



# Olney Infant Academy

Happily  
Learning  
Together





We have been an Ofsted  
**OUTSTANDING** school, in  
every category, since 2008.

## Welcome to Olney Infant Academy

### Foreword: Steve Dunning, Principal...says

I am proud to welcome you to Olney Infant Academy. We serve the people of Olney, and the surrounding area, and have very strong links with all sections of this community.

#### Dedicated staff

Our highly experienced and dedicated staff work hard to ensure the highest possible academic standards for your children. We are a happy school, and have the lowest staff turnover of any school in the Milton Keynes area.

#### Best in country

Our children's attainment is amongst the best in the country. Every year Ofsted tell us that in reading, writing and mathematics our results are "significantly higher than national expectations". And, in June 2011 we became one of the first primary schools in the country to convert to academy status, free of Local Authority control.

#### Happy children's' faces

It's a very real, daily pleasure, to see the sea of happy children's faces in Olney Infant Academy. Our ethos celebrates that achievement: 'Happily Learning Together'.

#### Igniting a love of learning

We work hard to ensure that learning is fun, stimulating and creative. We want to ignite an interest in the world around them, and for that interest to lead to fulfilling and imaginative lives!

#### Parent partnership

Another important part of our school is you, the parent! As you will see by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us. We champion the link between school and parent and work very hard to involve you in every step of your child's time here...and increase your child's enjoyment of learning.

#### Get in touch

The very best way to find out about our school is to visit us while we are at work. If you would like to do so or require any further information please contact us. We are always proud to show people around the school. I am truly confident that you will find Olney Infant Academy to be a welcoming and supportive school, with staff that listen, consult and actively encourage your involvement. I know that you will be impressed by the quality of education we can offer your child.

To make an appointment to visit, or to simply ask me a question, please email the school office on [admin@olneyinfant.org](mailto:admin@olneyinfant.org) or telephone (01234) 711388

## Rebecca and Robert are pleased how well Thomas has settled in at Olney Infant Academy

### Careful preparation

Rebecca is delighted with the good start made by Thomas at Olney since last September and grateful for the care taken by the school to prepare new children. She says: "The school did a brilliant job settling him in. Preparation started before the summer holidays when the whole family was invited in for a couple of mornings. Thomas was able to go in and use all the facilities and equipment. It helped him become familiar with the school before he had to go in on his own."

### Trust building

She says that Thomas has had no problems settling in. "After summer the children are introduced gradually to the school and go in for mornings or afternoons. They don't do full days straight away. Their teacher and teaching assistant come to your house for a cup of coffee and a chat to get to know your child. They ask the child to show them their favourite toy. It builds trust and gives them information to use later if the child is unsettled."

### Play facilities

Rebecca says Olney has great facilities and a fantastic outside play space with swings and a climbing frame. "There is a lot for them inside too and Thomas particularly enjoys playing with learning activities set out before the register. He loves the outside classroom and doing messy play with sand, water and paint. I can see that they are teaching the children the behaviour necessary for progressing through the rest of the school."

### Well organised

"There is an intake of 90 children every year, which sounds a lot, but the school have a lot of staff and facilities. They break them down into smaller groups and the classes all have different entrances. A lot of thought has gone into the organisation of the school. Now he is in there and settled I am happy with the size of the intake. I admit it was a concern to begin with but I can see that the staff know how to make it work, Rebecca says."

### Building confidence

"I would recommend Olney to any parents who are concerned about their child starting school. Thomas's confidence has really grown because he was quite shy before. He now has a nice group of friends and never complains about going in," says Rebecca.

### Children say

Thomas says: "I like school because everything's fun."

Rebecca and Robert  
Wemyss live in Olney  
with their son, Thomas,  
aged five, and daughter,  
Emily, aged two.



## School day



Morning Session	8.55am – 12.00pm
Break	10.30am – 10.45am
Afternoon Session	1.00pm – 3.00pm
Break	Variable
Daily assembly	10.15a.m

Our Breakfast Club opens from 7.45am every morning. We serve healthy breakfasts i.e. cereals, toast and fruit juice etc. and provide quiet activities.

**After-School Club**

The After-School Club is privately run and opens daily from 3pm-6pm.

