CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR ADMISSIONS TO MIDDLE, PRIMARY, LOWER SCHOOLS AND MIDDLE, PRIMARY AND LOWER PHASE ACADEMIES
ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/2022

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and supported by The School Admission (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, requires Local Authorities to formulate a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all maintained schools in their area. Academies are required to participate in the co-ordinated scheme.

1.2 For the purposes of this scheme any reference to school means any maintained community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided or foundation school or academy in the Bedford Borough Council area.

1.3 The following table sets out the admission authority for each type of school.

Type of school	**Who is the admission authority?**	**Who is responsible for arranging an admission appeal?**
Academies	Academy Trust	Academy Trust
Community schools	Local Authority	Local Authority
Foundation schools	Governing body	Governing body
Voluntary aided schools	Governing body	Governing body
Voluntary controlled schools	Local Authority	Local Authority

1.4 This scheme will apply to all middle, primary and lower school admissions in the Bedford Borough Council area from September 2021.

1.5 Any reference to Bedford Borough is a reference to the administrative area of the unitary authority.

1.6 The scheme is in two parts. Part A relates to middle schools and Part B relates to primary and lower schools. However, the timetable will be the same.

Section 2 - The Scheme

Part A – Middle Schools

2.1 There will be a standard form known as the Standard Application Forms (SAF).

2.2 The SAF will be used for the purposes of admitting children into the first year of a middle school (Year 5).

2.3 Parents of all children living in Bedford Borough and attending a lower school in the Local Authority area will receive details about the transfer process. The School Transfer booklet, available on the Local Authority website, will contain information on:

- the schools in Bedford Borough;
- dates of open evenings;
- schools' admission numbers and admissions criteria;
- how to complete the standard application form;
- how to make an online application;
- how places are allocated;
- timetable for the application and allocation process;
- school transport
- who to contact for advice

2.4 Parents of children attending a lower school in Bedford Borough who do not live in the Local Authority area must make an application to their home Local Authority.

2.5 Parents of children living in Bedford Borough but not attending a lower school in the Local Authority area, this includes children in Year 4 at a primary school, and those who wish to apply for a middle school place in another Local Authority may obtain the SAF from the School Admissions Service. The SAF and the School Transfer booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

2.6 Parents of children living in Bedford Borough will be able to apply online for a school place.

2.7 The SAF or online application form will enable parents / carers to:

- express a preference for up to 3 schools
- give reasons for their preferences
- rank their preferences

The Timetable

2.8 In **September 2020** information is sent to parents of all children living in and attending Year 4 at a lower school in the Local Authority area. Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough will be advised to contact their home Local Authority.

2.9 Completed SAFs are to be returned to the School Admissions Service by **15 January 2021** via the lower school or directly to the School Admissions Service. Online applications are also to be submitted by this date. Parents of children who

do not live in Bedford Borough must apply to their home Local Authority.

2.10 By **19 February 2021** applications for places in other Local Authority schools are sent to those authorities.

2.11 All preferences will be logged on the database and by **19 February 2021** the School Admissions Service will notify the admission authority for each school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy.

2.12 By **5 March 2021** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Service with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.

2.13 The School Admissions Service will match the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools nominated and:

- where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child

- where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference

2.14 Between **8 March 2021 and 19 March 2021** information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Bedford Borough child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Bedford Borough school) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.

2.15 Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy (unless they are already attending a school at which they can remain in the September), but only if the child is resident in Bedford Borough. If the child does not reside in Bedford Borough, parents may request a place at any of the schools that still have vacancies. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular school over those who have not.

2.16 On **16 April 2021** all middle schools will have access to details of the pupils to be offered places via the web based School Admissions Module.

2.17 On **16 April 2021** the School Admissions Service will post letters to parents of children living in Bedford Borough notifying them of the outcome of their applications, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority school. Parents who have applied online will be able to access the decision online. Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough will be notified by their home Local Authority on the date determined by that Local Authority.

2.18 By **30 April 2021** parents are to notify School Admissions Service of their rejection of the place offered if this is no longer required. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place.

2.19 By **30 April 2021** parents not offered a place will be invited to request a place at a school with vacancies.

2.20 From **18 May 2021** the School Admissions Service will co-ordinate the re-allocation of any places that have become vacant since **16 April 2021** and will continue to co-ordinate admissions until such time as the waiting lists are no longer maintained.

Waiting Lists

2.21 Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference school or at any of their preferred schools are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if places become available. Where a pupil has been offered a place at their highest ranked school, they will not be considered for re-allocation, unless there has been a significant change in their personal circumstances.

