Sheldon School

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Policy Title: **Admissions Arrangements for Entry 2028-29**	Effective Date:	Sept 2026
LT Member Responsible: Headteacher	Review Date:	Aug 2027
Governors' Committee Responsible: Quality of Education Committee		

The Sheldon School Academy is the admission authority for Sheldon School and is responsible for determining and applying these admission arrangements. References in these arrangements to the "admission authority" mean Sheldon School Academy.

Admissions Procedures for Year 7 – September 2028

Students are admitted at age 11 without reference to ability or aptitude. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for admission to Year 7 in September 2028 will be 240 students. Applications must be received by the applicant's home local authority by 31 October 2027.

How to Apply

Applications must be made through the co-ordinated admission scheme of the local authority in which the child lives. Applicants resident in Wiltshire should apply through Wiltshire Council. Full details of this can be found on their website at: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schools-learning-admissions-applying

In brief, the scheme is outlined below:

• Parents/carers will be able to make an online application. The online facility will be available from 1 September 2027 up until the deadline of 31 October 2027.

• A standard written application form known as the Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF) can be used to apply if parents/carers are unable to apply online. To obtain a SCAF, parents/carers should call WC customer services team on 01225 713010 to request an SCAF to be sent to the home address.

• This form must be used to apply for the admission of pupils into the first year of secondary education in the specified year, unless an online application has been submitted.

• Unless an online application has been made, the SCAF must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences by the parents/carers wishing to apply for a school place for their child (either within or outside the county).

• The deadline date for applications is 31 October 2027. All completed SCAFs are to be returned directly to the WC at the address on the SCAF, by the deadline date. Any SCAFs which are incorrectly returned to schools must be forwarded to WC to be submitted by the deadline. Forms returned to schools and not received by WC by 31 October 2027 will be treated as late applications.

• WC will send out an acknowledgement of receipt for each SCAF and all online applications. Parents/carers will be advised to contact WC if they have not received an acknowledgement within 15 school days of posting their paper application.

• On 1 March 2028 (National Offer Date) if parents/carers have applied online they will be able to log into their portal account to view the outcome of the application. If they applied using the SCAF, letters will be posted out on National Offer day, so the decision letter will be received a few days after the National Offer date of the 1 March. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed by the school of their position on the waiting list.

• The deadline for parents/carers to accept the place offered is 16 March 2028. Parents/carers should confirm their acceptance online if they have applied online, or if they have applied by paper return the acceptance/decline slip directly to WC. If the parent/carer does not respond to WC to confirm if they wish to accept or decline the offer by 16 March 2028, WC will send a second letter to the parent/carer informing them that they have seven days in which to accept or decline the place which has been offered. They will also be advised in this letter that failure to respond could result in the offer of the place being withdrawn. If there is still no response a third letter will be sent to the applicant informing them that the offer of a place has been withdrawn. It will then be the responsibility of the parent or carer to apply for an alternative school place.

• Second round applications, i.e. those received between 1 November 2027 and 6 March 2028 for the Year 7 intake round, will not be considered until after all first round on time applications have been processed. Second round applications will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place in the first round and if necessary will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

Admissions Criteria for Sheldon School 2028

The Published Admission Number (PAN) is 240.
Sheldon is a comprehensive school. Pupils will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

Oversubscription Criteria

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names Sheldon School will be admitted. Where this happens, the number of places available under the Published Admission Number will be reduced accordingly. These admissions are dealt with through the statutory Education, Health and Care Plan process and not through the ordinary oversubscription arrangements.

The following criteria will be applied to all applications, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit in the event of oversubscription:

a) Looked-after and previously looked-after children

A looked-after child, or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This criterion also includes children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

A looked-after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions at the time an application is made to the school.

b) where a child has a brother* or sister* currently in the school;

c) Children of members of staff- Children of members of staff who are employed to work at Sheldon School and who, at the time of application, either:

i. have been employed at Sheldon School for two or more years; or

ii. were recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skills shortage.

d) children living in or attending state-funded primary schools in the civil parishes of Acton Turville, Biddestone, Castle Combe, Christian Malford, Colerne, Grittleton, Kington Langley, Kington St Michael, Lacock, Marshfield, Nettleton and Burton, North Wraxall, Seagry, Stanton St Quintin, Sutton Benger, Yatton Keynell, the part of the civil parish of Bremhill which is west of the Old Canal, the part of the civil parish of Calne Without which is west of Bowood House, and the part of the civil parish of Langley Burrell Without excluding Cepen Park North;
e) children living in, or attending state-funded primary schools, in the civil parishes of Chippenham and Chippenham Without, (this area now includes Cepen Park North);
f) Children with an exceptional medical need that makes attendance at Sheldon School, rather than another school, particularly necessary. The application must be supported by written evidence from an appropriately qualified independent medical professional. The evidence must explain the nature of the child's medical need and why Sheldon School is the most suitable school to meet that need. The admission authority will determine whether the criterion is met on the basis of the evidence submitted. Evidence must normally be submitted by the application closing date.
g) all other children (i.e. those resident and attending primary school outside the areas specified in criteria d and e) For criteria d) and e), an applicant will satisfy the criterion if either their home address is within the specified geographical area or they attend a state-funded primary school located within that area.

