



Policy Title: Admissions Policy 2026-27	Effective Date:	Sept 2025
LT Member Responsible: Headteacher	Review Date:	Sept 2026
Governors' Committee Responsible: Quality of Education		

Admissions Procedures for Year 7 – September 2026

Students are admitted at age 11 without reference to ability or aptitude. The proposed admission limit of children aged 11 for the academic year commencing on 1st September 2026 will be 240 students. Wiltshire Council (WC) must receive applications by the 31st October 2025.

All applications must be made through WC co-ordinated admissions scheme; 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 will be able to make an online application. The online facility will be available from 1st September 2025 up until the deadline of 31st October 2025.
- 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 an 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 preference by the parent wishing to apply for a school place for their child (either within or outside the county).
- The deadline date for applications is 31st October 2025. All completed SCAF's are to be returned directly to the WC at the address on the SCAF, by the deadline date. Any SCAF's 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 31st October 2025 will be treated as late applications.
- WC will send out an acknowledgement in receipt for each SCAF and all online applications. Applicants will be advised to contact WC if they have not received an acknowledgement within 15 school days of posting their paper application.
- On 2nd March 2026 (National Offer Date) if you applied online you will be able to log into your portal account to view the outcome of the application. If you 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 2nd March. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed by the school of their position on the waiting list. Page 4 of 11
- The deadline for parents to accept the place offered is 16th March 2026. Parents 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 does not respond to WC to confirm if they wish to accept or decline the offer by 16th March 2026, WC will send a second letter to the parent 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 parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.

- Second round applications, i.e. those received between 1st November 2025 and 6th March 2026 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 used the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

Admissions Criteria for Sheldon School 2026

The Published Admission Number (PAN) is 240.

Sheldon is a comprehensive school; pupils will be admitted without reference to ability, aptitude or culture.

Over-Subscription Criteria

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 Children" and "previously Looked After Children" as defined by section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989;
- b) where a child has a brother* or sister* currently in the school;
- c) children of a member of staff employed by Sheldon School for more than two years at the time of which the application is made, living in the same family unit at the same address;
- 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 Bengier, 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) where there are medical grounds for admitting the child. These must be supported by a doctor's report explaining why Sheldon is the most suitable school for the child;
- g) all other children (i.e. those resident and attending primary school outside the areas specified in criteria d and e)

[A map of the areas defined in d) and e) is available on the school website or from the school.]

* Brother or sister is defined to include adopted siblings, half-siblings, step-siblings, and the child of a parent or carer's partner; but only if the siblings in question are resident in the same household. ** "Attending the school" means due to be in Years 8 to 13 at the time of admission, which will usually mean currently in Years 7 to 12 at the time of application.

Tiebreak

In the event of a "tie" under any single criterion, allocation of a place will be decided by applying each of the subsequent criteria in turn. If a "tie" still ensues, allocation of a place will be decided by the proximity of the child's home to the school, with those nearer accorded the higher priority. Distances supplied by Wiltshire LA will be used and these will measure the straight line distance using the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings of the home and school address. Those with the least distance will be given priority. In the event of there being equal distances the priority will be decided by casting lots.

Likelihood of gaining a place

In years when the school has been over-subscribed, all applicants meeting the oversubscription criteria b) and d) and the vast majority (and sometimes all) of those in e) have been able to gain a place at Sheldon. In many years applicants from outside the defined areas have also been successful.

Waiting List

In the event of oversubscription, a waiting list will be maintained, ranked according to the criteria set out above. Applicants will join the waiting list according to these criteria regardless of the order in which the applications are received. When a place becomes available, it will be allocated to the child at the top of the waiting list.

Waiting lists for all year groups will close on 14th July 2026 and any remaining names will be removed. Parents are welcome to submit a fresh application in the next academic year, which will be considered in accordance with the admissions criteria.

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 will follow the agreed Fair Access Protocol for hard-to-place children. Other applications for admission to Years 7-11 beyond the normal transfer age should be made directly to Wiltshire Council. Upon approach from Wiltshire Council, Governors will first consider whether places are available up to the year group's Published Admissions Number and if demand for places remains oversubscribed, applicants will join the waiting list according to the criteria described above. Applications made more than a term in advance will be held on file until the first week of the term before the child wishes to start at the school.

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, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a relocation date. Such places will be allocated according to the criteria outlined above. A Unit postal address will be acceptable in the absence of a new home postal address. Wiltshire Council will be willing to notify parents of results of such applications by e-mail or fax, where this is acceptable to the applicant, especially when families are still abroad.

Admission to the Sixth Form

There is no limit on places in the Sixth Form for students completing Year 11 at Sheldon and meeting the entry requirements below. There will be a minimum of 30 places available to students applying from other schools. Where there is capacity to accept additional students on courses, these students may be admitted. If this is not the case and there is over-subscription from students who meet the minimum entry requirements below, the over-subscription criteria above will be applied.

The Sheldon Sixth Form currently offers advanced courses. The minimum entry requirement to the Sixth Form is five or more 9-4 grades at GCSE including English and mathematics. For admission to some A level courses, additional GCSE requirements apply. Such course requirements are published in the Sheldon Sixth Form prospectus. (Applicants to course programmes mainly comprising vocational or applied A levels maybe accepted with four suitable 9-4 grades if this is judged to be appropriate by the head of sixth form.)

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 2026 is 31st October 2025 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 2026

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 2026. 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 over-subscribed 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 2026 (normal admissions round, i.e. applications submitted on or before 31st October 2025)

2nd March 2026 Parents notified by the Local Authority of their allocated school.

16th March 2026 Deadline for accepting or refusing the place offered.

23rd April 2026 Deadline for lodging an appeal for admission to Sheldon School.

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.

9. Where are the appeals heard?

At a suitable venue in the Chippenham area.

10. 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.

11. 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, Office Manager, or phone 01249 766020.

12. 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.