Data Protection Privacy Statement – School Admissions

To deliver services to the citizens and communities in Bedford Borough, it is necessary for the Council to collect, gather, and process personal data about residents, staff, and other individuals. Bedford Borough Council is committed to protecting your personal data when you use its services and/or correspond with it.

The Council has registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This registration can be viewed on the ICO website (opens in a new window) Registration Number Z5916725.

As a Data Controller, the Council sets out the purposes and methods for processing information and ensures safeguards over any personal and special category information it processes.

The sections below explain what data we are collecting and storing and the arrangements we have in place to protect the information entrusted to the Council.

In relation to **School Admissions**, Bedford Borough Council will process your personal data for the following processing purposes:

To enact our duty to provide a statutory service, co-ordinating school admission applications for starting school (lower and primary), transfer (middle, secondary and upper) and in-year places. The service also provides Presenting Officers for School Admission Appeals.

We collect information about your child as well as information about you as their parent/carer submitting their school application, a wider family member if needed to support certain criteria, alongside details of any siblings who already attend the school you are applying for. We hold this personal data securely and use it to:

- Process your child's application including validating information provided (e.g. catchment area is correct for school applied for), establishing a priority list for admission and waiting list priority order if oversubscribed, and communicating the application outcome in writing to you
- Share application data with Other Local Authorities in order to co-ordinate main round applications
- Share with schools/academies to assist in processing applications
- Manage enquiries around the application
- Contribute to the core education record of your child held by the Borough Council
- Undertake statistical forecasting and planning
- Complete statutory returns
- Undertake wider Council statutory duties in support of your child's education and welfare
- Ensure compliance with our obligations under the accuracy principle of the General Data Protection Regulation (Article (5)(1)(d)), making sure our records about you and your family are up to date

The personal data that will be collected:

- Personal information, for example, the child's full name, preferred name, current address, new address, placement address, date of birth, age, year group

- The parent/carer's name, relationship to child, home address, contact telephone number, email address
- Family contact details
- Name and date of birth, year group of any sibling attending the school you are applying for
- The supporting evidence you provide relevant to your application (such as address evidence)
- Current school or previous school (school name, leaving date)
- School attendance information
- Schools applied for
- Date the application was submitted
- Date school place required
- Reasons for applying for the schools
- Waiting list requests
- Relevant documents – evidence to support application
- Declaration confirming applicant has Parental Responsibility, that allows them to make a school place application for the child

The special category data that will be collected:

- Information about your child's characteristics (such as gender, faith grounds indicator, ethnic origins, looked after status indicator)
- Supporting evidence you provide relevant to your application (medical evidence, care responsibility evidence e.g. adoption certificates/care orders)
- Special category information such as sex of the child
- Child in Care (LAC) status
- EHC Plan status
- SEN status
- Details of any other agency involvement
- Refugee/Asylum status
- Details about exclusions

Bedford Borough Council is processing this personal data by virtue of the following Lawful Basis:

Compliance with a legal obligation - Article 6(1)(c) - This lawful basis applies when the processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the data controller is subject.

Performance of a task carried out in the public interest - Article 6(1)(e) - This lawful basis applies when the processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller.

Article 9(2) (g) – Necessary for reasons of substantial public interest on the basis of Union or Member State law which is proportionate to the aim pursued and which contains appropriate safeguarding measures

Sch.1, Pt.2, 1 - Substantial public interest conditions, for processing under the Data Protection Act 2018 (when enacted)

These articles under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) are supported by the following specific legislation:

- The School Admissions Code issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998')
- Sections 85(2), 96 and 97 of the SSFA 1998 and Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the SSFA 1998
- The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012
- The School Admissions (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2012
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Under this lawful basis we do not require your consent to process this information but we are required, through this privacy statement, to ensure you are fully informed of why we are collecting this information and what we will do with it.

Please note that no automated decision making (decisions taken without a person involved) occurs for any parts of these activities controlled by Bedford Borough Council.

The Borough Council does use profiling as part of the admissions process. The first set of profiling is used in how we administer the admissions process by splitting each academic year's activity into age groups (Year R, Year 3 and Year 7) and main round or in-year admissions. The second approach to profiling is within the admissions criteria, when applicants are established against where they rank against an educational establishment's admissions criteria. This is based on characteristics such as being a Child Looked After, child of an individual who works at that educational establishment and for faith schools, their religion.

Personal data provided for School Admissions may be shared with, or obtained from the following organisations (in addition to any other disclosure required by a Court of Law or in response to a valid request by, normally, a law enforcement agency:

- Bedford Borough Council Departments,
- Other Local Authorities, Schools, Academies
- Other Government Organisations and Public Sector Services including the Department for Education and NHS Trusts.

We share with schools/academies to assist in validating applications, to enable schools/academies to process in year applications, to enable them to rank applications (for own admission authority schools and schools/academies with a school specific criterion only) and to enable the school/academy to establish their school record for applicants allocated a place.

Section 88P of the SSFA 1998 requires the Council to make reports to the Schools Adjudicator about such matters connected with relevant school admissions as required by the Code.

If your child has another parent who has Parental Responsibility for them, who may not live with you or your child, then they may also have submitted an application on your child's behalf, which they are legally entitled to do. If we do receive more than one application, stating different school preferences and/or addresses for the child, we will be required under the statutory process to contact both parents to inform them that multiple applications have been received. The individual detail within the application (such as schools selected or the address of applicants) will **not** be disclosed to the other party but the identity of the applicant will be shared. This is so both parties can finalise arrangements as the law requires that only one school place can be offered and only one address can be used for the application.

Depending on the individual circumstances of each situation, we may have to share this information with other teams within the Council to fulfil other duties and powers to support our work. These might include areas such as our Home to School Transport (for supporting your transport requirements); Education Inclusion Service, Children Missing Education (for ensuring the provision of full time education); Data Protection Team (for personal data incidents); Virtual School (for support of children looked after); School Appeals Service (in supporting the appeals process); and/or other Social Care teams (supporting welfare, safeguarding and corporate parent functions). We may also share information through the Council's role in any Children's Safeguarding Board/Partnership to comply with their statutory duties.

As part of our statutory function to co-ordinate admissions applications we may need to share information about your application and outcome with another Local Authority if you've applied for a school in their geographical area but live in Bedford Borough or if you live outside of Bedford Borough but have applied for a school within the Borough.

The processing of your personal data will be restricted:

Data collected will be retained securely, for only as long as necessary, in adherence to Local Government Classification Scheme Retention Guidance

Your personal data will be held by/for the Council within the UK or the EU. We have a range of measures to protect the personal data you provide. These include cyber security, physical security of the Council's buildings and training on Data Protection for staff.

Bedford Borough Council is the Data Controller processing your information, who can be contacted as follows:

Data Protection
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Email: dpo@bedford.gov.uk
Telephone: 01234 267422

If you wish to enquire about your rights as a data subject, whether you wish to request a copy of your information that Bedford Borough Council holds, request for data portability; rectification or erasure of your data for any reason or objection to any processing, please get in touch with the Council's UK GDPR Data Protection Officer by emailing dpo@bedford.gov.uk or writing to the above address.

Alternatively, in the event that you remain dissatisfied with the way Bedford Borough Council has handled the processing of your information (i.e. after liaising with the Council to find a satisfactory solution), you have the right to contact the UK's Statutory Authority: The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who can be contacted by using the details displayed at the bottom of the page entitled Personal information and your rights | Bedford Borough Council on our website under the "Challenging the response" heading.

Changes to this Notice:

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review; this Notice was last updated in August 2025.