



www.littleacornschildcare.org

A venture of



Parent Guide

2022/2023



Our Mission:

'At Little Acorns, we believe all children are individual. We aim to provide a safe, awe-inspiring, nurturing environment for them to explore and develop. Our inclusive provision embeds tolerance and respect as part of everyday life and encourages the children to listen and have their voices heard, to show compassion and to celebrate achievements.'

To achieve this, we feel it is vital that we have a good working relationship with parents and carers. We hope that by putting together this handy parent guide and providing you with some important information about our setting and how we run day to day, you can get to know us a little before your child starts with us. If you have any further questions after reading this guide, please feel free to chat with a member of staff who will help in any way they can.

Our staff

Our dedicated team of childcare practitioners have a wealth of knowledge and experience in child development.

Nursery Manager/Lead Safeguarding Officer –
Deputy Manager/Deputy Safeguarding Officer -
Supervisor -
Supervisor -
SenCo -
Sen Support -
Childcare Practitioners (minimum level 3)

Katrina Rose
Joanne Bailey
Anna Crawford
Emma Foreman
Susan Edwards
Carla Smith
Rachel Kenealy
Danielle Brame
Beth Ibbs
David Stevenson

Apprentice – Level 2
Committee Chair/Health & Safety Officer

We have a good relationship with the local schools and college, and as the need for childcare in our society grows, it is necessary to have continuous training opportunities, which is why we are happy to offer work placements for childcare students. Offering students hands-on experience is vital, and we like to encourage them to join us. As part of their training, it is often necessary for students to carry out written observations on children. If you do not wish for your child to participate in this, please let a member of staff know. Long-term students may be counted in ratios once they are DBS checked. Volunteers and work experience, or short-term students will never be left unsupervised, and are not responsible for any intimate care such as toileting or nappy changing.

Our staff regularly update their childcare qualifications including Safeguarding level 3 and Paediatric First Aid level 3. Anybody who works on the premise of Little Acorns Childcare will be subject to enhanced DBS checks before being allowed unsupervised contact with the children.



As a team, we:

- ✓ Create a warm and friendly atmosphere
- ✓ Promote every child's self-esteem
- ✓ Care for all aspects of a child's development
- ✓ Provide consistent care from the happy, enthusiastic, highly qualified and motivated staff
- ✓ Provide a variety of activities indoors and outdoors to suit all needs, moods, interests and abilities
- ✓ Encourage children to be co-operative, respect others and promote positive behaviour
- ✓ Provide a secure, safe place to play and learn
- ✓ Value every child as an individual by giving them time to talk and staff time to listen
- ✓ Provide a high-quality curriculum across the age range that ensures every child has the opportunity to make good progress
- ✓ Review, adapt and improve our environment taking into account children's development
- ✓ Provide appropriate activities and resources which are readily accessible to all children 'in the moment' to enhance learning outcomes

Funded childcare is applicable from 9:00-12:00 and 12:30-3:30 only. All other sessions will be charged as indicated in the table below. Lunch sessions are available for those attending morning sessions or full days. You are welcome to collect your child at 12:00 and return them at 12:30 to avoid being charged for the lunch session.

Breakfast club £5	Morning £18.50 or funded entitlement	Lunch £3 You provide a packed lunch	Afternoon £18.50 or funded entitlement	Late Pick- Up £5
8:00-9:00	9:00 – 12:00	12:00 – 12:30	12:30 – 3:30	3:30 – 4:00

Funding and session fees are intended to cover the cost of providing the childcare. They do not cover consumables including, but not limited to snack, art and craft resources, cooking ingredients, sand and sensory resources. There is a consumables charge of just £1.00, per child, per 3 hour morning or afternoon session, which helps cover some of the cost of us providing fantastic learning opportunities for the children. You will be billed for this half-termly however weekly payment plans are available – just speak to the manager and she will help you. If you would prefer to supply your own consumables for your child and not pay the consumables charge, please get in touch and we will let you know our plan for the week and what you would need to provide.

Please note our sessions are 3 hours long and are priced accordingly. Sessions must be paid for in full, and not by the hour as this is a space another child could have had.

If you have more than one child attending the setting, not claiming funded sessions, the youngest child will be entitled to a sibling discount. Whenever more than one child from the same family attends Little Acorns for the same session, there is a £2.00 reduction per session. Lunch clubs are excluded from this discount.

