

Willow Grove Primary School



Admission Arrangements for 2025/2026

Willow Grove Primary School
Fisherswood Road
Wixams
Bedford
MK45 3TE

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

Introduction

1. This Admission Policy is part of the admission arrangements for Willow Grove Primary School (**School**), a new primary free school which is part of Kingsbridge Educational Trust (**Trust**), a multi academy trust.
2. The School offers educational provision for children from Reception Year through to Year 6. Initially, the School opened with one class of 25 pupils in Reception Year and one class of 25 pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, but it is being built with facilities to expand into a four form entry, 120 published admission number, 840 total capacity, primary school. In September 2024, the school admitted pupils to Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2. From September 2025, the school will admit pupils into Reception Year only.
3. The Trust and the School promote the highest standards of achievement, welfare and personal development for all pupils, regardless of ability or background. This is achieved through an ethos of the highest expectation and challenge, supported by consistently outstanding teaching and behaviour. An enabling and ennobling curriculum and extra-curricular offer that provides for excellence in academia, and a wide range of pathways and options to develop and nurture individual talent and interest, is a unique feature of the school.
4. The 'admission authority' for the School is the Trust, via its Board of Trustees, who delegate their admission functions to the Local Governing Body. These functions are carried out in compliance with the School Admissions Code 2021 (**Admissions Code**) and the School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (**Appeals Code**), along with other relevant law relating to equality, human rights and special educational needs.
5. In education law and this policy, a 'parent' means a natural or adoptive parent of a child (irrespective of whether they have care of, contact with or parental responsibility for, the child), as well as other persons who are not the natural or adoptive parent of the child but who have care of and/or parental responsibility for them.

Children with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)

6. Children with an EHCP are not admitted under this policy, they are admitted under separate statutory processes set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25. Their EHCPs are maintained by their home Local Authority, who are responsible for making decisions as to which educational setting will be named therein as the one the child will attend.
7. Where the parents of a child with an EHCP want them to be educated at the School, they must discuss this with SEN team at their home Local Authority. The home Local Authority may then consult the School on its suitability and compatibility, before deciding whether or not to name it in the child's EHCP.
8. Where the School is named in an EHCP, it will admit the child. Where this happens in the 'normal admission round' (see below), their place will be allocated before others within the PAN, reducing the number remaining. Where this happens at any other time, they will be admitted when the

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

school is named regardless of numbers.

Age at Admission and Compulsory School Age

9. All children are entitled to a full-time place at school in the September following their fourth birthday. However, they do not reach compulsory school age (the age at which they are legally required to attend school full-time) until one of three prescribed dates after their fifth birthday:
 - 9.1. Children born on or after 1 September to 31 December reach compulsory school age on 31 December on or after their fifth birthday.
 - 9.2. Children born on or after 1 January to 31 March reach compulsory school age on 31 March on or after their fifth birthday.
 - 9.3. Children born on or after 1 April to 31 August reach compulsory school age on 31 August on or after their fifth birthday. These children are known as 'summer born children'.

Deferred Entry, Delayed Entry and Part-Time Attendance

10. Parents have a right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach compulsory school age. Where this is for one or two terms, this is known as 'deferring' entry, and the place offered and accepted will be retained for that child until they start school.
11. However, entry cannot be deferred beyond the end of the second term of the school year. The parents of summer born children can defer entry for one or two terms (and retain their place), however if they decide that their child will not start school until the following school year in September (known as 'delaying' entry), the place offered and accepted will be lost, and the parents will have to make a new application for admission the following year.
12. Parents also have a right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Unlike with deferred entry, this may be for the whole school year (in the case of summer born children), and it can also be combined with the right to defer entry. For example:
 - 12.1. Children born on or before 1 September to 31 December can defer entry until the first day of school in January, or attend part-time until then.
 - 12.2. Children born on or before 1 January to 31 March can defer entry until the first day of school in January or April, or attend part-time until either of those dates, or a combination of the two can be arranged (e.g. defer until January, then attend part-time until April).
 - 12.3. Summer born children born on or before 1 April to 31 August can either:
 - a) Defer entry until the first day of school in January or April, or attend part-time until either of those dates or for the whole school year, or a combination of the two can

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

be arranged (e.g. defer until January or April, then attend part-time until April or the end of the school year); or

- b) Delay entry until September the following year, when the place offered and accepted will be lost and a new application for admission must be made the following year. This would normally be for admission to Year 1 with the child's normal age group, unless a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group is made and agreed in principle for entry to Reception Year instead (see further below).

13. In all cases, parents are asked to let the School know their decisions as soon as possible, to assist with operational planning.

