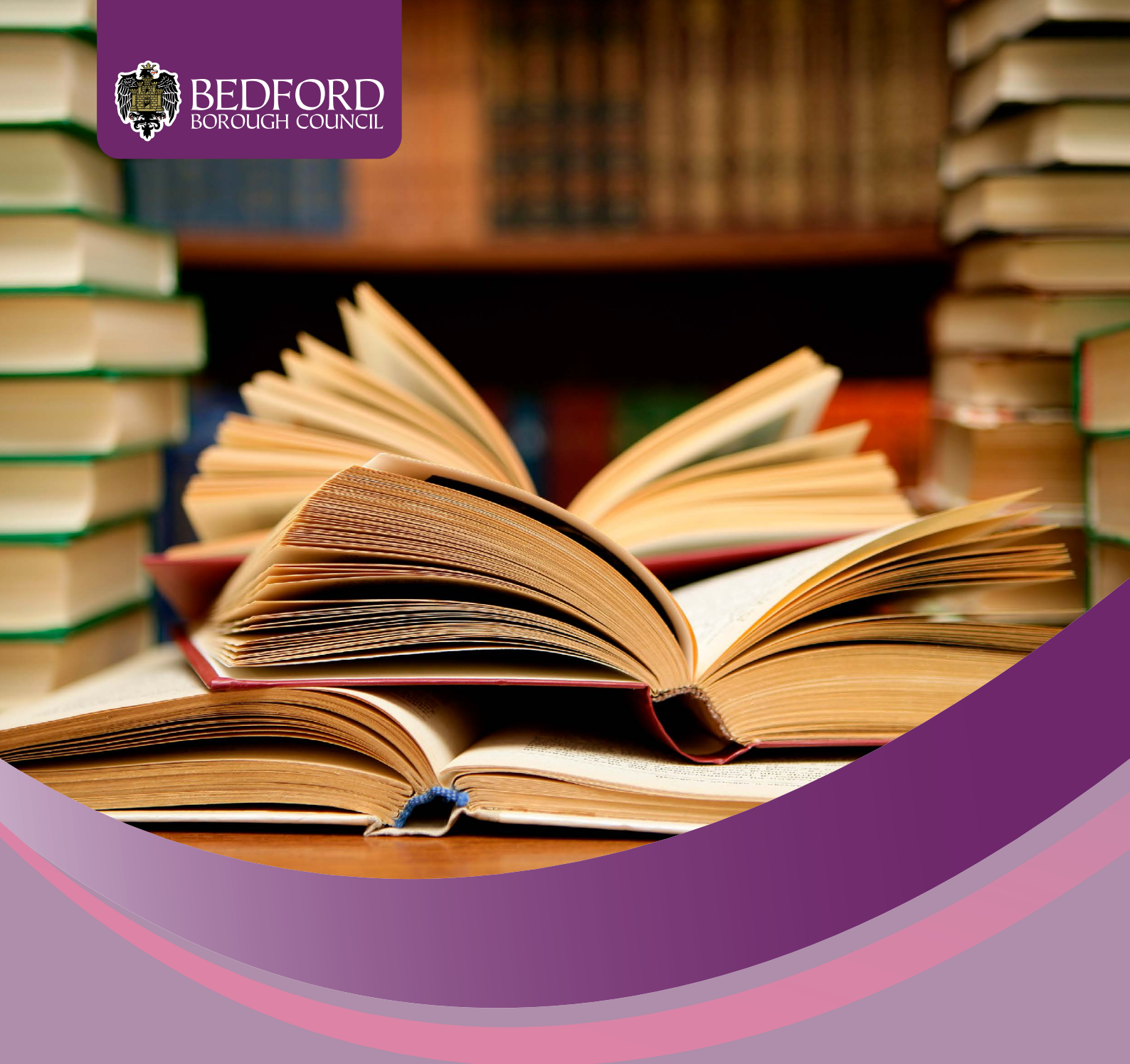




BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



School Transfer 2026

For children transferring school in September 2026

You can apply online at - www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions

Children's Services

Contents

A message from the Mayor of Bedford Borough	3	Schools Information Sheets	22
Introduction	4	Bedford Academy	22
Who to Contact	4	Bedford Free School	23
The Transfer Process Timetable	5	Biddenham International School & Sports College	23
Applying for a school place	6	Castle Newnham School	24
Admission criteria	8	Daubeney Academy	24
How to complete your application	10	Goldington Academy	25
Who allocates places?	15	Kempston Academy	25
How are places allocated?	15	Lincroft Academy	26
Late applications	16	Mark Rutherford School	27
How you will hear the result of your application	16	Marston Vale Middle School	28
Waiting lists	17	Sharnbrook Academy	29
Home to school transport	17	St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School	30
Admission to Other Year Groups	18	Wixams Academy	31
Schedule of Open Days/Evenings	18	Wootton Academy	32
Central Bedfordshire Schools - Middle & Secondary Open Evenings	19	Map of Bedford Borough	33
Schools Information Sheets - Key	20		

Any reference to school in this publication includes academies, community, foundation, foundation (trust), voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools within the same age range.

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We would like to thank the parents of the children who appear in our publications for permission to use their photographs.

A message from the Mayor of Bedford Borough

Welcome to Bedford Borough Council's School Transfer Booklet. This booklet is for parents / carers of children who are due to transfer to a different school in September 2026.