During each session, we offer a range of healthy snacks including toast, fruit, cheese, crackers, milk and water. Your child is required to bring a water bottle with them for each session. Please ensure only water is brought in, and we will refill their bottles as needed throughout the session.

Please clearly label ALL your child belongings.

Little Acorns Premises

Little Acorns Childcare is held in a well-lit, well-ventilated and spacious hall within the Beacon Church on Oakes Road. It is set up Monday to Friday for the sole purpose of running a childcare facility.

Health and safety assessments have been carried out and passed, and are updated regularly to maintain our high standards of a safe learning environment.

The premises have been made accessible for everybody, with wheelchair access, accessible toilet and baby changing facilities within the building.

The childcare facility is set up in such a way to ensure that resources are accessible to all the children, providing equal play and learning opportunities. We have a kitchen within the building where we can prepare drinks and snacks for the children. Cooked meals WILL NOT be prepared for children, those staying for lunch are required to bring a healthy packed lunch with them following these guidelines:

- ✓ No fizzy drinks
- ✓ No sweets – a small treat such as a chocolate biscuit is acceptable
- ✓ Always include some fruit. Grapes should be sliced to avoid choking hazards.
- ✓ Children will be encouraged to eat sandwiches and fruit before enjoying their treats.
- ✓ Staff will leave uneaten food in the lunch box so that you can see how much your child has eaten.
- ✓ Please be aware that we will not force a child to eat.



The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Your child's learning and development are of paramount importance to us. At Little Acorns Childcare, we follow guidelines and statutory requirements set out by the Department of Education which is the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS).

The EYFS is a legal framework stating the requirement for all early years providers to follow. It sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep every child safe and promote their welfare.
- The 7 areas of learning and development which guides professionals in their engagement with children throughout their play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge.
- Assessments that will tell you about your child's progress through the EYFS.
- Expected levels that your child should reach by the age of 5, usually the end of reception year. These expectations are called the Early Learning Goals.

At Little Acorns, we use this framework to support each child by providing learning opportunities based on their interests and individual needs, and by observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing.

Some of the ways we support the EYFS within our activities include:

- ✓ Personal, Social and Emotional Development –
 - Key person approach, building relationships, care, comfort and support
- ✓ Physical Development –
 - Exploring the environment, healthy snacks, learning about how the body works, supporting the development of motor skills
- ✓ Communication and Language –
 - Talking, singing, story time, following instructions, developing our own rules in play
- ✓ Literacy –
 - Sharing stories, rhymes and poems, staff model positive language, enabling the child to speak freely and have their voice heard
- ✓ Mathematics –
 - Shape sorting games, puzzles, songs, number games, time recognition
- ✓ Understanding the World –
 - Cooking activities, gardening including growing our vegetables, recognising and accepting various cultures and festivals
- ✓ Expressive Arts and Design –
 - Creative activities including gloop, shaving foam, crazy soap, paint, sand, junk modelling and messy play in our fabulous mud kitchen



Learning Journals

In January 2018, we introduced an exciting new way to record, track and share your child's learning during their time at Little Acorns. This system called an 'online learning journal' will enable staff to take photographs and videos which are added in a weekly round-up. Your key person will also highlight any 'wow moments' from the week including any targets your child has achieved or new skills they have learnt (you will then have access to this information) so you can celebrate this learning at home too. Parents/carers can also add their own photos and comments to the journal. We actively encourage parents to use the Tapestry platform to help share home learning and development, and any important information we should know about your child.

The system we are using is called 'Tapestry' and is hosted in the UK on dedicated, secure servers. These servers conform to very high safety standards and are proactively managed by a central security team. The safeguarding of our children is very important to us. Everything that is added to Tapestry will be added to our nursery account and can only be viewed by the nursery staff that use the system, and also yourself, using your own log in details. Tapestry admin staff will only access these accounts with prior permission from the nursery (for example, if required to solve a technical issue). A copy of Tapestry's 'Privacy, Security and Back-Up Policy' is available to view on request.

How we plan for your child's Early Years Education

At Little Acorns we strongly value the unique child and believe that every child is an individual who will learn and develop in their own unique way. Each area provides children with a variety of self-selection resources which promotes individual choice and creativity and encourages independence. Staff are passionate and are trained to recognise 'teachable moments' which can be extended through language, resources and imagination to create a learning opportunity for all children. 'In the Moment' means to follow a child's lead and recognise those 'teachable moments' along the journey. Staff use their knowledge of the EYFS to support and extend the learning as well as to promote our fundamental British values.

