



Admissions Policy 2026 / 2027

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at Priory Primary School
- Explain how places are allocated to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admission Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

As a Foundation School, Priory Primary is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

3. Definitions

Normal admissions round: the period when parents can apply for state-funded school places using the application form provided by the local authority, at the normal point of entry – that is starting school in the September following the child's fourth birthday.

Looked after children: children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are in the care of a local authority or who are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions.

Previously looked after children: A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after', were adopted (under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002), or became subject to a child arrangement order, or special guardianship order. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in care due to being adopted.

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: defined as 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 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 comments of the Local Authority's medical officer may be sought 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 parents/carers 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 (Monday 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, water) a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

4. How to Apply

For applications in the normal admissions round, parents / carers should use the application form provided by the local authority, Bedford Borough Council:

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/schools-and-collegescadem/school-admissions/online-admissions/>

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from Bedford Borough Council.

Please note:

There are separate arrangements for admission into the nursery unit. Parents / carers should collect an application form from the School Office for admission into the Nursery



Class, which is a 15 hour per week provision, starting in the September following the child's third birthday.

The school will use the same principles as for school admissions at 5.1 to 5.4 when allocating places to the Nursery unit.

A place in the nursery unit does not guarantee a place in the Reception Year. A separate application must be made as described above.

Priory Primary School has a page on its website with clear instructions and FAQs to guide parents and carers through the admissions process:

<https://prioryprimary.co.uk/admission/>

5. Allocation of Places

5.1 General Principle

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 such cases, an offer of a place will normally be made at the nearest Local Authority maintained school which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.

5.2 Admission Number

Priory Primary School has an agreed admission number of 26 children in each year group. There are 24 places in the Nursery Class.

5.3 Oversubscription Criteria

Should there be more applications than places, the following criteria will be used to determine how places are allocated:

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admissions 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 definition)



2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition of sibling)
3. Other pupils living in the catchment area (see definition)
4. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds (see definition)
5. Other siblings (see definition)
6. Any other children who are identified as vulnerable through having Pupil Premium
7. Any other children

5.4 Tie Break

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 the front door of the school. The Local Authority will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.

5.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Bedford Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

5.6 Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Pupils who have an EHC Plan are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the plan, even if the school is full, so long as the pupil's needs can be met by the school. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full, so long as the pupil's needs can be met by the school

6. In Year Admission

Parents / carers can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case for the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC Plan names the school will be admitted, so long as the pupil's needs can be met by the school.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.



If there are no places available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria at 5.2. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list for the longest.

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made by completing a form available on the Bedford Borough website: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/schools-and-collegescadem/school-admissions/in-year-admissions/>

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

7. Appeals

Parents / carers of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeal Panel. If the child's application is unsuccessful, parents / carers will be given information by the local authority about why admission was refused and about the process for hearing appeals.

7.1 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 who have an EHC Plan 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, governing bodies that are their own admission authority should consult the Local Authority who will be able to advise whether the first of these conditions applies
- The admission of a looked after child or a previously looked after child (as defined in the School Admissions Code) outside of 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 Headteacher are in agreement that not to agree to admit the child would be perverse

8. Monitoring and Review

The Admission Policy is reviewed and approved by the Governing Body every year.

Whenever changes to the admissions arrangements are proposed (except for an increase to the agreed admission number) the Governing Body will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

This Policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body On:		
Date:	30/09/2024	
Signed:	<i>Carolyn Stebbings</i>	(Chair of Governors)