

The Local Offer For Acorn Under Fives

My child has SEND. I would like to look around. What do I need to do?

We operate 5 days per week during term time and have an open door policy welcoming all families to look around the setting prior to a child being enrolled to start pre-school.

Parents are free to look around the setting at any time or can telephone beforehand to arrange a visit. Please feel free to make as many visits as you require so that you are comfortable with the setting and ask all the questions you may have about ensuring the needs of your child are going to be met if you were to take up a place.

We welcome you to talk to the Manager, Deputy and/ or Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENco) at the group and if you feel the setting suits the need of your child you can complete an application form and discuss when you would like your child to start. This discussion will include funding the place at the setting.

How will my child and I be made to feel welcome and how will you get ready for my child coming?

Acorn has a well-established team of staff who has considerable experience in working with children with SEND and staff members have the expertise to include all families into the setting.

We ensure that the whole family is made welcome and each child's individual needs and interests are catered for through preparation before they start. This includes visits to the setting to meet the staff, the other children and becoming comfortable with the environment – both inside and outside.

Parents are given a welcome pack with information about the setting and how to become involved in their child's learning and we talk through the running of the sessions.

A home visit can be arranged for children with SEND to share information and additional visits to the group are also possible.

Acorn encourages the professionals working with a child with SEND to liaise with the setting before a child starts and keeps this channel open to ensure the best support possible is maintained. The setting acts upon advice from the professionals to prepare for a child with SEND and arranges training for individuals or the whole team of staff to ensure the needs of the child are understood and the environment provides the best learning opportunities.

If your child has a Targeted plan, SEN Support plan or EHCP, this is reviewed carefully and systems are put in place to support individual needs.

Each child and their family is given a key person who ensures that they have information to help with the settling in process when your child starts at the setting. This key person will give support to you and your child whilst at Acorn.

We request that you complete a registration form and an 'All about Me' questionnaire before your child's first day so that the key person has a sound knowledge about your child and can make necessary preparations. This documentation provides information about your child's current interests, strengths, needs, likes, dislikes, comforters and special words and is crucial in helping to make those first few days and weeks a positive experience. The 'All about Me' sheet is updated on a regular basis so that we are aware of any changes which may impact on your child's behaviour and

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plan to your child's current needs and interests.

We include the child's voice in planning experiences and aim to build their self-confidence and self-esteem in order for them to fulfil their full potential.

We hold regular staff meetings to discuss all the children in the group to ensure we meet the needs of all who are in the setting. Therefore, all staff members have an understanding of all the children should the key person be ill or on holiday.

When your child's starts, you are welcome to stay and help your child settle and we are more than willing to work through a phased entry so that both you and your child are happy.

How accessible are your premises?

Acorn Under Fives operates in a mobile in the grounds of Highcliffe Primary School. The entrance to our building has disabled access leads directly into the building.

A wide door at the entrance enables accessibility for wheelchairs and we have disabled toilet facilities if required.

Staff members are able to change nappies although they do not have the facilities to dispose of them on the site.

The Acorn playroom is quite small, but space can be made for wheelchairs to move around if required. We are fortunate to have direct access to the outdoor play areas through the exterior door. A slope provides access to the large playground.

We have a small enclosed play area outside the playroom, which is covered with a canopy with anti-glare glazing. This enables access to the outdoors all year round and acts as a sun screen.

Outside the small play area there is a large playground which is used to play ball games and ride wheeled toys. We also have a wooded area, which the children call 'the forest' and this allows the children to experience playing with natural resources.

The whole outdoor area is enclosed by a secure fence.

Acorn promotes inclusion and welcomes all families from a range of cultures and background. We have supported many children with English as an additional language and actively seek support from other agencies to ensure equality of opportunity. We have translated documentation into other languages to help parents to apply for funding and to read about their child's progress and events in the setting.

The resources promote positive images of other individuals including children in wheelchairs and those with additional needs.

How will you keep my child safe?

All our members of staff hold a current DBS check and receive regular training in safeguarding.