Sibling definition

For the purposes of these arrangements, a sibling includes a full, half, step or adopted brother or sister, and the child of a parent's or carer's partner, provided that the children live in the same household. The sibling must be attending Sheldon School at the time the applicant is admitted. For admission in September 2028, this will normally mean that the sibling is currently in Years 7 to 12 when the application is made.

Tie-break

Where there are more applicants than places available within any individual oversubscription criterion, priority will be determined by the straight-line distance between the child's home address and the school, with priority given to the child living closest to the school. Distances will be calculated by Wiltshire Council using Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the home address and the school address.
Where two or more applicants live exactly the same distance from the school and there are insufficient places for all of them, priority will be determined by random allocation. The random allocation process will be independently supervised by a person who is independent of the school and the admission authority.

Home address

The child's home address is the address at which the child is ordinarily resident with their parent or legal guardian for the majority of the school week at the closing date for applications. Where a child lives at more than one address, the admission authority will consider the individual circumstances and may require evidence of the child's principal residence. The address used must not be an address of convenience.

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Likelihood of gaining a place

Previous allocation patterns do not guarantee that an applicant will be offered a place in a future year. The number and distribution of applications vary from year to year.

Waiting List

Where Sheldon School is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be maintained for Year 7 until at least 31 December 2028. The waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be determined by the date an application was received.

Each time a child is added to the waiting list, the list will be re-ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Consequently, a child's position on the waiting list may move up or down. If a place becomes available, it will be offered to the child ranked highest on the waiting list at that time.

Applications from twins and other multiple births

Sheldon will admit a twin (or other sibling from a multiple birth) even if this takes the number of admissions over the PAN, if to do otherwise would result in such siblings being separated.

Applications for school places outside the normal admissions round

Sheldon School participates in Wiltshire Council's Fair Access Protocol. The Fair Access Protocol operates outside the ordinary admission arrangements and is used only for eligible vulnerable or hard-to-place children who have not secured a school place through the normal in-year admission process. Admission through the Fair Access Protocol may result in the school admitting a child even where the relevant year group is full.

In-year applications

Applications for admission to Sheldon School outside the normal admissions round must be made through Wiltshire Council's in-year admission process. Details of the process and access to the application form are available on Wiltshire Council's website. Applications will be considered in accordance with these admission arrangements. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome within 15 school days of the application being received and will be informed of their right of appeal if a place is refused. For applications to Years 7 to 11, the admission authority will consider whether a place is available in the relevant year group. Where the admission of an additional pupil would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, the application may be refused. The applicant will be informed in writing of the decision and of the right of appeal.

Admission outside the normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside the child's normal age group. Requests should be made in writing and should explain why admission outside the normal age group is considered to be in the child's best interests. Parents may submit supporting evidence with their request. The admission authority will consider each request individually and will make its decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and the best interests of the child. The admission authority will take account

of the parent's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, relevant medical history, the views of the headteacher and any other relevant evidence.
Parents will be informed in writing of the year group in which the application will be considered and the reasons for the decision. A decision about the appropriate year group is separate from the decision whether a place can be offered.

Admission of children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) outside the normal admissions round

Families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad, often at relatively short notice. Places will be allocated to children and their families in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCDO or GCHQ letter declaring a relocation date. Such places will be allocated according to the criteria outlined above. A unit or quartering address will be accepted where the family does not yet have a confirmed home address. Wiltshire Council will be willing to notify parents of results of such applications by e-mail, where this is acceptable to the applicant, especially when families are still abroad. The supporting evidence must confirm the posting and relocation date.

Admission to the Sixth Form

The Published Admission Number for external applicants to Year 12 is 30. This is the minimum number of external applicants who will be admitted where sufficient applicants meet the published academic entry requirements. Students currently in Year 11 at Sheldon School who meet the published academic entry requirements are entitled to transfer to the Sixth Form and are not required to apply for admission.

The minimum academic entry requirement for admission to Sheldon Sixth Form is five GCSE qualifications at grades 9 to 4, including English and Mathematics. The same academic entry requirements apply to internal and external applicants. Additional subject-specific requirements may apply for individual courses and are published separately in the Sixth Form prospectus. Subject-specific requirements determine access to particular courses and do not constitute separate admission criteria for entry to the Sixth Form. Where an application for admission to the Sixth Form is refused, both the parent and the young person have a separate right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Sixth Form Over subscription criteria

Where more external applicants meet the academic entry requirements than there are places available, places will be allocated in the following order:

1. Looked-after and previously looked-after children, including children adopted from state care outside England, using the definitions set out above.
2. Applicants with a sibling attending Sheldon School at the time of admission.
3. Other applicants, ranked by straight-line distance between the applicant's home address and Sheldon School, with priority given to those living closest.

