

Determination of the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2026-27

Date decision published:	12/02/2025
Ward affected:	All wards
Is it a key/non/key decision?	Key decision A full explanation of what constitutes a key decision is contained in Part 2, Article 12 of the Council's Constitution.
Is any information relating to the decision exempt?	No
Is the decision subject to call-in?	Yes Call-in closes at 5pm on 19 February 2025
Is the decision urgent?	No

Reason for delegated decision, please select all that apply

- ☐ Because it is a matter of urgency;
- ☒ Authority was delegated to the Director following a report to Executive; or
- ☐ Delegated authority is already approved in the Council's Constitution

Where relevant, please provide further information on when authority was delegated to the Director and/or which paragraph of the Constitution is being relied upon for this delegation:

The Executive at their meeting on 3 December 2025 resolved:

To authorise the Director of Children and Families, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services to determine the Council's admission policy for 2026/27 by 28 February 2025, as required by legislation.

Details of the decision

What is the subject matter covered by this decision

Determination of the Council's admission arrangements for 2026/27 for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and the associated co-ordinated admission schemes and supplementary forms.

Changes to admission arrangements were proposed for the following Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and the Executive was asked to:

1. Approve the commencement of the consultation regarding the proposed changes to the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year 2026/27.
2. Agree the Coordinated Admissions Scheme for 2026/27 for Lower, Infant, Junior, Primary and Middle schools.
3. Agree the Coordinated Admissions Scheme for 2026/27 for Secondary and Upper schools.
4. Agree the confirmation of religious affiliation forms for Central Bedfordshire Schools for those applying on faith grounds for either Church of England Schools or Catholic Schools in the local authority area.
5. Note and agree in principle with the proposed admission changes for:
 - A. Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School, Wrestlingworth, Nr Sandy
 - B. Dunton CofE Junior School, Dunton, Biggleswade
 - C. Edward Peake CofE VC Secondary School, Biggleswade
 - D. Kingsmoor Lower School, Flitwick

In the recommendation the Executive was asked also asked to approve to delegate authority to the Director of Children and Families in consultation with the Executive Member for Children and Families to determine the Council's admission policy for 2026/27 by 28th February 2025, as required by legislation.

What is the decision/intended decision

To approve the changes to admission arrangements as above in point 5, to summarise:

- 1) Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School: changes to the catchment area and admissions oversubscription criteria as below:

An amalgamation of the catchment areas for Wrestlingworth Infant School and Dunton Junior School so all children living in the current catchment areas for either school which include the parishes of Dunton, Eyeworth, Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley have priority for a place at Wrestlingworth Infant School for their key stage 1 education and Dunton Junior School for their key stage 2 education.

Criterion 1 (Looked After and previously Looked After children) remains unchanged.

Criterion 2 (Children of staff) remains unchanged.

Criterion 3 gives priority to children with siblings at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School who live in the catchment area.

Criterion 4 remains unchanged, with priority given to catchment children.

Criterion 5 gives priority to children who live outside the catchment area but have a sibling at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School.

Criterion 6 remains unchanged: Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another

Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made*.

Criterion 7 remains unchanged: Any other children

- 2) Dunton CofE Junior School: changes to the catchment area and admissions oversubscription criteria as below:

An amalgamation of the catchment areas for Wrestlingworth Infant School and Dunton Junior School so all children living in the current catchment areas for either school which include the parishes of Dunton, Eyeworth, Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley have priority for a place at Wrestlingworth Infant School for their key stage 1 education and Dunton Junior School for their key stage 2 education.

Criterion 1 (Looked After and previously Looked After children) remains unchanged.

Criterion 2 (Children of staff) remains unchanged.

Criterion 3 gives priority to children at Wrestlingworth Infant School to ensure those children leaving the infant school at the end of Key Stage 1 can transfer to Dunton Junior School for their key stage 2 education.

Criterion 4 gives priority to children with siblings at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School who live in the catchment area.

Criterion 5 gives priority to catchment children.

Criterion 6 gives priority to children living outside of the catchment area with a sibling at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School.

Criterion 7 prioritises applicants applying on Faith grounds, where parent/carers have shown commitment to Christianity by attending public worship once a month for the last year.

Criterion 8 is Any Other children.

- 3) Edward Peake CofE VC School: changes to admissions oversubscription criteria to remove Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School from criterion 7.
- 4) Kingsmoor Lower School: reduction to published admissions number (PAN) from 45 to 30.

What is the reason for the decision and what information was taken into consideration in reaching the decision

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that admissions are coordinated for all admission authorities in the local authority's area for children being admitted into the normal year of entry, and that only one offer of a school place is made.

The Council is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and must undertake consultation on admission arrangements where changes are proposed. This is to ensure compliance with the School Admissions Code which is issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998') and the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

As changes to the admission arrangements were proposed for Wrestlingworth Infant School, Dunton Junior School, Edward Peake CofE VC School and Kingsmoor Lower School, the Council being the admissions authority for these schools was required to consult with the required consultees.

The consultation results report is attached at Appendix A to this delegated decision report.

What alternative options were considered?

