

Barley Lane School

Friendship, Optimism, Hardwork

Admissions 2020-21

How we prepare for children and young people to join our school (for a brief description of who we are and what we do please see page 3 below).

- Our children and young people are placed in the school by the local authority (Devon County Council) specifically the 0-25 team. When parents and carers approach us directly they are redirected to our contacts: david.saunders@devon.gov.uk and velda.woodruff@devon.gov.uk
- Often parents, carers and families need support navigating the sometimes daunting process of having a child placed in a Devon special school and we alert them too to the Devon Parent Partnership there to support and guide them: www.parentpartnershipdevon.org.uk
- The importance of those currently teaching and supporting a child or young person; head-teacher, SENCO, the link educational psychologist in exploring and deciding change is shared with parents. Parents need to know too a panel will meet and consider the best fit for a student and only then is the school engaged with.
- Throughout this process parents can seek the support and guidance of the Devon Information, Advice and Support (DIAS) service who offer free, confidential, impartial and legally based information to children aged between 0-25 who have special educational needs, as well as parents or carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities (also known as SEND) <https://www.devonias.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/>
- We will be sent a formal request alerting us that the team in the council judges our school a suitable placement for a young person and parents will be similarly written to. We will receive paperwork describing the child's needs and what we must provide . It is at this point our own in-house procedures begin.
- The person key to the process is admissions and pastoral care officer Katrina Campbell Crocker 07848457022 kccrocker@barleylane.devon.sch.uk and the head-teacher will do everything possible to be present at this meeting and answer your questions and if not offer at the parents convenience an additional meeting and is available to you throughout the process (mmaccourt@barleylane.devon.sch.uk 07848028341)

At this point you will be offered:

- An initial informal meeting in school (we can make a home visit if you prefer) where your priorities, questions and concerns can be addressed because we understand moving from the mainstream to a special school can be a tough and challenging and emotionally bruising process.
- We welcome any family members and or professionals working with and supporting families to attend and support them throughout the admissions process.
- You can see the school in operation and meet the staff; we will all seek to make you feel welcomed and supported and valued.
- With your support and agreement we will then meet with you and your son or daughter and at this point we can also agree with you to discreetly visit and observe you child in his current school.
- If and as your confidence in us builds and we all come to understand each other better up to two “taster” sessions will follow for the child or young person so they can experience the school and experienced staff can observe and feedback (in our experience such human interaction an essential element as paperwork and documents lack the humanity and insight meeting and working together bring).
- Parents are welcome to stay in school for these visits, have a cup of tea and continue their discussion with the school’s admissions officer.
- A conversation will continue throughout this process and in the vast majority of “referrals” a consensus does emerge and parents and carers seek a place and the school happy to offer one. It is true not all parents wish to take up a place and equally the school may sometimes feedback early and or during the process that it does not believe it can meet the child’s needs.
- If we are proceeding together any induction is explored and negotiated with parents and each student’s method of entry to the school is personalized and rooted in their needs and the views of their parents and carers.
- From the time of the referral to the school this process should happen within a fifteen days.

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Barley Lane on a page

The technical things

- The school is a day school with up to 80 places designated SEMH and works with and for diverse children in key stages 2, 3 and 4.
- ACE ADHD, ASD, PDA, ODD SPLD and access to SALT these are common themes of need but equally many of our young people simply need the emotional security of a smaller and more child-centred school and stable relationships with skilled, caring and consistent adults.
- We work hard to offer practical and emotional support to our equally diverse families.
- The school's prevailing culture is rooted in building positive and compassionate relationships and recognising the children's innate worth and celebrating their successes but also the challenges they overcome and it seeks to promote and embed the children's happiness and wellbeing but there is also more targeted support and a school counsellor, staff trained in ELSA and access to mentoring.
- The curriculum is increasingly bespoke and personalized and also necessarily broad to accommodate a diverse and able student body: it is both academic with GCSEs in core subjects and a range of accredited vocational courses at college are offered from year 9.
- The curriculum is also enriched with activities of all kinds from DoE to drumming, mountain biking to opera and this contributes to the young people's happiness and wellbeing; they have fun 😊
- Classes are small and nurturing and whilst we have specialist teachers most of our young people stay within a primary model and often with the same teacher over time as this stability undoubtedly promotes their wellbeing and so enables them to learn.
- Where children are particularly complex and sometimes vulnerable there is limited access to very small and highly supported groups with a wholly bespoke and flexible curriculum
- Some of our children return to mainstream school and almost all successfully transition to college

The people things

If you are finding out about us it is likely your child or a child you know or work with is clearly bright and capable but not thriving in their mainstream primary or secondary school and this for a whole range of reasons. You can see they need help and support with their emotions, behaviour and learning and you are now beginning to explore possible alternatives...

Please be reassured we know your child is talented, unique and complex. We work hard with parents and carers and professionals to understand and support each youngster individually.

If you are looking for a school where there is a broad curriculum both academic and vocational with a range of GCSEs and vocational qualifications where students can also have a variety of enriching experiences from abseiling (we offer the DoE award too) to opera then please come and visit us and we can explore together how we can help.