2.22 Waiting lists will be maintained until **the end of the Autumn term 2021**. Parents wishing their children to remain on the waiting list for a Bedford Borough school beyond that time will have to notify the School Admissions Service in writing. A revised waiting list will then be drawn up and maintained until the end of that academic year.

Late Applications

2.23 The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2021**. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for *a good reason* will be accepted provided they are received before **19 February 2021,** the date the allocation procedure begins.

2.24 There is no guarantee that applications received when the allocation procedure has begun **(19 February 2021)** will be considered when places are offered on **16 April 2021.**

2.25 Late applications not considered as part of the allocation round and any applications received after **16 April 2021** but before the start of the school year, will be considered as part of the co-ordinated arrangements and a place offered at the highest preference school that has a place available. If all preferred schools are full and the pupil lives in Bedford Borough, a place will generally be offered at the nearest school with places available. However, it may be necessary to make a priority placement available for children in rural areas whose application is late for *good reason.*

Part B – Primary and Lower Schools

2.26 There will be a standard form known as the Standard Application Form (SAF).

2.27 The SAF will be used for the purposes of admitting pupils into the intake year of a primary or lower school (Year R).

2.28 Parents of all children born between **1/9/16 and 31/8/17** and living in Bedford Borough will be able to apply for a school place using the SAF. The SAF will be available from any local primary and lower schools, from the School Admissions Service or it can be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

2.29 The Starting School booklet, available on the local authority's website, will contain information on:

- the schools in Bedford Borough;
- schools' admission numbers and admissions criteria;
- how to complete the standard application form;
- how to make an online application;
- how places are allocated;
- timetable for the application and allocation process;
- school transport
- who to contact for advice

2.30 Parents of children living in Bedford Borough who wish to apply for a primary or lower school place in another Local Authority must also use this application form.

2.31 Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough but who wish to apply for a place at a Bedford Borough school must complete an application form available from their home Local Authority.

2.32 Parents of children living in Bedford Borough will be able to apply online for a school place.

2.33 The SAF or online application form will enable parents / carers to:

- express a preference for up to 3 schools
- give reasons for their preferences
- rank their preferences

The Timetable

2.34 In **September 2020**, the Local Authority Starting School booklet and the SAF will be available to parents of children living in Bedford Borough. Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough must contact their home Local Authority for an application form.

2.35 Completed SAFs are to be returned to the School Admissions Service by **15 January 2021**. Online applications are also to be submitted by this date. Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough must apply to their home Local Authority.

2.36 All preferences will be logged on the database by **19 February 2021** applications for places in other Local Authority schools are sent to those authorities.

2.37 By **19 February 2021** the School Admissions Service will notify the admission authority for each school of every nomination that has been made for that school.

2.38 By **5 March 2021** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Service with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.

2.39 The School Admissions Service will match the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools nominated and:

- where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child

- where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference

2.40 Between **8 March 2021 and 19 March 2021** information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Bedford Borough child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Bedford Borough school) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.

2.41 Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy (unless they are already attending a school at which they can remain in the September), but only if the child is resident in Bedford Borough. If the child does not reside in Bedford Borough, parents may request a place at any of the schools that still have vacancies. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular school over those who have not.

2.42 On **16 April 2021** all primary or lower schools will have access to details of the pupils to be offered places via the web based School Admissions Module.

2.43 On **16 April 2021** the School Admissions Service will post letters to parents of children living in Bedford Borough notifying them of the outcome of their applications, including those who have applied for place in another Local Authority school. Parents who have applied online will be able to access the decision online. Parents of children who do not live in Bedford Borough will be notified by their home Local Authority on the date determined by that Local Authority.

2.44 By **30 April 2021** parents are to notify School Admissions Service of their rejection of place the offered if this is longer required. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place.

2.45 By **30 April 2021** parents not offered a school place will be invited to request a place at a school with vacancies.

2.46 From **18 May 2021** the School Admissions Service will co-ordinate the re-allocation of any places that have become vacant since **16 April 2021** and will

continue to co-ordinate admissions until such time as the waiting lists are no longer maintained.

Deferred Entry

2.47 Parents of children offered a place for admission in September may defer the admission until January or April, provided the child is not of compulsory school age. Parents cannot defer admission beyond compulsory school age nor beyond the academic year for which the place was offered.

