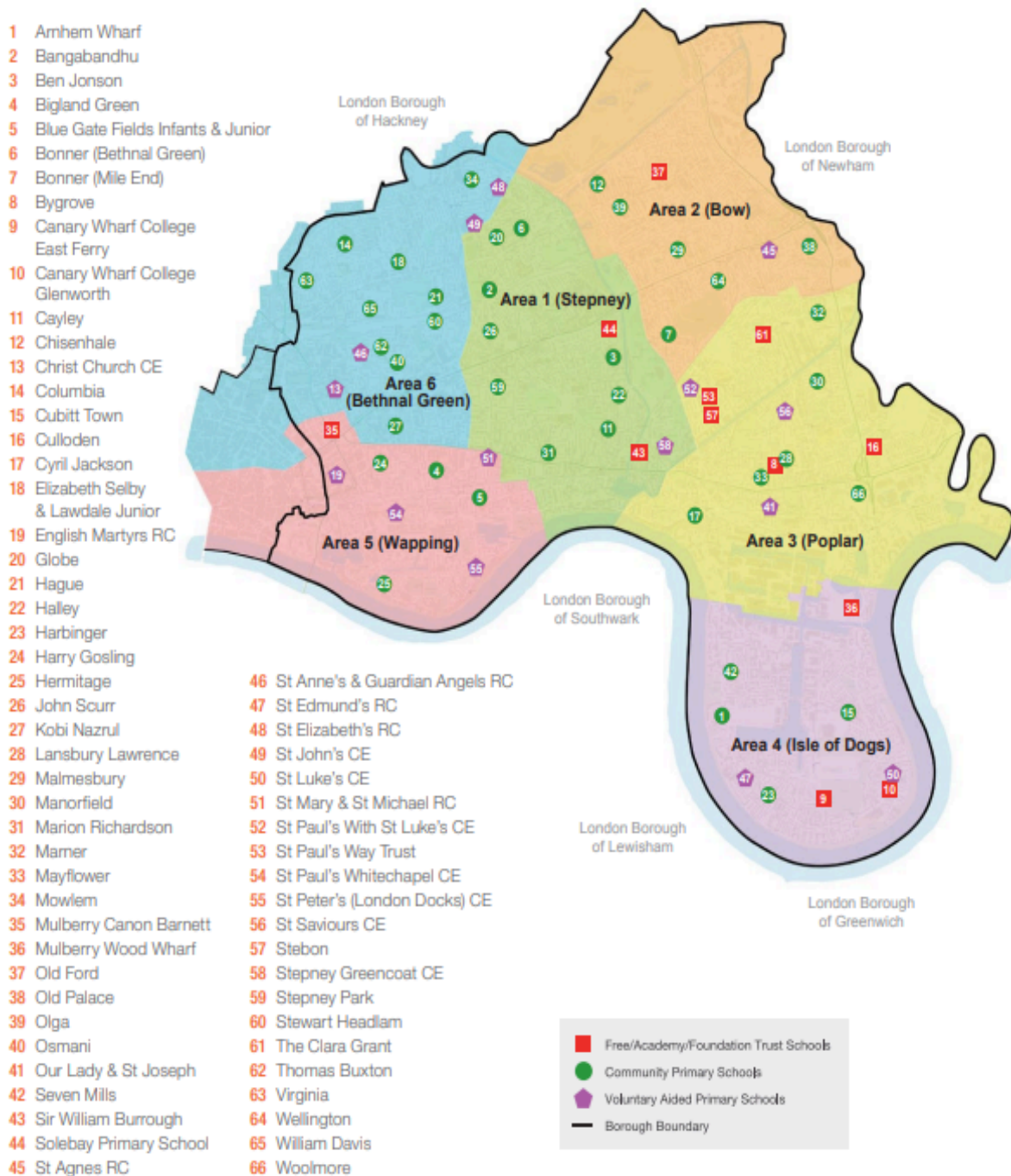
Should two or more children live an equal distance from the school, including instances where more than one child lives in a multi-occupancy building, the offer of a place will be decided by random allocation.

12. Appeals

The parents of any child refused a place at the school have a right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. The decision of the independent appeal panel is binding on all parties. Please refer to the The LETTA Trust Appeals Arrangements for Admission in 2026-2027 document for further information.



Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Areas





Tower Hamlets Primary Schools Catchment Area 1 (Stepney)

Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

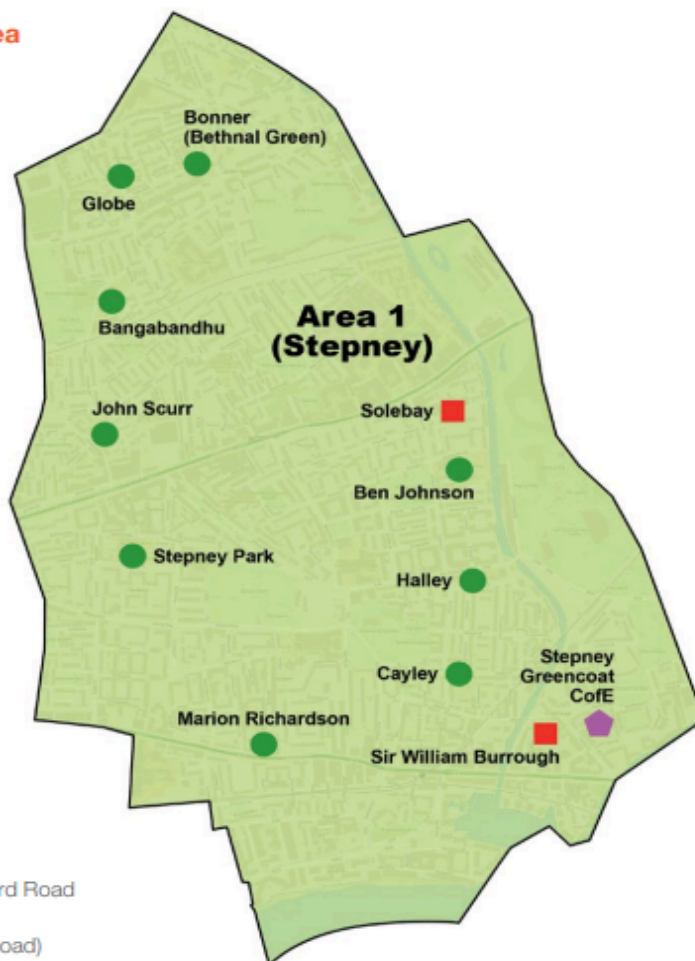
- 2 Bangabandhu
- 3 Ben Jonson
- 6 Bonner (Bethnal Green)
- 11 Cayley
- 20 Globe
- 22 Halley
- 26 John Scurr
- 31 Marion Richardson
- 59 Stepney Park

Voluntary primary schools

- 58 Stepney Greencoat CE

Academy/Free schools

- 43 Sir William Burrough
- 44 Solebay – a Paradigm Academy (uses same admissions policy as community schools)