Where applicants are tied by distance, the independently supervised random-allocation procedure set out above will apply.

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Right of Appeal

Parents have the right to appeal to an independent admissions panel if their child is not offered a place at Sheldon. Details of this process are available from the Appeals Clerk via the school. The appeals process is straightforward and non-confrontational. Both the clerk and the panel are completely independent of the school and work within a legally-defined appeals procedure.

Deadline

The deadline for applications for places at Sheldon in Year 7 in September 2028 is 31st October 2027 at midnight. Applications are possible after this date, but they will be treated as late admissions under Wiltshire's agreed procedures.

Where to apply

Applications within the normal admissions round for entry into Year 7 are made through the coordinated admission system of the local authority in which a family lives (e.g. Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire). Wiltshire applications should be made online at www.wiltshire.gov.uk.

Appeals for Admission to Sheldon School in September 2028

In the event that your child is not allocated a place at Sheldon School, you may wish to appeal the decision. If you decide to appeal, you need to submit your appeal to the school, in writing, by 23rd April 2028. We do not issue a particular form for completion but you may wish to consider the following:

- Please explain, as fully as you can, why you want your child to attend Sheldon School. If you think your application for a place at Sheldon has not been treated correctly or in accordance with the admissions criteria, then you should explain why.
- If there are medical issues involved, it is important that these are supported by written evidence, e.g. doctor's letter.
- If your case is based on a house move, you should provide written evidence to confirm this. For example, a letter from your solicitor or a copy of your tenancy agreement.
- You may also include other relevant letters, correspondence, reports or documents to support your case.
- You don't need to wait until you have all supporting evidence before you send your form to us as this may delay the processing of your appeal. Supporting evidence can be sent in later.

The appeal will be held within 40 school days of the deadline for making an appeal. The panel will be made up of three independent people who will consider:

- Whether the admissions authority followed its own admissions policy and if it had good reasons for not offering your child a place (e.g. the school was oversubscribed and other children met the over-subscription criteria more closely).

- Whether your child's need to be at the school is greater than the effects on other children in the school of having additional children at the school.

- Your reasons for wanting your child to attend the school.

- Any supporting evidence that might be relevant to your case.

Timetable for appeals for Sheldon School Admission in September 2028
(normal admissions round, i.e. applications submitted on or before 31 October 2027)

1 March 2028 Parents notified by the Local Authority of their allocated school.
16 March 2028 Deadline for accepting or refusing the place offered.
23 April 2028 Deadline for lodging an appeal for admission to Sheldon School.

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Appeals - Frequently asked questions

1. **Do I have to pay for the appeal?**
   No. There is no charge to parents for appeals

2. **Can I ask the panel to contact anyone, such as a doctor or social worker, to support what is on my appeal form?**
   No, the panel will not contact anyone else. It is your responsibility to ensure that the panel has any written supporting evidence at the hearing.

3. **What documentation or information can I submit in addition to my appeal notice?**
   You can submit any information you wish in order to support your appeal. You should mention all reasons why Sheldon would be the best school for your child and any special factors which justify your child being allocated a place. Everything you submit either verbally or in writing will be treated in confidence.

4. **Can I bring a friend to the appeal hearing?**
   Yes. You can bring someone with you. They can speak on your behalf, or simply support you.

5. **Should my child attend the hearing?**
   No, we advise against this. A child may find the hearing difficult and confusing.

6. **How does the panel reach a decision?**
   The appeals panel discusses the case in private and reaches a majority decision. If the panel is considering more than one appeal, it will not make a decision about an individual case until all cases have been heard.

7. **How long will the hearing take?**
   This is difficult to say as it depends on the complexity of the cases being heard. Generally, for mid-year appeals, both stage one and stage two take about half an hour each. In multiple intake or transfer appeals, stage one could take forty-five minutes to an hour and stage two about thirty minutes.

8. **Where are the appeals heard?**
   At a suitable venue in the Chippenham area.

9. **Can I change the date or time of my appeal?**
   If we can accommodate requests for changes we will do so. However, we have to abide by statutory timeframes and may be hearing several appeals in one day, so it may not always be possible to agree to changes.

10. **What should I do if I change my mind about appealing?**
    If you wish to withdraw your appeal please let the school know via e-mail marked for the attention of Mrs Briony Burgess, Admissions, or phone 01249 766020.

11. **My child is on the waiting list. If I appeal, will it affect my child's place on the list?**
    No. If your appeal is not successful your child will remain on the waiting list. If you win your appeal, your child's name will be removed from the waiting list and your child will be offered a place at Sheldon.

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