

## **Applying for a place in Year 9 at Wootton Upper School for September 2021**

We anticipate that most parents/carers applying for places in Year 9 at Wootton Upper School for September 2021 will have children in Year 8 at Marston Vale Middle School or Holywell School. Both of these schools are willing to give parents/carers lots of support in completing the application process. Wootton Upper School has 297 places available in Year 9 next September.

We know that at the start of the school year there were 154 children in Year 8 at Holywell and 129 children at Marston Vale Middle School. This means that providing you apply for a place by the deadline, October 31 2020 you should be reasonably confident in securing a place for your child as there are 283 children in the two schools who are likely to want places at Wootton Upper School. Additionally, we tend to receive applications from parents/carers who live in our catchment area, and for a variety of reasons have children at other schools; the most usual reason is that they have moved into a new home and have made a conscious decision to wait until the beginning of upper school to move their child into our pyramid.

Many parents/carers ask us *how to apply for a place*. The vast majority of applications are made on-line; it is possible to apply on paper, if you prefer.

### **How to apply for a place?**

If your child lives in Bedford Borough, then you **must** apply for a place for them using the **Bedford Borough Council website**. The Bedford Borough Council website link is: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/schools-and-collegescadem/school-admissions/how-to-apply-school-place/>

There is an option to download a paper application form from this website, should you choose. If you miss the deadline for applying for places and need to make a "late-application" the Borough Council asks parents/carers to complete the paper application form.

If your child lives in Central Bedfordshire, then you must apply on the **Central Bedfordshire Council** website. To apply for a place online, visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions).

If you prefer a paper application form, contact Central Bedfordshire Council's School Admissions team on 0300 300 8037, email [admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), or write to School Admissions, Central Bedfordshire Council, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LF.

A very small number of parents/carers wishing to apply for places at Wootton Upper School for their children have their homes in another local authority, such as Buckinghamshire or Milton Keynes or Northampton or Luton. Where this is the case, these parents/carers will need to apply using their home local authority. *If this is the case and you are finding it difficult to apply, please contact either your child's middle school or alternatively contact Wootton Upper School.*

Some children spend time at more than one family home, usually sleeping some nights with one parent and other nights with their other parent. Where this is the case, the application should be submitted from the address where the child spends most nights, Monday to Friday. As well as this being the correct process, it means that if your child is eligible for home to school transport it will be arranged for the address where the child spends most of their time, Monday to Friday.

### **When to apply for a place?**

There is a national deadline for applying for places for both secondary schools and upper schools. The deadline is midnight on October 31. After this date, you are likely to find that the on-line application process is disabled. Therefore, please make a note of this date and apply as soon as possible.

Bedford Borough Council is accepting on-line applications for places from September 12 onwards through to October 31. Central Bedfordshire Council has already opened its online on-line application system.

**Parents/carers applying early do not get higher priority in their applications;** nonetheless, many parents/carers like to apply as soon as possible ... to avoid forgetting and missing the October 31 deadline.

If you do not miss the October 31 deadline, it could have serious implications for you. Local Authorities allocate places based on the applications they have received by the deadline. If there are more than 297 applications, it would mean that Wootton Upper School will be full. Parents/carers who apply by the deadline will learn the outcome of their applications on March 1 2021. Most people will learn the outcome by email.

However, if you have applied by paper application form, you will be sent a letter by post on that date. This means you will learn the outcome a few days later.

Usually, if you apply for a place after October 31 your application will be considered in March and April 2021 and you will be notified of the outcome around April 21 2021. *Please be aware that if you live in Central Bedfordshire, you may be at risk of not securing a place on home to school transport if you apply late.*

Local Authorities may have varied approaches to late applications; in our experience, Central Bedfordshire has enforced a very strict interpretation of the deadline. Bedford Borough Council has historically, looked at the individual reasons for late applications and on occasion included some applications received after the deadline. Our advice to all parents/carers is to ensure you submit the application before the deadline!

### **Where to find more information?**

Each Local Authority produces a booklet to help parents/carers navigate their way through the application process.

#### **Bedford Borough Council School Transfer Booklet 2021**

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Education%20and%20Learning/Schools%20and%20colleges/School%20Admissions/School-Transfer-Booklet-2021.pdf>

#### **Central Bedfordshire Council School Transfer Booklet 2021**

<https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/52o1q05f86vhf4i1nf59qeg4b1y6mv4w>

Your child's current school should be able to give you support if you need it, or at the very least direct you to where you can find the help you need.

In the past Wootton Academy Trust has often received enquiries from some parents/carers who live in Central Bedfordshire you have found it very difficult to work out how to apply for a place at Wootton Upper School.

We hope the following information helps these parents/carers:

**Click on** <https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions>

**Click on** [Apply for a new school place](#)

**Click on** [Apply for an upper school](#)

**Click on** [Apply online for your upper school place](#)

*First of all, you will need to create your account by scrolling down to the bottom of the page headed [Central Bedfordshire Council's Online School Admissions System](#). When creating an account to apply for a place for your child you need to enter the LA of the school*

*your child is currently attending: if your child is at Marston Vale Middle School, you will need to change the LA from the default setting to Bedford Borough. If your child is at Holywell, you should leave it as Central Bedfordshire Council.*

### **Once you have created your account you will be able to apply for a place**

Central Bedfordshire residents applying for a place at Wootton Upper School, you need to change the default setting from **Central Bedfordshire** as the local authority where the upper school they want to apply for is located to **Bedford Borough**.

**Once parents/carers have done this**, the easiest way to select Wootton Upper School is type ***Wootton Upper School*** under school requested and then press **search**. Click on the tick next to the name of the school and your preference will be registered.

### **How are places allocated?**

Places are allocated according to Wootton Upper School's admissions criteria. These are listed on our school's website. Overriding priority is given to children with an Educational Health Care Plan [EHCP]. If your child has an EHCP we hope you will have already contacted our SENDCo, Mrs Holmes, one of our Assistant Principals. If you have not, please telephone the school and ask to speak to her.