### Uniform

All children are expected to wear the uniform. We feel this helps to establish good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it children quickly feel part of the community. Full details are given on our website at [www.olneyinfantacademy.org](http://www.olneyinfantacademy.org)

### School Meals and snacks

All children are entitled to a free, freshly-cooked, hot school lunch every day and we always provide a choice of meat, vegetarian and jacket potato options. We source as much of our food as locally as possible and the children even grow fruit and vegetables which are used in the school kitchen.

The food is tasty and nutritious and we cater for all needs and allergies.

Children bring a water bottle to school each day which can be topped up from our chilled water dispensers. We provide every child with a free piece of fruit every morning. All under-5's are entitled to a free carton of milk every morning. Following a child's fifth birthday milk can be purchased.



**Claire and Dave Dowling live in Olney with their sons, Vincent, aged seven, Lawrence, aged six, and Frank aged 18 months.**

## Claire and Dave have seen Lawrence and Vincent thrive in the friendly environment of Olney Infant Academy

### Happy and settled

Both Lawrence and Vincent have attended Olney for more than a year now and are very happy at the school. But what a difference that year has made to the family. Claire says: "This time last year I was having an awful time because I knew that the school they were attending just wasn't right for Lawrence. Now both my boys are happy at school. It was such a relief when I was offered places for the two of them at Olney."

### Right move

"I now know that moving them both to Olney was the right thing to do. The previous school was probably okay for Vincent but it was not at all suitable for Lawrence," Claire says. "It was a very small school and there was no consistency of approach. They didn't seem to have any ability to work with children independently. They seemed to pigeon hole Lawrence as 'trouble' right from the start and although they came up with strategies to help him they didn't stick to any of them."

### Encouraging

Claire says: "Lawrence is very intelligent and gets bored easily. The other school saw it as a problem but Olney have dealt with this by giving him tasks to encourage him to use his skills. Staff at Olney have already worked out that Lawrence will mess around when the class are doing fun things but will really concentrate when it is Maths. Olney have also encouraged him to be proud of his achievements in reading and spelling."

### New challenges

Claire says she was worried about moving Vincent because he had made friends at his old school. "But he has succeeded in walking into a new environment and making new friends with the help of the staff at Olney. He is doing well in class because he is much more challenged now. At his previous school he was top in everything but here at Olney he is constantly encouraged to do better and to achieve that little bit more."

### Friendly staff

Claire says: "I can't speak highly enough of Olney and I would definitely recommend it to other parents. All the staff are fantastic, including the ladies who work in the school office. Lawrence's teacher promised me he would be all right at Olney and he has been more than all right. Vincent has also had lovely teachers and is thriving in this happy atmosphere."

### Children say

Lawrence says: "I love my teacher and going to school each day."  
Vincent says: "I enjoy going to school and seeing all my friends."



## Curriculum

The curriculum at Olney Infant Academy is divided into two stages. The Early Years Foundation Stage, in the children's first year of school, follows on from the work begun at pre-schools and nurseries. Key Stage One of the National Curriculum is taught from ages 5 to 7 (Years 1 and 2).

We have an outstanding curriculum which is varied and exciting. We bring in lots of outside visitors such as authors and theatre groups as well as people from the local community.

We further enliven the curriculum with special weeks and events, varying from year to year but including:

- Take One Picture (in conjunction with The National Gallery)
- Book Week
- Healthy Living Week
- African Week
- Maths and Science Week
- Music workshops
- Community events (e.g. Pancake races, Dickens of a Christmas, Cherry Fair)



## Eleanor's parents have been heartened by the support their daughter has been given at Olney Infant Academy

### Excellent care

Emma and Simon have always thought Olney was a good school but since Eleanor was diagnosed with a medical condition a few months ago they have been amazed by how much support they have been given. "I can't find the words to fully explain how fantastic the staff have been and what marvellous care she has received," Emma says. "I am particularly amazed by Eleanor's teacher, who has to give her all the care she needs and more."

### Good listener

"When I go in to tell her things she listens really intently. The school have taken on full responsibility for Eleanor's care during the day and therefore I don't have to worry. The day we told the head teacher, Mr Dunning, of our news, he sent us an email assuring us that he would look after her and he has lived up to his promise," Emma says.

### Coping well

Eleanor's condition can be time consuming and they have to ensure she is given the care and treatment required. They cope very well with this on top of all the other work they have to do."