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The manager holds regular supervisions with the staff to ensure that there are no changes in Health or DBS status to make them unsuitable to work with children.

Policies and procedures ensure that all children are kept safe. These include reference to Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Equality of Opportunity, Special Educational Needs, Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying

A positive behaviour management policy is in place to ensure that all children are supported in managing their feelings and behaviour in line with their individual needs and development. We ensure that children verbal praise for their achievements and support them in a positive way when they exhibit challenging behaviour. At all times we work with parents to offer support to the child and the family.

Policies and procedures support the storage and administration of medication in the setting – medication is stored in a secure place and permission and medication records require parental consent, exact dosage, and time of administration.

A Health care plan is put in place for children with specific needs identifying how support is put in place and we display this for members of staff to ensure all are fully informed.

Risk assessments are in place to ensure children are safe from harm. We complete a risk assessment for a child with additional needs prior to starting the setting to ensure the environment is safe for them.

Information about diet and allergies is recorded from registration records and displayed for all staff to see with a photograph of a specific child and the known allergy.

Acorn operates a no nuts policy with the foods that it purchases for snacks and we advise parents not to bring foods containing nuts for packed lunches.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality is paramount and we use photographic devices only for recording children's achievements and events with parental consent.

Before taking children on outings we carry out a risk assessment to ensure that children are safe and increase the numbers of adults for support in caring for the children.

The setting is inspected by Ofsted to ensure that it meets the requirements to keep your child safe – www.ofsted.gov.uk

How will you communicate with me what my child has done, enjoyed and learnt?

The key person (primary or secondary) talks to parents on a daily basis and the SENco is available to meet with parents whenever convenient.

An electronic Learning Journey is used to communicate with parents on a weekly basis. This includes observations and photographs about your child's progress and there is the opportunity to add comments and add observations and photographs of your own.

We provide all children with a Learning Journey folder which records the achievements in a variety of ways - photographs, children's creations, observations and explains the learning behind the

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experiences. These Learning Journeys are available at all times and can be taken home to share with your child and the family.

A system of record keeping and assessment is used to track your child's progress in terms of development which is age and stage related and is shared with you.

A 'Meet your Key person' evening is held twice a year to share information and progress about your child. We are happy to arrange other times of the day for meetings if the evening is not convenient.

The noticeboard in the corridor provides photographs of all the children taking part in enjoyable experiences and information about learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Other forms of communication include newsletters, the website and our facebook page.

How do you work with other professionals?

Acorn is confident to work with other professionals and has built strong relationships with many services. These include:

The Specialist Needs Teaching Team and the Area Sancho, Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapists, Visually Impaired Team, Autism Outreach, Physiotherapists, Occupational therapists, Paediatricians, Social services etc.

We have supported a wide range of children with SEND and have worked effectively with outside professionals to meet their needs. This contact has included sitting on review panels for children with SEND.

We liaise with professionals in a variety of ways – telephone, meetings to share information about children and the best ways to support them – and act upon their advice to such as updating a targeted plan, SEN Support plan and an EHCP and implementing different strategies.

What training have you /your staff had in SEND?

All members of staff are trained in early years and we have a wealth of experience in child care and child development.

The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENco) is a qualified teacher and EYP and has attended the necessary training to fulfil the SENco role within the setting provided by the Local Education Authority.

The team of staff has attended a wide variety of training:

Paediatric First Aid, Basic Food Hygiene, Safeguarding, Makaton, Autism, Epic pen, Diabetes, Heart problems, Albinism, ECAT – Every Child a Talker, Speech and Language development, Social Communication groups, Cancer related care, Behaviour management, Lifting and Handling, behaviour management.

We are happy to access additional training if necessary to support the needs of a child.

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How will you adapt play opportunities for my child?

The SENco and key person makes regular observations on your child and keeps you updated on their progress. With parental agreement, we liaise with outside agencies for support and guidance and encourage you and your child to contribute to planning experiences.