Statutory Maximum Infant Class Size

14. The statutory maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils per teacher.
15. Some categories of children may still be admitted over the statutory maximum. These categories are set out in regulations and summarised at Paragraph 2.16 of the Admissions Code. Where this happens, the additional pupils are deemed to be 'excepted pupils' who do not count towards the class size until it falls back to 30.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

16. The PAN for Reception Year is **25**.

Oversubscription Criteria

17. Where there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered a place. Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be:

17.1. Looked after and previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is one who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Local Governing Body to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence, such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status,

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England, evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application. When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head (**VSH**) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and the School is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for evidence to be provided with the application.

17.2. **Children who live in the catchment area of Wixams with a sibling at Willow Grove Primary School**

The child's home address (as defined by this policy) must be in the catchment area of Wixams¹ at the time of application, and this must still be the child's home address at the time of their admission. An address is deemed to be in this catchment area if 'Wixams' is included in the address for property. An indicative map is published alongside this policy on the School's website.

The sibling must be on the roll at Willow Grove Primary School at the time of application, and will still be on the roll at the time of the applicant child's admission.

A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), or an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents) who live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) as part of the same core family unit.

For the avoidance of doubt, step-siblings, the children of the parent's cohabiting partner, and a child of a family member (e.g. cousin or grandchild) or friend will not be a 'sibling', even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

17.3. **Other children who live in the catchment area of Wixams**

The child's home address (as defined by this policy) must be in the catchment area of Wixams at the time of application, and this must still be the child's home address at the time of their admission. An address is deemed to be in this catchment area if 'Wixams' is included in the address for property. An indicative map is published alongside this policy on the School's website.

17.4. **Other children with a sibling at Willow Grove Primary School**

The sibling must be on the roll at Willow Grove Primary School at the time of application,

¹ Where reference is made to Wixams, this refers to Wixams, Bedfordshire.

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

and will still be on the roll at the time of the applicant child's admission.

A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), or an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents) who live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) as part of the same core family unit.

For the avoidance of doubt, step-siblings, the children of the parent's cohabiting partner, and a child of a family member (e.g. cousin or grandchild) or friend will not be a 'sibling', even if they live at the same address as the applicant child

17.5. **All other children**

All applicant children not included in any of the categories above will be included in this category.

Tie Breaker

18. In any of the oversubscription categories above for any year groups, where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places are allocated will be determined by distance between the child's home address (as defined in this policy) to the School, with those living nearer receiving higher priority.
19. This will be measured using Bedford Borough Council's distance measuring software. This measures in a straight line from the designated address point at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) to the main front door of the school's reception lobby.
20. Where the distance is exactly the same for more than one applicant, random lottery (also known as random allocation) will be used to determine the order in which places are allocated, which will take place in front of a person who is independent of the School.
21. Where applications are received for the admission of twins, triplets or siblings of higher multiple births to the same year group at the same time, but not all of them are allocated a place because of the application of the tie breaker for the final place(s), all of them will be allocated a place even where this means going over PAN.
22. In Reception Year to Year 2, these children are deemed to be 'excepted pupils' for the purpose of the statutory maximum infant class size, which means they do not count towards the total until the class size falls back to the maximum.

Child's Home Address

23. The child's home address is defined in this policy. It is the address meeting this definition that must be stated in the application, and which will be used when processing the application.
24. The child's home address is the residential (not business) address at which they will live and sleep

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night each week during term time, at the time of their admission. Where the child lives with more than one parent and the pattern for overnight stays is irregular, this will be assessed over the most recent five term time weeks.

25. Parents will be expected to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the child's home address, and/or the home address of others (e.g. siblings) where appropriate. This may include family court orders setting out child arrangements and/or proof of ownership and renting, on an intended permanent basis.
26. Applications are welcomed for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces personnel and Crown Servants. Where the family is relocating from overseas, the address used will be the address at which the applicant will live when they return, as long as the parents provide some evidence of this address. Alternatively, a Unit or Quartering address may be used, at the parent's request.

Application Process in the 'Normal Admission Round'

27. All local authorities are required to coordinate admission in the 'normal admission round' for all schools in their area.
28. The 'normal admission round' for applications for admission to Reception Year in September 2025 covers all applications made by the statutory deadlines for applications (**15 January 2025**), as well as applications made after this date but in time for the School to offer a place by 'national offer day' (**16 April 2025**).
29. Applications in the 'normal admission round' must be made to the child's home Local Authority using their Common Application Form, which will be available on their website. For applicants resident in the local authority area of Bedford Borough Council, their admission webpage can be accessed here: [School admissions | Bedford Borough Council](#)
30. A 'late application' is one received before the first day of term but not in time for the School to offer a place on 'national offer day'. As these applications cannot be processed until after the first round of place allocations has happened, this is likely to adversely impact on the chances of achieving a place. Parents are therefore strongly encouraged to submit applications by the statutory deadline.