### Trained to help

Eleanor's teacher and the teaching assistant in her class have both been trained to care for her. Emma says: "The other day they were both out of school on a trip and so another teaching assistant was trained to do it, but Eleanor was absolutely fine and happy with her. Nothing seems to be too difficult for them. I keep going into the school with different requirements but they are always pleasant and helpful towards me."

### Welcoming staff

Edward, who is in Year Five at junior school, had three happy years at the school. Emma says: "All his teachers were fantastic and approachable and took a lot of interest in him. One of the teaching assistants in the Foundation Unit still asks after him. I would wholeheartedly recommend the school to other parents because as well as the caring staff, the school organise plenty of trips and events for the children and the facilities are brilliant."

### Children say

Eleanor says: "I like my teachers and am pleased that they all look after me."

Emma and Simon live in Olney with their son, Edward, aged ten, and daughter, Eleanor, aged six.



## Extended curriculum

### Trips and visits

To extend the curriculum, and make learning even more fun, we offer many trips and activities, including:

- Central Milton Keynes (library, Waterstones etc)
- Salcey Forest
- Mead Open Farm
- Milton Keynes Museum
- Coventry Transport Museum
- Emberton Park

### Communicating with parents

At Olney Infant Academy we have a high level of communication with parents. You are very welcome to speak to your child's teacher at the end of the day. The Principal has an 'open door' policy and welcomes parents at any time, often without the need for an appointment.

#### Newsletters

Regular newsletters are issued, usually electronically via Parentmail. Occasionally, particularly if a reply slip is included, these will be sent home on paper via the children's book bags.

#### Reading Diaries

All children are given a Reading Diary which will come home every afternoon in their book bags. We hope parents will share reading books with their children regularly and make comments in the diary (which will also be written in by staff).





# Inclusion: a curriculum for all

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Olney Infant Academy is an inclusive school which is able to support children with various special educational needs and disabilities, including social, communication and interaction needs, learning difficulties and physical needs. Children with physical disabilities are fully supported in accessing all parts of the school.

### Identifying need

We constantly track children's progress and where children appear to be making slower progress than their peers we put in place a series of intervention groups with daily 20 minute sessions in small groups to help them catch up. Children with more serious needs may be placed on our Special Educational Needs register, with individualised plans and support put in place, occasionally with advice from external agencies. Conversely we recognise that many children are exceptionally

able and we provide a stimulating and enriching curriculum and environment for them.

We aim for every child to have high self-esteem, to fulfil their potential and to give them the skills to enjoy life in and out of school.

Please see our website for more detailed information about what we offer (under the Key Information tab).



Ania and Marcin are delighted with the way Maya has been supported to enjoy life at Olney Infant Academy

# Ania and Marcin are delighted with the way Maya has been supported to enjoy life at Olney Infant Academy

## Well prepared

Maya loves going to school and is doing well in all subjects but her family were anxious about her starting at Olney because she is permanently in a wheelchair. Her Mum, Ania, says: "The school had never had a child in a wheelchair before but they have been very accommodating. They got the school ready with everything Maya needed before she was due to start at the age of four and a half. They had to make a ramp access to every classroom and adapt the toilet and put in a hoist for her. They also put another hoist in a spare room so that she could be moved from one chair to another."

## Caring staff

Maya needs support and help with most day to day activities. She has been provided with one to one assistants who do a job share. This ensures that there is more than one person trained to help her at school. Ania says: "Maya's carers at school assist her with most physical tasks, but also know when to step out to let her work independently when she's able to. They very often come up with ideas how to include Maya in every part of school life. The school also provided a lovely lady who supervises Maya during the lunch break. They go above and beyond what is expected of them to make sure that she's included in every part of curriculum, as well as trips and after school clubs."

## Enjoying school

Maya loves school and Ania says she is often quite miserable in the holidays. "Despite having Spinal Muscular Atrophy she is a very happy little girl. She is also clever for her age and does

well in all subjects. She has lots of friends who are very accepting of the fact that she is in a wheelchair and is in a lovely class with the girls and boys who have grown up with her."

## Taking part

Maya has created strong friendships and will go for tea at friends' houses after school, Ania says. "She isn't able to play football or rugby but she tries to join in with the yoga class with adapted movements. The teaching assistants help her take part. She enjoys everything about school and is good at everything she does. She prefers reading and writing to Maths but is quite good at Maths as well. She is good with her hands because she spends a lot of her time doing things at a table and is good at arts and crafts and cooking."