As Mayor of Bedford Borough, I know how important it is for you to access all the necessary information to enable you to make the right decisions regarding your child's education.

This booklet provides you with important information to help you through the process of applying for a school place. It contains information about the schools in the area and explains how and when places are allocated. It also explains the importance of applying for a school place by 31 October 2025.

You can apply for a school place using the online application system. Applying online is a quick, safe and efficient way of making your application and offers many benefits which are outlined in this booklet. Whilst the Council recommend that you apply online you may, if you prefer, complete a paper application form.

I hope that this booklet will provide you with all the information you need. If you require any further guidance, support or advice please contact the School Admissions general enquiries line telephone **(01234) 718120** or email admissions@bedford.gov.uk.

I truly believe there is no more important investment we can make, than in the future of the Borough's children and young people therefore may I take this opportunity to wish your child every success in their education.



Tom Wootton

Tom Wootton
Mayor of Bedford Borough

Introduction

Legislation requires you to make an application to the local authority in which you live. Therefore, if you live in Bedford Borough you must list all of your preferred schools using the Bedford Borough application process even if the schools are within another local authority.

It is important, therefore, that you apply for a school place using the appropriate application form or online in accordance with the information contained in this booklet.

Don't forget that you can apply for a school place using the online application facility in accordance with the following directions:

Residents of Bedford Borough – only you can apply online at www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

Residents of other local authorities – you must apply using the online system of your own local authority.

Please make the time to visit the schools before you apply so that you have all the information you need. We hope you find the information in this booklet useful. Please let us have any views you might have about this booklet by writing to:

School Admissions Service, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP.

Who to Contact

The School Admissions Service

We are based at Borough Hall in Bedford. If you have any enquiries about the transfer process, please contact our School Admissions general enquiries line on:

Tel: (01234) 718120

Email: admissions@bedford.gov.uk

If you would like details of schools in other authorities please contact that Local Authority directly.

Contact details for school admission teams in neighbouring authorities

Cambridgeshire

Tel: 0345 045 1370

Email: admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Central Bedfordshire

Tel: 0300 300 8037

Email: admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Milton Keynes

Tel: (01908) 253338

Email: secondaryadmissions@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Northamptonshire

Tel: 0300 126 3000 (North Northants)

Email: admissions.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 126 7000 (West Northants)

admissions@westnorthants.gov.uk

The Transfer Process Timetable

Transfer to Secondary School (Year 7)

September 2025

We will send you information on secondary school transfers through your child's primary school.

September/October 2025

Schools will hold their open evenings.

31 October 2025

Last day for applications.

2 March 2026

National Offer Day

Transfer to Upper School (Year 9)

September 2025

We will send you information on upper school transfers through your child's middle school[#].

September/October 2025

Schools will hold their open evenings.

31 October 2025

Last day for applications.

2 March 2026

National Offer Day

Transfer to Middle School (Year 5)

September 2025

We will send you information on middle school transfers through your child's lower school*.

November 2025

Marston Vale Middle School will hold their open evening.

15 January 2026

Last day for applications.

16 April 2026

National Offer Day

If you have applied online, you will receive an email to let you know the outcome of the application.

If you have not applied online, we will post a letter to you on offer day.

It is very important to apply by the date shown, so that we have time to deal properly with all the applications before we notify you of the outcome.

If you live in the area covered by Bedford Borough Council but your child does not attend a Bedford Borough school, please apply online or return your form to:

School Admissions Service, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP

If you live outside the Bedford Borough Council area and are applying for a place at a Bedford Borough school, you must apply to your own Local Authority.

Only children who attend Marston Vale Middle School will receive this information.

** Only children who attend Broadmead Lower School will receive this information.*

Applying for a school place

Which schools can I apply for?

Most parents will want their child to attend their local school but you have the right to express a preference for another school or schools. You may wish to apply for your catchment school (if applicable), as well. This will usually mean that, if a place is not available at your preferred school, you will still have priority for a place at your catchment area school, although it is not a guarantee of a place.

If you do not ask for a place at your nearest school (if applicable), it could result in your child attending a school some distance from your home. You would be responsible for transporting your child to that school.

You can find out which school serves your local area by logging onto the Bedford Borough Council website:

www.bedford.gov.uk/catchmentareas

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact us.

What you should consider when expressing a preference for a school

At the back of this booklet, you will find information about every school. The “key” explains the difference between the various types of school. For each school you will find:

- the address
- the name of the headteacher
- the telephone number
- the fax number (where applicable)
- the email address
- the website address
- the category of the school and the age range
- the number on roll for January 2025
- the admissions number (how many pupils the school can admit)

As well as this basic information you will also find

- the admissions criteria
- the designated measuring point used in the event of the school being oversubscribed
- the number of applications received and the number of places offered for admission in September 2025
- at which point on the list of admissions criteria the last place was offered for admission in September 2025

Information about individual schools

We ask the headteacher of every school to arrange an open evening for parents / carers of children who are due to transfer to their next phase of school. The open evenings will help you to decide which school is best for your child. You will find the dates of the open evenings later in this booklet.

The headteacher and other school staff will be at the open evening and will answer questions about their school. The school must also publish information on its website.

This information will tell you things you need to know about the school, such as:

- what subjects the school curriculum covers
- the aims of the school
- what the school community is like
- public examination results (if appropriate)
- inspection reports by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)

Performance tables and examination results can also be helpful when choosing a school, but they have limitations. Be careful when comparing the performance of individual schools based only on these results – they don't give you the full picture.

