

Eileen Wade Primary School

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026 - 2027

Rationale

Under the provision of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents have the right to express a preference for the school they wish their child to attend. However, children usually attend the school which is nearest their home and each school has a catchment area determined by the Local Authority. Therefore, children who live within the catchment place cannot be guaranteed. Eileen Wade Primary School serves the local villages of Upper Dean, Lower Dean, Melchbourne, Shelton and Yelden. The number of pupils the school can admit each year is currently 10.

The statutory age when a child must start school is the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. The LA and in particular Eileen Wade Primary School are committed to promoting and maintaining high standards in school for all its pupils. We also recognise the particular importance of making sure services for children under five are of the highest quality, so that every child has the best possible start to their education.

Children who are of pre-statutory age, ie. 4 years old, may attend Eileen Wade Primary School in the September of the school year in which they become five; This means they will complete one, two or three terms of pre-statutory education at the school, depending on their birthdate.

Applications for admission in September 2026 should be made in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme. The timescales for the application process are set out in the Starting School Booklet, available with the application form from the school (Bedford Borough residents only) or the Local Authority in which the child lives.

If the number of requests for places exceeds the number available, then the following criteria will be applied, in rank order, to determine how the places will be allocated:

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. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds (see definition)
5. Other siblings (see definition);
6. Any other children

The following exceptions may result in the admission number for the school being exceeded:

- 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 admission arrangements. This is not, however, a guarantee of a place
- The admission of pupils who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school, when that pupil has either been assessed or moved into the area outside the normal admissions round
- 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 this exception, the governing body will consult with the Local Authority who will be able to advise whether the first of these conditions applies
- The admission of a looked after child outside of the normal admissions round as a result of a direction by the Local Authority acting as corporate parent.
- The admission of a child in very exceptional circumstances in which the Local Authority and the Headteacher are in agreement that not to agree to admit the child would be perverse.
- The admission of a twin or children from multiple births provided the admission would not cause a breach of infant class size limits.

Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeal Panel. 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.

Appendix 1

Notes:

1. 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 the main entrance of the school. Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.
2. 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 the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.
3. A place will normally be offered 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 of the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the local 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 maintained school which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.

Appendix 2

Definitions

'Looked after' children

The Children Act 1998 defines a child who is 'looked after' as a child or young person who is accommodated by the Local Authority (Section 20) or a child or young person who is the subject of a full care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38).

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).

'Looked after' children 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

Sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother 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 that 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 Governors reserve the right to seek further information in order to decide 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, brother or sister or other relative/childminder.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of parents or guardians 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 at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is normally 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 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.

In Year Admissions

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form and in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme for In-Year admissions. The application form is available from the school or can be downloaded from the Local Authority website (Bedford Borough residents only). Parents not living in Bedford Borough should contact the Local Authority in which they live for an application form.