


Mark Rutherford School



Admissions Policy and Criteria 2025 - 2026

Author:	Headteacher and Chair of Governors
Governor's Committee:	Curriculum and Standards
Adopted by the Governing Body on:	11 th March 2024
Signed (Chair of Committee):	Mr J Warehand
Signed (Headteacher):	
Policy review date:	March 2025

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA: SEPTEMBER 2025 - 2026

The Governors are committed to continuing the present admissions policy for the school with respect to its comprehensive and inclusive character. They reserve the right, however, to respond to changes instituted by national and local authority initiatives. The following arrangements with respect to admissions from September 2025 onwards will apply to all applications.

Year 7 Admissions

The normal admission point into the school is Year 7. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for Year 7 will be 200.

Oversubscription Criteria

If fewer applications than the stated PAN are received all applicants will be admitted. If the number of applications for places exceeds the PAN number, after the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care (EHC) plan, where the school is named in the statement or the plan, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below:

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after, including those children 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.
2. Children with siblings who attend Mark Rutherford School.
3. Children living in the catchment area.
4. Children attending Brickhill Primary School, Goldington Green Academy, Great Barford Primary School, Putnoe Primary School, Ravensden Primary School, Renhold Primary School, Roxton VA Primary School, Scott Primary School, Sheerhatch Primary School, The Hills Academy and Wilden VA Primary School.
5. Children of staff 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.
6. Any other children.

Tiebreaker

In any situation where the application of the above criteria results in a situation where there are more children with an equal right of admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be distance from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised mapping system. The distance will be measured from the address point of the child's home to the main school gate, with those living closer to the school being deemed higher priority. The Governing Body does not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. The Local Authority will measure all distances for the Governing Body.

Pupils who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named on their EHCP, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

Definitions

1. A looked after child is a child in the care of a local authority as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school.

A previously 'looked after' child is a child who was 'looked after', but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

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 provided of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister (where foster care has been arranged by a Local Authority) 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.
3. A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent/carer 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 child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays 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 or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Application Process

Information about the transfer process will be given to all students by their current school. Parents/carers can also apply using the online application procedure for the Local Authority in which they live. When completed, the form must be returned by the date specified on the application form.

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

In exceptional circumstances the Governors will consider agreeing to the admission of a child to a year group other than is applicable to their chronological age. Circumstances will be considered on merits and in all cases; decisions will be taken in the best interests of the student.

Casual Admissions

Whilst admission will normally be into Years 7 or Year 12, students may be admitted to Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 where there are vacancies. The above criteria will apply in these circumstances. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made to the school using the In Year application form. The form is available from the school or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

If your child is attending an independent school or a school outside Bedford Borough, please contact the Local Authority for more information.

Appeals

Parents/carers of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeals Panel. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding. Details of admissions and appeals arrangements will be published each year.

Waiting List

Parents/carers not offered a place are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if a place becomes available. The waiting list for places in Year 7 will be maintained until the end of the autumn term following the normal admission date of students; parents/carers wishing to remain on the waiting list beyond this point need to notify the Local Authority in writing not later than 31st December. Waiting lists for other year groups will be kept until the end of the term in which the place has been requested.

The Nightingale ASC Centre

The Nightingale ASC Centre is a specialist provision for pupils with autism. It provides education for students from Year 7. Students need to have an Education and Health Care Plan which clearly identifies that they have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition as their primary need. The admissions process is different for the centre therefore please contact them direct on 01234 290251 for more information.

Sixth Form Admission Arrangements

The Governors are committed to maintaining the present policy for Year 12 admissions into the school with respect to its comprehensive and inclusive character and age range.

Students already on roll at Mark Rutherford School and students currently at other schools will be admitted to Year 12 provided they meet our general admission requirements. However, acceptance on to individual courses of study will be dependent on students meeting specific course entry requirements. Further information on Sixth Form entry requirements can be found in the Sixth Form Information Booklet on the Mark Rutherford School website.

For students looking to join Year 13, we ask that there is a contact with the Sixth Form Team to ensure this a viable option based on our curriculum.