



We understand how important starting a new school is for you and your child. As we are unable to offer face to face visits to the school at the moment we have compiled a list of some of the frequently asked questions. This along with the 'Open Day' information should help you to build a good picture of the school.

### **How does my child get a place at Granta?**

We have to receive a request from your local authority. They will send us your child's EHCP and supporting documents. We will then respond to the LA to either say yes we can meet their needs, yes we can meet their needs but we need certain resources to be able to do so or no we are not able to offer a placement.

If we are unable to offer a placement it is usually because either the age group that child is in is full and we have no more capacity in the class groups or we feel that we are not the best setting to meet your child's needs. The LA will then inform us whether or not any places we have offered are being accepted.

### **What happens if I am not in Cambridgeshire?**

The same process applies. We have pupils from Essex, Suffolk and Hertfordshire. The LA you are resident in will send us your child's papers in the same way as described above.

### **Will my child get transport?**

Transport arrangements are made by the local authority and we have no direct control over their arrangements. Decisions on transport are made by education transport and are based on criteria such as whether we are your catchment area school, how far you live from school and your child's individual needs. Most families who request transport receive it.

Transport is usually in the form of an individual taxi or a small group minibus. Some buses have escorts / PA's and some do not. This is a decision made by the transport providers and local authority and while we can make suggestions and recommendations we have no ultimate control over this.

### **Do we have to re-apply for a place at the end of a key stage or department?**

Once your child has a place at Granta that automatically transfers across departments. At key transition points (Primary to Secondary, Key Stage 4 to 6<sup>th</sup> Form) you will be asked to name the school you wish your child to attend. You must state that you want the child to remain at Granta on this paperwork.

However this is not a case of reapplying for a space and generally speaking they will automatically be included in our planning for their next transition.

On a small number of occasions we may say that we feel that the child's needs can be best met at a different setting and at these transition points may recommend a change of placement. However if this is the case you would already have been invited to have discussions about this.

### **My child wears pads is that a problem?**

No. Many of our pupils either wear pads, are undergoing a toilet training programme or need support with toileting. This is not a barrier to them attending school and we will provide the appropriate support.

If your child wears pads you will need to supply the pads from home. We have standard wipes which can be used from school stock however if your child needs a specific type or brand you will need to supply these.

If your child is wearing pads or toilet training we ask that you send in changes of clothing which can be used as required. Wet or soiled clothing will be bagged up and sent home for cleaning.

### **My child eats a limited selection of food / specialist diet is that ok?**

Yes. We will of course work with you to support you and your child to help broaden out their repertoire of food however we can work around any restrictions to diets. The school kitchen can provide food which is gluten free, casein free and vegetarian. Meals can be chopped, mashed or pureed as required.

### **Can I send in snacks / packed lunches for my child?**

You are welcome to send in additional snacks and packed lunches we just ask that they are nut free. We encourage healthy eating as far as is possible but we recognise that this is not possible for all children all of the time.

### **Will my child still have therapy input?**

This depends on your child's individual needs and what is written in their EHCP. All therapy support is provided by NHS colleagues who work on site once a week and as such we can refer pupils but we do not have direct control over their caseloads.

As staff in a special school often have more training and specialism and the environment is different it is often the case that children who had individual speech therapy previously in a mainstream setting are discharged from caseload when they join Granta.

Physio and occupational therapy involvement is based around providing equipment, training and programmes which are reviewed both routinely and on

request. With this input staff in the child's class meet these needs on a day to day basis and approach the therapists if more advice is needed between reviews.

### **Does my child have to wear uniform?**

We do have a school uniform / colour which we encourage pupils to wear as much as is possible as it helps give a sense of identity and acts as a cue for the child – uniform means it is school. Primary pupils have a light blue jumper / cardigan, secondary navy blue and in 6<sup>th</sup> Form pupils don't have a uniform to mark their maturing into college age! Most pupils wear dark trousers, shorts or a skirt. Ideally pupils wear dark coloured shoes.

That said, independence and comfort are key for our pupils especially if they are toilet training, learning to dress themselves or are wheelchair users. It is important that pupils wear clothes which are comfortable, especially if they are sensitive to textures or use a wheelchair. Independence is the most important factor for us so it is more important that their clothes are loose and easy for them to put on and off independently than it is that they are very smart or formal with more complex fastenings.

### **My child has medical needs is this a problem?**

We will work closely with you to get to know your child's individual medical needs and put plans in place to support them. We regularly support pupils with allergies, asthma, epilepsy, are fed via a gastrostomy, require oxygen or suction. We have to have the correct protocols in place and will need support from you to supply and source these and liaise with the nursing team around training. Generally speaking the school staff will be trained and will manage these needs within the classroom.

### **What if my child needs medicine at school?**

We are able to administer most types of medication in school. We will require a permission form to be completed with specific instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. Ideally we ask for medication to be sent in which can be kept at school to reduce the amount of medication going backwards and forwards between school and home although we recognise this is not always possible.

We are able to give over the counter medication such as paracetamol or barrier creams, these do not need to be prescribed. You will need to clearly label them with your child's name and complete the permission forms.

### **How will I know what my child has done at school?**

All pupils have a home school diary which gives us an opportunity to share what they have done during the day but also for you to share with us how they have been overnight and what they have been doing

### **What are the timings of the school day?**

The school day starts at 9.00. However many of our pupils arrive on transport and the time they are collected is dependent on the distance you live from school as well as how many other children are on the same bus and the route it takes to school.

We start to call the buses for the end of day at 3.30 however it takes a little bit of time for all pupils to safely load a bus and leave site so pupils leave site between 3.30 and 3.45

Please note that we share a campus with Linton Village College and the road between ourselves and the college is closed between 3.00 and 3.15 to allow their pupils to safely board their transport. Access at this time is for emergencies only so if you are collecting your child you will need to arrive before 3.00 or after 3.15

### **What provision is there before and after school?**

We do not have a breakfast club provision. Under normal circumstances we run an After School Club 4 days a week which is staffed by members of the school staff. Allocation is on a first come first served basis and applications from across the school population are welcome. It takes the form of a youth club where children of different ages mix together and choose what they would like to do from a variety of activities on offer. We do not run separate sport or activity clubs.

### **What opportunities do parents have to be involved in the school?**

We welcome parental involvement as we need to work in partnership with parents and families to best support your child. Prior to your child starting at Granta we will hold a preadmission meeting to start to get to know you, your child and your family better.

Once your child joins Granta we have daily contact through the form of a home school diary where we encourage you to share with us how things are going at home, what children have done at weekends etc. We encourage you to call or email with any questions or concerns.

Throughout the year you will be invited 2 parents evenings, an open afternoon and an annual review. You will also receive your child's annual review paperwork and an end of year report.

We welcome parent volunteers to support in school. If you wish to support your child in swimming sessions then you are welcome to come and swim with them. If you would like to volunteer in the classroom we welcome this but ask that you support in different classes and not your child's own class. This gives your child the freedom to grow and learn in their own space and means that home and school remain separate. Some of our children find it hard to see their parents in the school and need to feel that the 2 things are distinct.