

Frequently asked questions

We have compiled a list of questions we often get asked during a physical tour of the school with prospective parents. We really hope that these help you. If there is something you still want to ask which we have not included, please call the school office and someone will answer your query as soon as possible. However, I completely understand that every family's circumstances are unique, and it may be that you want a personal conversation with me as the head for some individual advice. If so, please e-mail me with the details, or with your telephone number and the best time to contact you, and I will be in touch.

Our uniform is available for you to see on our website in the school prospectus and all children are expected to wear this as we believe it supports a sense of belonging to our school community here at Lilliput.

How many places are available in September?

As a four-form entry school, we will have 120 places available in September.

I am moving house after the deadline for applications, what should I do?

You must put the address where the child is actually living as at the closing date of 15th January. If you move after that date please let the BCP admissions team know, but they will use the 15th January address for the initial round of allocations in April, and the new address for the 2nd round in late May.

What about twins?

Where one twin is offered a place, if necessary we will breach our PAN of 30 mainstream places so that the other twin can be offered a place too. However, this would only be in exceptional circumstances and would be on the basis that all other offers had been accepted and we only had one space remaining in a reception class.

What makes Lilliput different to other schools?

The staff team at Lilliput really do go the 'extra mile' to get to know your child and to support them to be the best they can be, not just academically but socially, emotionally and morally.

Many of the staff team are long standing, demonstrating their commitment to the school and the children.

We place a huge emphasis on developing the whole child, revolving around our focus on the creative curriculum. This is a forward-thinking, comprehensive program that integrates creativity to make learning not only exciting, but relevant for every child. We see it as accessing all the different subjects to create a balanced provision such as art, music, history etc. allowing the children to shine in their own strengths, which might otherwise be missed in a narrowed curriculum.

We enable the children to develop resilience, co-operation, respect and perseverance so that they are increasingly able to manage their own feelings and cope with situations they find themselves in as part of growing up.

Lilliput is a great place to learn. We make extensive use of our grounds and all children have access to Forest School activities with our member of staff who is fully accredited. The addition of the Barbeque hut this year additionally means that we will be able to offer the children forest school sessions throughout the year. We also place a lot of emphasis on PE and Sport along with Music and the Arts so that our children experience a wide range of activities.



Our site is well maintained and the grounds enable us to provide rich learning experiences both inside and outdoors for all year groups. We have a real 'family approach' as we believe that in order for our children to be in a good place to learn, we need to be there for them but also their family as well. Most families go through the school without requiring any support but our skilled and knowledgeable staff, including our SENCO, Miss Smith is on hand for those who do.

We also have ELSA's (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) in the school. The ELSA's develop and deliver individualised support programmes to meet the emotional needs of children in our school. The program recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed. These mostly involve a session once a week over a half term with an ELSA working through the child's emotional needs to encourage them to be more resilient and towards developing their own coping strategies. In the sessions, the ELSA either works individually with your child or with a partner / small group if that is the identified need.

Furthermore, we also have the privilege of having a part time speech and language therapist who compliments our team

In September, do all the children start at the same time?

In the best interest of the children, we stagger the start of term for our new entrants. Traditionally this means attending for mornings or afternoons only to begin with so that small groups of each class are in for the first few days and can really get to know each other and form the start of friendship bonds. The children then build up to some whole day sessions and additional mornings and afternoons. All children are given a bespoke timetable in advance of them starting. They usually then attend full-time from around the middle to the end of September. Some children may need an adapted timetable so this is flexible and very much dependent on the needs of the child.

How are the classes put together?

The Early Years leader makes a point of visiting as many nurseries as possible prior to the children starting. As we take from 27 nurseries, where there is only perhaps one child coming from that nursery, we would make a phone call instead. However, if the nursery advised us that a visit was essential, then we would include them in the visit schedule. We listen closely to the nurseries in terms of friendship groups and occasionally of children who may be better placed in different classes for all sorts of reasons. As a result of all those visits, we then start putting together the class lists.

What happens at breaktimes and lunchtimes?

At break times the children are offered a free piece of fruit everyday and are encouraged to try everything that is provided; the fruits offered do change with the seasons. They are also entitled to free milk if they are under 5 and there is an option to buy into the service if they are over five.

All the children at Lilliput are entitled to have a school lunch free of charge under the Universal Free School Meals initiative. Our meals are cooked locally at one of our schools within the MAT and the menu each day consists of the choice of a hot meat dish; hot vegetarian dish, plus a dessert. After lunch the Reception children have their own play space and are looked after by their own mid-day supervisor who get to know them really well.

