

Dress for mess! We love messy activities and your child will get painty and sticky!

# Welcome to Little Acorns!



Please dress your child in appropriate clothes.

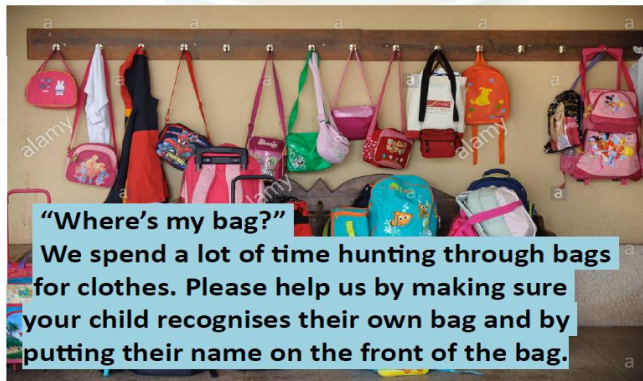


Rise and shine! Be consistent with bedtimes – preschoolers need 11 -12 hours each night.

At snack time your child needs to be able to wash their hands, sit on a chair at a table and drink from an open cup.



Please put names on all clothes and bags



“Where’s my bag?” We spend a lot of time hunting through bags for clothes. Please help us by making sure your child recognises their own bag and by putting their name on the front of the bag.



Dressing and undressing. Dress your child in easy to remove clothes (no belts or braces or laces) and name them- otherwise they will get mislaid!

(Please take some time out to read, as this pack contains some important information about routines, policies, food, sun, behaviour etc)

## Little Acorns Pre-school Information for new parents

We hope that your child will soon settle in and feel at home with us here. We have listed a few suggestions and some information from our policies, which should help in this process.

### The service offered by Little Acorns Pre-school:

- We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2 years 9 months and 5 years.
- We are open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings between 9.15am and 12.15pm The pre-school is open 38 weeks each year. We are closed during school holidays

### Session format (approx. times)

**9.15am** Children arrive, find their name card, put it on the board and sit down for the register. The parents/carers may stay until after the register (or longer if they wish) but most usually leave when their children sit down. After the register has been taken, the supervisor will talk to the children about the activities for the session.

The children may then choose what they would like to do but will be encouraged to join in with at least one of the adult-led activities usually taking place at the tables, outside play is available during this time weather permitting. Although, rain will not stop us using the outside area.

**10.45am** The children will be reminded when it is time for them to tidy away, and once that is done we will have circle time. This is when we sit down with all the children and spend time as a whole group learning and playing together. The children then wash their hands and sit down at the table for milk or water and a healthy snack.

Once the children have finished their snack they may leave the table and there will be new activities for them to choose, again outside is available during this time.

**12pm** The children will be reminded when it is time to tidy up again and then we will all sit down together for a story and singing.

**12.15pm** Home time. The parents/carers come in and find their children who should be sitting on the carpet ready to be collected. Please wait until their name has been called by one of the staff sitting with the group of children before picking them up.

Paintings and other items to take home will be set out on tables for the parents/carers to collect. Children are registered out of the room when they leave by the member of staff at the door and responsibility for the child transfers to the parent or carer once the child has left the room with them. The times of the children 's arrivals and departures are recorded in the register.

## **Dropping off and picking up your child**

- When the children arrive, they find their own name using a photo to help them and put it on the board. Please supply a small recent photograph of your child (approx 5" x 4") for this purpose.
- When leaving your child make sure you say good-bye and reassure them that you will return at the end of the session, usually after story and singing time. At first children are often happier to be left after registration when settled at an activity with a member of staff. Some children will take longer to settle than others and therefore need a more gradual approach to pre-school life. This can be talked through with the key person or a member of staff.
- It is very important that parents/carers bring the children in on time as we explain to the children our activities and remind them of our rules for the day right at the start of the session.
- Parents/carers should also plan to arrive in good time to collect them as it can be upsetting for a child to be left waiting once all the other children have been collected.
- No child will be allowed to leave with anyone that is not listed by the parents on the registration form unless a separate letter of permission has been given.
- No child will be handed over to anyone under the age of 18. If the leader is in any doubt to the person's age, identification will be sought.
- The member of staff at the door will ensure that no child leaves unaccompanied.
- We have an emergency telephone number, which we ask that you only use if really necessary ie if you are going to be late picking up your child at the end of a session or if your child develops an infectious disease. This number can also be used to text us should your child not be able to attend a session. Tel. No. 07986 716503. We will follow up any non-attendance after two days for the purpose of safeguarding and accurate council funding.

