

Admissions Policy



Introduction

Acorns Primary School is a generic special school for pupils aged 2 to 11 years who have a wide range of learning difficulties including moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, children who are on the autistic spectrum or have communication and language difficulties. The school is located within the Preston district of Lancashire Education Authority.

Rationale

Through our Admissions Policy and Procedure the Staff and Governors wish to ensure that all admissions to the school enable a child to settle into the life and routines of the school as easily as possible. The school wishes to work in partnership with parents/ carers, and to be supportive and sensitive to the needs of the child and his or her family.

Aims

- To ensure that a child's introduction/ transition to Acorns Primary School is made as easy as possible for the child and his or her family.
- To establish professional and supportive links with parents/ carers.
- To begin a positive partnership with parents which will continue throughout the child's education at Acorns Primary School.
- To enable the parents/ carers to learn about the school, the curriculum and its staff.
- To enable the staff to make early assessments of the child to ensure that Individual Education Plans/ protocols and procedures are in place as soon as possible.
- To liaise with parents, carers and all professionals who have worked with the child prior to them attending Acorns Primary School, in order for the staff to gain an early knowledge and understanding of the child's special educational needs.

Admissions Procedure for Children seeking a place at Acorns Primary School.

1. Parents/ carers request a without prejudice visit to see Acorns Primary School.
2. An appointment is made with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/SMT to visit the school. The parents or carers, and often the child, are shown around school. Parents/carers are given a Prospectus and have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. During the visit the parents or carers and the child meet school staff and are able to see class groups in action. They also have the opportunity to have short discussions with individual members of staff, where appropriate and meet some of the pupils.
3. Parents make a request for a place via the Local Authority's SEND office.
4. The SEND Office then informs Acorns Primary School, that a request has been made.

5. The SEND LA Admissions Panel will discuss any requests for a place, before a place can be offered at the school. If a place is available and the needs of the child can be met this will be agreed at Panel.
6. The LA confirms the child's placement at Acorns Primary School via a letter to the parents/carers. A copy of this letter is also sent to school.
7. The LA also forwards to parents a transport request form which when completed is processed by the LA.
8. School sends a 'Welcome Pack' to parents/carers which includes Home School Agreement, data collection, uniform requirements, the payment of dinner money and school holiday dates etc. Permission forms for educational outings during the normal school day and the taking of photographs are also sent to parents/ carers to complete.
9. Transition into school is arranged on an individual basis. Parents/carers will be contacted to arrange a mutually convenient appointment to visit school or a home visit, prior to the child starting school.
10. During this meeting or home visit parents/cares are asked to provide any information which they feel will be useful to help the child settle into school easily. This usually includes details about the child's personal care needs, such as, how or what the child eats and drinks, toileting/care needs and routines, what their favourite activities are etc. Where required, parents also meet with the school nurse, to discuss any medical issues, draw up medical protocols, risk assessments and complete medical consent forms. Assistance is provided for parents over the completion of these forms if it is required. Arrangements are then made for some transition visits to school prior to the child's starting date.
11. During Transition, school staff liaise with the child's present nursery school or Child Development Centre to enable them to be provided with any essential information such as the child's IEP, individual targets and assessment data. Permission is gained from parents/ carers to enable this liaison to take place.
12. For children in KS1 or KS2 who will be commencing their place at the start of the academic year, they are also invited to attend transition mornings/afternoons/full days, which whenever possible take place in July, prior to the end of the summer term. In the Autumn Term we hold coffee mornings for parents, where there is an opportunity to meet with other new parents, learn more about their child's new school and ask questions.
13. For children in EYFS, transition is arranged via the EYFS Leader. Transition for nursery aged pupils, takes place over a two week period. The children and parents attend an initial play and stay session, which gives parents an understanding of the routines and structure of the classroom and learning environment. This is also an opportunity to meet class staff and the other pupils. The child/children then attend sessions (both am and pm), building up towards their two full days. This allows the children to feel comfortable, secure and confident as they increase their time spent in school. For children in reception, they can either start full time in September after attending transition sessions in July or they will complete a staggered start in September – building up full morning and afternoon sessions until they are full time. This normally takes place over 2 to 3 weeks.

The First Day at School

The child is welcomed into class on his or her first day and gradually introduced to all the activities and the school routine. Children are closely supported and guided by staff throughout all activities, at lunchtime, when travelling around the school and in the playground to ensure that they feel re-assured and comfortable in their new school surroundings. Home/School books are sent home for parents or carers in order for them to keep in touch with what is going on in school. Parents/carers are encouraged to write in these books regularly, especially about any appointments their child may have and other important information such as whether their child has slept the previous night or refused breakfast etc. (Information and comments from parents/carers can often be a good starting point to the school day). Parents/carers are encouraged to come into school to discuss any issues however big or small but we do request that they ring first to make an appointment so that the member of staff can be released from the classroom. Parents/carers are also able to ring school whenever they wish if they need to discuss anything over the telephone.

Admissions/Transition Procedure for Children transferring from Mainstream Schools

1. Parents/carers request a non-prejudicial visit to see Acorns Primary School, with the Headteacher/deputy Headteacher/SMT.
3. If the parents or guardians feel that a transfer to Acorns Primary School is appropriate for their child, this is discussed with the mainstream school, usually at the Annual Review meeting. The placement is discussed with the parents and all the professionals concerned.
4. If a transfer is recommended by the Review meeting, the request is submitted to the Local Authority for consideration. If this is approved by the Authority (via the SEND LA Admissions Panel), a formal request for a place at Acorns is made by the SEN office.
5. If a place is available and agreed, a letter is forwarded to the Local Authority (LA), stating an appropriate start date for the child.
6. The LA confirms the child's placement at Acorns Primary School via a letter to the parents/ carers. A copy of this letter is also sent to school.

The transition process/first day is the same as listed above, but will again be tailored to meet the individual needs of the child. The appropriate class teacher will contact the parents/carers to arrange transition and visits to school or home.