What will my child learn?

Children in Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and this will follow on from any pre-school experience your child may have. The children learn through play and exploration so for them it may not seem like they are actually learning but that is down to the skill of our teachers and support staff.

Each day the children will have time following their own interests (child-initiated learning) as well as times when the adults choose the learning e.g. phonics and maths sessions.

Children will learn both inside and outdoors and the most important part of their first year at school will be to form friendships and learn to become increasingly independent.

Do the children get any homework?

The children will be sent home with two reading books a week once they have settled into school. Maths games and a maths challenge will be sent weekly. Children may be asked to present an item at news time. This could be a family focus or a topic focus. Parents will be told in advance what the topic will be so that they have plenty of time to prepare.

Going to church

As a church school we do have a very close link with Holy Angels church and the vicar Reverend Louise Ellis. Rev'd Louise comes in regularly to take whole school worships and as a school we also visit the church regularly for all the major Christian festivals throughout the year. We base our school worships on Roots and Fruits and Values for Life. The aim of roots and fruits is to use the creative arts to engage children as active participants and to involve them as much as possible in the process of planning, leading and evaluating the impact of worship. This was an area identified in our last SIAMS inspection in March 2019 where we received the top grading of excellent; to include the children more in the planning and delivery of worships. The material presented is rooted in the Bible with a focus on the values that build character and inform attitudes and behaviour consistent with the Christian teachings.



What happens if my child misbehaves?

As well as a school positive behaviour policy, each class has a set of rules that they all agree and sign up to as part of their own class charter. Each half term, the school council presents a worship to the children with video examples of how we expect every child to behave in school. This is a three stepped approach which gives support to the child to not repeat the same behaviour again and is very successful.

At these worships all adults are present, including the Mid-day supervisors so that the children understand that we are all working together to keep the school safe for everyone.

Do you have before and after school provision?

We have a before school club run by our staff which runs from 7.45am every morning until 8.30am in our creative room. The children are then taken back to the classrooms.

There is also a wrap-around care facility again managed by our staff and this runs from 3- 5.30pm with an earlier collection time of 5pm if that suits. We believe that as these clubs are run by our staff, that the children feel it is very safe and familiar.

Which school/s do your children move on to?

When your child is in Year 2 you will need to apply for a Junior (Key Stage 2) school. Currently most of our children transfer to our local Junior schools. We ensure that whichever school the children move to, that there is effective transition so that they can become familiar with their new school prior to starting there.

My child has an additional need so how will you support them?

We do our utmost to ensure all our children fulfil their potential from their individual starting points. However, we will be honest with parents if we feel their child will benefit from additional support. Our Inclusion Lead, Miss Smith, is experienced and knowledgeable and will advise and work with parents to ensure the necessary support is in place for their child within the confinements of the school budget. We work exceptionally well with external agencies such as the speech and language service and the occupational therapy team as well as having staff trained in supporting children with emotional and social needs.

Do you have clubs for the children to join?

There is usually a range of clubs either before school, during school or after school for our children in Year 1 and 2. The timetable below shows our current clubs.

Day of the week	Name of club	Name of club	Name of club
Lunchtime Clubs			
Tuesday	Science		
Thursday	Science		
After School Clubs			
Monday	Rugby		
Tuesday	Football	Forest School	
Wednesday	Football	Dramarama	
Thursday	French	Dramarama	
Friday	Tennis	Little Ninjas	

How does the school involve parents?

The school prides itself on its excellent relationship with parents and we try to invite you in as often as we can. Here are some of the ways we involve you in your child's learning and their life at Lilliput:

- Attending phonics sessions
- Invitations to concerts and festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, special assemblies, sports events, fundraising events
- Parent surveys so we can gather your views
- Homework activities and an opportunity each term to come in and see the learning which has been done at home
- Parents evenings, information sessions and 'meet the teacher' times

Are the children listened to?

We also have a School Council with members voted for by their classmates. The representatives meet with the other Council members twice a term and try to sort out any concerns their classmates have or to bring about improvements. The School Council has a small budget each year which they can use as part of their influence on change within the school. Recently they have used this budget to buy more playtime equipment as the feeling amongst the children was that they wanted greater variety.

We also recently had a street artist working with us and we sought views from the children as to what they wanted included. We are really pleased with the end result and so are the children. Please see below for one small part of the whole landscape.



