



# **Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit**

## **Waiting List Policy for Years 2 – 7 Procedures for admissions complaints to the Department of Education**

Reviewed: January 2022 Next review due: January 2025

## Waiting List Policy

Acorn Integrated Primary School (Acorn IPS) operates a waiting list policy for all applications received by the school for admission to Years 2 – 7. Consideration of applications for admission to Nursery and Primary 1 will follow the normal processes and criteria as published online by the Education Authority for the current school year.

*A sub-committee of the Board of Governors, the Admissions Committee, which consists of at least three Governors plus the Principal, meets to decide on criteria and the application thereof OR the Board of Governors may delegate the responsibility for organisation of admissions on a day to day basis to the Principal*

A waiting list is defined as a record of the names of all pupils who wish to be considered for admission to the school when a place becomes available. Application to Acorn IPS will only be considered on completion of an Application for Admission to Acorn IPS other than Year 1, see Appendix 1. This form is available from the school office. On this form parents/guardians will indicate whether they wish their child to remain on the waiting list if unsuccessful.

A child on the waiting list will be admitted if a vacancy arises provided that:

1. The school will not exceed its enrolment number as determined by the Department of Education (DE)
2. The class size of 29 pupils, as determined by DE, will not be exceeded
3. Their acceptance does not affect the efficient delivery of the curriculum within the class and their admission would be prejudicial to the efficient use of resources
4. The Board of Governors reserves the right to limit the classes to a manageable size

### **Admissions criteria to be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed i.e. the number of applications for admission exceeding the number of vacant places for Years 2 to 7**

The criteria are listed in order of priority.

1. The child is resident in Northern Ireland
2. Religious balance to be maintained
3. Sibling(s) in attendance at the school
4. Preference will be given to children coming from other integrated schools
5. Date of application
6. Children will be selected on the basis of initial letter of surname (as entered on Birth Certificate) in the order published online on the Education Authority website, admissions criteria for Acorn IPS for the current school year.

The school will contact the parents/guardians of all those children whose names are on the waiting list in June of each year to determine whether they wish to remain on the waiting list.

### Procedure for Admissions complaints to DE (Primary 2-7)

It is essential that in the case of a refusal for admission that parents are made aware of their right of complaint or appeal as appropriate.

These apply when parents complain against the decision of a grant-aided school to refuse their child admission to Primary 2—7. An important distinction is that unlike statutory admissions appeals to Independent Appeal Tribunals on the grounds of incorrect application of admissions criteria for Primary 1, where admissions to Primary 2-7 refusals are on other grounds e.g. refusal on the basis that it would be prejudicial to the efficient use of resources are dealt with as complaints under Article 101 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 as amended by Article 158 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989.

The Department will not accept as a reasonable decision by or on behalf of the Board of Governors to refuse a child admission on the basis that it would prejudice the efficient use of resources because of the child's attendance record, discipline record or behavioural problems, English language ability or level of social exclusion unless documentary evidence is provided to demonstrate that it would clearly be inappropriate to place the child in the school.

The Department would not consider it unreasonable for a school to refuse a child on the basis that it would prejudice the efficient use of resources where for example:

- The year group to which admission is sought is full.
- Class sizes would have to be significantly reorganised altering a school's planned allocation and usage of staff, accommodation and other resources. Evidence, including the details of the class sizes will need to be provided in each class.
- The school's approved enrolment number exceeds the school's physical capacity, because of existing pupil numbers and pupil numbers need to be reduced.

A parent may appeal to an independent tribunal against an admissions decision only where a child has been refused a place at an oversubscribed school by application of the school's admissions criteria.

See Appendix 5 for a letter to be used in both these circumstances.

See Appendix 6 for the information that is to be provided by the school to the DE.

See Appendix 7 for an overview of the application and complaints procedures.

**APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO ACORN INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL  
OTHER THAN YEAR 1**

Child's Surname\* \_\_\_\_\_ Forename(s)\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*As recorded on the child's birth certificate

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Boy  Girl  Eldest in the family

Home Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Present Home Address of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of change of address (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

New Address (if moving to a different address than above) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) telephone number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

School currently attending: \_\_\_\_\_

If not attending a school at present, give the name of the school previously attended and the date of last attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving/wishing to leave: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Religious Denomination: Please circle one category as appropriate:

**OTHER**

**PROTESTANT**

**ROMAN CATHOLIC**

*If Roman Catholic the child will be expected to participate in all Masses and Sacraments and will be prepared for First Holy Communion and Confirmation.*

Seeking admission to **ACORN INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL** with effect from:

Please Tick

As soon as possible

Start of next term

Start of next school year

Reasons for applying to Acorn Integrated Primary, e.g. parent previously attended the school; nearest integrated school; sibling at school etc. It is important that all relevant information is given.

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I hereby make application for a place for my child in Acorn Integrated Primary School and certify that:

- a. The details I have given are correct;
- b. The address which I have given is the child's home address

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Print: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent\*\*/ Guardian)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Parent = the person who has legal custody of the child**

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Personal Data Fair Processing Notice

Acorn IPS collects and processes personal information in order to carry out its statutory functions. The information provided by you to the school is required by us to process your application. At times, we may also share your personal information with other public bodies such as the Department of Education and the Public Health Agency where such sharing is required to carry out a statutory function and where we have a clear legal basis for doing so.

In handling your personal data, the school will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018). Further information is contained in our Privacy Notice which is available on the school website: [www.acornips.com](http://www.acornips.com).

The school will respond to you in writing when a decision has been made, normally within 10 working days.

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Office Use only:

Date received \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian contacted \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome including a copy of the letter sent to the parent (see appendices 2-4)

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## Guidance Notes

1. This form and a copy of the child's birth certificate should be returned to the School Office, Acorn IPS, 110 Victoria Road, Carrickfergus, BT38 7JL or emailed to [info@acornintegratedps.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@acornintegratedps.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk)
2. Any reference to "parent" must be taken to include any person who holds parental responsibility for the child as defined in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.
3. Parents are advised to:
  - a. Read the school's admissions criteria carefully (see admissions policy)
  - b. Ensure that all information relevant to this school is attached to the application form
4. Decisions regarding the admission of pupils to a school are a matter for the Board of Governors of the school. The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Governors of the school, will inform you of its decision, normally within 11 working days after receipt of application, and if appropriate, of any complaint/appeal procedure.
5. The legislation currently in place (the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997) provides an opportunity for parents to state their preference(s) as to which school(s) they wish their child(ren) to attend. Schools must conform with these preferences unless one of the following applies:
  - a. The enrolment number for the school as a whole would be exceeded by the admission of the children.
  - b. The admission of the child would be prejudicial to the efficient use of resources.
  - c. There are insufficient places available to admit all the children for whom places are sought. In this situation, the school's admission criteria will be applied to identify the children who will be admitted as they best satisfy the criteria.

In the case of b. you may have a right of complaint against this decision. In the case of c. you may have a right of appeal to an Independent Admissions Appeal Tribunal.

Information on the right of complaint or appeal is contained in the school's written response to the application.

## Appendix 2

### Admission to Primary Education other than Year 1

To: Parent/Guardian

From: Principal, where a school is full i.e. has reached its approved enrolment number taking account of statemented pupils and Year 1 pupils admitted on appeal.

Name of Child:

Date:

Address:

School:

Date of Birth:

Dear

#### Re Application for Admission

I wish to advise you that the Board of Governors of Acorn IPS is not in a position to admit your son/daughter as the school has reached its approved enrolment number of 203 and therefore has no places available.

You may wish to consider alternative schools for your son/daughter to attend. If so, access this link for further information: <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/transfer-between-schools> .

A copy of this letter has been forwarded to the Transfer Officer of the Education Authority for information.

If for exceptional reasons you feel that your son/daughter must attend only this school, you may make applications to the Exceptional Circumstances Body. Further information about this process can be obtained from the Secretary of the Exceptional Circumstances Body, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Rathgill, Bangor BT19 7PR.

Yours sincerely

Principal

### Appendix 3

#### Admission to Primary Education other than Year 1

To: Parent/Guardian

From: Principal, where a school has received more applications than there are places available and admissions criteria have been applied to select pupils.