None, as it was necessary to consult on the admission arrangements for these schools to comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code, in particular to ensure arrangements are fair, clear and objective for Wrestlingworth, Dunton and Edward Peake schools. In respect of Kingsmoor Lower School and their reduction to their published admissions number, this was proposed to ensure the school could operate a more efficient and financially sound curriculum model that provides better outcomes for children.

Are there any additional capital or revenue budget implications in the current or future years arising from the decision (in the event of budgetary implications please specify)?

None.

Approvals

Were any elected Members other than the approver (where relevant) consulted on the decision

No

Where applicable enter the names of the Elected Members below:

Member name(s)	Date on which consulted
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.

Were any officers other than the approver (where relevant) consulted on the decision

No

Where applicable enter the names of the officers below:

Officer name(s)	Date on which consulted
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.

Contact officer's details

Contact officer name

Lydia Braisher

Admissions Manager

Children's Services

Contact officer email address

Lydia.Braisher2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Admissions Arrangements 2026-27

Consultation results

By Joanna Lang

Senior Consultation Officer
Communications and Consultation

Purpose of consultation

The proposed admissions arrangements for academic year 2026-27 was published on the council's website on 18 December 2024. This set out proposals for Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School, Dunton CofE Junior School, Edward Peake CofE Secondary School and Kingsmoor Lower School.

The consultation process

The consultation ran from 18 December 2024 to 29 January 2025. Local residents were encouraged to comment on the proposed arrangements by completing a short online survey. Paper response forms were also provided on request.

Activities included:

- E-bulletin
 - 2 e-mails sent for Kingsmoor – sent to 13,974, with 47 clicks
 - 2 e-mails sent for the schools in the Biggleswade cluster – sent to 13,974, with 49 clicks
- Social media
 - Facebook – 5 posts with 54 engagements
 - Twitter/X - 5 posts with 27 engagements
 - Instagram - 4 posts with 8 engagements

*engagement is the number of interactions your content received from users - likes, comments, shares, saves, etc.

Feedback on the proposals

In total, 26 responses were received for this consultation.

How they accessed the questionnaire:

- 22 (85%) respondents accessed the questionnaire through the mobile version
- 3 (11%) respondents accessed the questionnaire through a pc/laptop
- 1 (4%) respondents accessed the questionnaire through the tablet version

We also received 1 written response. This has been included in full, in appendix A.

To make sense of the feedback received, we have employed two types of analysis. We have looked at the headline quantitative measures, followed by coding of the free text comments to help understand the sentiment behind respondents' agreement or disagreement with the order. The codes we generated identified frequently mentioned comments and concerns. The findings of the consultation are set out in the next section of this report.

When summarising these consultation findings in other reports please ensure that the findings of this report are quoted accurately, and that a link to this report is provided.

Please note, all quotes are shown as received, so may contain spelling mistakes, and percentages shown in the charts may not total 100% due to rounding.

The findings

The breakdown of responses was as follows:

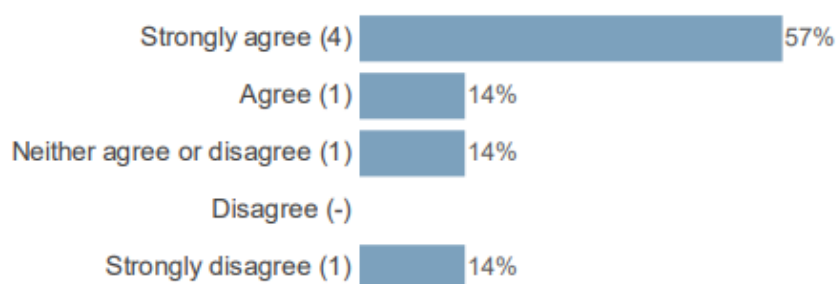
- Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School – 7 responses
- Dunton CofE Junior School – 7 responses
- Edward Peake CofE VC Secondary School – 6 responses
- Kingsmoor Lower School – 18 responses

Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School

Wrestlingworth Infant School is in a federation with Dunton Junior School.

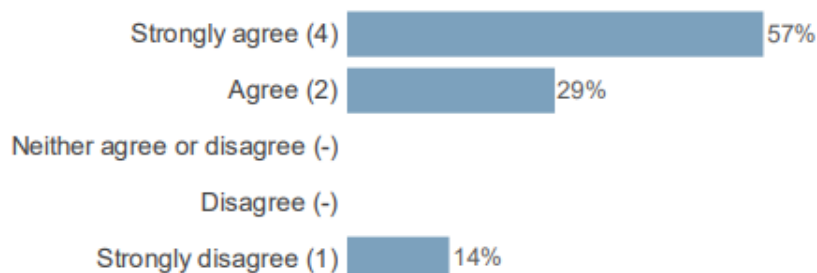
The proposal is to amalgamate the catchment areas for Wrestlingworth Infant School and Dunton Junior School so that all children living in the current catchment areas for either school which include the parishes of Dunton, Eyeworth, Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley have priority for a place at Wrestlingworth Infant School for their key stage 1 education.

