

PARENT HANDBOOK

Charlton Acorns PRESCHOOL



A collaborative painting,
produced on large paper outside.

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STARTING AT PRE-SCHOOL

Our Prospectus aims to provide you with all the general information about Charlton Acorns Pre-school, giving you a view of how our sessions run and our Partnership with Charlton Primary School. You are very welcome to visit the Pre-school at any time, or you can contact us on 01235 224088 or e-mail manager.charltonacorns@gmail.com to arrange a convenient time, or to obtain an application form. If you have any queries or there is something we have not covered in this prospectus, please do ask. More details are available from our website www.charltonacorns.co.uk

OUR AIMS, VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Charlton Acorns Pre-school provides a relaxed and friendly setting in which young children can play and learn. It is widely recognised that children learn best when they feel happy, secure and are suitably challenged and we aim to provide this through a play-based curriculum with both child and adult-initiated activities and exploration. We provide an environment where children can learn through their play and while we offer adult-led activities and group time the focus is still on play and discovery as the children can learn at their own pace. Within our practice we regularly observe each child and note their achievements and current interests. This information is used to guide us when planning future activities to ensure that each child has the opportunity to experience a variety of areas aimed at their individual level and further their holistic development. Children are not made to take part in any activity they do not want to do, but gentle encouragement may be given to help each child to diversify and try new things.



LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and the world around them. It is this interaction that we seek to build on with you and your child as they take their first steps on the journey to learning. At Charlton Acorns we know that each child is unique and we endeavor to tap into this uniqueness and build this into positive experiences and relationships as your child takes part in activities and interactions at Pre-School.

OPENING TIMES

The Pre-school meets Monday to Friday throughout the school term for the following sessions:-

Monday	Morning Session (9 – 12pm)
To	Lunch Session (12-1pm)
Friday	Afternoon Session (12pm-3pm)

Children are eligible to attend at 2 years 6 months old and can continue until they start school. We plan sessions with a variety of activities and incorporate the children's current interests for discussions and activities for the children to take part in. At the same time we encourage free play, so that children can develop at their own pace and explore things they are attracted to.

We are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance which ensures we are kept up to date with new initiatives and training. Our Pre-school is managed by a committee, which is elected annually by all parents and carers. Charlton Acorns Pre-school is a registered charity and our fees are kept to the minimum necessary to cover wages, heating, electricity and insurance and they are reviewed on an annual basis. Fund-raising is therefore a vital aspect of the committee's work as well as providing for all the consumables and equipment.

THE KEY PERSON APPROACH

We operate a system recommended by the Pre-school Learning Alliance whereby every family is allocated a member of staff as their Key Person. The Early Years Foundation Stage recognises the importance of emotional attachments for young children, particularly when away from their parents. Through this approach we aim for each child to be given the opportunity to form a strong relationship with a 'Key Person' who will help them settle and offer security through a friendly and familiar face. We also hope you will get to know your Key Person and share family values and expectations with them. They will also discuss your child's progress and share his/her play plans, records and observations with you. Similarly, if you have any concerns or requests, your child's Key Person is the person to contact. Your input is welcomed and valued in assisting the Key Person in observing your child and meeting their individual learning and emotional needs.



SETTLING IN

We work hard to ensure that the transition from home to pre-school is as smooth and worry free as possible for both you and your child. In order to achieve this there are a number of things which we have put in place and we hope that you will take advantage of these one you have registered your child to help you all to settle and become used to the setting and routines.

1. **HOME VISITS.** Children who meet their Key Person at home, in a safe and familiar place find it much easier to settle once they begin at Pre-school. We therefore aim to offer a home visit to all our new families.
2. **STAY AND PLAY.** Children are invited with their parents/carers to their initial session where they can play knowing someone 'safe' is nearby. This enables families to get to know the staff, children and setting before that first step of staying alone. However, this is flexible to the needs of the children and families, some children need more time to settle and this can be discussed on an individual basis.
3. **FIRST DAY.** We try to stagger the starting date for our intakes in order that the chosen Key Person can give individual attention to each child.

WHAT TO BRING

It is best if your child wears comfortable, washable clothes. The children can be very active and often get quite messy. Clothes which are easy to remove and put on help your child become independent, although staff members are always willing to help if needed. We do play outside most days, so please ensure your child has a warm coat and appropriate footwear in cooler weather. Likewise, loose, cool clothing and a sunhat are ideal in the summer.

Your child will need to bring a backpack containing the following:

- Slippers/indoor shoes.
- Spare underwear and, if appropriate, spare pull-ups/nappies and nappy sacks.
- Complete set of spare clothes.
- Jumper or fleece.
- Coat - even in warmer months it's good to have a waterproof in their bag. Please remember that we play outside for up to an hour during each session, so even if you have not needed a coat on the way to preschool, your child may need one for playtime.
- Hat - for hot and cold weather.

All items should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Please **DO NOT** bring the following:

- Toys from home – unless needed to smooth transition.
- Food or drink (other than packed lunch)
- Money
- Sweets

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

We will open the doors at the end of each session and welcome you in to collect your children, apart from the 1pm pick up where we ask that you ring the bell to gain entry. This is an opportunity for you to talk to a member of staff and for us to share with you. Please collect your children and their belongings and check their tray for any communication and items that they may have produced during the session.

We take the safety and security of the children in our care very seriously and have a system in place to monitor those adults collecting children from our sessions. Upon registration parents are asked to name all those adults who may collect their child on a regular basis, we also hold a book for you to record details of any adult collecting on a particular date (and who isn't on your collection list). Whenever possible we would ask to be introduced to someone due to collect your child, however we appreciate that this may not always be possible and on those occasions we will ask for the agreed password to be used. If we are at all uncertain about the identity of a person arriving to collect a child, we may telephone the parents for confirmation. Please understand that this is for the safety of your child and we ask those involved to be patient and understanding throughout this procedure. It is important to update the collection information we hold if circumstances change as we CANNOT allow anyone to collect a child who isn't registered with us or entered in the collection book.

DROPPING OFF CHILDREN

When coming into pre-school please encourage your child to find their name/picture card on one of the hooks and self register. Hang up their coat and bag, change their shoes if necessary (in dry weather it is OK to leave their outdoor shoes on if they are clean).

Please let a member of staff know if your child has been at all unwell recently or if they have had a bump or scrape. It is important for our own records and an Ofsted requirement to note these down.

If your child needs to take time off from school, please do call and let us know so that they are marked in the register as an authorised absence. Telephone 01235 224088.

In order to provide a healthy environment for children and staff and to ensure poorly children are given the care and attention they need, please note that your child should be kept off school:

- If they have suffered sickness or diarrhoea. They should not come back to school until a clear 48hrs has elapsed from the last time they were ill.
- If your child has a temperature over the normal range, please keep them at home or seek medical assistance (normal range is 97 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 36.1 to 37.8 Centigrade).
- If your child has had administered paracetamol or ibuprofen. The child should be kept away from school for at least 24 hours after the last dose, to ensure they are over the cause and symptoms.

Please note that cars are not allowed on site at any time (except for staff cars). Please park with consideration outside the school grounds or consider coming to preschool by alternative means; there are bicycle and scooter racks outside school which preschool families can use.

No dogs are allowed on school premises for Health and Safety reasons, except for official helping dogs.

FOREST SCHOOL

Forest School is an inspirational process, which offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.

Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education.

It is our aim to nurture children to be the best that they can be. Through holistic experiences we aim to enable children to become capable and confident in their abilities, to have the tools and the self-assurance to take risks, ask questions and build their knowledge, engage with the natural environment and have fun!

By engaging with the Forest School Principles (Page 4 Forest School Handbook) we aim to provide a holistic experience for our learners that supports them to engage in hands on activities at a level that recognises their age and stage of development, well trained Forest School practitioners are on hand to scaffold children's experiences appropriately in line with the Principles. We provide a minimum of six sessions for set groups to support confidence in a familiar group, enabling deep and risky play to be experienced and enjoyed.

Forest School Association Principles

Principle 1: Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.

Principle 2: Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

Principle 3: Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Principle 4: Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

Principle 5: Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

Principle 6: Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning



OUR FEES

The fees structure is reviewed annually and priced competitively. Families who may have difficulty paying any fees should speak in confidence to the Fees Secretary as external assistance can sometimes be obtained. Many families are entitled to Child Tax Credit which can help with the costs of childcare.

Invoices that remain unpaid at the due date will be re-issued and will incur an additional 10% charge on top of the unpaid amount. Should invoices remain unpaid for a specified length of time, our solicitors will be instructed to take the matter to Court to recover the money.

Families are asked to contribute towards the cost of snacks. A donation per session per week is suggested, payable every term. Envelopes are issued and sent home in your child's tray, please look out for them and when complete, please hand to a member of staff.

The nursery education grant and additional fees pay for staff wages, insurance and consumables. As a charity, the Pre-School actively fundraises to cover the costs of maintaining the building and larger items of equipment. Families are asked to actively support these events, which directly benefit their children.

In order to keep our fees as low as possible invoices are handed out during the first few weeks of term and prompt payment is much appreciated. Families experiencing problems concerning fees can speak to the Manager or Treasurer in confidence and we will try to help them in any way we can. Fees are still payable when a child is absent from Pre-school whether because of illness or holiday. If you wish to withdraw your child altogether, a period of six weeks term time notice is usually required.

The Government currently funds up to 5 sessions (a minimum of 3 hours) per week for 38 weeks per year for each child from the term after their 3rd birthday. The Manager or Treasurer will contact you to complete the documentation as soon as this applies to your child.

Fees are currently £12.00 per 3 hour session.

Where funding is being 'spent' elsewhere i.e. other Pre-school or Day Nursery current charges per hour may rise.

We also accept Nursery Vouchers.

CONTACT DETAILS - IMPORTANT

Please make sure that you give the pre-school up-to-date contact details for yourself and other carers. An alternative contact, in case of emergency, is also requested plus a password in case of emergency.

SAFEGUARDING

Under the Children Act we have a responsibility to protect the children in our care and we must report any incidents or suspected abuse to Social Services in line with our policy and procedures. Our named persons for Safeguarding are Louise Dymock, Manager and Anna Clark, Supervisor.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We aim to provide a Pre-school that is available to all children and families in the community. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Our named person is Chris Froud, cover supervisor.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We aim to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children including those with disabilities or learning difficulties. Our named person for this is Anna Clark, Supervisor, who has attended courses on special educational needs and manages our system of observations and record-keeping, in conjunction with parents, ensures we can monitor children's needs/progress on an individual basis.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

The Pre-school supports the use of positive behavior management. Our named person for this is Louise Dymock, Manager. Positive behaviour is always praised and the staff will endeavor to provide positive models. Should a child misbehave an explanation will be given to the child as to why their behaviour is inappropriate and where necessary a time-out period is implemented.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

When an accident happens at Pre-school, a member of staff will deal with it, record the details in the accident book and inform the parents and gain a signature from the parents. However, if an accident occurs, which cannot be dealt with on the premises we will contact the parents, or failing that, the emergency contact number given by them. If there is no reply from this number a member of staff will take the child to the surgery or Emergency Unit. Meanwhile, we will continue to contact the parents as quickly as possible.

KEY PERSON MEETINGS

Each year we hold parent's evening when you are welcome to visit preschool, talk with the Key person and look through your child's file. Please speak to a staff member if you would like to see the file at any other time. Similarly, if you or your key person feels that another meeting would be beneficial for your child, then a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We understand the importance of Parent involvement in children's learning and encourage all family members to contribute to their child's Pre-school experience and support learning at home. One way to do this is by staying to play. This is an opportunity to see what goes on during our sessions, share any skills you may have (whether you are a fantastic artist or just enjoy reading stories one to one!). All children love to have a parent to 'show off' and you will have the chance to explore the activities we offer and how these support your child's learning and development.

We understand that it is not always possible for parents to come in and help, and there are many other ways you can be involved, from carrying out activities at home, bringing in items from home and sharing other experiences from home, or joining the committee or fundraising events. We welcome help from mums, dads, grandparents or any other carer!

Our online learning journey allows you to log on and see photographs and observations of what your child does when they are here. Plus you can share photographs and comments from home.

Regular newsletters are sent out by email sharing news, dates, events and ideas.

THE COMMITTEE

Whilst the Manager has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Pre-school and the registration process, the committee (made up of parents and carers) are responsible for the management and administration of the Pre-school. The role of the committee includes the appointment of staff, policy decisions, fund raising and generally ensuring that the Pre-school runs smoothly and efficiently and meets any statutory requirements.

Both the staff and committee are keen to encourage parents to become involved with Pre-school activities and it is an excellent way for parents to contribute to decisions about their child's Pre-school and to get to know other parents. There is always room on the committee for willing volunteers!

Chairperson – can be contacted by email on charltonacorns@gmail.com

STAFFING

Preschool currently employs members of staff including a cleaner. At least four preschool staff are present at each session. All of them are enthusiastic and committed, having many years experience between them. Staff members are all qualified or studying for qualifications and everyone attends regular courses to update their knowledge. All the staff are trained in first aid, food safety and safeguarding procedures. Photographs of the staff members are on display in the preschool foyer.

Louise Dymock BA(Hons), FD, EYTT, Forest School Leader – Manager. She holds a Degree in Early Childhood and Early Years Professional Status and Forest School Leader. She has three children, and enjoys jogging, Nordic walking, canoeing, walking the family dog and helping out at the local scout group. She has also completed the national three peaks challenge to raise funds for pre-school. She is the Safeguarding and Behaviour coordinator.

Anna Clark – Deputy Manager. She holds a Level 3 in Early Years and is currently undertaking a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies. She is married with three young children. She enjoys time with her family, keeping fit and cycling. She has also completed the national three peaks challenge to raise funds for pre-school. Anna is the preschool's Special Education Needs coordinator (SENCo) and Physical Development coordinator.

Rosie Brandon – Supervisor. She holds a Level 3 in Early Years and is just completing her Degree in Early Childhood Studies. She is the coordinator for Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World. She is very creative and enjoys craft activities and baking lovely cakes.

Judith Jackson – Pre-School Assistant. She holds a Level 3 in Early Years. She is married with two young children. She enjoys yoga, swimming, jigsaws and singing in Rock Choir. Judith is the preschool's Health and Safety and Mathematical coordinator.

Susan Ashwin - Pre-School Assistant. She holds a Level 3 in Early Years. She loves working with children and finds her job immensely rewarding. She values the time spent with her own family – husband and two grown-up children – and also enjoys golf, flying kites and cooking. She is the Communication and language and Literacy coordinator.

Hayley Primrose – Pre-School Helper. She holds a Level 2 qualification in childcare and is looking forward to continuing her studies up to Level 3. She has one child and enjoys walks with the family dog. She is the Personal, Social and Emotional Development co-ordinator and role play.

Lorraine Brew – Pre-School Assistant. She is currently training towards Level 2 and is looking forward to continuing her studies. She has three children and a family dog.

Sue Farrow – Pre-School cleaning operative, keeps the building clean and tidy.

POLICY DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

The Pre-school works in line with agreed policies in the following areas:-

1.0 Child Protection

- 1.1 Children's rights and entitlements
- 1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection
- 1.3 Looked after children
- 1.4 Uncollected child
- 1.5 Missing child
- 1.6 Use of mobile phones and cameras

2.0 Suitable People

- 2.1 Employment
- 2.2 Student placements

3.0 Staff Qualifications, Training, Support and Skills

- 3.1 Induction of staff, volunteers and managers
- 3.2 First aid

4.0 Key Person

- 4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

5.0 Staff:Child Ratios

- 5.1 Staffing

6.0 Health

- 6.1 Administering medicines
- 6.2 Managing children who are sick, infectious, or with allergies
- 6.3 Recording and reporting of accidents and incidents
- 6.4 Nappy changing
- 6.5 Food and drink
- 6.6 Food hygiene
- 6.7 Basic kitchen opening and closing checks template

7.0 Managing Behaviour

- 7.1 Achieving positive behaviour

8.0 Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

- 8.1 Health and general standards
- 8.2 Maintaining children's safety and security on premises
- 8.3 Supervision of children on outings and visits
- 8.4 Risk assessment
- 8.5 Fire safety and emergency evacuation
- 8.6 Animals in the setting
- 8.7 No-smoking
- 8.8 Health and safety risk assessment template
- 8.9 Fire safety risk assessment template

9.0 Equal Opportunities

- 9.1 Valuing diversity and promoting equality

9.2 Supporting children with special educational needs

10.0 Information and Records

- 10.1 Early years prospectus
- 10.2 Admissions
- 10.3 Application to join
- 10.4 Registration form
- 10.5 Parental involvement
- 10.6 Children's records
- 10.7 Providers records
- 10.8 Transfer of records to school
- 10.9 Confidentiality and client access to records
- 10.10 Information sharing
- 10.11 Working in partnership with other agencies
- 10.12 Making a complaint

11.0 Appendix

- 11.1 Sample policy and procedure

Safe storage of records

Upon registration, parents are asked to read and agree to the policies and procedures of the pre-school. A full set of policies can be found in the pre-school entrance hall and on our website www.charltonacorns.co.uk.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

There are 4 main themes within the Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS), with each area being divided into 4 principles to support these themes. These are summarised below:-

1. A UNIQUE CHILD

"Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured."

1.1 Child Development

Children develop at different rates and every area of development is equally important.

1.2 Inclusive Practice

Diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against.

1.3 Keeping Safe

Children develop resilience when their physical and psychological well-being is protected by adults.

1.4 Health & Well-being

Children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being.

At Charlton Acorns Pre-school we understand that all children are individual with differing needs and interests. We offer a range of activities throughout our sessions, encouraging the children to build on what they already know and further their understanding of the world around them. Children can choose which activities they would like to explore both indoors and outside. We provide a safe environment that minimises risks to children, but at the same time offer a structure in which they can learn to take their own risks. We have a quiet area where children can rest or sleep if they need to. We monitor each child regularly and record their progress in their development file, this can take place through daily discussions with the child about what they are doing or through more formal observations. This information is used by staff to plan areas where the child should progress over the next few weeks/months. Parents are regularly given the opportunity to review their child's file and can ask to do so at any time. Staff are happy to discuss any concerns you may have and time can be arranged for any discussions in confidence.



".....Children dipping cooked spaghetti into paint and then throwing it at the paper. The children were able to use their senses to explore the ingredients, they talked about how slippery, squidgy and slimy the spaghetti was. They used their motor skills to pick up the spaghetti thereby employing fine and gross motor movements as they threw the spaghetti at the paper."

2. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

"Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person."

2.1 Respecting each other

Children develop best when their feelings are respected and acknowledged.

2.2 Parents as Partners

Parents are children's most enduring educators. When parents and staff work together, children's development and learning will be enhanced.

2.3 Supporting Learning

Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more than any amount of resources.

2.4 Key Person

A Key Person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building a relationship with their parents.

Through our Key Person Approach we aim to provide young children with secure relationships as a firm foundation for them to gradually learn to become independent at their own pace. We understand the important role parents play in educating their children and welcome any input and involvement. Each child has a development file which we share and discuss with parents. We also ask for contributions from home, such as current interests, developmental achievements, etc.



'GARDENING'

The children are preparing the vegetable patch for our seeds. Whilst digging they found some lovely juicy worms, prompting a discussion on size, shape and habitats, the adult supported the children to think about animal homes.

3. ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

3.1 Observation, Assessment & Planning

Schedules and planning should flow with the individual child's needs. All planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning.

3.2 Supporting Every Child

The environment supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.

3.3 The Learning Environment

A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging indoor and outdoor spaces.

3.4 The Wider Context

Working in partnership with other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community supports children's development

The spaces available to the children are safe, stimulating, unique, challenging and fun. The adults around them support, encourage, suggest and demonstrate new ideas, skills and ways to use them.

All children are included in our cycle of observations as well as daily 'snap shot' records. This ensures that the learning needs of all children are met and helps plan suitable activities to support them. By creating a secure bond with the adults in the setting we can enhance the children's learning through questioning and by encouraging their own explorations. Many activities allow the child to learn through their personal discoveries rather than being 'taught'.



PLAYDOUGH

The children make their own play dough every week; they are able to select the colour and add spices to make it smell nice.

In this photo one child has enhanced the provision by selecting foil cases from nearby shelving to make cakes for their Halloween party.

4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

4.1 Play and Exploration

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and through play children learn at their highest level.

4.2 Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

4.3 Creativity and critical thinking

When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations they discover connections and come to better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think and ask questions.

4.4 Areas of Learning & Development

All areas are connected and are equally important. The six areas of learning are:-

Personal, social, emotional development

Children are encouraged to play in groups of different sizes on a wide range of tasks so as to develop their social skills. These include sharing, turn taking (eg board games), expressing themselves (puppets and drama), trusting new grown ups (ie staff and parent helpers) and other children as well as learning to become more independent. At circle time the children are invited to show and discuss items they have brought in for 'show and tell'. They are expected to listen carefully and show respect for the feelings of others.

Physical Development

Fine and gross motor skills are constantly practiced during sessions. The former through activities such as colouring, pouring in the sand and water tray, painting, writing, threading, kneading, cutting and gluing, etc. The latter through using equipment to throw, catch, pedal, balance, hop and jump. We have a lovely outside play area where the children can ride tricycles and play games and explore in our mud kitchen.