'In the Moment' allows no forward planning, but planning in the moment experiences which are an extension of a child's interests observed at that moment in time. Each child's key person will ensure a variety of provisions and open-ended resources are continuously available at all opportunities to encourage creativity in play as well as supporting individual next steps and interests.



Terms and Conditions

- Your child's space is guaranteed once your first invoice has been paid in full. If your child is eligible for funding, you will be invoiced for the consumables charge only. The consumables charge does not place any condition on your child's funded space.
- If you reserve a space and do not take it, any payment already made is non-returnable.
- A 4-week notice period is required in writing to terminate your child's space.
- Invoices are issued monthly, in advance and are due by the last day of the month. For example, September's fees are due on or before 31st August.
- Any unpaid fees by the date stated on the invoice will result in care being denied from that day until all fees are paid in full. Outstanding fees remaining at the end of the half term will result in your child being removed from our registers, and a claim to the County Court will be made to recover all unpaid fees and any costs incurred.
- If your child is absent from the nursery, the space will still need to be paid for, and deductions will not be made. The exception to this is where the Nursery closes for occasions such as a funeral being held in the church, where fees will be deducted from your next bill.
- Please ensure you arrive on time to collect your child. A late fee will be incurred at a charge of £5.00 for every 10 minutes or part thereof. This charge will be added to your next bill. Late fees should be paid in full within seven days.
- A late pick-up is available, but must be pre-booked as spaces are limited.
- On arrival at the nursery for the start of each session, please buzz once and wait in the play area with your child and a member of staff will come out to greet you. Your children are your responsibility until they are taken in by a member of staff.
- When arriving to collect your child, please buzz once and wait in the play area and a member of staff will bring your child out to you. This is a great opportunity to speak with the key person should you have any concerns or information to share with us. If you would like to speak to your child's key person or the nursery manager in private, please inform us, and we will make sure someone is available to see you.
- In the event of severe weather such as snow or flooding, leading to hazardous travel conditions, Little Acorns may be forced to close if our child: staff ratios cannot be met. If we have to close due to circumstances beyond our control, invoices remain unchanged. Please refer to the Emergency Closure Policy.

Government Funding for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds

All 3 and 4-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours funded childcare per week, for 38 weeks of the year. This funding begins from the term AFTER your child turns 3. You will be given a grant claim form which must be completed and given to our staff as soon as possible to allow us to claim the funded sessions on your behalf. If you fail to return a completed grant form, you may lose your funding and therefore may be charged for sessions attended.

Some 2-year-olds are eligible to receive up to 15 hours funded childcare each week for 38 weeks a year. This begins from the term AFTER your child turns 2 and is subject to you meeting certain criteria.

All parents are recommended to visit the website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to register and find out what help if any, you are entitled to.

Some 3 and four-year-olds may be eligible to an additional 15 hours funded childcare per week for 38 weeks a year, providing you meet certain criteria. At Little Acorns, we will endeavour to offer any additional hours to eligible children providing we have availability. To be considered for any additional funded hours above the universal 15 hours entitlement, parents must provide us with a 12-digit eligibility code which we must be able to verify. This code can be accessed via the Childcare Choices website above. The 12-digit code, once verified, will allow us to offer any additional hours available from the following term.

Our funded entitlement offer is Monday to Friday during term time. **Funded entitlement may be used between the hours of 9:00-12:00 and 12:30-3:30 only.** All other sessions are chargeable.

Upon registering your child with us, you will be asked to sign to give consent to certain procedures such as short outings and administration of emergency first aid. You will also be required to provide a password and names of anyone likely to collect your child. This will be kept on record and should somebody other than yourself arrive to collect your child, we will not let them take your child unless they give us your chosen password. Please understand that for the safety of your child, our staff will not let anyone take your child unless they can provide the password.

If your child is unwell out of childcare hours and is unable to attend, please telephone us on 01284 756588 and either ask to speak to a member of staff or leave a message on our answer machine. This makes us aware of any illnesses that might be in circulation. You should keep your child at home until they are well enough to return to the nursery. If you are unsure of this, please seek advice from your GP or refer to our Children's Sickness Policy.

If your child becomes unwell during childcare hours, we will try to contact you and ask you to come and collect them. When starting at Little Acorns, you will be asked to provide emergency contact information in case we are unable to contact you.