How far do you agree or disagree with this proposal? (please select one)



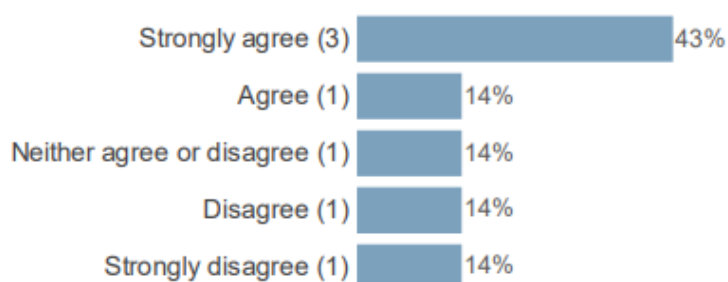
71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to amalgamate the catchment areas.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to include the priority of children with siblings at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School who live in the catchment area as criteria 3? (please select one)



86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal of siblings in catchment at Wrestlingworth Infant or Dunton Junior as criteria 3.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to include the priority of children who live outside the catchment area but have a sibling at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School as criteria 5?



57% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal of siblings outside of catchment at Wrestlingworth Infant or Dunton Junior School as criteria 5.

3 comments were provided about the proposals for Wrestlingworth CofE Infant School, and they have been provided in full below,

"Being a federation staff across both schools work very closely together and some staff work at both schools. The infant school should feed into the junior school, therefore priority should be given to siblings so that children and parents are familiar with the 2 schools throughout primary age."

"Transport needs to be provided from Dunton to Wrestlingworth for 5-7 year olds and from Wrestlingworth to Dunton for key stage 2 children."

"Strongly agree that all children within or outside catchment that have siblings attending dunton or wrestlighworth should be prioritised. Wrestlingworth should be a feeder school for dunton."

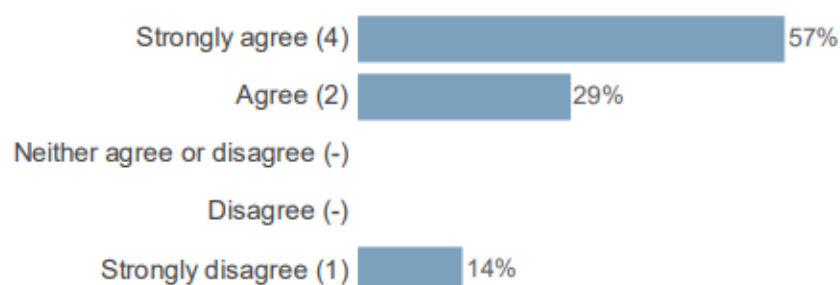
The written response received also noted, “Wrestlingworth and Dunton have a number of out-of-catchment children (including from a traveller site just to the west of the catchment area) and have concerns that siblings of these children could be displaced if either school becomes oversubscribed, potentially leading to the loss of existing pupils from both schools, some of whom may be particularly vulnerable. Would the authority consider combining the sibling category and placing it above catchment children for 2027-28”

Dunton CofE Junior School

Dunton Junior School is in a federation with Wrestlingworth Infant School.

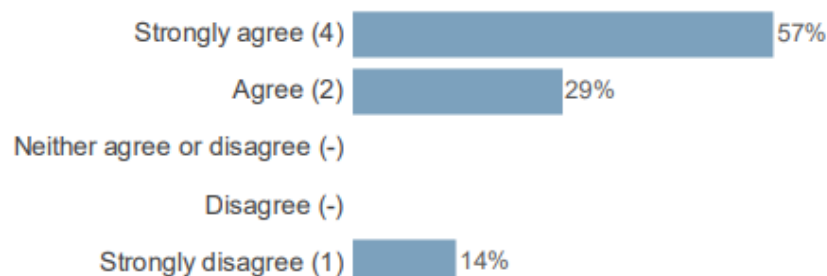
The proposal is to amalgamate the catchment areas for Wrestlingworth Infant School and Dunton Junior School so that all children living in the current catchment areas for either school which include the parishes of Dunton, Eyeworth, Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley have priority for a place at Dunton Junior School for their key stage 2 education.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal? (please select one)



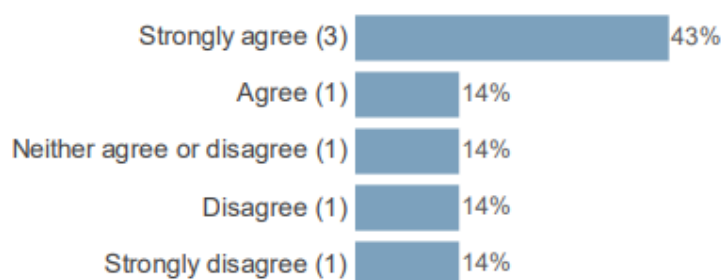
86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to amalgamate the catchment areas.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to include the priority of children with siblings at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School who live in the catchment area as criteria 3? (please select one)



86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal of siblings in catchment at Wrestlingworth Infant or Dunton Junior as criteria 3.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to include the priority of children who live outside the catchment area but have a sibling at either Wrestlingworth Infant School or Dunton Junior School as criteria 5? (please select one)



57% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal of siblings outside of catchment at Wrestlingworth Infant or Dunton Junior School as criteria 5.

