Sheldon School
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Consultation on Proposed Changes to Sheldon School Admission Arrangements for September 2028
Introduction

The Governing Body of Sheldon School is consulting on proposed changes to the school's admission arrangements for entry into Year 7 from September 2028.

As an admission authority, the Governing Body is required to consult on any proposed changes to admission arrangements before they are determined. This consultation provides parents, carers, local schools, the local authority and other interested parties with the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes before a final decision is made. The consultation is being carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

The consultation will run from 12th November 2026 until 24 December 2026, a period of six weeks.

Summary of Changes
The principal changes being proposed are:
1. Clarification of the position for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan
The proposed arrangements expressly state that children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names Sheldon School will be admitted through the statutory Education, Health and Care Plan process. These children are admitted before the oversubscription criteria are applied, and the number of places available within the Published Admission Number is reduced accordingly.

2. Updated definition of looked-after and previously looked-after children
The first oversubscription criterion has been expanded and clarified. It now expressly includes:

- children who were previously looked after and immediately afterwards became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order; and
- children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside England and who ceased to be in state care because they were adopted.

The proposed arrangements also include a fuller definition of a looked-after child.

3. Revised priority for children of staff
The existing requirement that the child must live in the same family unit and at the same address as the member of staff has been removed.
Under the proposed arrangements, priority would apply where the member of staff:

- has been employed at Sheldon School for two or more years at the time of application; or
- was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skills shortage.

The second provision is an addition to the existing arrangements.

4. Changes to the geographical priority area
The wording of the fourth oversubscription criterion has been amended.
The proposed changes:

- expressly include the parishes of Derry Hill and Studley and Bremhill;
- replace the existing reference to only the part of Bremhill west of the Old Canal with a reference to the whole parish of Bremhill;
- remove the existing reference to the part of the civil parish of Calne Without west of Bowood House; and
- retain the part of Langley Burrell Without, excluding Cepen Park North.

The priority relating to Chippenham, Chippenham Without and Cepen Park North remains substantively unchanged.

5. A higher and more clearly defined threshold for medical priority

The existing criterion refers generally to "medical grounds" supported by a doctor's report.

The proposed criterion applies where a child has an exceptional medical need that makes attendance at Sheldon School, rather than another school, particularly necessary. It also:

- requires written evidence from an appropriately qualified, independent medical professional;
- requires the evidence to explain the child's medical need and why Sheldon School is the most suitable school;
- confirms that the admission authority will decide whether the criterion is met on the basis of the evidence submitted; and
- states that the evidence must normally be submitted by the application closing date. The proposed arrangements expressly confirm that a child will satisfy geographical criterion 4 or 5 if either:
- the child's home address is within the specified area; or
- the child attends a state-funded primary school located within the specified area.

This makes clearer how the residential and primary-school elements of the criteria operate.

The proposed policy retains the inclusion of full, half, step and adopted siblings and the child of a parent's or carer's partner, where the children live in the same household.

It clarifies that the sibling must be attending Sheldon School at the time the applicant is admitted, rather than simply being described as currently attending the school when the application is considered

8. Revised tie-break arrangements

Under the current arrangements, where applicants are tied under one criterion, each of the subsequent oversubscription criteria is applied before distance is considered.

Under the proposed arrangements, straight-line distance will be used to rank applicants who are tied within any individual oversubscription criterion. This means the subsequent criteria will no longer be applied as part of the tie-break.

Where two or more applicants live exactly the same distance from the school and there are insufficient places for all of them, the current reference to "casting lots" will be replaced by an independently supervised random-allocation process.

9. Introduction of a home-address definition

The proposed arrangements introduce a definition of the child's home address. This is defined as the address at which the child is ordinarily resident with their parent or legal guardian for the majority of the school week at the application closing date.

Where a child lives at more than one address, the admission authority may require evidence of the child's principal residence. The proposed arrangements also state that an address of convenience must not be used

Rationale for the Proposed Changes

The Governing Body believes the proposed amendments will:

Improve clarity and understanding of the admissions process for families.

Ensure that places continue to be allocated fairly and consistently.

Better reflect local circumstances and demand for places.

Maintain a transparent and objective admissions process.

The Governing Body has carefully reviewed the school's current arrangements and considers these amendments to be in the best interests of pupils, families and the wider community.

Full Proposed Admission Arrangements

The full draft Admission Arrangements for entry in September 2028 are available:

On the school website.

On request from the school.

Stakeholders are encouraged to review the complete policy before submitting comments.

How to Respond

The Governing Body welcomes comments on the proposed changes.

Responses should be submitted by 5.00pm on 24th December 2026.
Comments can be sent:

By Email
enquiries@sheldonschool.co.uk

By Post
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Please mark correspondence:
Admission Arrangements Consultation 2028