



Integration Process for Children Joining 'The Orchard'

Purpose

This document outlines the structured and supportive process in place to ensure a smooth and successful transition for children joining **The Orchard**, the specialist SEMH provision at Thornton Primary School. The aim is to provide a welcoming, well-informed and child-centred induction that supports both emotional wellbeing and academic continuity.

1. Initial Contact and Observation

Where possible, during the Pre-Placement Assessment, a member of The Orchard staff will visit the child in their current educational setting. This visit allows staff to observe the child in a familiar environment, gain insight into their current routines and support strategies and begin building a relationship.

If a visit is not feasible to their educational setting, the child will be invited to visit The Orchard for an initial meeting and informal introduction to the environment and staff.

2. Parent/Carer Engagement

Parents and carers play a vital role in the transition process. As part of the induction:

- Parents will be asked to complete **Child Information Questionnaires**, providing key details about their child's strengths, needs, interests and any concerns.
- A **pre-start meeting** will be arranged between the parents/carers and the class teacher to discuss the child's background, aspirations and any specific support requirements.

This collaborative approach ensures that the child's transition is informed by both professional and parental insight.

3. Phased Transition Timetable

To support a positive start, children will begin their time at The Orchard on a **flexible, phased timetable**, designed and communicated by the class teacher. This gradual integration allows the child to:

- Become familiar with the new environment and routines
- Build relationships with staff and peers
- Adjust at a pace that supports emotional regulation and confidence

4. Academic Assessment and High Expectations



During the phased transition period, the child will be **assessed holistically**. This will include **social & emotional, academic and behaviour assessments** to establish a clear understanding of their current attainment, learning profile and their behaviour needs. This ensures that:

- High expectations are maintained from the outset
- Teaching is appropriately personalised
- Progress can be monitored effectively from the point of entry

5. Full-Time Integration

By **Week 3**, it is anticipated that the child will attend The Orchard on a **full-time basis**. At this stage, they will be fully integrated into the class and expected to follow the school's rules, routines and expectations, with continued support as needed.

Ongoing Support

Throughout the integration process, staff will monitor the child's emotional wellbeing, social development and academic progress. Adjustments will be made where necessary to ensure the child feels safe, supported and ready to learn. Should a child require an extended settling in period, this will be discussed with parents/carers at the earliest possible opportunity and a collaborative decision will be made to ensure a smooth transition into The Orchard.