If you wish to speak to a member of staff please can you wait until all children have been picked up, please do not speak to staff who are on the door as they are checking children are with their adult and that no child is going out unaccompanied.

## **Food and Drink**

All children are offered milk or water and a healthy snack during the morning.

**Please let us know if your child has any food allergies.**

- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children throughout the session which they can help themselves too.
- If parents would like to bring in cakes or sweets for their child's birthday, these will be given to the children to take home rather than eaten during the session due to the number of allergies within the group.

## **Fees**

Fees are £14.25 per 3 hour session for those children whose 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday is the term after they begin and for children who already claim their 15 hours funding elsewhere. Nursery funding to pay the fees is normally available (subject to certain conditions) for up to fifteen hours per week for three and four year old children. Parents need to fill in a form that we will give them and sign it each term so that we can then claim the money directly from the council.

Please let us know if you are claiming some funding at another pre-school. The funding is available under the following conditions: In the Autumn term for those 3 years old by 31 August, in the Spring term for those 3 years old by 31 December, in the Summer term for those 3 years old by 31 March. We also ask parents to contribute £25 per year towards our healthy snacks for the children. We are only able to offer up to 15 hours a week per child.

If for any reason your child will be leaving the pre-school before starting school, we need to have at least four week's notice in writing otherwise you will be unable to receive funding for the first two weeks at any new setting. If a child is absent for 2 weeks or more without a reasonable explanation they may lose their place at the pre-school (see admissions policy for info about holidays) – please speak to us if your child is ill for a long time, or if family circumstances prevent them from attending.

Please note that Little Acorns Pre School is **NOT** a feeder into Highfield School and attending does not make any difference to your application to Highfield School.

## **Q and A**

**Q. Parents are taking their child on extended holidays but want the pre-school to hold their child's place, can this be done?**

**A.** As LA cannot fund an extended holiday the parent can, if they wish, pay the provider for the holiday period in order that the provider is not financially disadvantaged. This would ensure that the child's place will be available on return.

**Q. If Parents do pay for the absence what do Providers have to do?**

**A.** Providers should adjust the number of weeks that the child will be actually attending on their NEF return.

**Q. If Parents do not pay for the absence what do the Providers have to do?**

**A.** Providers should provide Southampton City Council with the child's last date attended on funding forms or via Anycomms+. Providers have the option of removing this child from roll and when the parent's return they may re-apply for a place for their child at the setting.

**Q. Providers feel there are exceptional circumstances to the extended leave, what do they do?**

**A.** Providers are requested to contact the nursery funding team if they feel that there are exceptional circumstances surrounding a child's extended absence.

## **Mobile phones and cameras**

Mobile phones and cameras cannot be used at Little Acorns. If your phone should go whilst dropping/picking your child up please answer it in the corridor. We are always taking photos of the children, so there will be plenty of photos of your child in their records.

## **Sun protection**

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is adequately protected from the sun by applying factor 15+ sunscreen before preschool. We are unable to apply sunscreen whilst they are in our care.

- We ask parents to ensure their children wear T-shirts not sleeveless vests and dresses. We supply sun hats with neck protectors and will encourage children to go indoors/or play in shaded areas if they seem to be adversely affected by the heat.
- We site activities in the shade wherever possible.
- We plan activities and stories to teach the children about sun safety and encourage parents to do the same.

## **Photographs**

In addition to this we take photographs of the children to use as illustrations of the type of activities we do at Little Acorns for our own memories book. We store these photographs in our locked cupboard but show them to visitors, prospective parents or current parents. Other parents sometimes like to take photos too when it is their child's birthday or to send abroad to family.

## **Key person and 'Learning stories' records**

Each child is allocated a member of staff who will be their key person and will assist them in settling in to pre-school. They will build a relationship with the child and their family and will monitor the child's progress by observing their play. The key person is responsible for filling out records of what the child has achieved and will assist in planning to encourage the child to develop. These records will be available for you to look at from time to time.

Please feel free to talk to your child's key person about any concerns you may have. Although each child is given a key person, as a team we all work closely with all of the children, not just those who we have been allocated.

## **Clothes**

Please send your child in clothes which you do not mind them getting paint or glue on. We do have aprons but some children still get messy. We have Little Acorns sweatshirts and t-shirts available to buy in two sizes, ages 3-4 or 5-6, if you would like them. Please see a member of staff for details. Please provide suitable outdoor clothing for your child for all weathers. We may take the children outside even if it is cold or raining!

We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off - and putting on - outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

Please can you also make sure your child is wearing sensible shoes that they are able to run/climb in. **No** flip flops or crocs.