1 comment was provided in relation to the proposals for Dunton CofE Junior School:

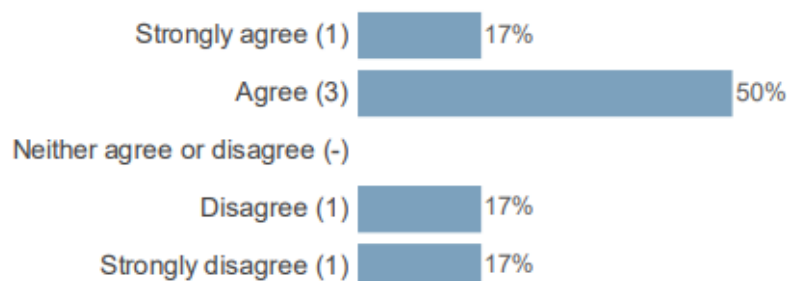
“Wrestlingworth Infant school should feed into Dunton Junior school, therefore it makes sense to give priority to siblings”

Written response also noted, *“Wrestlingworth and Dunton have a number of out-of-catchment children (including from a traveller site just to the west of the catchment area) and have concerns that siblings of these children could be displaced if either school becomes oversubscribed, potentially leading to the loss of existing pupils from both schools, some of whom may be particularly vulnerable. Would the authority consider combining the sibling category and placing it above catchment children for 2027-28”*

Edward Peake CofE VC Secondary School

The proposal for Edward Peake CofE VC Secondary School is to remove Wrestlingworth from the school's oversubscription criteria at criteria 7, as Wrestlingworth now only takes children in years R to 2.

How far do you agree or disagree with this proposal? (please select one)



67% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to remove Wrestlingworth from the school's oversubscription criteria.

1 comment was provided in relation to the proposal for Edward Peake CofE VC Secondary School,

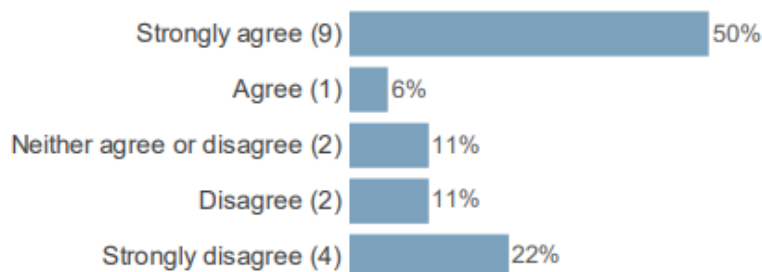
"What about Dunton? Does Edward peak remain the next school for kids who attend Dunton school but live in wrestlingworth as currently, Wrestlingworth catchment is Sandy secondary"

Written response also noted, *"The Board supports the removal of Wrestlingworth Infants from the list of feeder schools"* and also requested further information about the schools which are currently feeders.

Kingsmoor Lower School

The proposal for Kingsmoor Lower School is to reduce the published admission number (PAN) to 30, from 45.

How far do you agree or disagree with this proposal? (please select one)



56% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to reduce the PAN at Kingsmoor Lower School to 30 from 45.

5 comments were received in relation to the proposal for Kingsmoor Lower School, and they have been provided in full below:

"It would be good to establish why it is undersubscribed. Also to consider if using any additional capacity in this school and the other Flitwick schools could allow for ARP as we have none in the Flitwick cluster of schools. And if the capacity helps viability for a move from 3 to 2 tier"

"School places are so limited with a growing population in the area. I am in the catchment for Kingsmoor but have not chosen it as my first choice. If I was to not be offered my first choice and had to go to Kingsmoor....would there then not be a space for my son?! How would that work!? I think with the growing population, cutting the intake would be a ridiculous idea."

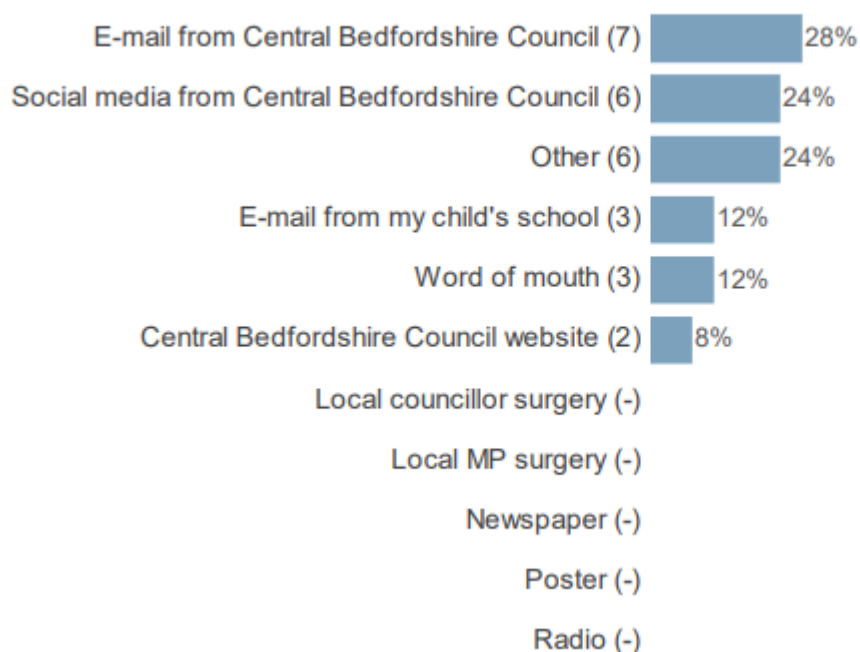
"With increasing housebuilding and proposed changes to tier 2, this change seems premature"

"Why just this one school in Flitwick is to be reduced. What is the rationale for Kingsmoor"

"Kingsmoor has managed mixed classes well in the pass so should be fine. We need a school on the east side of Flitwick"

How did you hear about the consultation?

