Willow Grove Primary School

Admission Arrangements
September 2028

WILLOW GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS SEPTEMBER 2028

1. Introduction

The Local Governing Body of Willow Grove Primary School ("the School") is responsible for deciding the admission of pupils into the school within the Local Authority's co-ordinated admissions scheme.

The School has a published admission number (PAN) of 60 for entry into the Reception Year. The school will accordingly admit up to 60 pupils in the relevant year group if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 60 or fewer apply.

Reception relates to pupils starting school for the first time, i.e. pupils who were born between 1st September 2023 and 31st August 2024 may start school in September 2028.

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan which names the school, priority for admission will be given according to the oversubscription criteria set out in this document. For the avoidance of doubt all pupils with a SSEN or EHCP which names the School will be admitted and the number of available places will reduce accordingly.

This document is split into three sections:

Admissions of children into Reception Year in September 2028 for children starting school for the first time – paragraphs 2-7.

Admission of children into any Year after 1st September 2028 (known as In Year admissions) – paragraphs 8-10.

Paragraphs 11-13 apply to both sets of admission arrangements

2. Procedures for admission into Reception for children starting school for the first time

Although the Governing Body of the School has delegated responsibility for the admissions, the Local Authority (LA), as required by the Department for Education (DfE) co-ordinates the admission arrangements for all schools/academies in Central Bedfordshire and will communicate all admission decisions to parents.

All applications for places are made on the Bedford Borough or Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Authority Common Application Form.

Parents should note that for all Bedfordshire Schools, including academies, there is no automatic right to a place at the defined area school. If you make an application for a school which is not your local school and subsequently are not allocated a place, there is no guarantee that a "fall-back" place will be available for your child at Willow Grove Primary School, even if you live within the defined area.

It is essential that application forms are completed and returned by the deadline date.

Procedures for applying to Schools are explained in the 'Starting School 2028' (Bedford Borough) and 'Admissions in 2028' (Central Bedfordshire) handbook, available to view on their websites under

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school admissions. Parents should read and make themselves familiar with this information and take particular note of the definitions provided, dates and deadlines.

The Local Authority's Common Application Form is the only form that will be accepted. It must be submitted to the Local Authority. No forms will be accepted at the school. It is important that application forms are completed and returned by the deadline date published.

The timeline for admission will be in line with that of the Local Authority's 'Admissions in 2028 handbook'.

Any application for a place at the School received after the published date for return (but before 1st September 2028) will only be considered after all prior applications have been looked at in line with the above. All applications for Reception in 2028 received after 1st September 2028 will be processed under the School's In-Year admission procedure (please see section 8 below).

If a parent prefers their child not to be admitted at 4+ but chooses instead to wait a little longer, then this can be accommodated as long as the child has started school by the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. This is the start of compulsory school age. In such a case, an application should be submitted within the normal admissions round but the parent should state that they wish to take up their right to defer entry. Any place offered will be held open for that child but only up to the end of the academic year. This means that the latest date a summer born child can start is the beginning of the summer term before their birthday (see also paragraph 11 – *Admission of a child into a year group other than that normally associated with their age*).

The School is required to comply with the infant class size rules which requires that each reception, year 1 or year 2 class must have no more than 30 children with a qualified teacher except in very limited circumstances.

3. Oversubscription criteria

The planned admission number for Reception in September 2028 is 60.

Children who have a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health & Care Plan will be admitted as required by law and will count towards the planned admission number. If the school is oversubscribed, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below to decide which applicants will be admitted:

1. A 'Looked After Child' or a 'Previously Looked After Child' as defined below.
2. Children who live in Willow Grove's defined area and will have a sibling attending Willow Grove at the time of application with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the start of the new academic year of proposed admission.
3. Children of any staff of the school where either or both of the following circumstances apply:
   (a) where the member of staff has been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made;
   (b) where the member of staff who is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. It is at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher to determine when there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Children who live in the defined area.

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5. Children who live outside the defined area served by the School and will have a sibling attending the School at the time of application with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the start of the new academic year of proposed admission.
6. All other children.

4. Oversubscription: Distance Tiebreaker

In the event of there being more applicants meeting any of the above criteria than remaining places available, distance between the applicant's principal residence and the School will be used as a tiebreaker, with those living nearest being given priority. 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 to the main front door of the school's reception lobby. 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.

5. Waiting List

The school will maintain a waiting list for those children who are unsuccessful in applying to join Reception in September 2028. This will be operated in accordance with the applicable admissions criteria and length of time on the list will not be a factor in offering a place. The waiting list will be held for the remainder of the academic year.

