

Acorns Childcare The Grange School

Parents' Handbook



ABOUT ACORNS

Acorns is registered with Ofsted (registration number EZ219945), and is based within the ground of The Grange School. The club is open from 7.30pm until 6.00pm weekdays, during term time. We also offer holiday care from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

You can download our last inspection report here: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/16/219945>

Acorns is located here at The Grange School. As well as our own building and enclosed garden area, we have full use of The Grange School's resources and facilities. These include a large ICT Suite, two large halls, playgrounds, an Art and D&T Studio, a music room and a purpose built activity room and outside area for our Early Years children.

Aims

At Acorns we aim to provide a safe and secure and relaxed environment, offering a range of activities to reflect the interests of the children in our care.

What we offer

Acorns follows the Playwork Principles, so the children are free to choose activities and resources as they wish. There will always be a selection of activities and resources available, including dressing up, home corner, craft, board games, construction, computer games, physical play, cookery, and reading. In addition other resources are available for the children to select from our vast amount of resources.

What we provide

The snacks we provide at Acorns is not intended as a substitute for a main evening meal. We provide healthy snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables. We promote independence, by encouraging the children to prepare their own snacks, and to clear away after themselves. We use fresh ingredients and follow statutory guidelines. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. We meet individual dietary requirements and parental preferences wherever possible. We recognise the importance of healthy nutrition for children delivered in a calm, friendly setting. We allow children to decide when they are ready to eat, but request that food be consumed whilst sitting at the snack table.

Staffing

Acorns is staffed by a Manager Laura Best, Supervisor Stephanie Goodyer and five playworkers. In addition we have volunteer staff. We aim to provide a smooth transition between school and our setting.

All of our staff have significant experience of working with children and undertake professional development training. All staff members are DBS checked. We maintain a staff/child ratio of 1:8 for children under the age of eight, and a ratio of 1:10 for children over the age of 8.

Staff also have designated roles:

Janet Hunt:	Special Education Needs Co-ordinator
Janice Hennessy:	Equalities and Inclusion Co-ordinator, Health and Safety Officer
Stephanie Goodyer:	Fire Safety Officer, First Aid Co-ordinator, Playwork Key Person
Laura Best:	EYFS Key Person, Child Protection Officer

If you have a query or concern at any time, please speak to a member of staff at the club when you collect your child. If you prefer to arrange a more convenient time for a meeting please contact the manager (contact details are at the back of this Handbook).

Organisation

Acorns is run as a private business, employing 8 staff. We enjoy a close working relationship with The Grange School in order to ensure continuity of care, and to maintain good communication links.

Policies and procedures

Acorns has clearly defined policies and procedures. Key points of the main policies are included in this Handbook. Copies of the full policies are kept at the setting and are available for parents to consult at all times.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Admission

Acorns aims to be accessible to children and families from all sections of our local community. Admission to the club is organised by the Manager and we use a waiting list system when the need arises. The waiting list will be operated on a first come-first served basis, with the exception of siblings who will have priority for the same days as a sibling already attending. See our **Admission and Fees Policy** for more details.

We require a completed set of registration forms for your child before they can attend the club. This information will be treated as confidential and will be stored appropriately.

Re-enrolment for September is required at the end of the summer term. We cannot keep a place open for your child unless you complete a new registration/booking form.

Payment of fees

The current fees are **£4.00** per child per session during term time. Fees are payable in advance by cash or cheque, bank transfer or childcare vouchers. We accept vouchers from the following schemes KIDDI Vouchers, Care4, BusyBees, Sodexo, EdenRed, Computer Share, Fideliti & RG Childcare. Cheques should be made payable to "Acorns"

The price per session per child applies to all children. This is payable for all booked sessions including when your child is sick, or on holiday (regardless of the amount of notice given).

We do not charge for bank holidays.

Please ensure that fees are paid promptly. Non-payment for more than one month may result in your place being terminated. If you are having difficulty paying fees, please speak in confidence to the Manager.

Changes to days and cancelling your place

You must give us one month's notice of termination or of changes in attendance. If you need to change the days that your child attends, please contact the Manager. We try to accommodate such changes wherever possible.

Temporary changes

Please remember that we need to know if your child will not be attending Acorns for any reason. Even if you have informed your child's teacher, you still need to notify us as the school does not automatically pass this information on to us. If your child doesn't attend a booked session, we will have to treat them as a 'missing child' unless you have notified us of their absence.

If you know in advance of any days when your child will not be attending during the following week, please try to let the Manager know by THURSDAY at the latest. In cases of illness or emergency when notice cannot be given, please call as soon as you can. Contact details can be found at the end of this Handbook.

Induction

You and your child are welcome to visit Acorns before your child's first day, to familiarise yourselves with the setting and to help your child settle in.

During your child's first session time will be set aside for an induction. The induction will include running through Acorns rules and routines (including snack times, collection, children's meetings), and introducing your child to the staff and other children.

Another child will usually be allocated to act as your child's buddy for the first few sessions.

See our **Child Induction Policy** for more details.

Arrivals and departures

Our staff collect children from The Grange School and escort them to the Acorns building. A register is taken when children arrive in our care, and you must sign out your child each day when you collect them.