If you would like a copy of Bedford Borough Key Stage 2 results or Key Stage 3 results, or details of public examination results please contact the Department for Education, telephone **0370 000 2288**. Alternatively, the information is available from the DfE website or the Bedford Borough website. These websites also contain other useful information and statistics about schools, as does the OFSTED website.

Department for Education: www.gov.uk/dfe

OFSTED: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Bedford Borough: www.bedford.gov.uk

When using the Bedford Borough website, the “Schools, Education and Childcare” section has a range of information about Education in Bedford Borough.

Applying for a Bedford Borough school if you live outside Bedford Borough

If you live outside the Bedford Borough area and you wish to apply for a place in a Bedford Borough school, you must apply to your own Local Authority. Your own Local Authority will inform us if you have put any Bedford Borough school on their application form. We will not be able to process any applications we receive on the Bedford Borough application form from out of area parents.

Even if your Local Authority accepts more than three preferences, please note that we will only accept a maximum of three schools.

Oversubscription

The number of children choosing a particular school varies from year to year and different schools have different admission numbers.

In some cases the number of places offered could be more than the admission number. This does not mean that there will be a similar number of places in September 2026. Please refer to the admission limit for each school.

You may find this information helpful when you are considering which school to request as your preferred school. But be aware that subscription levels may vary from year to year.

A school may be oversubscribed one year but be undersubscribed the next. Likewise, the fact that a school was undersubscribed last September does not mean that you will definitely get a place there next September.

Admission criteria

Admission criteria are the rules we apply when there are more applications for places than places available. They explain the order in which places are allocated. All schools have published admission criteria, you can check full details/definitions by visiting the individual school's websites.

We have standard criteria which some schools use. You will find our standard admission criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools below.

Some schools have additions to our standard criteria and you will find details of these later in this booklet. This will help you to judge whether you meet the criteria for admission to a particular school. It will also help you when you make your application.

Local Authority standard admission criteria

The Local Authority will apply the following criteria (in the rank order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents than the number of places available:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see definitions);
2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition of sibling);
3. Other pupils living in the catchment area;
4. Other siblings (see definition);
5. Any other children

Notes

1. If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to a point on the school site agreed with the governing body of the school (published in the 'Starting School' and 'School Transfer' admissions booklets). The Local Authority will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.
2. If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area school if this would mean exceeding the admission number at the school. In this case, a place will normally be offered at the next nearest school or academy which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.
3. Pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named in the plan, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

Definitions

'Looked after' children

A 'looked after' child is a child in the care of a local authority as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school.

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is a child who was 'looked after', but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or a Special Guardianship Order.

'Looked after' children from Outside of England

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.

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister where foster care has been arranged by a Local Authority or the child of the parent's / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent / carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents / carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or tax credit information.

How to complete your application

The law says that every parent must have the opportunity to express a preference for the school or schools they want their child to go to. We will send you an information sheet via your child's current lower/primary/middle school which explains how you can do this. We would strongly recommend that you apply online at www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions (residents of Bedford Borough only).

You should complete only one application and list the schools you want your child to attend in order of preference. If you apply online please do not submit a paper application. If you do submit more than one application, we will process the most recent one.

The following notes and the notes on the form are designed to help you make an application. Please read them carefully and answer all the relevant questions, giving further details where the application asks for them. If you are not sure how to apply, please ring us.

Pupil's Details

Please complete your child's personal details in all the boxes in this section.

You should provide your child's address at the time you apply, if this is different from parent/carer, you must explain why.

If you are moving to Bedford, do not use your new address unless you have exchanged contracts or have a signed tenancy agreement. You must apply via your current Local Authority.

If you move after submitting your application, you should notify us by email as soon as possible providing appropriate evidence, but please be aware that we cannot guarantee to take account of your new address if the allocation process has begun.

Although we are not asking all parent / carers to provide evidence that they have Parental Responsibility or to provide proof of address, we reserve the right to carry out checks and you may, therefore, be asked to provide this information at a later date. If you do not provide this information when asked it may not be possible to process your application.

Please note: We will withdraw the offer of a place if we find that you have given fraudulent or misleading information that has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim – for example if you claim to live in the catchment area when you don't.

Child living between two addresses (such as due to parents being separated/divorced or joint care arrangements)

An application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (e.g. due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make one joint application naming one address.

If the child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide one of the following:

- Court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes;
- Child Benefit if applicable;
- The address being used for GP registration purposes.

Conflicting Applications

We will only accept one application per child. Where parents disagree on school preferences for their child, they must settle their differences between each other and only submit one application. Where different applications are received or we are made aware of a dispute between two parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will not be processed until such time that:

- One joint application is made, signed by all parties; or
- Written agreement is provided from both parents; or
- A court order is obtained confirming which parents' application carries precedence

Conflicting applications that are not resolved by the relevant closing date will be placed on hold until resolved and therefore will not be considered until the late allocation phase.

Whilst we appreciate differences between parents can be a difficult time for all involved, including possible court action, the School Admissions Service must remain neutral and treat both parties equally.

School Preferences

This section allows you to express a preference for the school or schools you want your child to go to even if this school is in another Local Authority area.

Do **not** include Independent schools in this section.

If you are applying for a school place and do not live within the Bedford Borough Council area, you must contact your own local authority to apply.

