

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Review Autumn 2020

CASTLESIDE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Aims

At Castleside Primary School we aim to provide a happy, caring atmosphere where the children feel secure and valued members of the community. An atmosphere where the interests of all pupils are safeguarded and they are able to:-

- develop good well balanced relationships with all those they come into contact with in the school community
- receive an appropriate education with a broad and balanced curriculum that allows them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential

Rationale

If we are to achieve this aim then it is important that the introduction to the school for both new children and their parents is as pleasant and informative as it can be. In this way we will be able to create a firm foundation for both parents and children on which good home/school relationships can develop in a positive and harmonious way with the needs of each individual child being of the utmost importance. A positive introduction to the school is important for all the new children whether they start as reception children or are transferred to this school from another infant, junior or primary school.

Applications for a School Place

All parents who wish to consider placing their child at Castleside Primary School will be provided with the appropriate documentation and given the opportunity to look around the whole school at the time of their approach and ask any relevant questions. Applications will be considered in keeping with the current LA Admissions Policy.

Admission to Mainstream School

Admission to the school is based upon the Durham LA Admission Policy. Every attempt will be made to comply with parental requests whenever space is available in the requested school.

In the event of the number of applications to the school exceeding the number of places available, the following admissions priority order will be used to decide the offers to be made and to establish a waiting list for places, which subsequently become vacant.

1. Medical Reasons

Pupils with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor.

2. Family Links

Pupils who have a brother or sister already attending the school or associated primary school on the same site* and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.

3. Distance

Pupils who live nearest the preferred school measured by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the parents' address. The Authority will, however, consider the overall availability of school places in an area to ensure that no children have an unreasonable distance to walk. This may override distance in the preferred school.

Please note: In the event of over-subscription within criteria (1) or (2), places will be granted to those pupils living nearest to the preferred school (measured by the shortest walking route).

Admission Limits

The current Admission Limit is 20 children per year group, with a maximum School Population of 140 pupils.

Equal Opportunities

- At this school we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ability, race, disability or gender equal access to an appropriate, broad balanced curriculum and the opportunities to involve themselves in the life of the school.
- All pupils including those with Special Educational Needs will be given appropriate support to enable them to benefit from the curriculum and achieve their personal potential.
- The LA and the school will plan strategically and improve the physical environment of the school to improve the access, participation and access of disabled pupils.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs/Disability

We believe that all children are entitled to a learning environment in which they are encouraged to reach their potential in a supportive atmosphere which fosters a growth towards independent learning appropriate to their age and stage of development.

- In the Early Years we follow the Admissions Policy recommended by Durham LA for children with special educational needs. Their needs will normally be met in a mainstream school unless:-

The child has a Statement of Special Needs and recommendations are incompatible with

* the wishes of the parents

* or the provision of efficient education of other children

- We have a clear framework for identifying, assessing and meeting pupils' special educational needs at the earliest possible stage.
- Parents are informed and appropriate action is taken.
- If the school and parents feel further action is necessary we will then follow the Special Educational Needs Staged Procedures.

Support and advice to staff, children and parents/carers are given by additional outside agencies e.g. Educational Psychologist, Learning Support Service, Speech Therapists and others as outlined in the school's Special Needs Policy.

Admissions of Children to the Reception Class

At the beginning of the half term prior to entry all the children who are to begin their Reception year together are invited to come to school with their parent(s) in order to learn something about the school and the different kinds of things we do. This may also give some parents and children the opportunity to stay with their children throughout this first visit and future visits as required.

At the initial visit the parents and children are introduced to the Reception Class and the Key Stage Unit and are invited to remain for the rest of the session taking part in a range of activities alongside the other Key Stage 1 children.

Following this initial visit the children are invited to take part in at least 3 visits in the successive weeks. The children will have morning visits with the final visit including lunch and part of the afternoon.

A Parents' Meeting will be arranged when the Reception Teacher and the Head Teacher will outline the work of the school, its aims and expectations – and also the importance of the Home/School partnership. Parents will be given copies of relevant documents. The Head Teacher and/or the Reception Teacher will then take this opportunity of talking to the parents about the Reception Class and the Key Stage 1 Unit and some of the experiences the children will have as their learning develops.

These pre-school visits will be well planned to include a number of both class and everyday school experiences and may also include parents and child participation in a school event e.g. Family Assembly, Sports Day.

Pre-School Visits – Experiences and Activities

The experience and activities planned for these visits will ensure a similar programme for all the children and may include the following:-

- Listening to a story tape
- Sand and water play
- Table top activities
- Role Play/Life corner
- Building
- Book sharing
- P.E. Lesson

- Painting
- Cutting activities
- Using the computer
- Singing games or rhymes
- Story time
- Etc.

The parents are given a programme of the children's visits at the first meeting and are encouraged to ensure that their children take part in all the planned visits.

After the first visit parents are encouraged to leave their children as soon as they are settled in order to help the 'settling in' process. However it is important that neither parent or child is too distressed about this parting and where there is a problem care, concern, help, support and guidance should be given to both parent and child. This will include encouragement to remain with the child, to delay the visit – or make the visit another time for a shorter time when there are no other children visiting.

Early pre-school visit will last for approximately 2 hours and will gradually increase until the children will spend almost full days in school (including the lunch break).

Pre-School Visits – Other Children in School

It is important that all children in school are aware of the fact that the pre-school visits are taking place. All children will be encouraged to act responsibly and kindly towards the new children, ensuring that each one does his or her own best to welcome the children to the school. It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that their class knows that everyone has a part to play in making these visits pleasant and enjoyable for all our young visitors.

Introduction to the School

The children will be introduced by name to other children in their class and Key Staff as soon as is appropriate after admittance to the school.

Home School Reading Programme

An important part of the Admissions procedure for the reception children is the introduction of education and particularly our Home/School reading programme to their parents. During the arranged pre-school meeting the Class 1 Teacher will talk about all aspects of early years learning including the literacy and numeracy hours. Time will be spent on our reading programme – how reading is taught in school and the partnership we like to develop with parents in helping their children to read. The Home Reading System we use is explained to parents and they receive a copy of the Home School Reading Book. It is emphasised to parents that this is a partnership and we are always there to help.

Admissions of Children at Other Times

Children are often admitted to the School at different times during their school life. It is important that these children and parents are made to feel welcome

and part of the school in the same way as the children and parents just beginning their school life. These children and parents will have developed attitudes towards and relationships with another school and there may already exist a firm foundation on which we can develop our relationship. Alternatively a firm base may not already exist so we must do our best to create positive, friendly and supportive relationships.

Parents are usually shown around the whole school when an approach is made to have their child admitted. Class teachers should ensure that a new child on entry to the school is shown around the school and is introduced to the adults in school who the child will come in contact with. This may be done with the help of another child. The child will be introduced to the whole school in the usual way at an appropriate assembly.

Whenever possible the Head Teacher will discuss our Home Reading Programme with the parent but this should be followed up at an appropriate point by the class teacher.

By following these guidelines we hope that all new children will be able to settle quickly and happily in our school.

Mrs. A.Spence
Head Teacher

Date
Sept 2019