



Statutory Admission Policy – September 2019

Admissions

As our school is a foundation school, the Local Authority determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the school. The LA is therefore the 'Admissions Authority' for our school.

Introduction

The governing body of Maple Tree Lower School applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school. All pupils living within the catchment area of Maple Tree Lower School have an automatic right to a place at the school.

Children will normally attend the lower school serving the area in which they live i.e. the school serving the local catchment* area. Parents may however apply for their child to be admitted to an alternative school, provided there is space available.

Aims and objectives

- We are an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities.
- All applications will be treated on the Local Authority agreed criteria.
- The first restriction is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure, agreed by the Local Authority, set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.
- The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the admissions policy of this school. In line with the LA it is the policy for the school to integrate children with special needs into mainstream provision whenever possible. The school does not discriminate against sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership or sexual orientation.

There are 3 points at which your child could be admitted to Maple Tree Lower School. Each may have different criteria. See the sections below for the relevant admissions guidance:

Admissions to the Pre-School

As our school is a foundation school, the school is the determining admission authority for the school's pre-school.

Maple Tree's first point of entry is the pre-school which takes children from the age of 2 years old. You can register for the waiting list at the main school office. Parents are invited to visit before the child attends the pre-school and are able to tour the school and pre-school before making a choice.

Children enrolled in pre-school will automatically move into Nursery the term after they turn 3 years old. There will be an opportunity for you to defer at this point if it is in the best interests of the child. This request should be made in writing to the Head teacher.

Admissions to the Nursery

As our school is a foundation school, the school is the determining admission authority for the school's nursery.

Children enter Maple Tree Nursery in the term after they are three (Jan-April births Summer term start, May-Aug births Autumn term start, Sept-Dec births Spring term start.)

Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to the school's nursery should ensure that they contact the school, as soon as possible, to enter their child's name into the school's waiting list. Parents need to complete the necessary application form for their child to start the nursery. Children already on roll in our pre-school will be offered a place automatically.

Visits to the school are encouraged to help make an informed choice. Parents should complete the school's nursery admission form and return to the school office. Places are offered in October for the Spring, Summer and Autumn term of the following year. Any applications received after October will be offered as spaces become available.

You will be informed about the school's acceptance of the children and the start date, the session and times, the home visit. Your child will normally be invited to a "taster session" the half term before they start. Parents will have the opportunity to defer at this point.

The children will normally have a staggered start to the nursery to ensure a smooth transition from home to the nursery.

Admission to Reception

How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school

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At Maple Tree Lower School children are normally admitted into the Reception year at the start of the academic year in which they become 5.

Admission to the main school is normally on the basis of pupils living within our catchment.

These are the agreed criteria for admissions to the school:

1. All looked after children or children who were previously 'looked after'.
2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school.
3. Children living in the catchment area.
4. Other children with siblings at the school.
5. Children who live nearest to the school determined by a straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address.

Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school.

New legislation allows for parents to delay entry into school for children who are summer born (1st April – 31st August):

Delayed admission for summer born children

Parents have the right to request their summer born child's admission to the Reception Year is delayed until later in the academic year or until their child becomes statutory school age in the September following their fifth birthday. Parents/Carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group (Reception or Year 1), a decision will be made by the Governing Body in consultation with the Head teacher.

Parents/Carers need to make their request in writing, separately from the Common Application Form (CAF), directly to the Head teacher and Governing Body of the school. The request should include the parents'/carer's reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional and if applicable, details if the child was born prematurely including whether they would have been in a lower age group had they been born on their due date. The application should be made at the normal time i.e. the January of the year their child will be 4 years old by 31st August. The Governing Body, along with the Head teacher, will then consider the request, making their decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child in accordance with the School Admissions Code. Once determined, the decision will be communicated by the Governing Body to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.

Admissions to Reception continued:

Delayed admission for summer born children continued:

If a request is granted, the parent will need to make an application as part of next year's normal admission round and this will be processed within the normal allocation process. A place is never guaranteed at the school and in the case of oversubscription, places are offered in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. In short it would be delaying the application rather than an offer of a place.

For full details please refer to the guidance on the Central Bedfordshire admissions website, <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/landing.aspx>

Applying for Reception Places

Parents **must** apply to the Local Authority in which they live. Parents living in Central Bedfordshire or Bedford Borough can apply using the online application system for the Local Authority in which they live. When completed the CAF must be returned by the specified date.

The allocation of places will take place after this deadline and parents will be notified on the national offer day by their home Local Authority of whether their applications have been successful. Parents, who make applications after the official deadline, even if they live in, or move into one of the catchment area will **not** be entitled to automatic places if this would mean exceeding the Published Admission Number.

Those parents not offered a place at the school of their choice will be advised of the appeal procedures by the Local Authority.

The admissions number

The admissions number is the number of children the school can accommodate (45 pupils for each year group from Reception onwards). We keep this number under review and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances allow.

Applications for a statutory place must be made in writing, or on line, and returned to the LA by the **due date - 15 January 2019**. Forms may be obtained by telephoning or contacting the school office directly, contacting the Local Authority or by applying online at www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

Infant class size

We teach infant children (aged five to seven) in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children.

Admissions to Reception continued:

Tiebreaker

If, when applying these criteria results, there are 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 distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the school front door. Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, using the School Admissions Team database to allocate the place.

Admission appeals

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school.

In-Year Admissions

Whilst admission will normally be into Reception, students may be admitted to Years 1 to 4 where there are vacancies (i.e. less than 45 on roll in the year group concerned).

The above criteria will apply in these circumstances. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made to the school on the In-Year Application Form. The form is available from the school or the Local Authority and can be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

Summary:

The Local Authority arranges admissions to the main school, the reception class up to Year 4 (see the criteria above) and the school arranges admissions to the school's nursery and pre-school.

Review - This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any changes by the Governors' Management committee and amendments advised to the full Governing body.

Signed.....

Chairperson of Maple Tree Lower School Governing Body.