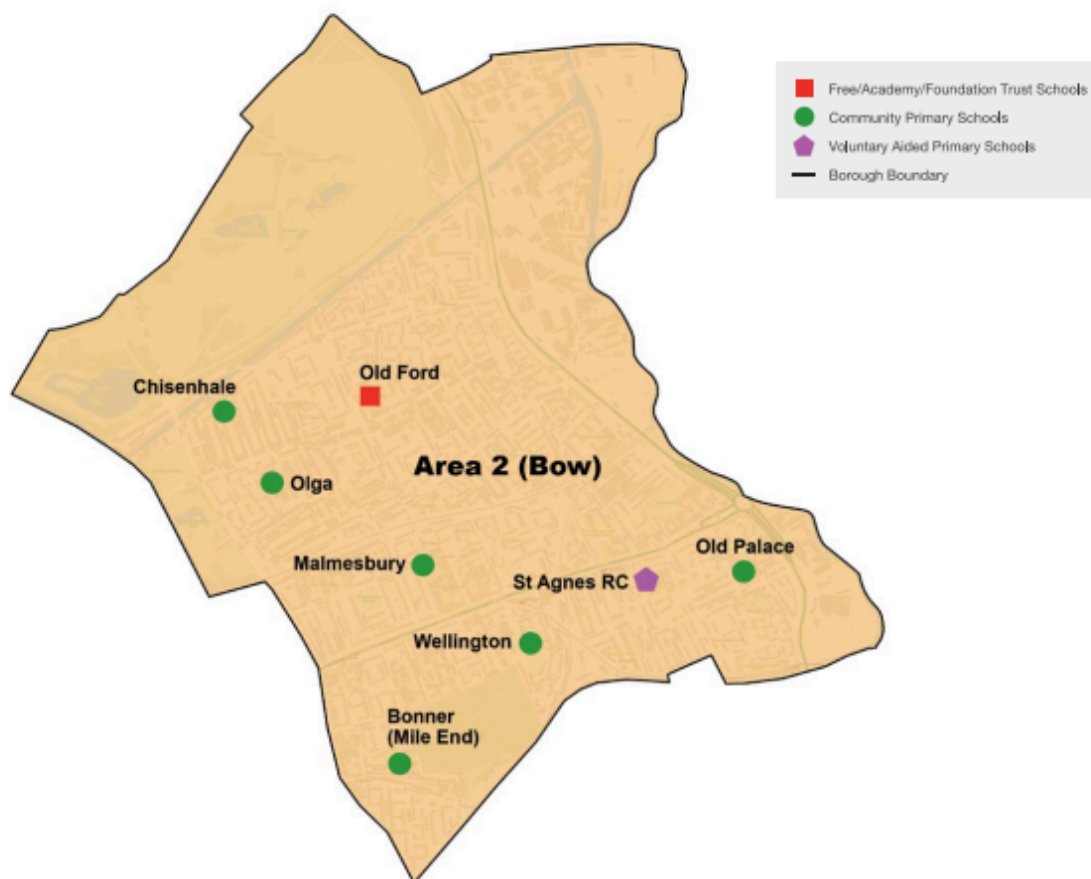
Area covered

- South of Approach Road and Old Ford Road
- West of Regents Canal (up to the Railway Bridge on Grove Road)
- West of Grove Road and Burdett Road
- North of Limehouse Cut from Burdett Road to River Thames
- North of River Thames
- East of Brodlove Lane and Devonport Street
- East of Lukin Street
- North of Commercial Road (from Lukin Street to Sidney Street)
- East of Sidney Street and Cambridge Heath Road





Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Area 2 (Bow)



Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

- 7 Bonner (Mile End)
- 12 Chisenhale
- 29 Malmesbury
- 38 Old Palace
- 39 Olga
- 64 Wellington

Voluntary primary schools

- 45 St Agnes RC

Academy/Free schools

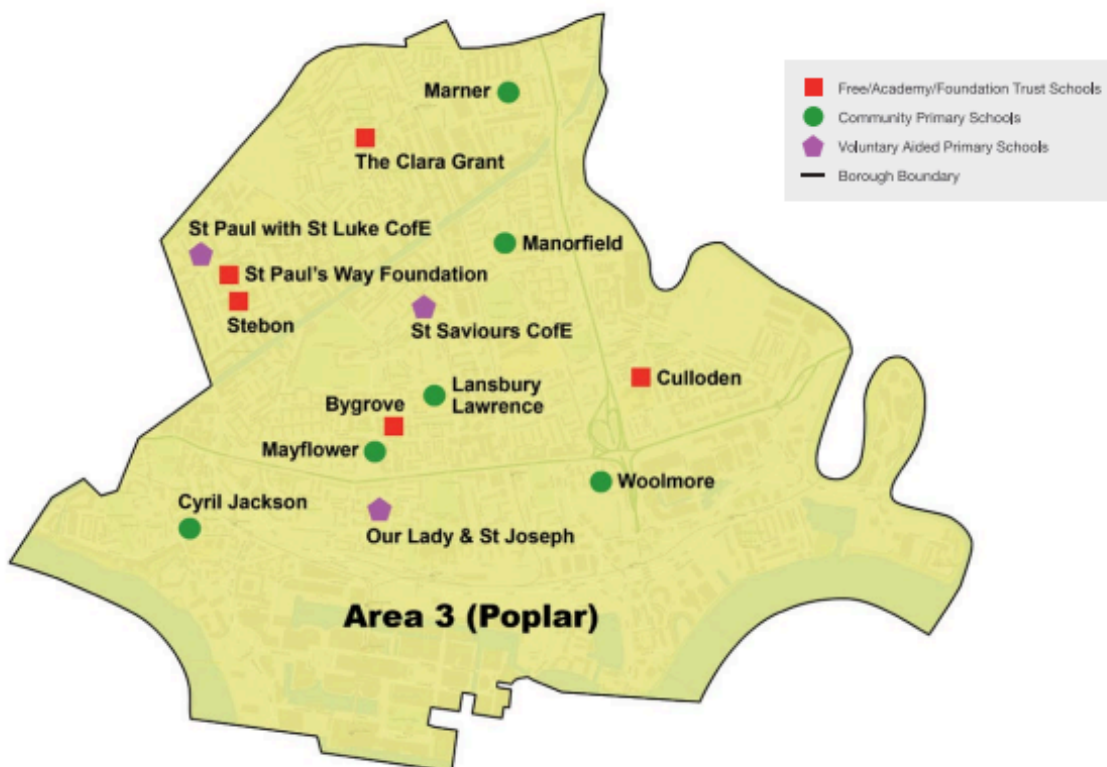
- 37 Old Ford – a Paradigm Academy (uses same admissions policy as community schools)

