



Pre-School

PROSPECTUS



Dover Acorns Pre-School, Heath Road, Leighton Buzzard,
Bedfordshire LU7 3AG
07415 633872

ddpreschleader@cbc.beds.sch.uk

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Doverly Acorns Pre-School. We are situated within the attractive woodland grounds of Doverly Down Lower School and have strong links with the school. This prospectus aims to answer some of your questions and to convey our commitment to the learning, development and well-being of the children in our care. If you would like to come and meet our staff and children during session time hopefully our termly open mornings will be convenient to you.

Please phone or email to secure a visit during our open mornings, or to arrange a more convenient time.

Our setting aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop
- add to the life and well-being of the local community
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected
- kept informed
- consulted
- involved
- included at all levels

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 parent helpers
- has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together
- builds on what he/she already knows and can do so that learning and development takes place
- has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is how the Government and early years' professionals describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5.

This is a very important stage as it helps children get ready for school as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born up until the age of 5, their early years experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

We are registered to deliver the EYFS and follow a legal document called the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

In 2012 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework also has a greater emphasis on parents' role in helping children develop. There have been some amendments, particularly to the Safeguarding and Welfare sections, which are effective from September 2014.

The EYFS sets out

- The legal welfare requirements that we must follow to keep your child safe and promote their welfare
- The 7 areas of learning and development which guide our engagement with your child's 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 at age 5, usually the end of the Reception year; these expectations are called the "Early Learning Goals (ELGs)"
- There is also guidance on planning the learning activities, and observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing

How my child will be learning

- The EYFS Framework explains how and what children will be learning to support their healthy development
- They will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development
- Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas are those most essential for your children's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in 4 specific areas. These are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. We will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary

schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that we can follow each child's individual needs and interests.

Here at Doverly Acorns our children learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Our learning involves activities and experiences for our children as follows:-

Personal, social and emotional development

Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and Language

Involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development

Involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Literacy

Involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers; calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding of the world

Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our setting uses the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the resources provided and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's journals. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves to a different setting or when they go on to school.

Records of achievement

The setting keeps a record of achievement for each child. This is done using an on line observation system. Paper records are also kept where we feel it is more appropriate. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which the key person and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together his/her achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for his/her well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and s/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress and appropriate next steps.

Working together for your children

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the 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
- allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety

These are the members of staff who work at our setting:

Mrs H Stiles	Pre-School Leader
Mrs S Wear	Deputy Pre-School Leader
Mrs F Clay	Pre-School Assistant
Mrs R Acosta	Pre-School Administration Assistant
Miss C Beare	Pre-School Administration Assistant
Miss S Geal	Pre-School Assistant

Session times:

Monday - Friday (term time only)

Morning session 09.10 am - 12.10 pm

Afternoon session 12.20 pm - 3.20 pm

All day flexible provision available between 9.10am - 3.20pm (lunchtime forms part of this).

Lunch club available each day

How parents take part in the setting

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their 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. You will be asked to complete a Registration Form, Starting Pre-School pack and various permission forms
- helping out during sessions and events
- sharing their own special interests with the children

- joining in community activities in which the setting takes part
- building friendships with other parents in the setting

Joining in

Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. Our parents have been very generous in the past by providing French lessons for the children, organising a local artist to do a demonstration, having police colleagues come in to talk to our children and cooking with our children to celebrate festivals from different cultures.

We welcome parents to drop into the setting to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

Key persons and your child

We use a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom s/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, s/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, s/he will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities.

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as having gained qualifications in early years care and education, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with current thinking about early years care and education. The setting also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education.

The setting's timetable and routines

We believe 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 setting are provided in ways that:

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

The session

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 children's health, their physical development 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 indoors.

For children that stay with us all day, the sessions are organised so that children can take part in a variety of child-chosen and adult-led activities. These take account of children's changing energy levels throughout the day. The setting caters for children's individual needs for rest and quiet activities during the day.

Snacks and meals

Snacks and meals are a social time when children and adults eat together. We provide morning and afternoon snacks. There is a choice of milk or water to drink and a choice of fruit to eat. At certain times other food will be available according to our themes and celebrations. Tell us about your child's dietary needs so that we can make sure that these needs are met.