Fair Access Protocol

The School will follow the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. Children identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will be admitted even if the School is full and will take precedence over those already on the waiting list.

6. Oversubscription Criteria: Definitions and Notes

"Defined area"

Defined area for Willow Grove is Wixams. An address is deemed to be in the defined area if 'Wixams' is included in the address of the property. An indicative map is published alongside this policy on the School's website.

"Residence"

Proof of residency will be required from all applicants living within the School's defined area. Acceptable proof of residence is a current Council Tax bill, or signed rental agreement, together with an official document that confirms the child lives at the normal home address.

Where the applicant child lives part of the week at one address and part of the week at another address, the residence to be used for the purposes of the application must be the address at which the child spends the majority of school nights. School nights are Sunday night, Monday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday night and Thursday night.

"Looked After Child"

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A Looked after Child is a child 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

"Previously Looked After Children"

A Previously Looked After Child is a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those 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.

"Sibling"

A sibling is a brother or sister, which for admission purposes means brothers and sisters of whole or half blood or any other child (including an adopted child) who permanently resides at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility.

"Multiple Births"

In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child on the waiting list is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth groups, the following will apply:

- Both twins would be admitted (or all siblings in the case of multiple births) even if this goes above the admission number of the school.

"Reception"

Reception relates to pupils starting school for the first time, i.e. pupils who were born between 1st September 2023 and 31st August 2024 may start school in September 2028.

7. Checking information

The School reserves the right to make its own enquiries to verify information supplied by the applicant. If subsequently the School finds that a place has been offered on the basis of information that was materially incorrect or misleading, e.g. the parental address or the applicant's date of birth, and the place would not have been offered if the correct information had been supplied, the Local Governing Body may withdraw the offer, even if the applicant has already started at the School.

8. In-Year admissions

This relates to all admissions to Willow Grove School in Reception to Year 6 except for the initial September entry into Reception which is explained above.

For admission to the School at any time other than the September following their fourth birthday, parents will be asked to complete an application form available from the school. Verbal or telephone applications will not be accepted. Where no place is available, the applicant will be advised in writing and informed of their right to request an independent appeal.

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The admission number for each year is as follows:

Reception	60
Year 1	60
Year 2	30
Year 3	25
Year 4	25
Year 5	25
Year 6	25

9. In-Year admissions – how places are allocated

For a place to be available for an in-year admission then the number for the relevant year group will have to have fallen below the admission number. When this occurs, the place will be allocated strictly in accordance with the process and definitions of the oversubscription criteria as set out in paragraph 3 and 6. Places that become available will be allocated to those applicants who meet the relevant criteria for the year group and who are currently in the application process or who have requested to be placed on the waiting list. For the purposes of in year admissions, the applicants in the application process are considered to be:

- those who have applied and whose applications have not yet been determined;
- those who have returned their forms for an independent appeal to the Clerk of the Independent Appeals Panel and are awaiting a date for the appeal to be heard.

Applicants who have not pursued their applications by returning the relevant forms by the relevant, stated deadline will not be considered to be part of the process.

10. Waiting List – In Year Admissions

The School will maintain a waiting list. Parent/Carers will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child's name to be put on the waiting list for the relevant year group. The waiting list will be operated in accordance with the applicable admissions criteria, and length of time on the list will not be a factor in offering a place. The waiting list will be retained for the remainder of the academic year. Children whom the Local Authority asks the School to admit and who are allocated a place at the School in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those already on the waiting list.

11. Admission of a child into a year group other than that normally associated with their age

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. The School will only admit children outside their chronological year group in exceptional circumstances. Parents should contact the School if they wish to make such a request by writing to the Chair of the Local Governing Body, c/o admissions@willowgrove.school or via post to Willow Grove Primary School, Fisherswood Road, Wixams, Bedford, MK45 3TE. For the avoidance of doubt parents should complete the LA common application form or the in-year admission form, as appropriate. Decisions will be made based on the individual circumstances of each case, and in the best interests of the child concerned, and will take into account the parents' wishes; educational advice; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, and whether they have been previously educated outside of their normal age group. The views of the headteacher will also be taken into account.

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12. Appeals

When an application is unsuccessful there is an automatic right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Details of the appeals process will be provided to those applicants who are unsuccessful.

Applicants who pursue their application to independent appeal, and are then unsuccessful at independent appeal, are no longer considered to be part of the process unless they write to the School asking to be placed on the waiting list.

13. Further applications in the same academic year

The School reserves the right not to accept a further application in the same academic year unless it considers that there has been a significant and material change in circumstance of the parent, the child or the school.

Adopted by the Local Governing Body on: 5th October 2026

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