



Acorn Welcome Pack

Welcome to Acorn! We are so happy that you are considering joining our family. We've put together this welcome guide to help you get to know us. If you have any questions not covered here, please don't hesitate to ask—we're always happy to help.

Meals

At Acorn, we encourage children to enjoy a varied and healthy diet. We operate on a four-weekly menu, which is regularly reviewed by our PANCo (Physical Activity and Nutrition Coordinator).

If you'd like support with your child's eating habits or ideas for healthy meals/lunches, we're here to help.

Early and late sessions include breakfast and a high tea, covered by session fees. Snacks such as fruit, vegetables, breadsticks, and dips are provided throughout the day.

We are unable to provide lunch due to limited kitchen facilities. Parents are required to supply a packed lunch.

Alternatively, we have a contract with the school kitchen (Dolce), offering hot lunches during term time only, at a small extra charge. If you'd like an account set up, please speak to the office.

In our Little Acorns & Tiny Acorns room, we can heat up packaged meals due to the ratio of staff to children and in-room kitchen facilities

In our Super Seedlings and Preschool rooms, we cannot heat food due to volume and lack of kitchen access. If you'd like to provide a hot lunch, we recommend using a flask—many parents do.

Please note:

We cannot reheat home-cooked food, as Food Standards Agency guidance requires stirring, probing, and immediate serving at safe temperatures, which is too time-intensive in large group settings.





Drinks

We are a juice-free nursery. Water and milk are available throughout the day and at mealtimes.

Please do not bring water bottles from home. Children have regular access to drinks, including water dispensers at child height in our toddler and preschool rooms to encourage independence.

For Little Acorns & Tiny Acorns children who are bottle-fed, please provide formula and bottles—we have a steriliser on site and will prepare feeds as needed.

Tapestry

We use a platform called Tapestry to communicate with families and share updates about your child's day.

You'll receive a Tapestry consent form at registration—please read the privacy policy before signing.

Our Little Acorns and Tiny Acorns rooms use the care diary, which show meals, sleep, and nappy changes. Our Super Seedlings room use it for sleep and nappy changes.

Families are encouraged to upload photos/videos from home—this supports children's language and emotional development and parent partnership

Tapestry is also used for important updates, messages, and reminders. When your child leaves for school, you'll receive a download link with your child's Tapestry history to keep.

Permissions

Permissions inform us of what you consent to (e.g. photos, trips, medication). Please complete your permission page in the admission forms.

We may request verbal consent again for specific occasions (e.g. watching a Christmas film or face paint). You can update permissions at any time by emailing or visiting the office.





Illness, Absences, and Medications

Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will be absent. Any unreported absence will prompt a safeguarding check-in call, in line with our Absent Child Policy (available on our website).

We follow NHS guidance for exclusion periods. For sickness/diarrhoea, children must remain at home for 48 hours after the last episode.

If a child develops a temperature at nursery, we:

- Complete an Unwell Child Form
- Try to reduce the temperature (drink, reduce layers, cold flannel)
- Contact parents if the temperature persists

If a child has a temperature over 38°C, they must be collected. We may administer Calpol with parental consent—either your supplied Calpol or nursery stock. All medication is recorded and administered in front of a second staff member.

We can only give prescribed medication (in original packaging, with a label showing the child's name). Calpol is the only non-prescribed medicine we administer.

If your child has asthma, allergies, or ongoing medical needs, a Health Care Plan must be completed—please speak to your child's room leader.



Stay and Play Sessions

Throughout the year, we host fun Stay and Play events (e.g. Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas). These are a great opportunity for parents and family members to join in.

Due to numbers, some sessions may be split. Invitations will be shared closer to the time.





Parental Consultations & Formatives

We hold parent evenings three times a year to discuss your child's development, progress, and any areas of learning that require additional support.

Practitioners will also complete Formative Assessments to show developmental milestones based on the Birth to 5 Matters (Bto5) and Development Matters (DM) for preeschool frameworks

We use Bto5 and DM to support assessments, we use DM to track children's progress against the EYFS and Bto5 to deepen understanding of how children learn and develop.

Practitioners regularly observe children in the setting and share next steps via tapestry. This includes guidance on how we will support your child at nursery and ideas how you can support at home, working together with parents.

Ad Hoc Sessions

If you need additional sessions, please email or ask at the office. We do our best to accommodate, but due to capacity, we can't book these far in advance. Please give at least one week's notice where possible

Pick-Ups, Drop-Offs & Late Charges

Each room has its own designated door–this will be shown during your settling session.

Between 4:30-6:00pm, children may be grouped together in our Little Acorns or Super Seedlings room due to staff ratios.

Please:

- Pick up your child on time–staff rotas are designed around strict ratios.
- Delays impact staff with their own commitments.

Late pickups:

- Past session end: You'll be charged for the next session.
- After 6:00pm: A late fee of £20 per 20 minutes is applied to cover staff overtime.





Funding

We offer government-funded childcare including:
9-month to 3-year funding (working entitlement)
2-year deprivation funding
3-year-old universal and extended funding (30 hours)

Notes:

9mo-3yo funding is year-round only

- 3yo funding may be used term-time only or stretched.
- Funding begins the term after your child becomes eligible (January, April, or September).
- Parents must complete a funding form in advance.

If you're eligible:

- Apply via [Childcare Choices](#)
- Provide your funding code to us
- Reconfirm your code each term

Some funding does not cover all days—we'll share gap dates each term. Charges apply only if your child attends on gap days. Please give one month's notice to cancel these sessions.

We're unable to swap contracted sessions.

Settle Session

As a baseline, we offer one two-hour settling session. This session is held either one week before or a couple of weeks before your child's start date, depending on availability. The settling session is free of charge and gives you the opportunity to come in, speak with our staff, and then leave your child to play and become familiar with the environment.

If you feel that your child would benefit from additional settling sessions, please speak to the office, who will be happy to arrange this for you.





Invoicing

Invoices are issued on the 1st working day of each month, billed in advance. Payment is due within 15 days.

Preferred method: bank transfer.


We also accept:

- Cheques (payable to Acorn Childcare Centre)
- Cash (receipts issued; please give directly to the office)

Invoices and statements are emailed to the Bill Payer listed on the admission form.

Late payment procedure:

- 7 days: Reminder email
- 14 days: Formal written reminder (+ possible late fee)
- 21 days: Contact for payment plan
- 30 days: Child's place may be suspended (no refunds during suspension)



What to Bring

A separate list will be sent for Little Acorns and Tiny Acorns. In general, please pack:

- Nappies & wipes
- Spare clothes
- Seasonal items (sun cream, hats, gloves, wellies)
- Indoor shoes (if requested)
- Coat
- Daily bag (goes home each night)

Please label all belongings to prevent loss.

We are thrilled to have you join us and look forward to the fun, learning, and memories ahead!