If your child has an accident while in our care, we will complete an accident or incident form which will be explained to you on collection, and you will be asked to sign it. Many accidents or incidents are quickly and easily dealt with. However, if the accident requires further medical treatment, we will contact you and take the necessary steps until you arrive.

If your child has a bump to the head, it is our policy to contact you to inform you of what happened. We will explain what has happened and give you the opportunity to come and collect your child. We will record all information and your decision, and should your child stay at nursery, they will be closely monitored.

How can I help my child?

Your child's time in childcare provides them with many opportunities to learn and develop through play. With praise and encouragement, children have a natural desire to learn. We cannot replace what children learn at home; our aim is to extend their knowledge and learning in situations they may be unable to experience in their home environment. Parents and carers hold a strong bond with young children. Your knowledge and understanding of your child are of great importance to us. As well as building a strong bond with your child, we hope to work together with you to ensure your child has the best start in life as possible. We need your input and support, and in return, we offer support to you as a family unit.

At Little Acorns Childcare we encourage children to be as independent as possible by doing age appropriate things for themselves. You can help us with this process by letting your child do as much as they can for themselves. Depending on your child's age this could include:

- ❖ Putting toys away after playing with them
- ❖ Washing and drying their own hands
- ❖ Dressing or changing themselves
- ❖ Putting on their coat and possibly doing it up
- ❖ Putting on and fastening their shoes
- ❖ Going to the toilet by themselves

Please do not worry if your child is unable to do things other children their age seem to be doing. Our staff recognise that all children develop at an individual rate. Although we try to encourage independence, we are always on hand to offer help and support. We never watch children struggle unnecessarily.

Some things to remember!

- Does your child like milk? We offer and encourage children to have milk every day at Little Acorns. If they really don't like it, please inform us. It is really important that you inform us of any dietary needs or dislikes that your child might have.
- If your child has any fears, it helps us to know this; we don't want to upset your child or cause any unnecessary worry.
- Does your child have a comfort item? We recognise the need for children to feel secure, especially when experiencing big changes such as being in a new childcare provision. We discourage children from bringing toys into the nursery, as it can cause a lot of upset if they become lost or broken. However, if a special toy is used as a comfort item, please clearly label it before bringing it in.
- Every day will include messy play of some sort, i.e. painting, gloop, mud and water. We encourage children to wear aprons, but it helps if children do not wear clothing that might get spoiled. We have t-shirts and jumpers available to purchase; please ask a member of staff for more information. Many parents choose to purchase these as they can prevent clothes from being ruined. However these are not compulsory, and stock may be limited so sizes might not be available right away.
- Please make sure your child wears sensible shoes; children do a lot of running and climbing, so trainers or flat-soled shoes are ideal; if your child wears sandals, please make sure the toes are covered.
- We have 2 purpose built outdoor play areas to provide free flow play and experiences for the children. Please make sure your child brings suitable clothing for the weather. As part of our curriculum, we like to include outdoor play in all weather. Differing weather conditions provide wonderful learning opportunities for children so please ensure your child comes in with suitable coats and wellies. Likewise, during the summer months, we encourage children to stay safe in the sun; a sun hat should

be brought every day. In the summer we ask that all children come into nursery having already had sun cream applied. With parental permission, we will re-apply sun cream throughout the day.

- We like to explore our surroundings and will often go on short walks to local parks, or the shops. You will be asked to give written permission for your child to be taken off the premises for these valuable learning experiences. Please refer to our Outings Policy for more information.
- Please let us know if your child needs help with toilet training. Our staff will happily help support your child with this new skill! Please ensure you bring in plenty of spare clothes including pants and socks, all clearly labelled, which can be kept in their bag. We have a very limited supply of spare clothes.
- Please check your child's hair regularly for head lice and let us know if it is going around. Unfortunately, this is very common amongst young children but is easily treated, and we rely on co-operation from all parents to help reduce the number of cases within the nursery.
- Please do not send your child into the nursery with jewellery as this can be hazardous during physical play and activities. Small studs can be worn in pierced ears if necessary.
- Does your child have a special word for things such as the toilet, a drink or comfort item? Knowing these words makes meeting your child's needs much easier for staff.
- Our staff use Makaton signing to help communicate with children; if you use this at home, please let us know.

