

# Admissions Policy

## 1 Introduction

1.1 The Governing Body of Shortstown Primary School applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school.

## 2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We are an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities.

2.2 All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.

2.3 The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.

2.4 The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the Admissions Policy of this school.

## 3 How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school

3.1 As our school is a Community School, the school determines the admission arrangements in agreement with Bedford Borough Council (LA). The LA is therefore the 'Admissions Authority' for our school. The regulations for entry to each school, where the Admissions Authority is the LA, are published each year by the LA. Parents can receive a copy of these regulations directly from the LA.

3.2 The LA publishes a composite admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school. Application forms can be obtained from the Bedford Borough Council Admissions Department. They should be completed by the date stipulated on the forms. The LA notifies parents about the school place as soon as all the applications have been considered.

3.3 In this area, children enter school in the academic year they become five. There is one admissions date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the school year). All places are on a full time basis. Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to this school during the year their child is five should ensure that they complete the necessary application form by the end of January before the September.

3.4 Enrolling the child in school is a commitment to abide by the school and setting Policies and Procedures. This includes the Attendance Policy, regardless of age. If a child has a Statutory Assessment and a Statement of Need, the recommendations of the professionals will be taken into consideration.

3.5 The school has an agreed number of 60 for entry to the Reception year. Children enter school in the academic year they become five. There is one admissions date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the school year). Therefore parents who would like their child to be admitted to this school during the year their child is five should ensure that they complete the necessary application form. Parents who wish their children to start in the Autumn term 2018 will need to complete an LA common application form available from the child's nursery care provider or the School's Admission Service from October 2017. The forms will need to be returned to the first preference school by January 2018 or parents can apply online. The admission number for Shortstown Primary School is 60

In the event of there being more applicants than there are places available, the local authority will apply the following criteria in the priority order of categories as listed.

- All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after' (see definitions);
- Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition of sibling)
- Other pupils living in the catchment area
- 'Very exceptional circumstances' medical grounds, Educational Health Care plans(see definition)
- Other siblings ( see definition)
- Any other children

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. The Local Authority will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. The Local Authority will normally offer a place at the catchment area school if parents apply for a place at that school during the normal admissions round. However, a place at the catchment area school cannot be guaranteed. 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. Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted, even if the school is full.

#### **Definitions:**

##### **'Looked after' children**

A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

##### **Previously 'looked after' children**

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

##### **Sibling**

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister or the child of the parent/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.

##### **Very Exceptional Medical Grounds**

'Very exceptional' medical grounds refers to cases where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Local Authority reserves the right to seek further information in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent / carer, brother or sister or other relative / childminder.

## 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 pupil is ordinarily resident and where 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 family tax credit information.

## Admissions above the published admission number

The Bedford Borough Admissions Forum has agreed the following exceptions which may result in the admission number for a school being exceeded.

For the normal admissions round:

- The admission of catchment area pupils, where the parent has expressed a preference (whether first, second or third) for the catchment school as part of the normal admissions round and in accordance with the published admissions arrangements. This is not however a guarantee of a place

For In-Year admissions

- The admission of pupils in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol
- The admission of pupils who have moved into the area, where there is no other suitable school within a reasonable travelling distance, or where the admission of an additional catchment area child would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Before admitting children under the exception, governing bodies that are their own admission authority should consult their Local Authority who will be able to advise whether the first of these conditions applies
- The admission of looked after children outside the normal admissions round
- The admission of a twin or children from multiple births
- The admission of a child in very exceptional circumstances in which the Local Authority and the Head Teacher are in agreement that not to admit the child would be perverse

**4.2** Applications for admission to the school should be made in accordance with Local Authority's co-ordinated admission procedures and arrangement. Forms can be obtained from the school or the Local Authority. Parents can also apply online or a form can be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

**4.3** In the case of older children who apply to join the school, admission will be on the basis of places being available in the relevant Year Group. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the In-Year Application Form and in accordance with the Local Authority's coordinated scheme for In-Year Admissions. The form is available from the school or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website. If there are more applicants for places than available, then the above Admissions criteria will apply.

## 4 Admission appeals

**4.1** Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an Independent Admissions Appeal Panel and will receive an appeal form with the refusal letter. The appeal should be returned to the Clerk of the Appeals panel in Committee Services at County Hall. (Tel: 01234 228905) or for information <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/appeals>

**4.2** Any child refused a place at the school will be placed on a waiting list which will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria. Waiting lists for the normal year of entry will be maintained until the end of the Autumn term.

Further information is available at: [www.bedford.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/admissions)

## **5 The standard number**

**5.1** The standard number is the number of children the school can accommodate. The standard number for our school is currently 360. We keep this number under review and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances allow.

## **6 Infant class size**

**6.1** We teach infant children (aged five to seven) in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children in line with current government regulations.

**6.2** Additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which came into force from 1 February 2012 have revised the permitted exceptions originally established in 2001 and further amended in 2006.

The excepted children are:

- Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs admitted outside the normal admission round
- Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children admitted outside the normal admission round
- Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the Admission Authority or Local Authority in the original application process
- Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal
- Children who move into the area outside the normal admission round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- Children of UK Service Personnel admitted outside the normal admission round
- Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 30th child admitted
- Children with SEND who are normally taught in a SEND unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

## **Review**

**7.1** This policy will be reviewed annually with the Admissions Authority in the light of any changed circumstances in our school or the local area.