Policies

Copies of the setting's policies are available in our entrance area and are available on request.

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

Staff work together to adopt the policies and have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of these policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling us to provide a quality service for our members and the local community. Comments and suggestions from parents will also be taken into account at the time of review.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. We work to procedures which are set down in the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document.

Our Designated Person is Mrs H Stiles (Pre-School Leader)

Our Designated Officer is Mrs D Brewster (Head Teacher)

Please see our Safeguarding Policy for further information.

When you visit our setting we will bring your attention to our Mobile Phone and Camera policy.

Children have access to computers and the internet whilst in Pre-School, and you will be asked to sign a form to give your permission. Please see our e-safety Policy for further information.

Confidentiality

It is important that confidentiality is maintained at all times within Dovery Acorns. All staff, parent helpers and students are made aware of the 'Children's Records', 'Confidentiality' and 'Information Sharing' policies.

Health and Safety

This is always a high priority in our day-to-day care. We have various Health and Safety policies and Risk Assessments and these include Fire Evacuation Procedure and daily kitchen, main room and outdoor checks.

Health Issues

Our outdoor and indoor areas are easily accessible for parents or children with disabilities and we have a disabled toilet.

If your child has an accident in Pre-School we will issue an accident report form which you will be asked to sign at the end of the session.

If your child is taken ill during the session we will phone the emergency contact numbers on their Registration Form to inform you. Children who are unwell should be kept at home. Children who have suffered with diarrhoea or sickness should be kept away from Pre-School for 48 hours following the last bout.

We will ask you to fill in the Permission to Administer Medication form if you need us to administer prescribed medication to your child.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

As part of the setting's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs and disabilities a child may have. The setting works to the requirements of the 1996/2011 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (July 2014).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs Hazel Stiles, Pre-School Leader

Registration of our setting

We are registered with Ofsted as part of Doverly Down School registration.

Pre-school Leader is responsible for:-

- administering the setting's finance
- managing the staff
- making sure that the setting has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service
- making sure that the setting works in partnership with the children's parents

Fees

We are registered to receive Early Years Funding and your child will be eligible to receive this from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. This is known as Universal 15 Hours funding. This is free at the point of delivery. Additionally, some families who meet certain criteria may also qualify for extended funding for their child/ren of up to 30 hours per week. This is known as Extended Hours funding. (For more information please visit the website: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

We will claim funding on your behalf via the School Census. We welcome children from their third birthday, providing there are sessions available, but charges will apply for these sessions until they become eligible for the funded care.

Fees for any non-funded sessions are charged at £12 per session which is payable on a monthly basis in arrears. We will issue an invoice for this non-funded care. Fees are still payable during short absences from Pre-school, including sickness and holidays. Our Terms and Conditions give more information on fees and notice period, a copy of which you will be asked to sign and return to Pre-School. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to the Pre-School Leader.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into our setting. We have a 'Role of Key Person and Settling In' policy: a copy of which is available on request. We will send you a 'Starting Pre-School' pack which you can return to us on or before their first day with us. This will provide us with information to help us provide the care that is best suited to your child. We will also ask you to complete various 'permission forms'.

Transition to School

We all appreciate that going to school is a change for young children that must be managed carefully. We would like all children to be excited about moving to Lower School and ensure that they feel happy and secure during this period of change.

We want all of our transition children to become familiar with the school environment, irrespective of which school they will be transferring to. It is important that our parents and carers feel included and valued throughout this process and we will include information and suggestions that you provide. During your child's final weeks with us we plan various sessions in school including: PE and hot lunch in the dining hall and visits to Reception Class, main playground and other classrooms and administrative areas.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. 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 name all clothing and footwear.

Dover Acorns polo shirts and fleeces can be purchased from Wear2School in Leighton Buzzard. You can contact Wear2School on 01525 373030 or visit info@wear2school.co.uk if you require any further information.

We will send you regular updates about news, information, planning, dates etc. These may be sent via email or made available in other formats on request. Our website also has information for parents including our newsletters and the 'Hints and tips' page, as well as our Pre-School gallery.

If you decide to join Dover Acorns we hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating.

The Pre-School team are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.