Most parents will want their child to attend the catchment area school (if applicable), but you have the right to express a preference for another school or more than one school. We will consider your child for each of the schools you put on the application. If there is a place for your child at more than one of those schools, we will offer you a place at the school you have identified as your highest priority. This may not apply if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (see Other Information).

You may wish to put your catchment area school (if applicable) as one of your preferences. This will usually mean that you still have priority for a place at the catchment area school if there isn't a place for your child at your preferred school or schools. If you are not sure which is your catchment area school, please check our website: www.bedford.gov.uk/catchmentareas.

If you do not have access to the internet please contact us.

The school information sheets at the back of this booklet will tell you what type of school your catchment area school (if applicable) is and the "key" also gives definitions of the various types of school.

Some schools do not serve a local catchment area, admission to these schools is in accordance with the schools' own admission criteria.

The law says that admission authorities must consider admitting children whose parents have expressed a preference for a school before they consider those whose parents have not expressed any preference. Because of this, if you do not make a request for your catchment area school (if applicable) according to the published admission arrangements it could result in a place not being available at that school.

Other children

In some cases your child may have a greater chance of being offered a place at a school if a sibling (see definition) already goes to that school, but this is not a guarantee of a place.

If, at the time of admission you will have another child still going to one of the schools you have nominated, please put their name, date of birth and the school they attend, in the boxes provided.

We will check this information with the school(s) concerned. If you do not provide this information or this section becomes relevant to you after the allocation process is completed, we cannot guarantee to take it into account as part of your application.

Other Information

i) Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

It would be helpful if you could complete this section if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan or if your child is currently going through the EHC needs assessment process. The arrangements for admitting a child with an EHC plan are different to those for children who do not have an EHC plan. The Children and Families Act 2014 says that we must consult with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school before we can name a particular school in an EHC plan. This process is co-ordinated by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Team.

The local authority must name your nominated school in the EHC plan provided that:

- the school is suitable for the child's age, ability and aptitude and the Special Educational Needs as set out in Section B of the EHC Plan;
- the child's attendance is not incompatible with the efficient education of other children in the school, and
- the placement is an efficient use of the LA's resources

The SEND Team will let you know by 15 February the name of the school which they propose to name on your child's Education, Health and Care Plan.

If you have any queries or concerns about the process, please contact the SEND Team, **(01234) 228375, sendteam@bedford.gov.uk**.

If your child's Special Educational Needs are supported at Additional Support level within the school, your preferences for their school place will be treated in the same way as all other applications.

If you have concerns about your child's Special Educational Needs when they transfer to a new school, you can talk in confidence with the Bedford Borough SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), **(01234) 276267, sendiass@bedford.gov.uk**.

ii) 'Looked After' children / Previously 'Looked After' children / 'Looked After' children from Outside of England (see definitions)

'Looked after' children / previously 'looked after' children / 'looked after' children from outside of England have a higher priority for admission. If your child is 'looked after' / previously 'looked after' / 'looked after' from outside of England you must provide evidence to support your application. We will check this information with the appropriate authority. If you do not provide this evidence your child may be refused a place.

iii) Parent / Carer who works at the school

Some schools give a higher priority to children who have a parent who works at the school. But this does not guarantee a place. Please check the admissions criteria/definition for the school you wish to apply for.

If any of the schools which you have nominated have this as part of their admission criteria and you meet that criterion, you must include the details on your application. We will check this information with the school(s) concerned. If you do not provide this information, or this section becomes relevant to you after the allocation process is completed, there will be no guarantee of a place at the school(s) concerned.

iv) Exceptional Medical Grounds

Some schools have this as a criteria, therefore if your child has a genuine and longstanding medical condition this may give him or her a greater chance of a place at your preferred school(s). It is not, however, a guarantee of a place. We will consider your application on medical grounds where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** for your child to attend a particular school, where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet your child's needs **and** has 'medical' as one of its admissions criteria. In recent years very few applications have met this criterion. With the application, you must submit a medical report from your child's doctor or consultant, setting out valid medical reasons why admission to the school is essential and the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. We reserve the right to seek further medical opinion, with parental consent, in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. We cannot consider admission on medical grounds where grounds relate to the medical condition of a parent, brother or sister, other relative or childminder.

Additional Information (e.g. Feeder schools)

Some schools give a higher priority to children from outside the catchment area who go to one of the feeder schools. If a school has a feeder school criterion, the individual admission criteria for that school will identify this (see school admission criteria). **But this does not guarantee a place**, even though out of catchment area children attending feeder schools may have been offered places in the past.

If any of the schools you nominate have feeder schools as part of their admission criteria, and your child attends one of these schools, you must provide the details so that we can take it into account when we consider your application. Please note that some schools impose a time limit for attendance at a feeder school.

If your child is admitted to a feeder school after the allocation process is completed there will be no guarantee of a place at the school(s) concerned.

Declaration

Please complete this part of the application.

Religious / Faith Grounds

Some schools provide religious education that follows the teaching of a particular faith. We have a Catholic Secondary Academy, St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School in Bedford Borough, but there may be faith schools in other areas you may wish to apply for. Being a practising member of the appropriate faith, or having been baptised into that faith, may give your child a greater chance of a place at that school according to the school's admission criteria. But it does not always guarantee your child a place. Being a practising member of another faith may also give your child a greater chance of a place at that school but, again, it is not a guarantee.

If you are applying for a place at a school on religious or faith grounds, it is important to provide all the information the form asks for.