Name of Child:

Date:

Address:

School:

Date of Birth:

Dear

Re: Application for Year \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to advise you that the school has received more applications than there were places available. The school's admissions criteria were applied and I regret to advise you that your son/daughter was not selected for admission.

You may wish to consider alternative schools for your son/daughter to attend. If so, access this link for further information: <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/transfer-between-schools> .

If you wish to appeal\* against this decision you should write to the Clerk of the Independent Admissions Appeal Tribunal at the Education Authority.

Your letter must be received within 10 working days from the date at the top of this letter.

If for exceptional reasons you feel that your son/daughter must attend only this school, you may make applications to the Exceptional Circumstances Body. Further information about this process can be obtained from the Secretary of the Exceptional Circumstances Body, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Rathgill, Bangor BT19 7PR.

Yours sincerely

Principal

\*The Admission Appeal Tribunal can only uphold an appeal where it finds that the child would have been admitted to the school on a correct application of the school's admission criteria.



Appendix 4  
Admission to Primary Education other than Year 1

To: Parent/Guardian  
From: Principal, where a school is not full to capacity i.e. there are places available within the approved enrolment number.

Name of Child:  
Date:  
Address:  
School:  
Date of Birth:

Dear

Re Application for Admission

I wish to advise you that the Board of Governors of Acorn IPS is not in a position to admit your son/daughter as it would prejudice the efficient use of resources because:

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You may wish to consider alternative schools for your son/daughter to attend. If so, access this link for further information: <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/transfer-between-schools> .

If you consider that the school has not acted reasonably in refusing your child admission and you wish to register a complaint, you should write to:

School Access Team  
Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
Balloo House  
Rathgill  
Bangor  
BT19 7PR

Your letter must be received within 10 working days from the date at the top of this letter.

If for exceptional reasons you feel that your son/daughter must attend only this school, you may make applications to the Exceptional Circumstances Body. Further information about this process can be obtained from the Secretary of the Exceptional Circumstances Body, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Rathgill, Bangor BT19 7PR.

Yours sincerely

Principal

Appendix 5

Complaint against the decision of a school not to admit an applicant.

Name of Child:

Date:

Address:

School:

Date of Birth:

I wish to complain against the decision of the Board of Governors of Acorn IPS not to select my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ (name) for admission to Year \_\_\_\_\_ from (date you wish your child to be admitted).

School currently attending \_\_\_\_\_

or

My child is not attending school at present. He/she last attended \_\_\_\_\_ (name of school) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Grounds for complaint

Please give details of the grounds for your complaint and any supporting information (additional sheets may be attached if required):

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Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Printed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The completed form should be sent to: School Access Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Rathgael, Bangor, BT19 7PR and must be received on or before \_\_\_\_\_.

## Appendix 6

Information to be provided by a school where a parent lodges a complaint against a school

Response to application for transfer between schools other than Year 1

All sections to be completed before returning this to DE)

Name of Child

### Section A

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Published Admissions Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Published Enrolment Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved amended Admissions Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved amended Enrolment Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Section B

The Board of Governors of the above named school has decided not to offer a place to the child. A copy of the application form and the letter from the school to the parent is attached. The decision was made on the grounds that admission would prejudice the efficient use of resources because

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

### Section C

A breakdown of the pupils enrolled at the time of application was as follows:

Year Group	Total number of pupils including Statemented pupils	Number of Statemented pupils	Number admitted on appeal to Year 1
1			
2			X
3			X
4			X
5			X
6			X
7			X
Total			

Any other relevant information:

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The completed form should be sent to:  
School Access Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Rathgael, Bangor, BT19  
7PR and must be received on or before \_\_\_\_\_.

## Appendix 7

### **Application Procedure – Timescale**

(for pupils other than at the normal transfer stage)

#### **Action from Application Stage**

Day*	Action
1	Application from parent received by school, application acknowledged by school
10	School to have taken decision either to admit (inform parents of arrangements to admit) or not to admit ( inform parents by letter of non-admission).

\*Day/timescale refers to working days

#### **Action from Complaint Stage**

Day*	Action
1	Parental Complaint Form received by the Department
10	FINAL DECISION OF THE DEPARTMENT

\*Day/timescale refers to working days