

BURY ST EDMUNDS COUNTY UPPER SCHOOL

Admissions Policy 2021/22

Bury St Edmunds County Upper School is a state funded high performing academy operated by the Bury St Edmunds Academy Trust (“the Academy Trust”). Procedures for applying to this school are explained in the publication, “Admissions to Schools in Suffolk”. Parents should make themselves familiar with this information and take particular note of the definitions provided, the dates and the deadlines, all of which apply to Bury St Edmunds County Upper School unless stated otherwise in this document.

Applications must be made using the Suffolk normal year of entry application form (CAF1) which is available online, from your child’s current school or from Suffolk County Council.

The Published Admission Number for year nine in September 2021 is 220.

Please note that we have a separate admissions policy for our sixth form (see below), and sixth form applications are processed by the School.

Definitions and Details

Our priority is to admit pupils from our Trust’s middle schools who apply for a place with us. Currently, these are Horringer Court Middle and Westley Middle Schools. However, our Published Admission Number allows us to admit more children than can be accommodated at these schools. The school will therefore provide places for children who do not attend a named middle school whose parents wish them to attend Bury St Edmunds County Upper School provided that they can be accommodated within the admission limits.

Sibling

Where the child has a sibling in the school or a sibling has already been offered a place at the school, and where the sibling will still be attending the school at the time of admission but not in the sixth form. The term ‘sibling’ includes: natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent/carer; and children who are fostered into the family. In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address (that is where the child is ordinarily resident) in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

Special Cases

Children who have a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) which names the school will always be admitted.

Oversubscription Criteria

In the event of the school being oversubscribed, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after).
2. Children with exceptional medical circumstances supported by written medical evidence. Any such applications must be received by the closing date in the co-ordinated scheme (31 October) and will be considered by the Admissions Committee of the school. Application should be made using the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) available from County Upper School. The extent and circumstances in which medical need would qualify would relate to situations in which e.g. a hospital consultant has stated in writing that attendance at County Upper was an essential in terms of meeting the medical needs of the child. Written supporting evidence must be provided by at least one registered health professional and must set out the particular reasons why placement at County Upper is essential.
3. Applications from children currently attending one of the middle schools operated by the Academy Trust in the following order of priority:
 - a) Children with a brother or sister (sibling) attending a school working within the Academy Trust at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the start of the new school year. Attendance at County Upper will include attendance in the Sixth Form.
 - b) Children who do not have a brother or sister (sibling) attending a school working within the Academy trust.
4. Applications from children of staff employed by the school at the time of the application in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which application for admission to County Upper is made, and/or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
5. Applications from children who do not attend a school operated by the Academy Trust in the following order of priority:
 - a) Children with a brother or sister (sibling) attending a school working within the Academy Trust at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the start of the new school year. Attendance at County Upper will include attendance in the Sixth Form.
 - b) Other children living nearest to the school, ranked by distance from the school according to the proximity criteria described below in 'Tie-Breaker'.

Tie-breaker

In the event of oversubscription in any category above, priority will be determined by the proximity of the address where the child is ordinarily resident to County Upper using a straight-line distance. All straight line distances are calculated electronically using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-points between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Those living nearest to the school will be given priority. Apartments in the same block will be treated equally with the measurement taken to the main entrance to the block.

Ordinarily resident: By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; we consider this to be a fraudulent application. Where a child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In the unlikely event that two or more applicants competing for a single place at the school lie the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by a person who is independent of the school.

Multiple Births

If the final place available at the school is offered to a twin, triplet or other multiple birth and the remaining sibling/s would ordinarily be refused, the Academy Trust will offer places to the remaining sibling/s.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, when requested to do so by the parent, the Academy Trust will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned in line with the School Admissions Code (December 2014). Parents will need to make a request to the Academy Trust in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. The Academy Trust will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher. The school will write to the parent or carer with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, details of how to complain to the Academy Trust will be enclosed with the reply. A CAF1 application form must be sent to the LA along with the decision letter(s) from the Academy Trust and other relevant evidence by the national closing dates. Even if the request is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available.

List of Schools working within the Academy Trust

This includes all schools operated by the Academy Trust, which currently are Bury St Edmunds County Upper School, The Bury St Edmunds STEM Academy, Horringer Court Middle, Westley Middle and Tollgate Primary School.

Waiting Lists

Under the co-ordinated scheme the Local Authority will maintain a waiting list of all Year 9 applicants who have been refused a place until 31st December. The school will continue to maintain a waiting list for subsequent terms. Applications for inclusion on the school's waiting list must be made on the appropriate form which will be sent by the school with the result of the application. They will be ranked according to our oversubscription criteria as described above. We have to admit any pupil who is the subject of a 'direction' by the Secretary of State or allocated to us according to the local Fair Access Protocol when such has been applied properly and with genuine fairness and according to its principles and any such pupils take precedence over the waiting list.

We also maintain waiting lists for all 'full' year groups.

In Year Admissions

Admissions for all other year groups will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.

Appeals

If you are refused a place at our school you have the right to appeal to an independent panel. Appeal papers will be sent out with offer letters to parents when any of their school preferences are refused. Please ensure that these are headed with the school name and address and are returned to the Educational Appeals Office.

All appeals should be heard by the same panel and it is difficult to slot in late applications. Where possible late appeals will be included with those being heard for the same admission round. However, if this is not feasible, appeals for late applications will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

Guardianship

The school reserves the right to carry out necessary checks as to the legal guardianship of an adult making an application for admission for a child whether as an in year admission or as part of the general intake where it considers it necessary to do so. It is recognised that this can relate to safeguarding issues and is therefore of the highest priority to the school.

Sixth Form Admissions Policy

Internal students

The school welcomes applications for entry to County Upper School from those of the school's students who have attended the school in Year 11 and wish to transfer to the Sixth Form.

External students

The school also accepts applications for entry to the sixth form from external candidates who attended another school. The Published Admission Number for Year 12 is a minimum of 30 external admissions – this figure refers only to year 12 students being admitted to the school for the first time, and not to the students transferring who currently attend County Upper School.

Late Applications

Students applying to join the Sixth Form after the deadline for applications (31 January) should note that admission will be subject to availability of places on chosen courses and achieving the specific entry requirements for the courses.

Provided places remain available and entry requirements are met, applicants seeking a late place will be notified in late August/early September.

Entry Requirements

The academic requirements for admission into the sixth form are published each year in the Sixth Form Brochure and on the school website. The same requirements apply to both internal and external applicants.