If you are applying for a place on religious grounds at St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School because your child has been baptised Catholic, or enrolled in a catechumenate programme, you **must** provide their Baptismal Certificate or your priest **must** confirm enrolment in the programme.

If you are a practising Catholic family, your priest **must** confirm this, by signing a Certificate of Catholic Practice. This is a requirement from the schools within the Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust. The blank Certificate can be obtained from the school or downloaded from our website, www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

If you are a practising member of another religion or faith you **must** make sure that your priest, minister or faith leader completes the religious declaration which is available on our website. Without this information, the governing body will not be able to consider your application on religious grounds.

You can obtain the relevant form to confirm religious affiliation at www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

If you live in Bedford Borough and your preferred school is a religious school in another Local Authority, you will need to ask them how to provide this information.

Data Protection

Under new Data Protection regulations (GDPR) Bedford Borough Council needs to inform you of the reasons why we are capturing your data and what we will do with your data. Any personal data collected and/or processed under this policy/procedure will be dealt with in accordance with Data Protection Legislation and the Council's Data Protection Policy. Data is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to individuals only where relevant to this policy/procedure. To find out more information on this follow the link below.

View the Council's current Privacy Notices at www.bedford.gov.uk/gdprprivacy.

Who allocates places?

Community and Voluntary Controlled schools

The Local Authority is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools. This means that we allocate places at these schools. The headteachers of these schools **are not** authorised to offer your child a place. If the headteacher of one of these schools indicates that he or she will offer your child a place, you **cannot** assume that this will be so. You must have an email/letter from **us** offering your child a place before your child can attend one of these schools. If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan please see Other Information.

Academy, Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools

The admission authority for an academy, a foundation or a voluntary aided school is its Governing Body. This means that the school governors decide who to admit to these schools. However, we email/write to parents on the school governors' behalf to offer school places. You must have an email/letter from **us** offering your child a place before your child can start at one of these schools. An email/letter from the school is not a valid offer. If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan please see Other Information.

How are places allocated?

All our schools operate an equal preference system for allocating places. This means that there are two stages in the allocation process.

Stage 1

All first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the schools' admission criteria. At this stage there is no distinction between first, second and third preference applications. For example, if the school has 130 places and there are 145 first, second and third preference applications, all applications are considered equally against the admission criteria.

Stage 2

If we are able to offer a place at more than one school, the school ranked higher by the parent (i.e: first or second preference on the application form or on-line application) will be offered and any lower ranking offers will be withdrawn. For example, a parent's first and third preferences might both qualify for a place, in which case the parent would be offered their first preference, leaving the place at the third preference school available for another pupil.

Offers

Occasionally the last child we offer a place to at a school is the first child from a family with multiple births. If this happens at a community or voluntary controlled school, we will offer a place to the subsequent child / children even if it takes the school over their admission number.

If this happens at an academy, foundation or voluntary aided school we would ask the school to admit the subsequent child / children.

Pupils living in the Bedford Borough Council area who have not been allocated a place at any of their preferred schools will be allocated a place at the nearest Bedford Borough school to their home address with vacancies.

Fair Access Protocol

The Local Authority has a Fair Access Protocol which has been agreed with all schools. The protocol applies in exceptional cases where the circumstances of the child mean that the normal admission procedure cannot ensure that the child will be admitted to a suitable school as quickly as possible.

In most cases children will be admitted to school in accordance with the arrangements set out in this booklet or in accordance with the in year admission arrangements (see separate guidance notes for parents). However, for some children without a school place, for example children permanently excluded from a school, the normal admission process may not result in a suitable school placement for the child.

Children identified for a school place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over other children on a waiting list for admission and may be admitted to a school even if that school is full.

Late applications

The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2025** for secondary/upper schools and **15 January 2026** for middle schools. As far as is reasonably practicable we will accept new applications for places and changes to existing applications in the normal admissions round that arrive late for good reason. If we receive applications late with good reason after the allocation procedure has begun we will consider them if it is practical to do so, but we cannot guarantee to do this.

If we receive applications late with good reason after the allocation process has started or after places have been offered we will prioritise the applications and any waiting list according to the admission criteria of the individual schools and we will offer a place at the highest preference school that has a place available during our late allocation rounds. If all preferred schools are full and the pupil lives in Bedford Borough, a place will generally be offered at the nearest school with places available. However, it may be necessary to make a priority placement available for Bedford Borough children whose application is late for good reason.

After the late application process if there are still children where parents/carers have not expressed a written preference, these children will be allocated a place at the nearest Bedford Borough school to their home address with vacancies.

How you will hear the result of your application

When we have completed the allocation process, we will email or write to tell you the outcome of your application.

If you have applied online you will receive an email on National Offer Day to let you know the outcome of your application. You can also log back into your online account to see the result. If you have not applied online we will post a letter to you on this day. If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team will write to you at the appropriate time to tell you the school where your child has a place.

If we are not able to offer you a place at your preferred school or schools, you have the formal right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeals Panel. We will tell you about the procedure to follow if you want to appeal. Appeals are normally held during the summer term.

If we are not able to offer a place at any of your preferred schools and you live in the Bedford Borough Council area, we will offer your child a place at:

- **the catchment area school, if there are still places available; or**
- **the next nearest Bedford Borough Local Authority school to your child's home address which has places available.**

We will also tell you which other schools still have places available. You will be able to request a place at one of those schools.

