



22nd October 2024

Proposed Wootton Upper School Admissions Criteria with effect from September 2026

In line with wider changes to a two-tier school system in the local area, Wootton Academy Trust has sought and received permission from the Department for Education to change Wootton Upper School's age range from 13-19 to 11-19, with effect from September 2026.

With this in mind, we are now consulting on the following changes to our Admission Policy:

- Introducing admissions points at Year 7 and Year 8, both with a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 150.
- Giving students at Marston Vale Middle School (MVMS) priority for these places in our admissions criteria, as from September 2026 MVMS will not have a Year 7 or Year 8.
- Reducing the Year 9 PAN from 297 to 270, reflecting proposed changes to the age range at Holywell School.
- We are also removing the criteria that prioritises children who have attended a feeder school for at least two academic years.

A copy of the varied criteria is attached.

Yours sincerely,

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Executive Headteacher, Wootton Academy Trust

Copied to:

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Central Bedfordshire Borough Council: admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Milton Keynes Council: secondaryadmissions@milton-keynes.gov.uk

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Admissions Criteria

with effect from September 2026

This document applies to Wootton Upper School, managed by Wootton Academy Trust (WAT).



**Wootton
Upper School**

Contents

1. Principles	1
2. Notes.....	2
3. Appeals.....	4

1. Principles

Wootton Upper School [WUS], is a co-educational school for students aged between 11 – 19 years of age. It has academy status and is operated by Wootton Academy Trust (WAT).

Children will be admitted to Year 7, 8 and 9 without reference to ability or aptitude. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for each year group will be as follows:

Year	PAN
7	150
8	150
9	270

If the number of applications for places exceeds the number of places available, children will be admitted in accordance with the following criteria, read in conjunction with the notes on the following pages. The criteria will be applied in the order set out below. Words in bold are defined terms, see the Notes.

1.1 Criteria for Year 7 and Year 8

1. All **'looked after'** children and all **previously 'looked after'** children, 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 (see definitions).
2. Children who currently attend Marston Vale Middle School, Stewartby.
3. Children whose home is in the **catchment area** and with **siblings** at the school.
4. Children whose **home address** is in the **catchment area**.
5. Children with **siblings** at the school and who are likely to remain in the school the following **academic year**.
6. Children who currently attend Holywell Middle School.
7. Children with siblings who currently attend Kimberley 16 – 19 STEM College.
8. Children of **staff employed at WUS** for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made.
9. Any other children.

1.2 Criteria for Year 9

1. All **'looked after'** children and all **previously 'looked after'** children, 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 (see definitions).
2. Children whose home is in the **catchment area** and with **siblings** at the school.

3. Children whose **home address** is in the **catchment area**.
4. Children with **siblings** at the school and who are likely to remain in the school the following **academic year**.
5. Children who currently attend either Holywell or Marston Vale Middle School.
6. Children with siblings who currently attend Kimberley 16 – 19 STEM College.
7. Children of **staff employed at WUS** for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made.
8. Any other children.

2. Notes

2.1 Definitions

1. A **looked after child** is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (as defined by section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of an application being made to a school.

A **previously looked after child** is a child who was looked after, i.e. in care of a local authority but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to child arrangements order or a special guardianship order. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order.

Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

A Special Guardianship Order is defined in Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

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 or main purpose is to benefit society.

A parent/carer will need to provide sufficient evidence of the child's previously looked after status; e.g.

- Adoption order or adoption birth certificate
- Residence order
- Special guardianship order

2. The **catchment area** includes the parishes of Cranfield, Houghton Conquest, Lidlington, Marston Moretaine, Stewartby and Wootton.
3. A child's **home address** will be regarded as the address of the parents/carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not normally 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 student is ordinarily resident and where 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), child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.
4. A **sibling** is defined as a brother or sister, or 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 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.
5. **Staff employed at Wootton Upper School** means a member of staff who is employed full-time or part-time on a permanent contract by Wootton Academy Trust.

For the purposes of Wootton Academy Trust's admissions criteria for its schools, a member of staff is defined

as someone who meets all the following criteria a) to c) or meets criterion d), at the time the application for admission to the school is made:

- Is employed at the school on a permanent contract;
- Has been in post continuously for at least two years;
- Has not given notice of resignation.

Or:

- Is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

Someone who meets the above criteria but has been TUPEd to another employer and is still working at the school is also defined as a member of staff for the purposes of this document. The children of staff criterion is school specific and staff children can only be considered for admission at the school their parent works at and not another school within Wootton Academy Trust.

6. Kimberley 16 – 19 STEM College is operated by WAT.
7. **Academic year** is a year from September 1st to August 31st.

2.2 Commentary

1. 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 a computerised mapping system.
The distance will be measured from the address point of the child's home to the gate to the front car park, with those living closer to the school being accorded higher priority. WAT does not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. WAT will ask [Bedford Borough Council](#) to measure all distances.
2. Pupils who have an Educational Health Care Plan [EHCP] or Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school/academy which is named on the EHCP or statement, even if the school/academy is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.
3. WAT will normally offer a place to catchment children if parents apply for a place during the normal admissions round. However, a place 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 school if this would mean exceeding the PAN for the school.
4. Parents not offered a place are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if places become available. The waiting list for places in Years 7, 8 and 9 will be maintained until the end of the autumn term following the normal admission date; parents wishing to remain on the waiting list beyond this point need to notify WAT and the Local Authority in writing not later than December 31st.
Parents applying for places in other year groups will have their applications kept on file until the end of the term in which the place has been requested. Parents wishing their children to remain on the waiting list beyond that time will need to notify WAT and the Local Authority in writing.
5. The relevant Local Authority on-line application form will be available to parents of children due to transfer to an Upper School/Academy the following September. Parents can also apply using a paper copy of the relevant application form which is available from their home Local Authority and often from their child's existing school. When completed, the form must be returned by the date specified.
6. The allocation of places will take place after this deadline and parents will be *notified* on the national offer day in March, *by the relevant Local Authority Schools Admissions Service*, whether their applications have been successful. Parents, who make applications after the official deadline, even if they live in, or move into the **catchment area**, will **not** be entitled to automatic places if this would mean exceeding the Published Admission Number.
7. Whilst admission will normally be into Year 7, 8 or 9, pupils may be admitted to Year 10 and Year 11 where there are vacancies (i.e. less than **297** on roll in the year group concerned). The above criteria for Year 9 will apply in

these circumstances. Wootton Academy Trust will consult on any changes to its admission criteria. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made directly to WAT.

8. The Published Admission Number is 150 for Years 7 and 8, 270 for Year 9, and 297 for Years 10 and 11.

3. Appeals

1. Parents who wish to appeal against non-admission will have the right of appeal to an **Independent Appeals Panel**. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding. Details of admissions and appeals arrangements will be published each year. In making these arrangements WAT will, of course, have regards to its **Master Funding Agreement 2013** and **WUS Supplemental Agreement 23 July 2013**.