Application Process for In-Year Admission

31. An 'in-year application' is one made for Reception Year on or after the first day of term in September, or for any other year group at any time.
32. The PAN set for Reception Year applies throughout the year of admission, but ceases to apply after that. This means that in-year applications made for this year group may be refused on the basis that there are no places available within the PAN.
33. In respect of other year groups, a place will be offered unless admitting an additional

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

child/applicant would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources, at the School.

34. Where multiple in-year applications for the same year group are received and processed at the same time, and some but not all can be offered a place within the PAN/without causing prejudice, the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker will be applied to determine the allocation of these places.
35. Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to the School by completing an In-Year Admission Application Form (which is available on the website www.willowgrove.school or in hard copy from the Trust's main office²) and submitting it to the Trust by email to admissions@willowgrove.school or by post/hand delivery to the School's main office³.
36. The outcome of in-year applications will be notified in writing to parents within a maximum of **15 school days** of receipt.

Withdrawal of a Place

37. The School will not withdraw the offer of a place unless it has been offered in error, the applicant's parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.
38. Where the applicant's parent has not responded to the offer, the School will give the parent a further opportunity to respond and will inform them that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.
39. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application will be considered afresh using the correct information, and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is not made.
40. The School will not withdraw a place once the child has started at the school, unless the place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time the child has been at the school will be taken into account. As a rule of thumb, the place might be withdrawn where the child has been at the School for less than one term.

Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

41. Parents have a right to request permission for admission to a year group outside their normal age group, which may be above or below, however this is not an absolute right. The request must be considered by the Local Governing Body which must decide whether to agree it in principle, or refuse it, taking into account the factors set out below.

² Admissions, Willow Grove Primary School, Kingsbridge Educational Trust, c/o Oakgrove School, Venturer Gate, Middleton, Milton Keynes, MK10 9JQ

³ See footnote 1

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

42. These requests are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make these requests as early as possible, preferably well ahead of any deadlines for their normal age group, so that they make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A request must be made to the 'admission authority' for each school for which admission is sought outside normal age group, as the outcome may not be the same for all.
43. The Local Governing Body make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, the Headteacher's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters or documents for consideration.
44. Parents must complete a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form (which is available on the website www.willowgrove.school or in hard copy from the School's main office) and submitting it to the Local Governing body by email to admissions@willowgrove.school or by post/hand delivery to the School's main office.
45. The Local Governing Body will notify parents of the outcome of their request in writing, and will explain its reasons in sufficient detail for them to understand why it came to that decision. Where the request is agreed in principle, the letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made.
46. Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, however they may complain to the School about the outcome if they wish.

Statutory Right of Appeal

47. Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel against the refusal of a place at the School. The refusal letter will set out full details of this right, including where the grounds of appeal must be sent and the deadline for doing so.
48. The School will publish an admission appeal timetable for appeals against refusals in the 'normal admission round' on or before 28 February 2025.

Waiting List

49. The School maintains a permanent waiting list for all year groups. At the end of each school year, the School writes to parents to ask them to confirm, in writing, that they want their child's name to remain on the waiting list the following school year. If parents do not respond within 15 school days, the child's name is deleted.
50. Waiting lists are ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria above, and not by reference to the date that the child/ applicant's name was added to the list. This means a child/applicant's

Willow Grove Primary School

Proposed Admission Policy for 2025/2026

name can go up, as well as down, the list as more names are added.

51. When a place becomes available, the tie breaker set out above (i.e. straight line distance, and random allocation where this is equal) will be used to determine which child/applicant in the highest category (if more than one) will be offered the place.
52. Children allocated a place under the Fair Access Protocol (which all schools are required to participate in) will take precedence over children on the waiting lists.

Review and Determination of Admission Arrangements

53. The admission arrangements for the School must be determined every year by the Board of Trustees. Where any changes are proposed from the criteria determined for the previous intake, these must be consulted on for a minimum of 6 calendar weeks between 1 October and 31 January, ahead of determination on or before 28 February.
54. As the School is opening in September 2024, it was not possible for the admission arrangements for that intake to be determined in accordance with the statutory timetable. The admission arrangements were therefore formally adopted on 30th November 2023 by the Board of Directors.