However, we will not be able to consider another application for a place at the same school in the same academic year unless there has been a significant change of circumstances relevant to the application.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the Admissions Appeals Panel cannot deal with your appeal. If you are unhappy about the school which has been named on the plan, you should contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team, **(01234) 228375** [**sendteam@bedford.gov.uk**](mailto:sendteam@bedford.gov.uk)

Waiting lists

If we have not been able to offer you a place at your preferred school(s), we will place your child's name on a waiting list which has been prioritised according to the admission criteria for individual schools. If a place becomes available we will contact you, even if you have accepted a place at another school. Your child's position on the waiting list could change if other children are added or removed. We will maintain the waiting lists for community and voluntary controlled schools until the end of the Autumn term 2026 / 31 December 2026. If you wish to remain on the waiting list beyond that time you will need to email to us. If you have been turned down for a place at an academy, foundation or voluntary aided school, their arrangements for maintaining a waiting list may be different.

Home to school transport

Parents and carers have a legal duty and a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and to make any necessary arrangements to ensure that they attend.

In certain circumstances Bedford Borough Council has a duty to provide free home to school transport. This is ordinarily where a child attends their nearest school and either distance or road safety criteria are met. The Council arranges school transport for children and young people in Bedford Borough who are assessed as eligible under the Children's Services transport policy.

Please note that from September 2017, Bedford Borough Council introduced a new home to school transport policy.

Before applying for a school place, you should read and understand the transport policy information on the Bedford Borough Council website and consider how you will transport your child to school, taking into account any potential transport costs. You should not assume that your child will be able to access transport services without checking if they will be eligible.

For further information and full details of the transport policy, please visit our website www.bedford.gov.uk/schooltransport.

Should you be unable to access information online, please contact Customer Services on (01234) 718004.

www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions

Admission to Other Year Groups

This composite prospectus is published primarily to allow parents to apply for places in schools that have a designated transfer point of entry into Year 5, Year 7 or Year 9.

In addition to these transfer entry points schools can admit children to other year groups, we call these In Year admissions. Here is the link to the appropriate page on our website where you can find out how to apply www.bedford.gov.uk/inyearadmissions.

Schedule of Open Days/Evenings

Bedford Academy

1 October 2025; 6:00pm - 8:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Bedford Free School

25 September 2025; 5:00pm - 8:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Biddenham International School & Sports College

6 October 2025; 4:30pm - 7:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Castle Newnham School

13 October 2025; 6:00pm - 8:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Daubeney Academy

16 October 2025; 5:00pm - 7:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Goldington Academy

2 October 2025; 6:30pm - 8:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Kempston Academy

2 October 2025; 6:00pm - 8:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Lincroft Academy

9 October 2025; 4:00pm - 7:30pm (details on school's website for presentation times and booking information), Intake Year Group: 7

Mark Rutherford School

16 October 2025; 5:30pm - 8:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Marston Vale Middle School

13 November 2025; 5:00pm - 7:00pm, Intake Year Group: 5

Sharnbrook Academy

2 October 2025; 5:30pm - 8:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School

25 September 2025; 6:00pm - 8:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Wixams Academy

9 October 2025; 4:00pm - 7:00pm, Intake Year Group: 7

27 November 2025; 4:00pm - 7:00pm, Sixth Form Entry

Wootton Academy

23 September 2025; 4:30pm - 7:00pm, Intake Year Group: 9

25 September 2025; 4:30pm - 7:00pm, Intake Year Groups: 7 and 8

Please visit the school's websites to find information about the school prior to making your application.

Central Bedfordshire Schools - Secondary Open Evening

This information is provided for those parents / carers whose catchment area secondary school is within the Central Bedfordshire Council area. Please visit the Central Bedfordshire website, or contact the School Admissions Service, for information about open evenings for other schools in the Central Bedfordshire Council area.

Sandy Secondary

9 October 2025; 4:00pm - 7:30pm, Intake Year Group: 7

Please visit the school's website to find information about the school prior to making your application.

Schools Information Sheets - Key

The following pages contain detailed information about our schools to help you to consider which school(s) you would like your child to attend.

Academy

Academies are all ability schools established by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and sponsors from business, faith and/or voluntary groups working in partnership with local education partners. The Governing Body is responsible for the admission arrangements. The Government has published proposals to increase the number of schools applying to become Academies. As a result the status of a school may subsequently change from that printed in this booklet.

Community

The Local Authority is responsible for the admission arrangements. Religious Education in community schools follows the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for the Authority.

Foundation

The Governing Body is responsible for the admission arrangements in a Foundation School. Religious Education in Foundation schools follows the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for the Authority.

Foundation (Trust)

This is a Foundation school which is supported by a charitable trust. A Trust may include just one school or a group of schools working with external partners to share best practice and to support transition between phases. The Governing Body is responsible for the admission arrangements in a Trust School. Religious Education in Trust schools follows the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for the Authority.

VA

Voluntary Aided. The Governing Body is responsible for the admission arrangements in a VA school. Religious education follows the teaching of the Church of England (if C of E) or Catholic faith (if Catholic). The Local Authority maintains the school but the governors employ the staff and have wider responsibilities for the upkeep of the building than in a Community or Controlled School.