How did you hear about this consultation?



Respondents were most likely to hear about the consultation through an e-mail from the council.

Of the other responses, 3 provided further detail:

"I am ward councillor for Flitwick and sit on Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee"

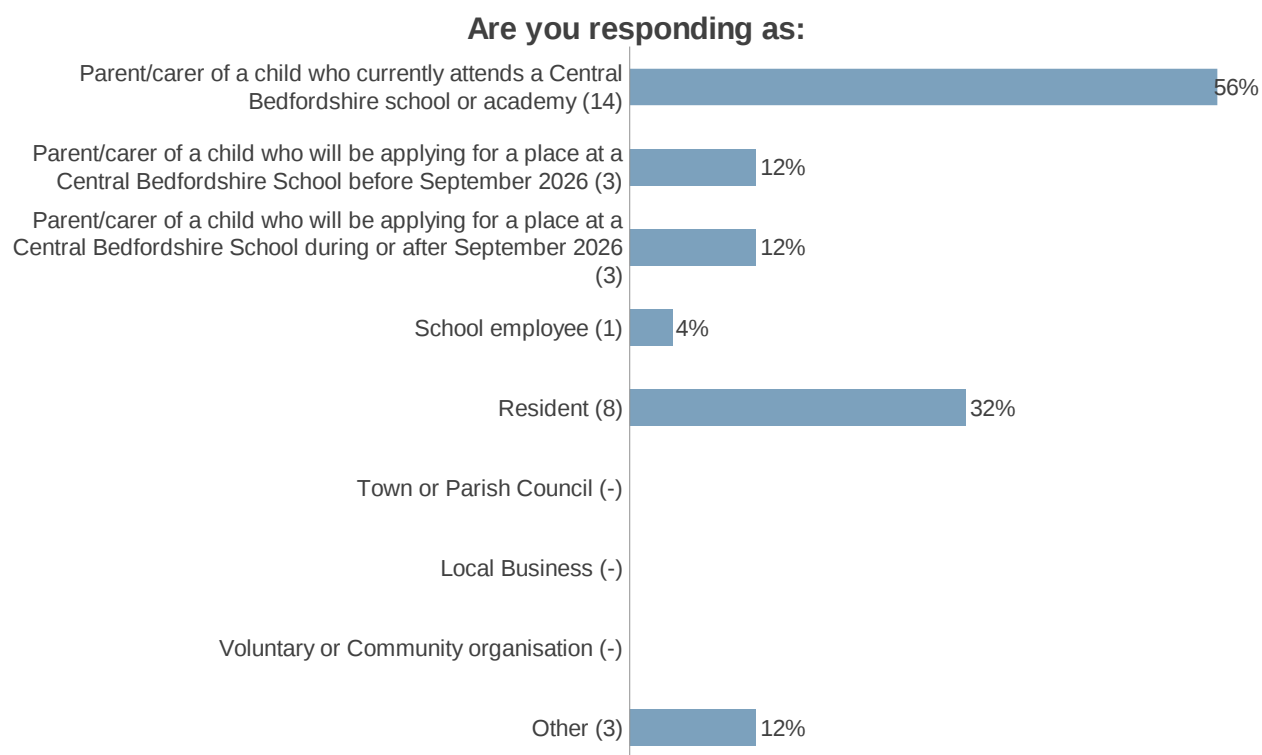
“Facebook group”

“The school”

If social media, please tell us which one:



Demographics



Respondents were most likely to be parents or carers of a child who currently attend a Central Bedfordshire school or academy.

The ‘other’ responses provided more detail:

“CBC Employee”