Policies and Procedures

All our policies and procedures are available to download via Tapestry. Our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. All new policies and procedures will be emailed to parents before being added to Tapestry. Individual policies and procedures are available via email on request. Our current policies and procedures include:

- Administration of medicines policy
- Admissions policy
- Arrival and collection policy
- Behaviour management policy
- Biting policy
- Capability procedure
- Children missing in education policy
- Children's sickness policy
- Complaints procedure
- Confidentiality policy
- Covid-19 policy and procedure
- Coronavirus Testing Policy
- Critical incident policy
- Dummy policy
- Emergency evacuation procedure
- Equality and diversity policy
- Equipment and resource policy
- Food and drink policy
- General Data Protection Regulations Policy
- Grievance policy
- Health and safety policy
- Intimacy and continence policy
- Lockdown policy
- Lost children policy
- Messy play policy
- Mobile phone and electronic device policy
- No smoking policy
- Non-collection of children policy
- Parental involvement policy
- Payment of fees policy
- Positive behaviour policy
- Risky play statement
- Safeguarding children policy
 - Safer recruitment procedure
 - Data protection policy
 - FGM awareness
 - The Prevent Duty
- Settling in policy
- Sleep and rest policy
- Social networking policy
- Special educational needs and disability policy
- Staff sickness policy
- Staffing and employment policy
- Student and volunteer policy
- Tapestry policy
- Transition policy
- Visitors policy
- Whistleblowing policy

DATA PROTECTION PRIVACY STATEMENT

Sharing information with others

As a nursery, it is necessary for us to collect personal information about you and your child. Sometimes we have to confirm or share information with other organisations. If we need to do this, we will make it clear to you on the forms you complete giving us the information. We aim to inform you before sharing any of yours or your child's information, unless this is likely to cause or risk causing serious harm to a child. In line with our safeguarding policy, we are legally bound to share certain information with professionals such as Children and Young People's Services, Suffolk County Council or Suffolk Police. Under safeguarding regulations we may not disclose to you that we are sharing your information.

In some cases, a third-party organisation, such as a funding body, may require you to sign an agreement to allow your information to be shared e.g. on a funding form. Please read all paperwork thoroughly before signing, so that you know exactly how your information will be used.

Information

We will make sure that the information about you is accurate and up to date when we collect or use it. You can help us with this by keeping us informed of any changes to the information we hold about you. We will send out information update letters each term which you can use to keep us informed of telephone number changes etc.

Information security

We will keep information about you and your child secure. We will protect your information against unauthorised change, damage, loss or theft. All information collected on paper is kept locked away. Our computer, and tablets are password protected.

Keeping information

We will hold information about you and your child only for as long as the law says. After this, we will dispose of it securely.

Openness

We will tell you what kind of information we hold and what we do with it, for more information please speak to the nursery manager Katrina Rose.

Access and correctness

Whenever possible, we will let you see the information we hold about you and correct it if it is wrong.

In general

We will comply with the General Data Protection Regulations, which replace the Data Protection Act 1989 and any subsequent legislation on information handling and privacy. We will do this through Little Acorns Childcare's General Data Protection Regulations Policy. We will help you with any questions or problems that you may have with General Data Protection Regulations, the Human Rights Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If we cannot help you, we will give you advice on where to write to get the information you may need.

Our Commitment

We will only collect information that is necessary for what we do. We collect information according to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. We will be fair in the way we collect information about you. We will tell you what we intend to do with the information about you. Where practicable, we will collect information directly from you. If we collect information about you from someone else, we will make sure you know that we have done this whenever possible.

Types of information we collect

This includes, but is not limited to: Yours and your child's full names; Your child's date of birth; Your address; Your contact numbers and those of your emergency contacts; Your email address; Your child's medical conditions; In some cases, your date of birth and National Insurance number.

While your child is with us we store information including, but not limited to:

Their ongoing progress and development, educational photographs/videos of them, accident/incident records, medication records, funding information, safeguarding information.

Contact Information:

Email: littleacornschildcare@beaconchurchuk.org

Website: www.littleacornschildcare.org

WhatsApp: 07584 563696

Nursery Manager & Safeguarding Lead – Katrina Rose

Telephone: 01284 756588 / 07584 563696

Should you call us and nobody answers, that is because we are all busy in the hall with the children.

Please leave a message on our answer machine, and someone will call you back.

At Little Acorns we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We carry out enhanced DBS checks on all staff and volunteers.