## Becoming independent

Ania's advice to anyone with a disabled child about to start school is to go into the school and make sure they have everything ready. "I was very nervous about someone else looking after Maya. It was more stressful for me than for other parents preparing their children for school. I invited the two assistants to the house to meet Maya in advance. But there comes a time when you have to let go and you will see how independent your disabled child can become. Maya was quite shy before she started school and is now a chatterbox with lovely friends."

## Children say

Maya says: "I like going to school to see all my friends."



## Clubs

There is a wide variety of clubs for children to join which take place either before school, at lunchtime or after school:

- French Club
- Spanish Club
- Football Coaching
- Tennis Club
- Digital Leaders
- Recorders
- Garden Bug Buddies
- Sewing Club
- Street Dance Club
- Multi-Skills Club



## Twins Thomas and Emily are flourishing in different ways in the happy atmosphere of Olney Infant Academy

### Class of their own

Thomas and Emily both made a good start at Olney at the age of four in different classes. Mum Julie says: "We chose Olney because it was important for us to be able to separate them. Until they started school they had spent every day together but James and I wanted them to be in different classes from the start so they could develop as individuals. The school reassured us that they could always go and see each other if they needed to. We felt splitting them from the start was better than doing so later. All the other schools locally had just one reception class so there would have been no scope for separating them anywhere else. They are not compared with each other by the teachers and are always treated as individuals, which reflects their very different characters".

### Making friends

Thomas and Emily had no problems settling in and have been able to develop their own circle of friends. Julie says: "They took to it straight away and have never said they don't want to go to school. Although there are lots of children, Olney still has a friendly, community feel. Thomas and Emily play with children from the other years and know everyone."

### Approachable staff

Olney is a happy place and the staff are all enthusiastic, Julie says. "The head teacher is very approachable and his door is always open to children and parents. Communication is good and regular newsletters and Parentmails keep parents updated with what is going on in the school."

### Satisfied parents

"I have now become joint chair of FOIOA (Friends of Olney Infant Academy) with another mum because I feel the school has done a lot for my children and any additional support that we can offer the school can only be a good thing. James and I have made many friends through the school and I enjoy talking to other parents and seeing how their kids are getting on. Olney put evenings on for parents to show us how they teach English and Maths so that we can support our children and not try to teach them in a different way," Julie says.

### Happy atmosphere

"I would tell other parents that Olney is a happy, caring environment where children will have the best possible early education experience. The classrooms are welcoming and stimulating and often if the children go somewhere in the morning, the photos from the trip are on the walls for the parents to see in the afternoon," Julie says.

### Children say

Thomas says: "I like school because I love learning and doing experiments."

Emily says: "I like colouring in at 'golden time', playing with my friends and the yummy lunches we have."

Julie and James Paynter live in Olney with their twins, Thomas and Emily, aged six.



# Admissions

Parents who are thinking of applying for a place at our school are invited to visit and have a personal tour with the Principal at any time. We might be the biggest school in the area but we believe the personal touch is preferable to a stage-managed open day.

## Applications

Olney Infant Academy is not a Local Authority maintained school so it is the Olney Infant Academy Trust which is responsible for deciding on admissions. Our admissions criteria are published on the school website each year.

Despite this, Milton Keynes Council (MKC) are still responsible for co-ordinating admissions so parents still apply for a place for their child via the MKC website. For those with no internet access we can provide you with a paper application form.

# Getting involved

## Governorship

The Governing Body consists of representatives of parents, staff and the local community. They work closely with the staff and Senior Management Team to support the school and plan and monitor its strategic direction.

## Friends of Olney Infant Academy

Friends of Olney Infant Academy (FoOIA) is the parent teacher association for Olney Infant Academy. FoOIA has a long history of active fundraising, generating thousands of pounds each year to provide a wide variety of complementary equipment and activities for the benefit of every child in the school.

### Do you want to join?

Anyone is welcome to join the FoOIA, either formally as a committee member, or informally to support the running of events. If you are able to lend your support to FoOIA, please contact the school office.

## Volunteering

The school recognises the value of parental and community involvement and as such parents are always welcome to help in school. We always like to include parent helpers on educational visits.

### Do you want to volunteer?

If you would like to volunteer, please contact your child's class teacher.





# How to find us



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