A joint discussion with all involved enables the play opportunities to be adapted to the needs of your child and a Targeted plan may be drawn up to support your child's unique style of learning and learn at their individual pace. The plan is shared with you and updated at regular intervals.

The Targeted plan shows how the play opportunities could be adapted to accommodate your child's needs and includes strategies to support learning. This may mean setting up smaller group work (social communication groups), sourcing additional equipment and providing a support for changes to routines (visual timetable) etc.

If necessary, we would seek additional funding to pay for a one-to-one support worker to ensure your child has access to the play opportunities on offer.

How will you get ready for my child going to his/her new setting/ school?

Transition is an important aspect within the setting and systems are put in place to support transition as the need arises.

If your child leaves Acorn and transfers to another setting before starting school, the Learning Journey folder and a recent Progress Summary report is written and sent to the new group. Your child's key person is happy to share information with the new setting if necessary.

When your child leaves Acorn and moves to school there is a planned period of transition. Transition books about the new school are shared with the children and there is school based role play where children dress up in school uniform and pretend to be at school. We try to explore how both you and your child are feeling at this time and offer strategies to deal with emotions which can be difficult at this time.

Regular visits for all children transferring to the feeder school on site are organised twice a week in the summer term and there are meetings with the reception teachers to share information about children moving to the school.

For children with SEND, the Acorn SENco meets with the SENco within the school to share information to ensure that there are the appropriate measures in place to receive your child. This may involve the parents and reception teacher.

If your child is moving to another school, Acorn makes contact with that school and shares information about your child and how best to support transition. There is an agreement in how to organise transition visits suited to the individual needs of the child, family, key person and school.

Hopefully, we can organise a time so the key person and/or one-to-one worker accompanies the child on a transition visit to school. This allows the sharing of important information so that the school can prepare for your child.

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The 'Transition to School' document devised by The Specialist Needs Teaching Team is completed and sent to the school along with the child's records – Transition Progress Summary report, Individual Tracker and Child monitoring Tool. We encourage your child to share the Learning Journey folder with teacher and take pieces out to start their new Learning Journey folder in school. The electronic Learning Journey is transferred to the feeder schools if using Tapestry.

How will you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

An Introductory Evening when your child starts will provide you with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to support home learning. Regular Newsletters and events will suggest ideas in providing play activities in the home environment to support your child's learning at home. These include such things as the recipe for playdough and what your child can learn from playing with dough.

A selection of story sacks are available to share with your child at home.

The key person for your child will communicate with you on a regular basis to track your child's progress and suggest ideas for home learning based on observations of your child in the setting.

The electronic Learning Journey is available for you and the key person to have a two way dialogue and if your child attends another setting or a child minder they can be included in the sharing of information.

On entry, your key person will make observations on your child and use this information along with that given by you to complete an Early Assessment Review. This information is used to plot your child's starting points on an Individual progress Tracker which shows the developmental levels in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the same time a document called a Child Monitoring Tool will be completed to record your child's development in Speech and Language.

Your child's key person will write a short 'Settling in' report and share this with you providing information about how they will plan the next steps in your child's learning within the setting and ideas to support you with their learning at home.

If your child requires an EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) Progress Check at Two report, this will be written between the ages of 24-36 months. This will show progress in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage and provide an opportunity to seek advice and support from other professionals if necessary.

After 6 months a Progress Summary report will be written showing progress and your child's Individual progress Tracker and Child Monitoring Tool will be updated. A Progress Summary report will be completed every 6 months until your child leaves to go to school and then a final report will be written called a Transition Progress Summary. These reports will provide feedback on your child's progress, suggestions for next steps and the Transition Summary report will provide the school with information about the child's interests and support them as they transfer.

At all times you and your child are invited to comment on the learning and contribute to planning

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the next steps in learning at home and in the setting.

To ensure that we evaluate how well we are supporting children with SEND, we encourage you to complete questionnaires at the beginning when your child's starts in the setting and again when they leave so that we evaluate the practice.

We strive to be inclusive to **ALL**.