

# 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 Approaching Statutory School Age**

1. Parents/ carers request a without prejudice visit to see White Ash Primary School.
2. An appointment is made with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher 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 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 SEN office.
4. The SEN Office then requests a place at Acorns Primary School. This is via a letter sent to the school.
5. If a place is available and the needs of the child can be met, a letter is forwarded from school 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.
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. This pack also includes the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy'.

9. The class teacher, AHT, Deputy HT or Home School Liaison then contacts the parents or guardians to arrange a mutually convenient appointment in school or a home visit, prior to the child starting school.

10. During this meeting 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, whether they are toilet trained or a toilet training programme is in progress, 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, manual handling plans 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 who will be commencing their place at the start of the academic year, they are also invited to attend two transition days, which 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.

### **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 or guardians 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.
2. An appointment is made with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to visit the school. The parents/ carers, and often the child, are shown around school, are given a Prospectus and have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. During the visit the parents or guardians and 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. If the parents or guardians feel that a transfer to Acorns Primary School is appropriate for their child, an Educational Psychologists Assessment is arranged by the mainstream school along with an Annual Review meeting to discuss the child's future school placement with 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 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.
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. This pack also includes the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy'. A transition plan is agreed with parents, which is appropriate for the needs of the child. This involves arranging the child's Transition/ link visits with parents/carers and the child's mainstream school, which will enable the child get to know Acorns and his/ her new peers and staff. During visits parents/ carers are asked to provide any information which they feel will be useful to help the child settle into school easily. The transition plan may also involve visiting the child in their current school to share information about past assessments, progress made and Individual Education Programmes.
9. A home visit and a meeting with the school nurse, to discuss medical information is also arranged, if required. Assistance with the completion of admissions forms is also provided as necessary.
10. During the transition process the child's personal Medical Protocols, Risk Assessments, Manual Handling Plans, Positive Handling Plans etc. are drawn up as required, and agreed with parents.
11. For children who will be commencing their place at the start of the academic year, they are also invited to attend two transition mornings, which 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.

### **The First Day at School**

The child is welcomed into class on his or her first day and because they have participated in a number of transition visits they are usually beginning to become familiar with 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/ 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.

**This policy will be reviewed in February 2021**