Area covered

- South of Approach Road and A106 Victoria Park Road
- South of Cadogan Terrace
- West of River Lea
- East of Regents Canal (from Railway Bridge on Grover Road) and Burdett Road
- North of the railway line connecting Limehouse and Bromley by Bow



Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Area 3 (Poplar)



Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

- 17 Cyril Jackson
- 28 Lansbury Lawrence
- 30 Manorfield
- 32 Marner
- 33 Mayflower
- 66 Woolmore

Voluntary primary schools

- 41 Our Lady & St Joseph RC
- 52 St Paul's with St Luke's CE
- 56 St Saviours CE

Academy/Free schools

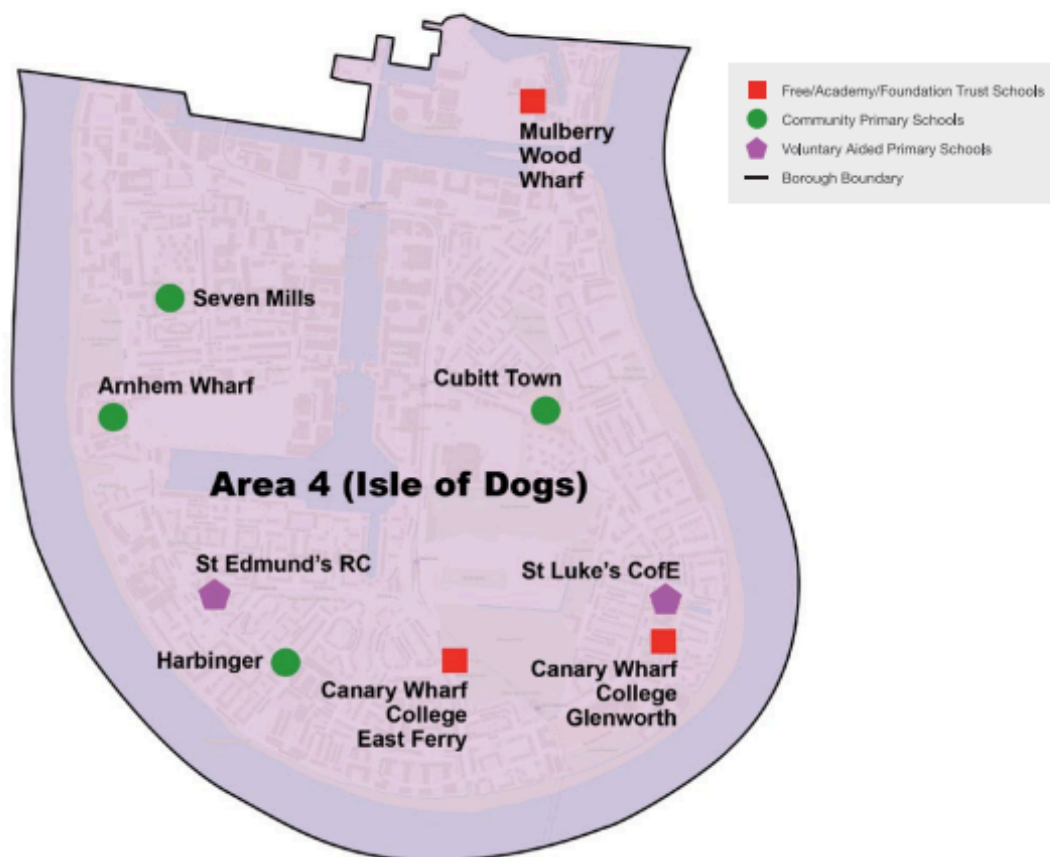
- 8 Bygrove (uses same admissions policy as community schools)
- 16 Culloden – a Paradigm Academy (uses same admissions policy as community schools)
- 53 St Paul's Way Trust (uses same admissions policy as community schools)
- 57 Stebon (uses same admissions policy as community schools)
- 61 The Clara Grant (uses same admissions policy as community schools)