Admission Number

This represents the number of pupils the school can admit in each year. Schools are expected to admit up to that limit during the course of the year, if there are requests for places. Where there are more requests for places than the number of places at that school, we allocate places in order of priority according to the school's admissions criteria. The Year 12 admission number represents the minimum number of external candidates likely to be admitted to the sixth form, in addition to the pupils currently attending the school who wish to continue their education in the sixth form (subject to meeting entry requirements for the course they wish to follow). Applications for admission into Year 12 should be made to the school direct.

NOR 2025

Number on Roll. We have included the roll for January 2025 to show you the likely size of the school.

Designated Measuring point

If applying the admissions criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to a point on the school site, agreed with the governing body of the school. This point is the designated measuring point.

Admissions last September

We have included this information as you may find it helpful when considering whether or not places are likely to be available at your preferred school. You should be aware, however, that numbers vary from year to year and the availability of places last September will not mean that places will be available next September. Likewise, over-subscription last September will not mean over-subscription next September.

Schools Information Sheets

Bedford Academy

Mile Road, Bedford MK42 9TR

Head: Mr C Deller

Tel: (01234) 301500

e-mail: info@bedfordacademy.co.uk

website: www.bedfordacademy.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 1375

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 300, Year 12 - 0

Designated measuring point: Front Gate on Mile Road

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Children who currently attend Cauldwell, Cotton End, Elstow, Shackleton, Shortstown and Kings Oak Primary Schools
3. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
4. Other siblings
5. Children of staff
6. Other pupils living in the catchment area
7. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds
8. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 250

Requests received: 328

Places offered: 300

At the time of the initial allocation the last place offered was under 'catchment' at a distance of 2230.69m

Bedford Free School

Cauldwell House, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AD

Principal: Mr T Wood

Tel: (01234) 332299

e-mail: info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

website: www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Free School / 11 to 16 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 525

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 100

Designated measuring point: Front Door of the School

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Children who have siblings in the school
3. Previous siblings who attended the school in one of the previous three academic years prior to the year of proposed admission
4. Children of Staff
5. Children on roll at Elstow School or Queens Park Academy
6. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 100

Requests received: 224

Places offered: 110

At the time of the initial allocation the last place offered was under 'any other children' at a distance of 821.11m

Biddenham International School & Sports College

Biddenham Turn, Biddenham, Bedford MK40 4AZ

Head: Mr D Bailey

Tel: (01234) 342521

e-mail: enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk

website: www.biddenham.beds.sch.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Foundation (Trust) / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 1357

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 240, Year 12 - 40

Designated measuring point: Entrance to the School Reception

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Siblings
3. Children of Staff
4. Pupils living in the catchment area
5. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds
6. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 240

Requests received: 342

Places offered: 240

At the time of the initial allocation the last place offered was under 'catchment' at a distance of 1371.96m

Castle Newnham School

Polhill Avenue, Bedford MK41 9DT

Principal: Mrs S Levesley

Tel: (01234) 303403

e-mail: cnsecondary@bestacademies.org.uk

website: www.castlenewnham.school

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 16 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 750

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 150

Designated measuring point: Centre of the school site

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Pupils currently attending Castle Newnham Primary or Hazeldene School
3. Children of staff
4. Pupils with siblings already at Castle Newnham (North Site)
5. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 150

Requests received: 167

Places offered: 150

At the time of the initial allocation the last place offered was under 'any other children' at a distance of 2388.44m

Daubeney Academy

Orchard Street, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7PS

Head: Mr C Carter

Tel: (01234) 400111

e-mail: office@daubeneyacademy.co.uk

website: www.daubeneyacademy.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 16 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 561

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 120

Designated measuring point: Main block entrance

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Children of staff
3. Children with siblings at the school
4. Children who attend Springfield Primary
5. Other children who currently attend any of the following schools in Kempston: Balliol Primary, Bedford Road Primary, Camestone Primary or Kempston Rural Primary
6. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 120

Requests received: 122

Places offered: 122

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Goldington Academy

Haylands Way, Bedford MK41 9BX

Principal: Mr F Galbraith

Tel: (01234) 261516

e-mail: office@goldington.beds.sch.uk

website: www.goldington.beds.sch.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 16 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 942

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 168

Designated measuring point: School Library

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Children with siblings at the school
3. Children of staff
4. Any other children

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 168

Requests received: 335

Places offered: 187

At the time of the initial allocation the last place offered was under 'any other children' at a distance of 1179.44m

Kempston Academy

Hill Rise, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7EB

Head: Mr P House

Tel: (01234) 290900

e-mail: office@kempstonacademy.co.uk

website: www.kempstonacademy.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 824

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 180, Year 12 - 80

Designated measuring point: Main Entrance off Hill Rise

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Students of staff
3. Students who have siblings at the school
4. Students who currently attend Springfield Primary
5. Other students who currently attend any of the following schools in Kempston: Balliol Primary, Bedford Road Primary, Camestone Primary or Kempston Rural Primary
6. Other students

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 180

Requests received: 116

Places offered: 116

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Lincroft Academy

Station Road, Oakley, Bedford MK43 7RE

Principal: Ms E Appadoo

Tel: (01234) 822147

e-mail: administration@lincroft.academy

website: www.lincroft.academy

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 16 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 931

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 210

Designated measuring point: School flagpole

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Pupils with siblings at the Academy
 3. Children attending Oakley Primary Academy or Great Ouse Primary Academy
 4. Children attending Bromham Primary, Ursula Taylor Primary or St James' Primary
 5. Pupils living in the catchment area
 6. Children of staff who have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made
 7. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 210