We expect that your child will normally be collected by the people you have named on the registration form. If you need a different person to collect your child on a particular day, you must notify us in advance. We will not release your child into the care of a person unknown to us without your authorisation.

See our **Arrivals and Departures Policy** for more details.

Acorns finishes at 6.00pm, if you are delayed for any reason please telephone to let us know. A late payment fee of £10.00 per 15 minutes will be charged if you collect your child after we have closed.

If your child remains uncollected after 6.30pm and you have not warned us that you will be delayed, and we have been unable to reach you or any of your emergency contacts, we will follow our **Uncollected Children Policy** and contact local social services (MASH)

Child protection

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm. Any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We comply with local and national child protection procedures and ensure that all staff are appropriately trained. For more details see our **Safeguarding Policy**.

Equal opportunities

Acorns provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination, for everyone in our community including children with additional needs.

- We respect the different racial origins, religions, cultures and languages in a multi-ethnic society so that each child is valued as an individual without racial or gender stereotyping.
- We will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices
- We will not tolerate any form of racial harassment.

Special needs

We make every effort to accommodate and welcome any child with special needs. We will work in liaison with parents or carers and relevant professionals to fully understand your child's specific requirements. We will endeavour to accommodate all children of all abilities, whilst working within the Club's limitations. Each case will be considered individually and risk-assessed to ensure everyone's safety.

Our staff training programme includes specific elements relating to children with special needs.

For more details on equal opportunities and special needs, see our **Equalities Policy**.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Behaviour (children)

Children and staff have created rules for acceptable behaviour whilst at Acorns. These are displayed for everyone to see.

We have a clear **Behaviour Management Policy**, a copy of which is distributed to all parents and carers:

Acorns promotes the ethos of care, consideration and respect for everyone attending: children, staff and visitors.

We encourage appropriate behaviour through: praise for good behaviour; emphasis on co-operative play and sharing; talking to children with the courtesy that we expect from them and engaging children in activities

Acorns has procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour. We recognise that poor behaviour can occur from time to time for reasons that are not always evident, or as a result of special needs. We will try to be flexible in order to accommodate such cases.

However, if your child is violent, or if their behaviour poses an immediate danger to themselves or others, we will require you to collect them from Acorns immediately. In exceptional circumstances, and only when all other attempts at behaviour management have failed, we reserve the right to permanently exclude a child from Acorns. See our **Suspensions and Exclusions Policy** for full details.

Behaviour (adults)

We will not tolerate from any person, whether a parent, carer or visitor: bullying; aggressive, confrontational or threatening behaviour; or behaviour intended to result in conflict. Acorns is a place of safety and security for the children who attend and the staff who work here, and we reserve the right to ban anyone exhibiting inappropriate behaviour from our premises. See our **Aggressive Behaviour Policy** for more details.

Illness

We are unable to care for children who are unwell. If your child becomes unwell whilst at Acorns we will contact you and ask you to make arrangements for them to be collected.

Please inform the Manager of any infectious illness your child contracts. If your child has had sickness or diarrhoea please do not send him or her to school or setting for 48 hours after the illness has ceased. See our **Illness and Accidents Policy** for more details.

Accidents and first aid

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of the children at all times, and Acorns is fully insured. Our staff are trained in first aid and a first aid kit is kept on the premises. If your child has an accident whilst in our care, you will be informed when you collect your child. For full details see our **Illness and Accidents Policy**.

Medication

Please let the Manager know if your child is taking prescribed medicine. If your child needs to take medicine whilst at Acorns you will need to complete a **Permission to administer medication form** in advance. See our **Administering Medication Policy** for more details.

Complaints procedure

If you have any queries, comments or need to discuss any matters concerning your child, please feel free to speak to your child's key person, the Manager, or any other member of staff.

Verbal complaints will be brought to the next staff meeting for discussion and action.

All written complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt and a full written response will be given within 28 days.

A full copy of our **Complaints Policy** is available on request.

PLEDGE TO PARENTS

We value our relationship with parents/carers and are committed to working in partnership with you to provide top quality play and care for your children. We will:

- Welcome you at all times to discuss our work, have a chat or take part in our activities.
- Keep you informed of opening times, fees and charges, programmes of activities, menus, and procedures.
- Be consistent and reliable to enable you to plan with confidence and peace of mind.
- Share and discuss your child's achievements, experiences, progress, and friendships.
- Be available to discuss decisions about running the setting.
- Ask your permission for outings and special events.
- Listen to your views and concerns to ensure that we continue to meet your needs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Acorns
The Grange School
Staverton Road
Daventry
Northants
NN11 4HW

Club mobile number: 01327 709727 (Please leave a voice message if there is no reply.)

Ofsted Registration No: EZ219945

Correspondence Address:

The Grange School
Staverton Road
Daventry
Northants
NN11 4HW

Tel (Manager): 01327 709727

The Grange School: 01327 705785

Club Staff

Manager:	Laura Best
Supervisor:	Steph Goodyer
Playworkers:	Carol Cockburn
	Emmaleen Gaul
	Megan Keeling
	Amanda Maclean
	Elana Stevens

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