Area covered

- South of the railway line connecting Limehouse and Bromley by Bow
- West of River Lea
- East of Burdett Road and the River Thames
- North of Blackwall Basin



Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Area 4 (Isle of Dogs)



Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

- 1 Arnhem Wharf
- 15 Cubitt Town
- 23 Harbinger
- 42 Seven Mills

Voluntary primary schools

- 47 St Edmund's RC
- 50 St Luke's CE

Academy/Free schools

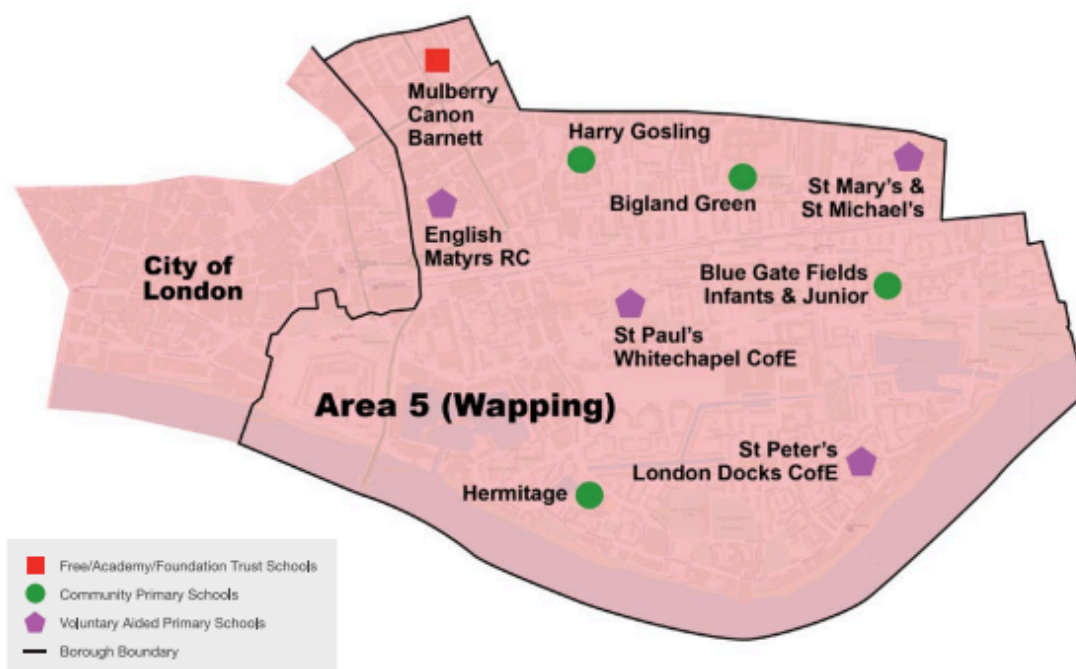
- 9 Canary Wharf College East Ferry
- 10 Canary Wharf College Glenworth
- 36 Mulberry Wood Wharf
(uses same admissions policy as community schools)

Area covered

- South of Blackwall Basin including Wood Wharf
- North of River Thames



Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Area 5 (Wapping)



Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

- 4 Bigland Green
- 5 Blue Gate Fields Infants & Junior
- 24 Harry Gosling
- 25 Hermitage

Voluntary primary schools

- 19 English Martyrs RC
- 51 St Mary & St Michael RC
- 54 St Paul's Whitechapel CE
- 55 St Peter's (London Docks) CE

Academy/Free schools

- 35 Mulberry Canon Barnett
(uses same admissions policy as community schools)

Area covered

Tower Hamlets

- South of Wentworth Street (up to Osborn Street)
- South of Commercial Road (from Whitechurch Lane to Lukin Street)
- South of Poonah Street
- West of Lukin Street, Devonport Street and Brodlove Lane
- North of River Thames
- East of Trinity Square, Mansell Street and Middlesex Street