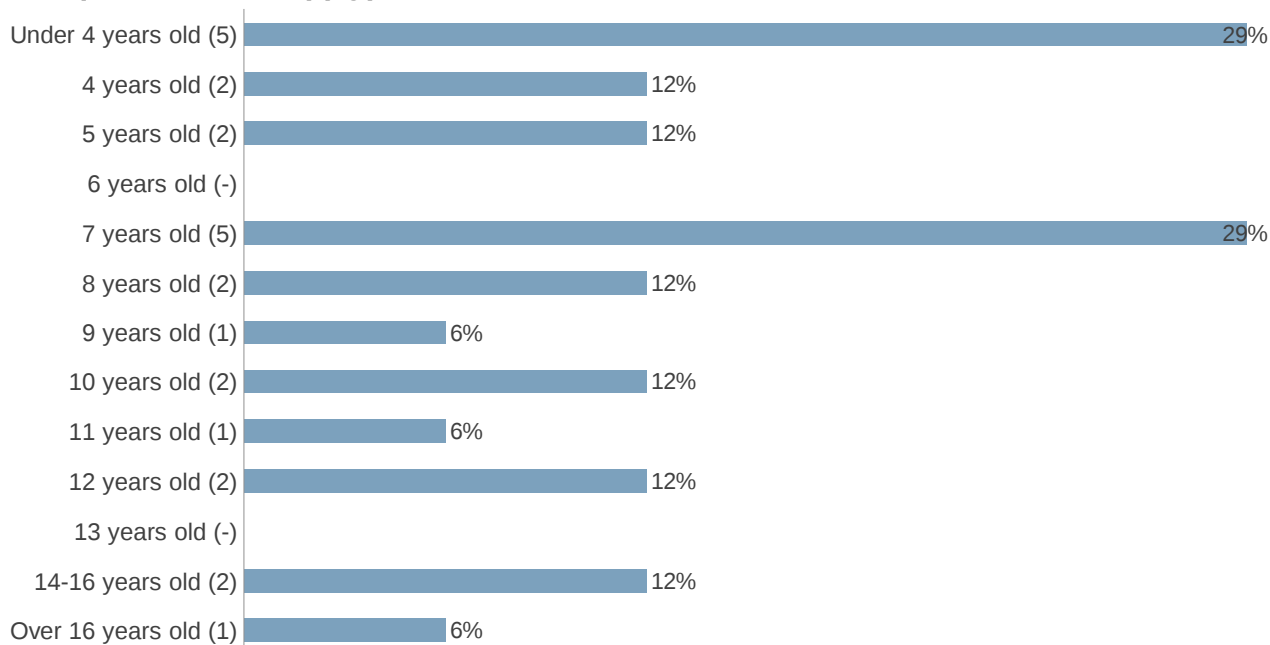
“Ward councillor”

“MHST”

Parents or carers of children who currently attend a school or academy in Central Bedfordshire were asked to provide the name of the school/academy. The responses can be broken down as follows:

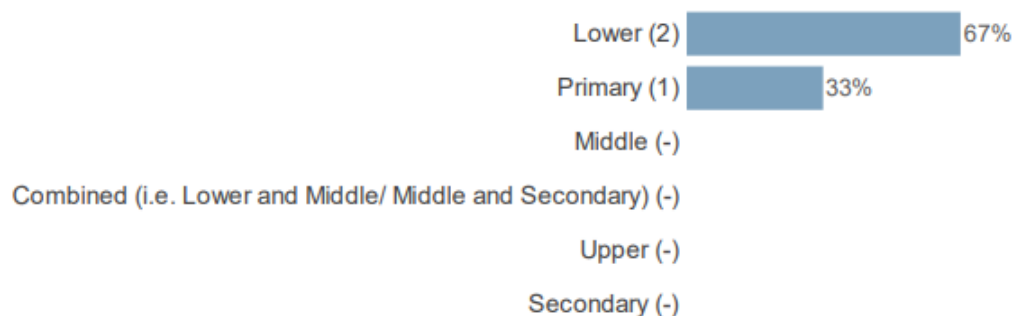
- Kingsmoor Lower School – 4 responses
- Dunton Junior School – 3 responses
- Edward Peake Secondary School – 1 response
- Flitwick Lower School – 1 response
- Wrestlingworth Infant School - 1 response

If your child currently attends a Central Bedfordshire school/academy or will be applying for a school place in the future, please tell us how old your child(ren) are: (select all that apply)

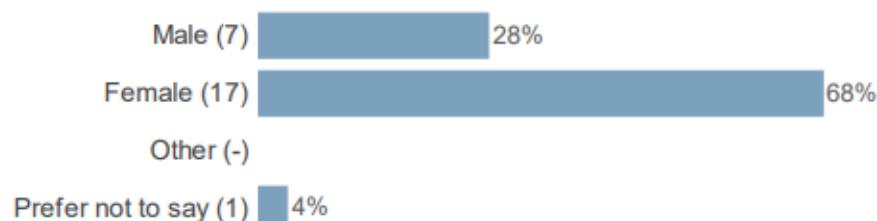


Of the 17 that responded to this question, 14 had children of primary school age.

If your child will be applying for a Central Bedfordshire school place for academic year 2026-27, which of the following stages will they be applying to? (please select all that apply)

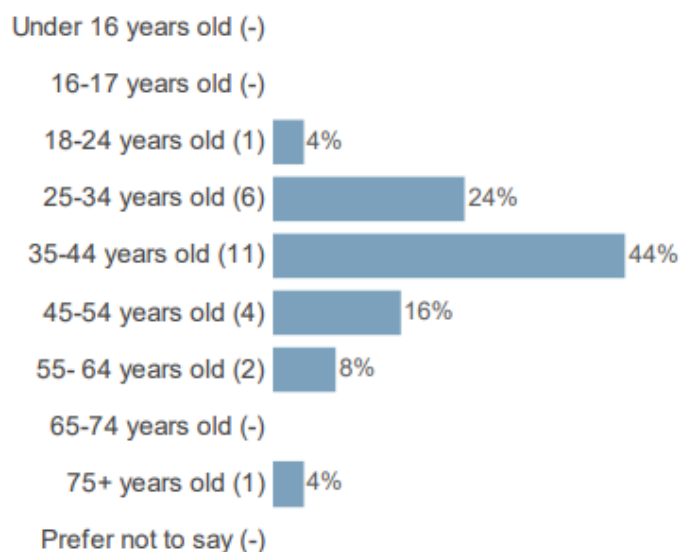


Are you: (please select one)



Respondents were much more likely to be female than male. This follows the pattern that we usually see for consultations about schools.

