 Little Acorns Pre-School (Huntingdon), Community Room, c/o Stukeley Meadows Primary

P r o s p e c t u s

School, Wertheim Way, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE29 6UH

Registered Charity N° 1125456

*We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2 years 9 months to school age.*

# OPENING TIMES

Monday to Friday

8.50 am – 11.50 am *or* 11.50 am – 2.50 pm *or* 8.50 am – 2.50 pm

term time only

# ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE

Little Acorns Pre-School

Community Room

c/o Stukeley Meadows Primary School Wertheim Way

Huntingdon

Cambs

PE29 6UH

Registered Charity N° 1125456

 07594-477652

e-mail: littleacornsadmissions@gmail.com

website: [www.littleacornshuntingdon.co.uk](http://www.littleacornshuntingdon.co.uk/)

*We also have a closed Facebook group which you can request to join once your child starts at Little Acorns*

# STAFF

Rachel Parkinson Supervisor

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| Lisa Brosnan  |   |   | Deputy Supervisor |
| Renata Wlodarczyk  |   |   | Assistant  |
| Johanna Rutterford |   |   | Assistant |

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| Nicola Benge  |   |   | Chairperson  |

## Welcome to Little Acorns Pre-School

Little Acorns Pre-School opened on 15 October 1995 in the Community Room adjacent to Stukeley Meadows Primary School.

We are fortunate in having very light and spacious premises with a safe enclosed outside area. This means the children have plenty of space to play and explore the world around them both indoors and outdoors. The pre-school has its’ own entrance which is child-locked during the sessions. Our members of staff have many years combined childcare experience and pride themselves in caring for the children whilst also committing to the principle of continuous learning and development. Training is encouraged and through this we ensure the staff are fully acquainted with the very latest approaches to pre-school education.

Our registration is held with OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) and we have inspections carried out by Ofsted inspectors. The Ofsted inspection report is available to read on the pre-school and/or the Ofsted websites. Our last combined inspection was carried out in December 2023.

**Little Acorns Pre-School’s Ethos:**

* to provide children with the best start in life and lay foundations for their future learning;
* to give children time to learn through play;
* to explore, concentrate, think and discover their capabilities;
* to be happy, have fun, be listened to and feel secure;
* to be kind and caring to each other, help each other and respect differences;
* to develop independence, confidence and resilience;
* to feel valued.

## Parents

Parents are regarded as members of Little Acorns Pre-School who have full participatory rights.

These include a right to be:

* valued and respected;
* kept informed;
* consulted;
* involved; and
* included at all levels.

As a community based, voluntary managed charitable setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep the pre-school going. Membership of the pre-school carries expectations on you for your support and commitment.

## Children’s development and learning

We aim to ensure that each child:

* is in a safe and stimulating environment;
* is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer helpers;
* has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
* is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
* has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;

▪ is in a pre-school that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop;

▪ is in a pre-school in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the development and learning of children from birth to 5 years is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE 2025):

### A Unique Child

* Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

*Positive Relationships*

* Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

### Enabling Environments

▪ Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and/or carers.

### Learning and Development

▪ Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our pre-school helps children to continue to do this by providing all the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

***The Areas of Learning and Development comprise:***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ▪ ▪ ▪  | ***Prime Areas*** Personal, social and emotional developmentPhysical developmentCommunication and language |  | ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪  | ***Specific Areas*** LiteracyMathematicsUnderstanding the worldExpressive arts and design |

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year of their education.

We refer to non-statutory curriculum guidance to support our professional judgement as we assess each child’s progress and level of development as they progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Our pre-school has regard to these when we assess children and plan for their learning by creating a curriculum that is ambitious and meets every child’s needs. Our educational programmes support children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

 *Personal, social and emotional development*

* self-regulation
* managing self
* building relationships

*Physical development*

* gross motor skills
* fine motor skills

*Communication and language*

* listening, attention and understanding
* speaking

*Literacy*

* comprehension
* word reading
* writing

*Mathematics*

* number
* numerical patterns

*Understanding the world*

* past and present
* people, culture and communities
* the natural world

*Expressive arts and design*

* creating with materials
* being imaginative and expressive

## Our approach to learning and development and assessment

### Learning through play

Being active and playing supports young children’s learning and development through doing and talking. This is how children learn to think about and understand the world around them. We use the EYFS statutory education programmes to plan and provide opportunities which will help children to make progress in all areas of learning. This programme is made up of a mixture of activities that children plan and organise for themselves and activities planned and led by practitioners.

