

Little Acorns & the curriculum

Little Acorns follows the Early Years Foundation Stage government guidelines. This sets out the legal requirements for working practices (e.g staffing ratios; training and qualifications; safeguarding) and about educational programmes.

The 7 areas of learning are:

1. Communication & Language
2. Personal, Social & Emotional Development
3. Physical Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the world
7. Expressive arts and design

The first three are the Prime Areas as they underpin the other areas (which are known as the Specific Areas).

Little Acorns has chosen to use a document called Development Matters which suggests curricular ideas to support child development.

We believe that through our routines, highly skilled staff team and our continuous provision (what's on offer regularly), the majority of the curriculum is naturally covered.

In addition to the curriculum, as a setting we have a strong ethos and hope to instil various life skills to the children in our care. We aim that children will be set up for life by having good people skills. So a lot of how/why we operate is to develop this.

This year (2021-2022) we are trialling a set of curricular goals that we hope children with us will gain before they leave us to move onto Primary School. The following document shows what the goals are and the progression a child will make (milestones) in order to achieve them.

Little Acorns Preschool's Curricular Goals

1. Appropriately express emotions and know how to calm themselves down

Milestones :

- name some emotions (happy, sad, cross/angry)
- talk about their feelings and recognise feelings in others (e.g excited, surprised, worried, frightened)
- know about strategies to regulate emotions e.g sand-timer, blowing, using Timmy the Turtle
- are able to recall and use strategies in order to keep calm when they find things hard or can't immediately have what they want

[How we support this: songs/stories about emotions; wall displays; poster, books, sand timer; Timmy the Turtle; role play scenarios, feeling fans; emotion cubes]

N.B where children need individualised and additional help, this will be offered promptly. Help includes meeting with parents to discuss consistent support between home and the setting and if other professionals need to be involved.

2. Confidently sing a song of their own choice (or perform or speak at length) stood in front of the whole group

Milestones:

- a non-verbal acknowledgement to their name at register time
- verbally answer to their name at the register
- join in group singing times/do the Weather Chart
- speak out in a small group (during free play, in a child's preferred group; or in a small group formalised by an adult)
- develop confidence and have their own ideas which they willingly want to share with the whole group

[How we support this: daily opportunities to be vocal during whole group times (e.g answering register, wake n shake ideas from children, answering questions, taking part in rotas, joining in songs and stories;) snack and lunch time chats; R4S small group times; role play opportunities; taking part in the Christmas Play]

N.B where children have communication difficulties, help will be offered promptly. Help includes involving the parent and seeking further professional advise if appropriate.

3. Can change into their P.E kit

Milestones:

- can recognise their personal belongings on their reception peg
- can put their own wellies on
- start to develop good manipulative and dressing skills
- can find their own P.E bag off the trolley, have the organisational skills to know the order of undressing and dressing themselves and can put their own shoes on, in order to change for P.E

[How we support this: daily independent self-care skills encouraged; dressing up available; R4S P.E sessions; sequencing puzzles and cards]

4. Be a confident learner

Milestones:

- separate from main carer with adult support
- settle at a self-chosen activity or with a staff member
- develop pride in their own achievements
- share their thoughts and ideas with others
- reflect on their learning through their own File or the Little Acorns Book, commenting on what was happening.

[How we support this: friendly approachable staff who help children feel secure and able to try new/difficult things; staff encourage and

praise specifically; use the 'praise chain' strategy; each child has a unique individual file; Little Acorns Books depicting some of the things we have done as a group]

N.B where children need individualised and additional help, this will be offered promptly. Help includes meeting with parents to discuss consistent approach between home and the setting, appropriate strategies and if other professionals need to be involved.

5. Make up their own stories

Milestones:

- enjoy listening to rhymes and stories
- take part in pretend play with small world toys or role play
- join in with set phrases in stories
- understand story structures and be able to recall stories/life events
- use available props to develop characters and tell stories to one or more people

[How we support this: small world toys and role play, books and storytime all offered daily. Other resources – story stones, finger puppet stories, story boxes, story map, story puzzles]

6. Write some (or all) letters of their name

Milestones:

- develop muscles in their hands through participating in manipulative and fine motor activities (threading, playdough)
- make marks using their fingers or tools
- begin to hold a pen and make controlled purposeful marks such as lines, zig zags or circles
- recognise the letters in their name
- hold a pen comfortably and write some or all of their name

[How we support this: fine motor and mark making resources offered daily; print in the environment; name-cards; named pegs in reception; staff encourage children to name their drawings.]

7. Can follow routines but cope with change, adapting well and behaving resiliently (e.g to trips out/visitors in)

Milestones:

- settle and begin to join in with some routines with help
- follow routines with adult support and promptings (i.e cope at transition times)
- develop secure relationships with staff
- follow instructions without support e.g lining up, tidy up
- develop a sense of belonging to the group and show confidence in new social situations

[How we support this: routines (timelines and Now & Next board); consistent approach by staff; warm & friendly staff; 'good listening' skills promoted; group rules; fire drills half termly disrupt the usual routine; spontaneous changes in routine; visitors and trips out]

8. Recognise other people's abilities and encourage them

Milestones:

- through non-verbal communication show that they are proud of their own achievements
- be able to talk about their own achievements with pride
- notice what others are doing
- comment on other's achievements in a positive way

[How we support this: staff encourage and praise specifically; use the 'praise chain' strategy; staff are role models and speak about different people's strengths and abilities; team games/challenges; encouraging cooperative play/teamwork; encouraging a child to scaffold a peer's learning]