

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you so much to all the prospective parents and carers who took the time to visit us this week. Many of your questions can be answered on the website, but we have collated some of the most popular questions and answered them here.

Q: What is the transition process?

A: We will visit the pupils in a natural environment for them in the summer term, either their homes or nursery settings. We would like to have at least one visit to the school before September but must wait to see if this is feasible with the current climate/guidelines. We start on full days from the first day, unless there are additional needs which may need to be catered for.

Q: Is there wraparound provision?

A: Breakfast club starts at 7:30am and after school club will run until 6. We are hoping to start this in January but at the moment there is not a lot of demand as more people are working from home. Please find more information here: [Wraparound Care - Lakelands Primary School](#)

Q: Where can we park?

A: Many children cycle, scoot or walk to school. We appreciate this may not be as easy if you live on the Oakwood Meadows estate. If you drive to school, you cannot park on Wagtail Mews but can park on wider roads, such as Plover Road, being mindful of local residents. You can also park in the retail park and walk down.

Q: How do you provide lunches for pupils with allergies?

A: We work closely with the Essex School Meals Service, who ensure that there is as little risk to cross contamination as possible. Our catering manager will also call you prior to your child starting to discuss their allergies further. If it is a class cooking project, and your child has extreme allergies, we will mitigate the risk as much as possible so that their group will have an adapted recipe.

Q: How do you support pupils' mental health and wellbeing?

A: We will use a tiered approach for our mental health and wellbeing curriculum. All pupils will have access to our book-based approach, which is centred around personal, social and emotional development and is part of our global curriculum. As part of this we will carefully choose books that support this, such as The Colour Monster or On Sudden Hill, which focus on friendships and emotions. Mental health is also part of the new [Relationships and Sex Education curriculum](#), which is statutory from September 2020.

As the school grows, we will employ learning mentors and develop a pastoral team for pupils who may need a more targeted approach. For pupils who may be on the Special Educational Needs register for Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, we may require specialist external support from our Inclusion Partners and counselling services. Mrs Anslow, the headteacher, is also a qualified children's Mental Health First Aider.

Q: What are your lunches like?

A: At Lakelands Primary School, we strongly believe that lunch time is a key part of the day. We have introduced a family dining service, where pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for different aspects of the dining experience, including laying the table, pouring water, and as they get older, serving food.

The fresh, healthy meals will be prepared on site, and there will be at least two options. Children from Reception to Y2 are eligible for a free school meal, however pupils can still bring in lunch from home if they wish. Crisps, confectionery and drinks other than water or milk should not be included. The school also has a strict no nuts policy. We cater for allergens.

In Reception, pupils are provided with milk and free snacks (fruit and vegetables) but you will need to provide these for the first week or two until the scheme is running. More information about signing up to the milk scheme will be sent out in welcome packs.

Our menus can be found here: [Lunch - Lakelands Primary School](#). We are in the process of recruiting a catering manager and so the menus might adapt slightly but we will ensure that school food standards are still met.

Q: How do you communicate with parents?

A: Our website is updated regularly, and we also have a [social media presence on Twitter](#). We send out weekly newsletters to parents, which can be found here: [Newsletters - Lakelands Primary School](#)

We also use [Tapestry](#) to provide remote learning and to communicate with parents in the event of self-isolation and school closure.

Q: How many children can you have in each year group?

A: Our standard classroom has space for 30 pupils. There are 60 pupils in each year group so there are two year one classes, two year two classes, all the way up to year 6, when the pupils turn 11. The pupils will be mixed every year but we will ensure that they have at least one secure friendship in their new class. Reception, Y1 and Y2 classrooms are downstairs. Y3-Y6 are upstairs. We will have capacity for 420 pupils when we are full.

Q: What is the curriculum like in Years 1 to 6?

A: We will teach a full curriculum comprising of English, Maths, Science, PE, History, Geography, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music and PSHE/RSE from Year 1. It will be an equally balanced knowledge and skills-based curriculum. We have specialist PE teachers already and are hoping to have a few more specialist teachers as the school grows. When the children are in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), we will partner with the [Essex Music Education Hub](#) who enable, enhance and enrich the music education available to students in Essex. We will use the food technology room where we teach the cooking part of our design and technology curriculum and have some benches for science experiments and woodworking.

Q: What is your homework policy?

A: Children receive homework from Reception as all children are expected to read at least 3 times per week at home. Children learn to spell from Reception as part of their daily phonics lessons and some of these may be sent home. Times tables are taught alongside our Mathematics Mastery curriculum and begin from the end of Year 1. From Year 2, children will have access to an online tool called 'TT Rockstars'- where they can practise their times tables at home. This will continue all through the school. We may provide more homework as children reach Y6 to help prepare for secondary school.

Q: If I live out of catchment, what are my chances of getting into the school?

A: This is a difficult question to answer. On the school website you will find out admissions criteria and how places are allocated.

Q: What clubs will you offer?

A: Our extra-curricular clubs start from September onwards. As the school grows, we will offer a wide range of clubs that are run by staff and other outside agencies. These will range from term to term but will include cooking, sport and art in the first instance.

Q: Is Lakelands a church school?

A: Lakelands is a non-denominational school. We will learn about different religious faiths and festivals and the values that underpin them. We follow the [Essex Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education](#).

Q: Is there a Forest School?

A: Our school is too 'young' to have a forest school on site, however, we have lots of learning outdoor opportunities planned, including the use of the lake just by the school and trips to the country parks, including Highwoods. The ethos of the forest school curriculum includes building a relationship between children and the natural world; this is already integrated into our global curriculum, but beyond this in our ethos of the school (including composting food waste, using natural materials, etc). We also encourage pupils to take risks with tools in other areas of learning, such as woodwork.

Q: Is there an ICT suite?

A: We do not have an ICT suite - we have a technology room instead. This is where we will deliver the cooking aspect of our design and technology curriculum, as well as woodwork and textiles. We will instead bring technology into the classrooms by way of laptops and tablets, which is reflective of modern life.

Q: Why are the toilets unisex?

A: By unisex toilets, we mean that our toilets will not generally have gender identity signage. However, when the pupils move to Key Stage 2, we will have gender identity signage on some cubicles.

Q: How do I apply?

A: Information about applying, including the link directly to the Essex admissions application page, can be found here: [Reception 2021 - Lakelands Primary School](#)

Q: What happens next:

A: You will find out in April 2021 about your child's school place. In May, we will contact all of our families to invite them to a Welcome Meeting. This is usually in person but may be online depending on government guidelines at the time. If you have any further questions, please contact the school.