Requests received: 190

Places offered: 190

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Mark Rutherford School

Wentworth Drive, Bedford MK41 8PX

Head: Mrs K Foster

Tel: (01234) 290200

e-mail: mark.rutherford@mrus.co.uk

website: www.markrutherford.beds.sch.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 1180

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 200, Year 12 - 50

Designated measuring point: Main School Gate

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children with siblings at the school
 3. Children living in the catchment area
 4. Children who currently attend Brickhill Primary, Goldington Green Academy, Great Barford Primary, Putnoe Primary, Ravensden Primary, Renhold Primary, Roxton Primary, Scott Primary, Sheerhatch Primary, The Hills Academy or Wilden Primary
 5. Children of staff
 6. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 200

Requests received: 194

Places offered: 194

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Marston Vale Middle School

The Crescent, Stewartby, Bedford MK43 9NH

Head: Mr J Heath

Tel: (01234) 768224

e-mail: school@marstonvalemiddle.co.uk

website: www.marstonvalemiddle.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 9-11 only / Middle

NOR 2025: 571

Admission Number 2026: Year 5 - 60

Designated measuring point: Central entrance to year 5 block

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children of staff
 3. Pupils currently attending Broadmead Lower
 4. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
 5. Children living in the catchment area of the school
 6. Other siblings
 7. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 150

Requests received: 144

Places offered: 144

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Sharnbrook Academy

Odell Road, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1JL

Principal: Mrs C Waterman

Tel: (01234) 782211

e-mail: administration@sharnbrook.academy

website: www.sharnbrook.academy

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 1685

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 270, Year 12 - 30

Designated measuring point: Main School reception of main school site

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children with siblings at the Academy
 3. Children attending Harrold Primary Academy or Great Ouse Primary Academy
 4. Children attending Carlton Primary, Christopher Reeves Primary, Eileen Wade Primary, Kymbrook Primary, Milton Ernest Primary, Pinchmill Primary, Riseley C of E Primary, Sharnbrook Primary, St Lawrence Primary, Thurleigh Primary, or Turvey Primary
 5. Children living in the catchment area
 6. Children of staff who have been employed by Sharnbrook Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made
 7. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 270

Requests received: 258

Places offered: 258

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School

Tyne Crescent, Bedford MK41 7UL

Head: Mr M Bonner

Tel: (01234) 400222

e-mail: office@stm.beds.olicatschools.org

website: www.st-thomasmore.org.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy (Catholic) / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 929

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 150, Year 12 - 20

Designated measuring point: Front door (opposite Reception)

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
 2. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic practice who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission
 3. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic practice who attend an OLICAT Primary School designated as a feeder school
 4. Other Catholic children
 5. Children of staff
 6. Children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission
 7. Children who attend an OLICAT Primary School designated as a feeder school
 8. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education whose application is supported by a Christian minister
 9. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader
 10. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 150

Requests received: 126

Places offered: 126

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Wixams Academy

Green Lane, Wixams, Bedford, MK42 6BA

Head: Mr N Wilson

Tel: (01234) 608950

e-mail: info@wixamsacademy.co.uk

website: www.wixamsacademy.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 18 / Secondary

NOR 2025: 933

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 210

Designated measuring point: The front gate of the Academy

Admission Criteria 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children with siblings in the Academy
 3. Children of staff
 4. Any other children
-

Admissions in September 2025:

Admission number: 210

Requests received: 165

Places offered: 165

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Wootton Academy

Hall End, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HT

Head: Mrs C McMorn

Tel: (01234) 767123

e-mail: hellowootton@wootton.beds.sch.uk

website: www.woottonupper.co.uk

Category / Age Range / Phase: Academy / 11 to 19 / Upper

NOR 2025: 867

Admission Number 2026: Year 7 - 150, Year 8 - 150, Year 9 - 270, Year 12 - 50

Designated measuring point: Gate to Front Car Park

Admission Criteria Secondary and Transfer to Year 8 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children who currently attend Marston Vale Middle School
 3. Children whose home address is in the catchment area with siblings at the school
 4. Children whose home address is in the catchment area
 5. Children with siblings at the school and who are likely to remain in the school the following academic year
 6. Children who currently attend Holywell School
 7. Children with siblings who currently attend Kimberley 16-19 STEM College
 8. Children of staff employed by Wootton Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made
 9. Any other children
-

Admissions in September Secondary and Transfer to Year 8 2025:

No admission into these year groups in September 2025

Admission Criteria Upper 2026:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
 2. Children whose home address is in the catchment area with siblings at the school
 3. Children whose home address is in the catchment area
 4. Children with siblings at the school and who are likely to remain in the school the following academic year
 5. Children who currently attend either Holywell School or Marston Vale Middle School
 6. Children with siblings who currently attend Kimberley 16-19 STEM College
 7. Children of staff employed by Wootton Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made
 8. Any other children
-

Admissions in September Upper 2025:

Admission number: 297

Requests received: 293

Places offered: 293

At the time of the initial allocation all applicants were offered a place

Map of Bedford Borough



Notes

Notes

Finding out more

If you would like further information about us and our services, please telephone, email or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Informacja

برای اطلاع

Za Informacije

Per Informazione

তথ্যের জন্য



01234 718120



School Admissions Service

Bedford Borough Council

Borough Hall

Cauldwell Street

Bedford

MK42 9AP



admissions@bedford.gov.uk



www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions