



# Acorn Integrated Nursery Unit

## Prospectus 2020-2021



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110 Victoria Road  
Carrickfergus  
BT38 7JL  
Tel: 93355229

Please feel free to contact us about any issue regarding your child, but please try to ring before 9am or after 11.30am. Seesaw will be the most appropriate method of keeping in touch with the nursery, messages can be sent and received privately.

## Nursery staff

### Principal

Mrs. C Webb

### Teacher

Mrs. Anna Rolloos                      Tuesday-Friday

Mrs. Joanne Arbuthnot      Monday

### Assistant

Mrs. Shonagh Patterson

# Acorn nursery timetable

- 9-9.45am Free play- during this time, children will choose from various play activities. Sand, dough, water, painting, computer, role-play and tabletop games are available daily. Structured art & craft activities will also be carried out during this time.
- 9.45am From 9.45am a buffet style snack is available for the children; they come to a table in small groups for fruit and bread, cereal or crackers. This is also a social occasion.
- 10.35-10.40am Tidy up and settling time at table top activities-children listen to calming music while tidying and sitting for a short settling period before going into the quiet room.
- 10.40-10.55am Circle/discussion time/storytime- through monthly topics children will develop talking and listening skills. Confidence and self-esteem will be developed through "circle time." Sesame Tree programme is followed to develop caring and empathy. During story & music time children's concentration and listening skills are developed. Song words will be sent home regularly to extend learning.
- 10.55-11.25am Outdoor play-this opportunity for physical play is taken daily unless the weather is very wet. In addition to the slide & pirate ship the children also experience bikes, prams, large building blocks & caring for the plants. During bad weather action rhymes and circle games will take place indoors. (The school hall is used weekly for P.E. sessions when the children develop throwing, catching, balancing and team games.)  
Table top toys or story may be used at the end of nursery if wet. Parents/carers are encouraged to come into the playroom and look at their child's work when collecting them. (This timetable is a guide; the nursery is flexible to allow for the children's needs.)

# The Importance of Pre-School Education

## Role of parents

Parents are the first educators of their young children and continue to play an important role in the early years. Staff aim to work in partnership with parents/carers for the benefit of the children. Being involved in the nursery has great benefits for your child as the learning taking place can be reinforced at home. Children will bring home monthly newsletters explaining the theme and activities taking place in nursery. Words of new songs and rhymes are also provided, as it can be very frustrating for both the child and parent when trying to repeat new songs learnt in nursery. Nursery will hope later in the year to run “come and play” days when the parents/carers are invited to spend the last 45mins of nursery playing alongside their child.



## Supporting children's personal, social and emotional development at home

Your child will feel secure with clear boundaries and routines at home as well as in nursery. Although it not always easy, try to keep calm with unwanted behaviour. As the adult you must always be in charge and not afraid of saying no! Help your child to develop a vocabulary of feeling words to enable them to describe when they feel angry or sad, encourage strategies to deal with these feelings appropriately. Nursery will help with ideas when we hold come and play days. Encourage children to wait for a turn, as this is a skill that they will need to learn. Give your child choices within reason e.g. 2 jumpers to choose from on a cold day-they cannot choose to wear a t shirt. Use first and then-first you eat your dinner then you may have a biscuit, first you can help tidy up the toys then you can play outside. This is a strategy we use often in nursery. Children should learn to become independent, so encourage dressing/undressing, putting on shoes. Please also teach your child to wash their hands thoroughly according to Public Health Agency. Though this may be time consuming in the beginning it will be quicker in the long term as your child gains independence. Children need to learn consequences- if they play co-operatively and follow instructions they will be praised, if they do not follow instructions they will face sanctions. Use positive language to guide your child e.g. “let me see nice walking” rather than “don't run.” Rather than “stop pushing” say “hands by your side/gentle hands.” By using the positive term, you will encourage positive behaviour.

## Role of staff

Staff qualified specifically in early years education lead the nursery. Mrs. Rolloos is a qualified teacher with a degree in Early Childhood Studies and a P.G.C.E. Mrs. Arbuthnot is also a qualified teacher and Mrs. Patterson, a qualified nursery assistant. They will form trusting relationships with the children and their families to ensure the child feels secure in the nursery environment. The staff plan a wide range of stimulating activities to meet the children's individual needs and ensure they all reach their full potential. They interact sensitively during play to extend thinking skills, language and provide help if needed. Each child's progress is closely observed to ensure they are further challenged during their play. All children are encouraged to become independent in their learning, solving problems and co-operating with others. Parent interviews and written reports are provided during the year and the children complete a profile as a record of their learning throughout the year.

## SeeSaw

This is a new app which is used to track the children's progress as well as sharing photographs and videos of the children learning through play. It can be accessed from a smart phone or computer and each child has their individual log in and folder. It has been extremely popular with parents this year and the nursery aim to regularly update parents/guardians with their child's pictures at play activities or creative work completed such as models made. When we have a visitor in nursery the app can immediately send home information and pictures about what has been happening in the nursery that day. As it keeps the parents informed on a weekly if not daily basis it is very relevant and children can look through the pictures describing what they have been learning about. It is a great way to exchange information and send a message to nursery. The reply may not be instant but it is monitored regularly.



## The pre-school curriculum

The curriculum we follow in nursery covers the 6 areas of learning:



### 1. Language development:

Children are encouraged to extend vocabulary through talking and listening, stories, rhymes and songs. They handle books independently and become aware that print has meaning. Children gain confidence in expressing feelings and interacting during social play. They recognise their name and develop pre-writing skills.

### 2. Personal, social & emotional development:

Children learn to share & take turns during activities. They also learn to co-operate with others during role-play & understand nursery rules. They develop friendships and become sensitive to the needs of others. The children show independence – putting on coats, going to the toilet & selecting play activities. Their confidence and self-esteem is developed, as everyone is a valued member of the group and treated with respect.

### 3. The arts:

Children enjoy daily opportunities to experiment with colour, shape & texture. Their imagination is expressed through painting, drawing and modelling dough - children choose what **they** want to make. They learn songs and respond to music/make their own music with percussion instruments.

4. Physical development & movement:  
Children develop fine motor skills and hand eye co-ordination through use of construction, threading, jigsaws and pencil activities. Their large motor skills are extended through play with large building equipment, climbing, sliding, pedalling and jumping. Children gain confidence through adventurous play outdoors and develop spatial awareness with bikes and prams.



5. Early mathematical experiences:

Children develop a positive attitude to maths in nursery. They begin to use mathematical language at sand and water play e.g. heavy, light, full, empty, more, less. They develop an awareness of size, order and pattern through sorting and matching activities. At snack they develop language associated with quantity, shape and order. Children will learn number rhymes and songs and will begin to recognise numbers on wall displays. Nursery staff are continually promoting maths language during play and these focus words and phrases will be sent home on newsletters regularly.

6. The World Around Us:

Children will be encouraged to observe, explore, investigate and select materials. They will learn to care for the living things in nursery- plants and animals. They will make simple predictions e.g. how properties will change when heated during cookery activities. Children will become familiar with I.C.T. by using the nursery computer. Children will care for the nursery environment both indoor and outdoor, replacing equipment when finished and helping to tidy. They will talk about themselves, families and their experiences during circle/discussion time. Children will learn about the roles of people in the local community e.g. police, nurse, fire-fighter, crossing patrol and dentist. They will explore items on the nature table/interest table and discuss the weather and seasons.

## Preparing your child for nursery - Clothing

Please ensure your child's clothes are comfortable and easily managed by themselves, as going to the toilet independently is an important part of nursery aims. Tracksuits or leggings are ideal and a school sweatshirt is available. We strongly encourage you to purchase 2 of these sweatshirts and wear them daily. Shoes/trainers should be Velcro or buckles which the children can close themselves. As children cannot tie laces at this age please do not send your child in lace ups, this will lead to frustration/accidents when they come loose! Although aprons are always worn for painting many messy activities may mean that occasionally children get paint/dough on their clothes (a sign they are working hard!) so please do not send them in "good clothes."



- All clothes that could be taken off during your child's time at nursery e.g. coat, hat, and sweatshirt must be clearly named as often children have similar belongings and they can be easily mistaken. As we enjoy daily outdoor play a coat is essential (and hat etc. on cold days.)
- For safety reasons open sandals or any shoes with heels should not be worn as using the climbing frame or bikes could be dangerous. Also please note it is not easy to climb and crawl through tunnels with a dress or skirt on!
- When children begin nursery, they should bring a complete change of clothes which will be left on their peg in the children's bathroom during their year at nursery.
- This will enable them to change into their own clothes should they have an accident or get wet at water play.