City of London

- South of Cornhill, Leadenhall Street, Aldgate High Street
- South of Harrow Place (from White Kennet Street)
- West of Middlesex Street, Mansell Street and Trinity Square
- North of River Thames
- East of King Williams Street



Tower Hamlets Primary School Catchment Area 6 (Bethnal Green)

Schools in the catchment area

Community schools

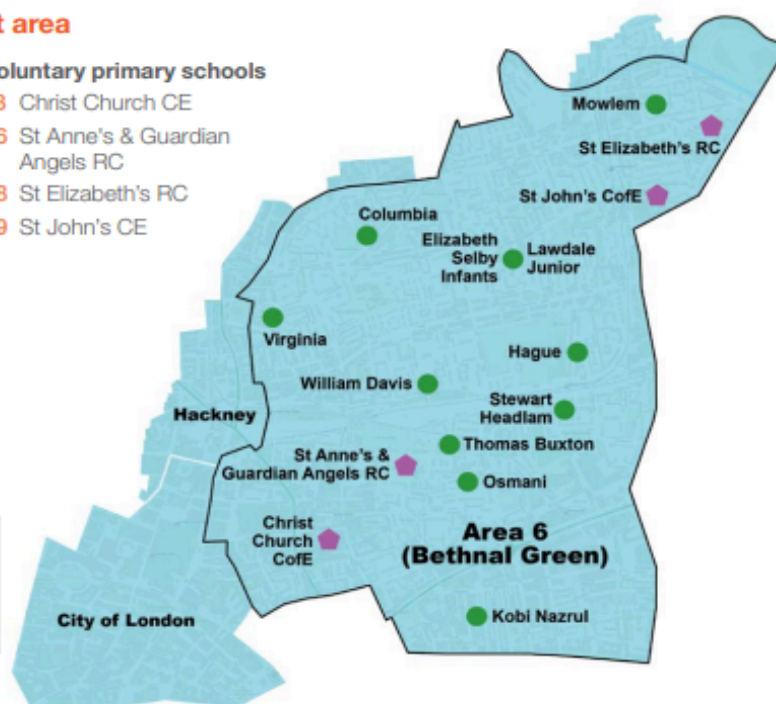
- 14 Columbia
- 18 Elizabeth Selby Infant*
- 18 Lawdale Junior*
- 21 Hague
- 27 Kobi Nazrul
- 34 Mowlem
- 40 Osmani
- 60 Stewart Headlam
- 62 Thomas Buxton
- 63 Virginia
- 65 William Davis

Voluntary primary schools

- 13 Christ Church CE
- 46 St Anne's & Guardian Angels RC
- 48 St Elizabeth's RC
- 49 St John's CE

*Linked infant and junior schools

■	Free/Academy/Foundation Trust Schools
●	Community Primary Schools
◆	Voluntary Aided Primary Schools
	Borough Boundary



Area covered

Tower Hamlets

- South of Hackney Road (from Shoreditch High Street to Goldsmiths Row), South of Teale Street Pritchard's Road and Regent's Canal
- West of Approach Road and Old Ford Road
- West of Cambridge Heath Road and Sidney Street
- North of Commercial Road (from Sidney Street to Whitechurch Lane)
- North of Wentworth Street (from Osborn Street to Middlesex Street)
- East of Middlesex Street, Norton Folgate and Boundary Street

Hackney

- South of Ash Grove and Earlston Grove
- East of Fremont Street
- West and South of Christchurch Square
- North of Regent's Canal (up to Ash Grove)
- South of Dunloe Street (from Dawson Street to Columbia Road)
- West of Columbia Road
- North of Hackney Road
- East of Weymouth Terrace (from Hackney Road to 14 Dunloe Court)
- South of Cremer Street
- West of Hackney Road, Boundary Street and Shoreditch High Street
- North of Worship Street East of Scrutton Street, Christina Street, Gatesborough Street, Great Eastern Street and Curtain Road
- East of Shoreditch High Street (from Rivington Street to Waterson Street) and Nazrul Street City of London
- South of South Place, Sun Street, Appold Street and Worship Street
- West of Norton Folgate and Bishopsgate
- North of Cornhill
- East of Prince's Street and Moorgate