### Characteristics of effective learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

* playing and exploring - engagement
* active learning - motivation
* creating and thinking critically - thinking

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child engages with learning and being clear about what we can do and provide to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

### **Assessment**

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them. We use information that we gain from observations of the children to understand their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we will ask you to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what your child likes to do at home and how you, as parents, are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children’s achievement based on our ongoing observations. These help us to build a picture of a child’s progress during their time with us and form part of children’s records of achievement/learning journeys. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals, as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves onto a different setting or when they go on to school.

### **The progress check at age two**

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child’s development in the three prime areas of learning and development: personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language; when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. Your child’s key person is responsible for completing the check using information from on-going observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

## Records of achievement

Little Acorns Pre-School keeps a record of achievement/learning journey for each child, including the ‘Special Book’. Your child's record of achievement/learning journey helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress. Your child's key person will work in partnership with you to keep this record. To do this you and she will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's progress. Together, we will then decide on how to further support your child’s learning and development.

## Working together for your children

In our pre-school we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We also have volunteer parent helpers, where possible, to complement these ratios. This helps us to:

* give time and attention to each child;
* talk with the children about their interests and activities;
* help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and
* allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

## How parents take part at Little Acorns Pre-School

Our pre-school recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All our staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their children. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the pre-school 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;
* contributing to the progress check at age two;
* helping at sessions;
* 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;
* being part of the management committee of the pre-school;
* taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the pre-school;
* joining in community activities and fundraising in which the pre-school takes part;
* building friendships with other parents in the pre-school.

## Helping in sessions

Little Acorns Pre-School welcomes parents who would like to help at a particular session or sessions. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the pre-school is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities. Parents can also offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. We welcome parents to drop into the pre-school to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

## Key person and your child

Little Acorns Pre-School uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that the childcare we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at Little Acorns, she will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the pre-school, she will help your child to benefit from our activities.

## Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining childcare qualifications, the pre-school staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education. They regularly attend courses run by the Early Years and Childcare Service for Cambridgeshire to gain ideas and new experiences which can then be put into practice at the pre-school.

As a member of the Early Years Alliance, we also keep up-to-date with best practice through publications produced by the Alliance and the Under 5 magazine.

There are also training opportunities for committee members, including a committee induction workshop.

**The staff who work with the children at Little Acorns Pre-School are:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Rachel Parkinson   | Supervisor  | Diploma in Pre-school Practice (DPP) PLA ‘Introduction to Pre-School Practice’ Speech and Language Development Paediatric First Aid Course Training in Fire Safety, the Disability Discrimination Act, Early Years Foundation Stage, English as an Additional Language, Positive Behaviour Management, PREVENT awareness, British Values in the EYFS, Promoting Health in the EY, ‘MOVERS’ masterclass. **Designated Safeguarding Lead****Designated Personnel Training for Special** **Needs Co-ordinator** **Designated Personnel Training for Equalities** **Named Co-ordinator** |
| Lisa Brosnan  | Deputy Supervisor | BTEC National Diploma in Childhood Studies Child Protection Paediatric First Aid Course Promoting Healthy Eating & Good Oral Health**Designated Safeguarding Lead**  |
| Renata Wlodarczyk     | Pre-SchoolAssistant       | Paediatric First Aid Course Child Protection, EAL in depth training, Positive Behaviour Management, EYFS, PREVENT awareness. Level 2 Certificate for the Children & Young People’s WorkforceIdentifying and supporting children with emerging needs. **Designated Personnel Training for Special Needs Co-ordinator** |
| Johanna Rutterford  | Pre-School Assistant  | Child Protection Paediatric First Aid Course Level 3 Early Years Diploma**Health and Safety Officer, incl. Food Safety** |

## Little Acorns’ timetable and routines

Our pre-school believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the pre-school are provided in ways that:

* help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the pre-school;
* ensure the safety of each child;
* help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
* provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

## The session and/or the day

We organise our sessions so that the children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. Outdoor activities contribute to all areas of learning and development, including their health and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor room.

If your child attends a full day, the activities take account of children's changing energy levels throughout the day. The pre-school caters for children's individual needs for rest and quiet activities during the day.