Delayed Entry to Reception for Summer Born Children

2.48 Bedford Borough Council provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Some parents/carers may feel their child is not ready to start school at this point. The School Admissions Code (Dec 2014) allows parents to request to defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (paragraph 2.16b) of the Code). Children can also attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. (2.16c).

In addition, for summer born children (born 1st April – 31 August) paragraph 2.17 of the School Admissions Code states that parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group and may request that their child is admitted to reception rather than year 1. Detailed information about the application process can be found at www.bedford.gov.uk/delayedentry

Waiting Lists

2.49 Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference school or at any of their preferred schools are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if places become available. Where a pupil has been offered a place at their highest ranked school, they will not be considered for re-allocation, unless there has been a significant change in their personal circumstances.

2.50 Waiting lists will be maintained until **the end of the Autumn term 2021.** Parents wishing their children to remain on the waiting list for a Bedford Borough school beyond that time will have to notify the School Admissions Service in writing. A revised waiting list will then be drawn up and maintained until the end of that academic year.

Late Applications

2.51 The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2021**. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for *a good reason* will be accepted provided they are received before **19 February 2021,** the date the allocation procedure begins.

2.52 There is no guarantee that applications received when the allocation procedure has begun **(19 February 2021)** will be considered when places are offered on **16 April 2021.**

2.53 Late applications not considered as part of the allocation round and any applications received after **16 April 2021** but before the start of the school year,

will be considered as part of the co-ordinated arrangements and a place offered at the highest preference school that has a place available. If all preferred schools are full and the pupil lives in Bedford Borough, a place will generally be offered at the nearest school with places available. However, it may be necessary to make a priority placement available for children in rural areas whose application is late for *good reason.*

In-year Admissions

2.54 If a parent wishes to apply for a school place on or after the start of the school year or during the school year, because they have either moved into the area or moved within the area or simply because they wish to transfer their child to another school, they are likely to make contact with the local school or the Local Authority.

2.55 The Local Authority will make an application form available to enable parents to apply for an in-year place at any school within the Local Authority area. All schools will be supplied with copies of the In-Year Admissions application form, which will enable parents to express a preference for up to 3 schools and to rank their preferences. The form will be available to download from the Local Authority website.

2.56 Parents must return their application form to the School Admissions Service. If the application is for a place at a community or voluntary controlled school, for which the Local Authority is the admission authority, the application will be determined by the School Admissions Service. If the application is for a place at a foundation or voluntary aided school or academy, for which the governing body or academy trust is the admission authority, the School Admissions Service will contact the school to determine whether a place is available.

2.57 Where a child is eligible for a place at more than one school, a place will be offered at the school ranked the highest by the parent. The School Admissions Service will notify the relevant school or Local Authority of the outcome of that process.

2.58 The School Admissions Service will notify parents of the outcome of their application. Acceptance of the school place must be received within two weeks of the date of the offer.

2.59 Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference school or at any of their preferred schools are kept on a waiting list. Where a pupil has been offered a place at their highest ranked school, they will not be placed on the waiting list for any lower ranked schools, unless there has been a significant change in their personal circumstances.

2.60 Pupils not offered a place at a community or voluntary controlled schools will be kept on a waiting list which will be maintained for the academic year of admission. Own admission authority schools will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with their own admission arrangements. In all cases where a place cannot be offered parents will have the right of appeal.

2.61 If all preferred schools are full and the pupil lives in Bedford Borough, a place will generally be offered at the nearest school with places available, unless the child is already attending a local school. For those pupils who have moved to a rural area, it may be necessary to make a priority place available at the local school.

Timetable for Co-ordinated Admissions to Primary, Lower and Middle Schools

September 2021

September 2020:	Information about the transfer to middle school and starting school process issued
15 January 2021:	National closing date for receipt of applications
18 February 2021:	Last date for receipt of applications or changes to existing applications authority.
19 February 2021:	Applications for places in other Local Authority schools sent to those authorities
19 February 2021:	By this date details of applications to be sent to own admission authority schools
5 March 2021:	By this date own admission authority schools provide School Admissions Service with ranked lists of applicants
8 March 2021 – 19 March 2021	Between these dates information to be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers
16 April 2021:	Information on pupils to be offered places will be available to schools via the web based School Admissions Module
16 April 2021:	National Offer Day - Notification to be sent to parents living in Bedford Borough and available online
30 April 2021:	Date by which parents reject the offer of a place if it is no longer required
30 April 2021:	Date by which parents not offered a place can request a place at a school with vacancies
From 18 May 2021:	School Admissions Service will allocate any places that have become available