Applying for a place in school

What if I don't get the school I want?

Firstly, please don't panic. After the initial allocation in April, parents have 2 weeks to let the LA know what they want to do. At this point, some families' circumstances have changed and they reject the place they have been offered, which frees up some places. People will also have moved in and out of the area. So there is a second round of allocations at the end of May, which takes all of those changes into account, and some children who were not offered a place in April can be offered a place in May. Changes can continue to happen all the way through to the end of August and into the beginning of September.

In the meantime, you can go on the waiting list, you can ask the LA which schools do still have places available in case you want to put in a late preference for an under-subscribed school, and you can appeal to an independent panel. This independent panel will hear your appeal, hopefully in July, and if they feel your child really needs a place at Lilliput Infants, they will direct the school to offer a place if it meets their criteria.

It is important to be aware, though, of Government INFANT CLASS SIZE legislation, which means that classes in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 with one teacher cannot contain more than 30 pupils.

If we already have a full mainstream class of 30 children allocated, the independent appeal panel can only look at:

- Whether the admission arrangements were lawful
- Whether the admission arrangements were incorrectly applied and your child should have been offered a place
- Whether it was unreasonable to refuse your preference. The appeal panel would need to be satisfied that the decision was so completely absurd or outrageous that no reasonable person, with the same facts, would have made that decision.

Given the extremely limited grounds on which an appeal may be upheld, Infant Class Size Appeals are rarely successful. Parents/carers can find it frustrating when they realise how very limited the powers of the Appeal Panel are in these cases, and so I wanted to draw it this to your attention now, so you can make an informed choice about whether you wish to appeal or not.

Even if you refuse the place offered in April, it will be held for your child until/unless another school can be offered, as the LA has a responsibility to ensure that every child has a school place. No child will start September without a school place, even if it is not the school you preferred. Please note that the waiting list is re set every September.

Does my child have to start in September or can they start later in the year?

Legally, children do not have to be in full time education until the term following their fifth birthday: this is known as compulsory school age (CSA).

If your child is below CSA you can request that they don't start until later in the academic year or until the term in which they reach CSA, or that they attend part-time until they reach CSA, or a combination of the above. However, children are normally admitted to school in the September following their fourth birthday. Because of the friendships that are formed and the assessment that we do in the first few weeks of school, we would not recommend that you defer the start date unless there are some real concerns and then we would urge you to discuss them with us prior to applying for a place.

Child's fifth birthday	Can defer until	If I defer which class will my child join
1 September – 31 December	January	Reception class
1 January – 31 March	April	Reception class
1 April – 31 August	The next September	Year 1

Can I apply for my child to start a whole year late, if they are summer-born?

Some parents feel that their child is not yet ready to start school, particularly if they are very young in the year group. You have the right to request an application to start Reception a year later, but as the law stands you don't have the right to insist on it.

If you decide to apply for a delayed entry, please contact the office and we will provide you with the relevant forms. A panel from the Coastal Learning partnership will then consider each request on its own merits. They make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, and they will always consider:

- the parent's views;
- the views of the head teacher at the school(s) applied to;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- any relevant, medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- whether they may have fallen into a lower age group were they not born prematurely.

If the panel do agree to your request, you can then let your school offer lapse, but you will then need to make an application on time next year. Your application will be processed with all the other on-time applications, applying the usual over-subscription criteria.

To avoid any doubt, if Lilliput is willing to allow you to make an application to Reception a year late, this will not guarantee a place at the school, as a new application will be have to be made the following year, and it will go in the mix with all the applications from the other children applying that year.

It is up to every admissions authority whether to agree to allow a delayed application, so if you are applying to any non-Coastal learning partnership school, you will need to contact them too to make the same request.

SOME IMPORTANT DOS AND DON'TS:

DO:

- Put down three preferences. You can change your mind up to the closing date but you must remember to re-submit your application if you change your mind after that date. If the LA cannot offer any of your preferences, they will allocate your child to the nearest available school with places.
- Use the address where your child lives most of the time.
- Consider naming one of your local schools. It is a very risky strategy to put schools whose APR does not cover your home address.

DON'T:

- Miss the deadline. If you do, your child will not be allocated a place until late May and most popular schools will be full by then.
- Name a school if you don't want a place there.
- Assume that there is automatic priority for siblings. It depends on whether you live in the APR and which year group the sibling will be in when your next child starts.
- Assume that you will be offered a place at your closest school.

Finally, good luck with your application!