

Admissions Policy

Legal Status:

Complies with Part 6, Paragraph 24 (3)(a) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 in force from 5th January 2015.

Applies to:

the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), out of school care, the breakfast club, the afterschool clubs, the holiday club and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours
all staff (teaching and support staff), and volunteers working in the school.

Other relevant documents:

Equality and Diversity Policy
Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
Attendance Policy
Inclusion Policy

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmistress. The Headmistress undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: March 2021

Review Date: March 2022

Mrs Anne Burton

Introduction

Orchard School is a non-selective co-educational independent school for pupils from ages under one to nine years. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We invite you and your child will visit Orchard School. We hold a number of open events during the year, which give a general introduction to the school. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents/guardians and their children at other times. Please contact, the school's Bursar, Mrs Doon Williamson on 01582 882054 or email on admin@orchardschool.org.uk to arrange a visit.

The school's criteria for admissions are a) that the school is able to meet the needs of a prospective pupil without impairing the education of other pupils; b) that there are sufficient vacancies in the appropriate year-group.

The Entry Procedure

Parents/guardians and their child visit the school and meet with the Headmistress Mrs Anne Burton. The visit will involve a tour of the school and nursery, if applicable. There will be ample opportunity to hear information about the school and address any questions that may arise.

All applications are treated on merit, and in a sensitive manner. Selection, for our nursery children is centred upon the potential partnership the school can form with parents. A similar procedure is adopted for our older applicants and may include an assessment during a morning in the school. Our selection process is designed to identify eager, enthusiastic pupils with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. Children who will benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education as well as making a positive contribution towards the life of the school.

As a result of this initial visit, and if appropriate, the Headmistress will extend an invitation to register for the school via the school website which includes the registration documentation, terms and conditions and fee list. Details requested include of the child's full name, date of birth (copy of birth certificate and a passport sized photograph, together with the name and address of every parent. The signed and completed forms should be returned to the School Office within seven days together with the payment of the non-refundable registration fee of £150.00.

Once the registration documentation has been received arrangements will be made for an age-appropriate assessment to ensure that the prospective pupil is able to take best advantage of the curriculum on offer. Depending upon outcome, an offer letter of a place for the prospective pupil is made via email.

When the school receives the signed acceptance form confirming that they have read and agreed to the "Parent-School Contract Standard Terms and Conditions" the child will be placed on the admission register for the desired entry date. Details regarding the start date and our 'settling in' process will follow.

Prior to the child's attendance at the school the parents/guardians are sent the Parent Handbook informing the parents/guardians of the basic standards of behaviour and the attitude towards teaching and learning that the school expects and requires. Parents are also asked to complete and sign various forms which provide the school with vital information about health and wellbeing and includes:

- Name, home address and date of birth of each child
- Starting date

Orchard School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential.

- Name, address, telephone numbers and emails of each parent or guardians
- Emergency telephone numbers of each parent or guardians
- Special Diets
- Arrangements for collection of children from school and nursery
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor
- Illness and inoculation details
- Details of any allergies
- Parental consent on emergency procedures

Parents or guardians will also be asked to provide the school with any further information that they feel will enable us to take that best possible care of their children.

Waiting List

Where demand exceeds places, the school will hold waiting lists. Priority may be given to where the child already has sibling(s) at Orchard, along with the date of registration and any other factor that the Headmistress feels appropriate to each case.

Age of entry

Pupils can be admitted to the school at any age, providing there are vacancies, and the school is suitable for the child.

IAPS and References

Where pupils who are currently at another school within the IAPS or ISA association are to be offered a place, in most instances and when practically possible to do so, the Headmistress will contact the Head of the other school to notify them before a formal offer is made, this is in accordance with association codes of conduct. In addition to this a written report/reference will be sought. It is therefore important that parents inform their child's current school that they have lodged an application with us.

School Transfer

Orchard is proud of its record of performance and progress tracking and therefore the accuracy with which we are able to predict success in the entrance exams to Harper Trust Schools. In short, we are able to forecast, with a high degree of accuracy, those pupils who will cope with the depth and pace of study in Year 5 at these school and those who are likely to struggle.

It has always been a priority to make sure that children leaving Orchard go to the **right** school and are never 'shoehorned' into a school where they may struggle or feel out of place.

Therefore, we recommend pupils for places at the Harpur Trust School in Year 4 based on their on-going aptitude and tracked academic performance.

Any children who do not receive this recommendation will still be permitted to sit the entrance exam to the HTS's. However, such children will be those for whom we will already have been recommending other schools that we believe will suit the child better, both academically and socially.

Sibling discounts

A discount of 5% of the full fees is provided for each second child and subsequent children, educated simultaneously at the school.

Equal Treatment

Orchard School's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We are committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity,

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religion, disability, or social background. Orchard School has no specific catchment area and welcome all children. There are limited places available for children under three years of age. Nursery children who are registered for Orchard School, will, in their final nursery year, transfer to the main school until the age of 9 years.

Special Educational Needs

Orchard School does not discriminate in any way regarding entry. The school welcomes pupils with special educational needs if its learning support staff can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with disabilities if our site can accommodate them. However, we require parents/guardians of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's needs with the school. Parents/guardians must provide a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report if they have one.

Each pupil with a disability and/or SEND requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate adjustments need to be put in place, they will be discussed thoroughly with parents/guardians and their medical advisers, including adjustments that can reasonably be made to the curricular and extra-curricular activities before their child becomes a pupil at the school. If an offer is subsequently made and the child takes up his or her place, the school will make provision for appropriate support (subject to a charge) and we will always consult with the local authority to ensure that the required curriculum is provided. We will also cooperate with the local authority to ensure that the relevant reviews, including the annual review, are carried out by regulation and best practice. In the case of the child, holding a Statement of Special Educational Need, Orchard School will meet the provisions of the Statement (subject to a charge).

English as an Additional Language

Our school will make provision for children who have English as an additional language, (EAL) in the assessment procedure. If following assessment additional help is required in school to support a child with EAL, extra fees may be levied. We do not regard children as having a 'learning difficulty' solely because the 'language or medium of communication of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught' (Education Act 1996, Section 312(1), (2) and (3)). However, pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) will be provided with appropriate support provided they meet Orchard School's Academic criteria. They will be assessed to gauge the support that may be needed to ensure equal access to the curriculum along with all other aspects of life at Orchard School. Our school has a policy and procedures for students requiring *English as an Additional Language* (EAL).

Sibling Policy

Most siblings join us at Orchard School. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the school judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

Complaints

The school hopes that parents/guardians and pupils do not have any complaints about the school's admissions process; but copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to parents/guardians on request.

The Headmistress is Mrs. Anne Burton whose address for correspondence during both term times and holidays is Orchard School, Higham Road, Barton Le Clay, Bedford MK45 4RB. The telephone number on which the Headmistress can be contacted at all times is 01582 882054 and the email: anneburton@orchardschool.org.uk.

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