



HOUSTONE SCHOOL

Admissions Policy 2025-2026

1. Introductory statement

- 1.1. Houstone School is a part of Advantage Schools. We believe that given the right circumstances, all children are capable of extraordinary things. The Trust's values of Aspiration, Respect and Honesty underpins the outlook for the whole school community.
- 1.2. Houstone School is a publicly funded, co-educational secondary school.

2. Admission number(s)

- 2.1. The school has an admission number of 180 for entry in year 7.
- 2.2. The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

3. Application process

- 3.1. The local authority (LA) will process applications in accordance with the normal LA process for co-ordinating school offers. This means you will need to complete your home LA common application form for all your choices of school, including this one.
- 3.2. The closing date for applications is 31 October 2024.
- 3.3. Offers will be made on 1 March 2025.
- 3.4. The application form for those whose LA is Central Bedfordshire Council can be obtained on the Central Bedfordshire School Admissions website.
- 3.5. If your home LA is not Central Bedfordshire Council, apply using the common application found on your home LA's website.

Oversubscription criteria

The criteria in this section apply to entry at all phases of the school.

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.¹ Children who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.²
2. Children who have siblings in the school.
3. Children of staff employed at Houstone School in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) where the member of staff has been employed at Houstone School for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
 - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Any other children.

Tie-break

If in categories 2-4 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured from the child's home to the front gates of the school in a straight line.

Late applications

All applications received by the LA after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. If, following consideration of all applicants the school is oversubscribed, parents may request that their child is placed on the school's waiting list.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. To do so parents should include a request with their application, specifying why admission out of normal year group is being requested and the year group in which they wish their child to be allocated a place.

When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

Waiting lists

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the first term after the beginning of the school year. This will be maintained by the

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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

² A child is regarded as having been in 'state care outside of England' if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society. Section 23ZZA(8) of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by Section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

Academy Trust and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Appellants should contact the Education Appeals Team by email at education.appeals@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk by the date outlined in the decision letter for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on the LA website at

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/5/school_admissions/500/school_admission_appeals/2

Notes:

Home address:

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the child is registered with the doctor. If the residence is not split equally between both parents then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Sibling:

'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a step brother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of the same family who, in any of these cases, will be living at the same address at the date of their application for a place.