Communication and language

We have a book corner which is arranged with comfortable seating, where the children are able to select a book for themselves or ask to share it with an adult or friends. Each Pre-school session includes singing, rhymes or ring games and are rounded off with story time. Each child is expected to listen attentively and is drawn into the discussion. The staff work to extend the children's vocabulary and use language in all activities, especially through role play. We focus on the children's developing listening skills and in being able to distinguish between sounds and noises around them as well as using a selection of word games and alphabet puzzles to promote both visual and audio discrimination. The children are encouraged to develop their writing skills, starting with swirls and 'scribbles' and eventually moving onto 'pretend' writing and emerging recognisable letters. We support the children in their development of hand-eye co-ordination skills, pencil control, as well as fine (finger) and gross (whole body) motor skills. By providing a language rich environment the children learn that speaking, reading and writing are a normal part of our lives and soon wish to engage with these activities. A tray of writing materials (including pens, pencils, notepaper and booklets) is always available to extend their opportunities for writing in role-play situations.



The children can enjoy a variety of 'mark making' activities both indoors and outside. The ability to make whole arm movements help with writing skills as these also use the shoulder muscles

Literacy

Children are encouraged to explore a variety of media in our book corner, from books they have made themselves, information books, magazines and story books. We encourage children to care for the books. We support their interest in the written word in many other ways to, signs on the toy boxes, coat pegs with photos and names, self registration. We follow the Letters and Sounds program to further support and enhance children's interest, this is continued in Charlton Primary School as children move to big school.

Mathematics

At Pre-school we tackle mathematics very practically. We use sand and water trays, play dough, cooking and construction kits to develop the children's sense of spatial awareness and measurement, including capacity and volume. Through a range of games and apparatus children are introduced to the number system and the language involved in simple operations such as addition/subtraction, sorting/sequencing (eg. Dominoes and threading beads). We use many opportunities for counting/matching throughout each session. A variety of activities to allow the exploration of patterns also encourage the children to think about the repetition in number patterns.

Understanding of the world

Children are encouraged to think about and discuss their environment, explore materials, and observe the living world. Visitors (eg. The Police and Fire Brigade) help to extend these experiences as well as visits to amenities within the local environment. We have developed a planting area where we grow vegetables, fruits, sensory plants, as well as stinging nettles to attract the butterflies and caterpillars! Our mud kitchen supports the children to explore natural materials in a hands on way. We also have use of Charlton School Forest School area in the adjacent nature reserve.

Expressive Arts and Design

Opportunities for music making, singing, imaginative play, dance and art and craft activities are provided, both indoors and outside, to allow the children to explore their senses and express their feelings freely. Some of these activities may be taped and work is displayed around the room to help the children develop a sense of pride and ownership in their surroundings.



Creativity is more than just painting, it includes imaginative play, singing, dancing, exploring materials as well as craft activities.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Ofsted Helpline	0300 123 1231	www.ofsted.gov.uk
Oxfordshire Family Information Service	01993 886933	email: enquiries@oxoncis.org.uk
Oxfordshire Early Years and Childcare Service	01865 815449	
Oxfordshire Preschool Learning Alliance	01865 744470	www.pre-school.org.uk/oxfordshire
Charlton Primary School	01235 762861	email: office.2573@charlton.oxon.sch.uk
Charlton Acorns Preschool Charlton Primary School Charlton Village Road Wantage Oxon OX12 7HG	01235 224088	www.charltonacorns.co.uk

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD

If you're worried about any child and think they may be a victim of neglect, abuse or cruelty, you should speak to someone in authority about your concerns.

There are a number of organisations you can speak to but if you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999. You can also get advice and help from NSPCC helpline on 0800 800 5000 or get help via email on help@nspcc.org.uk.

You do not need to know everything about the child and what is happening just to be worried, or feel that everything is not right.

You can also contact your local children social care team to discuss your concerns on

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Team - 0845 050 7666.

The social care team will always take your concerns seriously but due to confidentiality they will not be able to give you updates on any actions they have taken in relation to specific children.

OFSTED – COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

OFSTED does have some powers to investigate your concerns about services we inspect or regulate, but we would suggest that you start by discussing your worries directly with the person in charge, for example the nursery manager.

For concerns about an early years and childcare provider go to [INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT OFSTED'S ROLE IN REGULATING CHILDCARE](#) or you can call on 0300 123 4666.

WHY WE 'DO' WHAT WE 'DO' AT PRE-SCHOOL.....

Because children retain
10% of what they read...
20% of what they hear.....
30% of what they see....
50% of what they see and hear
90% of what they experience 'first-hand'

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY



We hope this handbook has given you an insight into what Charlton Acorns Pre-school provides for young children and their families, and what it is like for the children who attend our sessions. If there is anything else you would like to know, or if you would like to arrange a visit please telephone us 01235 224088. Or just call in and visit anytime.