What is your age? (please select one)

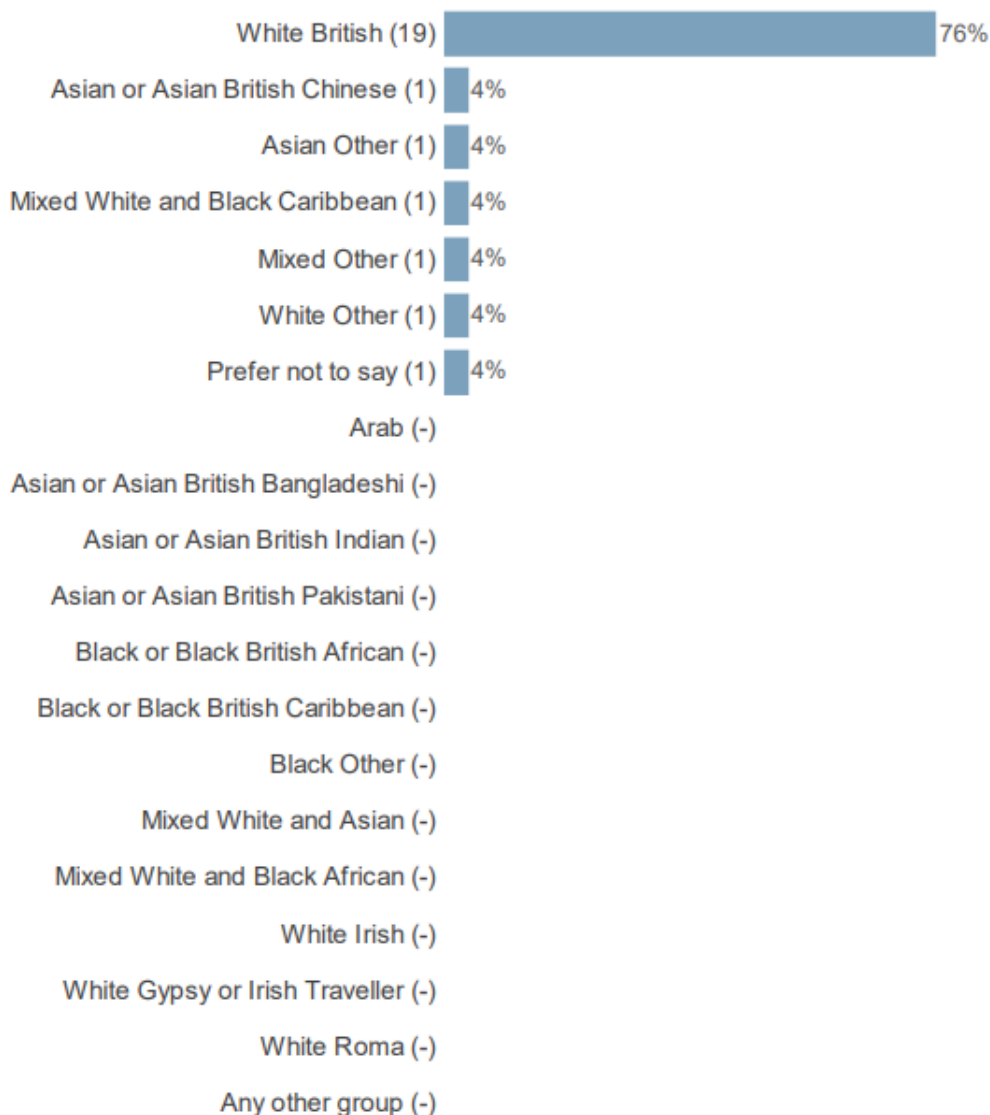


Do you consider yourself disabled? (please select one)

Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.



To which of these groups do you consider you belong? (please select one)