## Nursery information

### Costs

The nursery is free of charge, however we do ask for a fund of £15 per half term payable at the start of each half term. This allows the nursery to provide a healthy snack daily for the children such as toast, pancakes, muffins, pitta bread or yoghurts. They also have a choice of milk or water. Every day the children have a selection of fruit in conjunction with the school healthy eating policy. This fund also covers the cost of sundries such as computer ink for printing photos and special visits such as Dizzy Kids Drama.

### Holidays & absences

The nursery holidays are the same as the primary school and will be issued separately. If your child is ill or unable to attend for any reason you should phone the nursery that morning. Children who are unwell should be kept at home as they need one to one attention and will probably want the care of a family member. Also it is unfair to spread any infection among the other children in nursery. Please do not send a child to nursery if they have diarrhoea, vomiting, an unidentified rash, or conjunctivitis. **(children must be kept off for 48 hours after a tummy bug)**

**Please adhere to Covid Guidance found on PHA for related illness procedures.**

### Settling in

Every child is an individual therefore some may settle in very quickly while others may take some time before they feel secure in their new environment. The settling in process in nursery takes 2 weeks when the intake is staggered with a few children starting each day. On their first day your child will stay for 1 hour and if they settle well this will be increased to full session time. This is essential to allow the staff to get to know your child and build up a relationship with them. Don't worry if your child has problems settling and do not hesitate to speak to the teacher about any queries you may have as they will happily discuss a flexible settling in plan for your child. Please contact nursery via seesaw for reassurance that your child has settled if they were upset when being left. If a child is upset and not settling the nursery will contact you.

### Early Years Inclusion Service

The nursery have previously taken part in the Early Years Inclusion Service training This Education Authority team provided training and support for staff in preschool settings to provide early intervention. Their aim is to identify any delay in children's development and address any concerns from parents and staff about children's needs. Areas such as language, communication, cognitive and behavioural development are identified. Staff have built experience and strategies to improve understanding of how best to provide support for children with additional needs. This is all done in close partnership with parents and referrals to outside agencies are always discussed with parents first.

## More Nursery information

### Medical matters

It is important to inform staff if your child is on any type of medication. If your child requires an inhaler they must bring a spare one to be kept in nursery, in the first aid cupboard, with the child's name clearly labelled. During warm weather we would ask that you apply sun cream directly before bringing your child to nursery, as we cannot apply it in case of allergies. A sun hat or cap should also be brought on sunny days to allow your child to play comfortably outside.

### Personal belongings

At present no belongings will be brought into nursery from home except a coat and hat. The child's change of clothes will be kept in the children's bathroom.

### Nursery behaviour agreement

Each September the children and staff discuss and agree on simple rules for a happy classroom. The children learn these very quickly during the first month. They allow the nursery to run smoothly and usually include; walking in the classroom, wearing aprons when painting, sharing equipment and not throwing sand. These are to ensure the safety and well being of all children in nursery. If a child is physically hurting another child or playing inappropriately they will be removed from that activity for a short time. Any persistent behavioural problems will be discussed with the parents. The nursery has a positive discipline policy; children are praised for appropriate behaviour, which will then encourage this to be repeated.

### Changing procedure

Should your child need changed in nursery either because they have had an accident or got wet when playing they will be changed into their spare clothes. We encourage children to be independent and often they can change themselves in the children's bathroom. Should they need help in changing staff will assist them in the bathroom. Parents will sign a permission form for changing to be carried out before children start nursery.



Policies-A full set of nursery policies is available to parents in the nursery hall. Our safeguarding summary is issued to all parents.

Pastoral care in schools  
CHILD PROTECTION

How a parent can make a complaint

I have a concern about my/a child's safety

I can talk to the class teacher  
Mrs. Rolloos

If I am still concerned, I can talk to our  
designated teacher for child protection  
Mrs. Rolloos/deputy Mrs. McIlmail

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the  
Principal - Mrs. Webb (principal)

If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the  
Chairperson of the Board of Governors -  
Mr Paul Comins c/o Acorn Integrated Primary School

At any time, I can talk to the social worker 02893315114  
Or the police care team in Newtownabbey  
028 9065 0222