### **How you as parents/carers can get involved**

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of our staff see themselves as partners with you in providing care and education for your child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;
- helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting;
- building friendships with other parents in the setting. We involve parents in the record keeping about their children - either formally by appointment or informally at the end of a session - and ensure parents have access to their children's 'Learning stories'.

We encourage parents/carers to get involved in whatever way they can. The notice board will keep you informed of different ways you can help. Weekly themes are displayed on our notice board. Please feel free to bring in one item from home relating to the theme, colour or letter. It is usually best to bring in items that are not too special to your child. Do make sure that all personal possessions are taken home at the end of the session, as we are unable to guarantee the safe return of anything left there since other groups also use the room.

### **Car parking.**

Extreme caution is needed if using the rear car park. Please do not allow children to climb up the stairs outside in the car park or run around the carpark as the car park is also used by members of the church.

### **Pushchairs**

The church centre has requested that pushchairs should not be left in the corridor during the session. Other groups use this building and they present a health and safety hazard. Please could you take them home with you or leave them outside (at your own risk).

### **CCTV**

Highfield Church Centre have CCTV cameras installed around the premises. Please note that these are no longer in operation but hopefully act as a deterrent to anyone attempting to break in the premises.

## Compliments/complaints



If you would like to compliment us, please don't hesitate. Talk to any member of staff. If you would like to know how your child is getting on, please talk to their key person.



If you have any concerns, please raise them with your key person or Carol. If you are unhappy with us, Carol will be glad to talk to you and do her best to sort things out.



If it's worse than that (and we hope it never will be) please follow our complaints procedure which can be found in the parents handbook on the windowsill in the corridor or you can phone Ofsted (0300 123 4666).

## Sickness

- Parents are asked to provide us with up-to-date contact numbers for emergencies such as sickness.
- If a child seems unwell, becomes ill or has a serious accident whilst at preschool then we will contact parents immediately to discuss arrangements for the child to be taken home or to the doctors/hospital.
- If a child (or adult) at the setting develops an infectious disease (such as chicken pox) whilst at home they should stay at home until they are no longer infectious and let us know so we can inform other parents (in confidentiality) that their children may have been exposed to the illness.

**If a child or adult at the setting has had vomiting/diarrhoea/fever or a temperature they need to stay away from preschool until 48 hours after the symptoms have ceased.**

We will notify Ofsted of any infectious diseases, which a qualified medical person considers notifiable. A list of notifiable diseases is contained in our health and safety manual. Ofsted now require notification of any food poisoning affecting 2 or more children looked after on the premises and the outbreak of any of the listed notifiable diseases including meningitis.

## Behaviour management

We aim to provide an environment in which acceptable behaviour is encouraged, unacceptable behaviour is dealt with appropriately and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment. We have a set of rules that we have put together with the children to make it clear to the children what our expectations are for their behaviour.

### **These are our rules at Little Acorns: -**

1. Be kind to each other
2. Let everyone share the toys
3. Look after the toys
4. Sit still and listen at circle time
5. Leave the doors and gates shut indoors
6. Walk, don't run when you're indoors

Most children will occasionally step outside the boundaries and we usually respond initially with:

“We don't do that at Little Acorns” to make sure that the child is aware of our expectations or to remind them. If the inappropriate behaviour occurs again, we would usually issue a warning or put in place some consequences, such as moving them away from the sand tray if they were throwing sand for example. If we see persistent incidents of inappropriate behaviour then we would talk to the parents and work with them to help the child.

### **Safeguarding children/child protection**

We see ourselves as partners with parents in protecting the children we care for. It is the aim of Little Acorns preschool to put the safety and well-being of the children first. We hope that if parents have any concerns about the way in which we care for their children they will feel free to talk to us about them, and if necessary, report their concerns about our care and protection of the children to Social Services and Ofsted.

Likewise, preschool staff will be alert to the possibility that children may be victims of abuse or neglect at home or in other environments outside the preschool. If we had any concerns of that nature we would usually discuss them with parents/carers first (unless we suspected that the parent/s were involved in abuse of any kind) and keep them confidential, discussing only with staff who need to know.

Parents need to be aware that, if necessary, we would contact Social Services for confidential advice or to refer a named child to the safeguarding children team. We hope you understand that the child's best interests must come first if we have any suspicions.

### **Policies**

We have written policies and procedures that specify our intentions and aims and how we plan to achieve them. They are available for you to read in our Parents Handbook that is usually on the windowsill in the corridor. If you would like to read them in detail, let us know and we will email them through to you.

We would advise you to take a look at these as they contain important information about the way we operate our preschool

If you are interested in the EYFS (Early years foundation stage) Framework, follow this link: [https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

This framework has been updated but this is the latest framework booklet available.