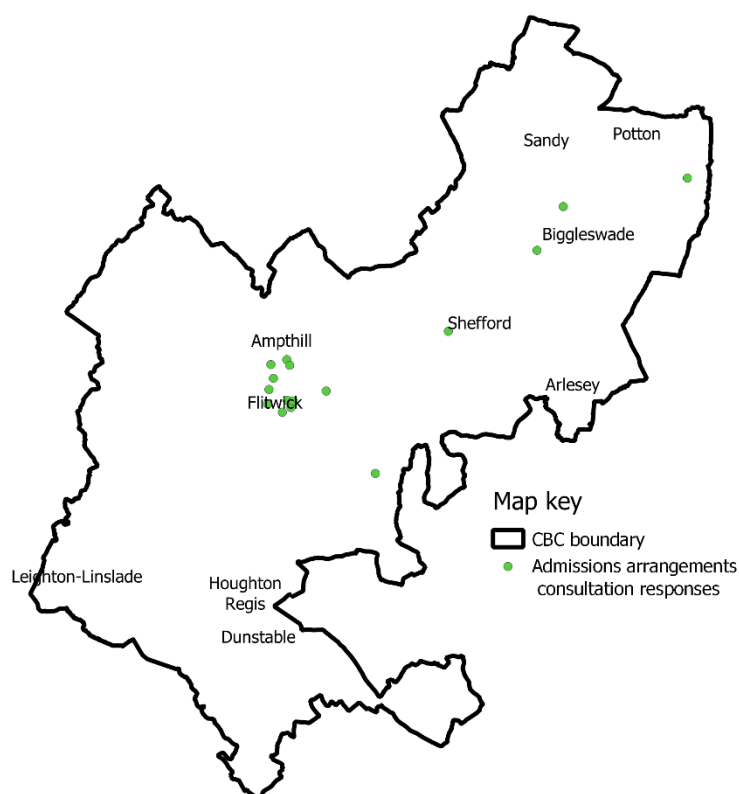


Respondents were most likely to be White British.

Postcode and Mosaic analysis

Postcode analysis

Admissions arrangements 2026-27, consultation responses



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A review of postcodes indicates that respondents were from across the north and mid Central Bedfordshire, with a larger cluster around Flitwick. This is based on the 16 respondents (62%) who chose to provide a postcode.

Conclusion

Respondents are broadly supportive of all proposals, but also noted a need for further information/explanation/rationale about some of the changes – particularly for Kingsmoor Lower School.

Appendix A

Response to CBC consultation on 2026-27 admission arrangements for community and VC schools including co-ordinated admission schemes

The Board of Education has the following comments on the proposed arrangements for 2026-27:

1. Admission arrangements for community/VC schools

General points

Page 1 - The terms “admission” and “oversubscription” criteria are used interchangeably here and throughout the text and we would suggest that this could cause some confusion.

Page 3 & 4 (footnotes) – the definition does more than define “Christian church”, so please can this be changed to read “See definitions section for further information and for the meaning of “Church of England” and “Christian church” “?

Page 8 – recent rulings by the OSA have clarified that admission arrangements must explain how staff can find out if their role is one that qualifies as a demonstrable skill shortage rule, so we would suggest the authority considers adding information about this to the notes.

Page 9 (catchment) - is the authority taking steps to address the concerns raised by the OSA in relation to parents being able to easily access CBC catchment maps?

Page 9 (faith) – please remove the comma after “which is a member” in line 2 of paragraph 3.

Wrestlingworth C of E Infants

We understand that discussions are ongoing with respect to the building works required in order to make the proposed PAN feasible for entry in 2025, let alone in 2026, and would be grateful for reassurance on this point.

The Board has the following additional comments on the proposed new arrangements and new catchment for this school and for Dunton C of E Juniors:

- We would be grateful to know how the proposed new catchment map will be linked to the arrangements, given the comments recently made by the OSA as to the accessibility of CBC’s catchment maps for potential applicants.
- One of the schools has raised concerns about the placement of non-catchment siblings below catchment children in the proposed oversubscription criteria. It appears that Wrestlingworth and Dunton have a number of out-of-catchment children (including from a traveller site just to the west of the catchment area) and have concerns that siblings of these children could be displaced if either school becomes oversubscribed, potentially leading to the loss of existing pupils from both schools, some of whom may be particularly vulnerable. Would the authority consider combining the sibling category and placing it above catchment children for 2027-28, if not for 2026-27? Dunton would of course still need to retain high priority for Wrestlingworth feeder children.

Edward Peake CoE VC Secondary

The Board supports the removal of Wrestlingworth Infants from the list of feeder schools, however please note that the correct names of the remaining feeders (according to GIAS) are:

Northill CofE Academy, Dunton CofE Junior School and Sutton CofE VA Primary School

The Board would be grateful to know the historic rationale/context for the selection of these feeder schools (only), given that they represent some but not all of the CoE primary/junior schools and academies in the local area. Would the authority be willing to consider expanding the list to include other local CoE schools, if not for 2026-27, then for 2027-28?

2. Co-ordinated scheme for admissions (primary/middle etc)

- General: both schemes use the terms “oversubscription” and “admission” criteria interchangeably, sometimes within the same paragraphs; as mentioned above, we feel this could cause some confusion.
- 2.6.4: the OSA has ruled that the word “request” can imply that a school has some discretion over part-time attendance below compulsory school age. We suggest it might be helpful to reword this section to make clearer that this is a parental right, not a right to request.
- The wording of this section appears unclear, as: 2.7.1 does not explain which year is meant by “that year”; 2.7.2 does not make clear that this is a recommended process only and that all requests must be considered, whenever made (as per DfE guidance); and 2.7.5 and 2.7.8 make no mention of this delayed application being a paper application, whereas the equivalent sections for in year and secondary delayed applications do indicate that this is a CBC requirement (as does the starting school booklet).
- 3.8: we believe the date should be 9 March 2026

3. Co-ordinated scheme for admissions (secondary)

- 1.1: the 2014 regulations only amended the 2012 regulations, so we are not sure why this section differs from the equivalent section in the introduction to the primary scheme.
- 4.5: we believe the date should be 27 March 2026.

Central Bedfordshire in contact

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