## Snacks and lunchtime

We make snack time and lunchtime a social time at which children and adults eat together. To promote healthy living, we provide crackers, bread, fruit and/or raw vegetables at morning snack time with water to drink. Other foods to celebrate festivals and different cultures are also offered to the children, as well as cooking activities. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will plan accordingly. Treats may be brought in on special days and birthdays, but we ask that you check with a member of staff first and ensure these are **nut free**. If your child attends pre-school during the lunchtime period of 11.50-12.20, we do ask you to provide your child with a healthy packed lunch. More details of this are in the Welcome Pack and on the website.

## Policies

Copies of the setting's policies are available for you to read on the pre-school website.

The pre-school's policies help us to make sure that the service we provide is of high quality and that being a member of Little Acorns is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and parents on the management committee work together to adopt and annually review the policies. This helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the pre-school to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

## Information we hold about you and your child

We have procedures in place for the recording and sharing of information [data] about you and your child that is compliant with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) as follows:

The data we collect is

1. Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject [you and your family].
2. Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
3. Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
4. Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects [you and your family] for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed.
6. Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

Our privacy notice can be found on the pre-school website and gives you further details of how we fulfil our obligations with regard to your data.

## Safeguarding children

Our pre-school has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual ‘significant harm’. Our employment practices ensure that people looking after the children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role and help to protect children against the likelihood of abuse in our pre-school and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

## Special educational needs

To make sure that our pre-school meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special educational needs a child may have. We work to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).

## The management of our setting

Little Acorns Pre-School is a charity and as such is managed by a volunteer management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend our pre-school. The elections take place at our Annual General Meeting in the Autumn Term. The committee make up the registered person with Ofsted and are responsible for:

* managing the pre-school's finances;
* employing and managing the staff;
* making sure that the pre-school has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service; and
* making sure that the pre-school works in partnership with parents.

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all the children who attend Little Acorns. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

## Fees

The fees are £5.50 per hour payable half-termly in advance. Parents will receive an invoice for payment at the beginning of each half-term period. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to the Supervisor. For your child to keep her/his place at Little Acorns, you must pay the fees within two weeks of the invoice date. If you have any problems regarding the fees, please contact the Treasurer - we will try to be flexible and help if we can. We can accept payment via the Tax-Free Childcare scheme.

Little Acorns Pre-School is registered with *Cambridgeshire County Council Early Years Funding Scheme (EYF)* for two, three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. The scheme offers up to 15 or 30 hours of free pre-school sessions (depending on parents’ work status). All child become eligible for the age 3 + scheme in the **TERM AFTER THEIR THIRD BIRTHDAY (term dates are set by the LA)**. When appropriate the staff will give you a Funding Agreement Form to complete and **return by the deadline** *(failure to do so means that funding cannot be claimed and you will be subject to a fees invoice)*. This will entitle your child to up to 15 or 30 funded hours per week at Little Acorns (subject to availability) and/or any other preschool or nursery setting. The funding covers up to 38 weeks in a year, over three academic terms. (In some cases our academic year can run for longer than 38 weeks. In these circumstances, we request payment from each grant-funded child for one week per term for example.)

We are also registered for Funded Twos – please ask the staff for further information about this scheme.

## Starting at Little Acorns Pre-School

### The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, our staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the pre-school. Our policies on the Role of the Key Person and Settling-in can be found on our website.

### Clothing

We provide aprons for the children when they play with messy activities but please do not send your child in their ‘best’ clothes. 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 and footwear that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

With the exception of stud earrings, we do not allow the children to wear jewellery at pre-school for safety reasons.

For outdoor play, please leave your child's coat and, in the summer, some protection from the sun in the form of a hat. Please apply sun cream before pre-school begins. We would also be grateful if coats, hats and backpacks are clearly marked with your child's name.

Little Acorns Pre-School has practical Sweatshirts and T-Shirts, with our logo, at very reasonable prices. Further details are in the Welcome Pack. Wearing the Little Acorns ‘uniform’ can help children feel inclusive and may help with the transition to wearing school uniform.

## Fundraising and Donations

As Little Acorns Pre-School is a charity, fundraising and donations are an important part of the pre-school. The Early Years Funding scheme only covers certain aspects of the running costs and so, as members of the pre-school, parents are encouraged to participate in pre-school fundraising events thus helping to provide extra resources for the children. Local companies are also generous in their donations. Donations of time, toys and many other things are always welcome!

**We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our pre-school and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. Our staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or to respond to any questions.**

Attendance at Little Acorns Pre-School does not guarantee your child a place at Stukeley Meadows Primary School. For further details on Reception places at your preferred school please ask the School Office for the e-mail/telephone number of the Admissions Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council.