

Acorn Class

Welcome to Acorn Class

We hope the following information will provide you with an understanding of the daily routine of the class and help to assist your child in a smooth transition into school.

Acorn Staff:

Monday – Wednesday: Mrs Garlick (Teacher)

Thursday: Mrs Dean (Teacher)

Friday: Mrs Tyler (Headteacher)

Monday – Friday: Mrs Presland (Higher Level Teaching Assistant)

Learning and Independence:

Please wait outside on the playground in the mornings. The door will be open from 8.45am and Acorn staff will come to meet you and your child. Please ensure your child is in school by 8.55am. We encourage them to say goodbye to their adults, and they can walk into school with their teacher. We encourage the children to develop their independence from their very first day supporting them as they put away their belongings and hanging up their coats. On the first few days children may find the routines of where to put drinks, bags and coats a little tricky, however they learn very quickly what to do and this ensures the smooth running of the class and maximises learning opportunities.

For your information:

Drinking Water Bottles are left on a tray in the classroom. Water bottles are refilled by staff during the day where necessary. Children are encouraged to drink throughout the day and can, at any time, help themselves. These must contain water.

Wellington Boots can be left in a bag on your child's peg.

Packed Lunches are left in the classroom.

Book Bags are placed in the large book bag box in the classroom. A member of staff checks the book bags daily for any letters or reply slips that you may have placed inside.

On arrival into the class children have early morning activities until our shared registration where the children choose their dinner option from the daily menu or their home packed lunch option. This information is on the website so please encourage your child to choose an option before coming into school each day. A member of staff will assist your child with putting their belongings in the correct place until they are confident to do this on their own.

Collective Worship:

Collective worship takes place daily, and Reception children are included in the daily assembly as soon as they feel ready to participate.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Your child will be following the new EYFS framework which outlines the standards for learning, development and care for children. The guidance recognises the importance of high quality early years experiences which help to build a secure foundation for continued learning throughout their school years and beyond. Your child will be working to achieve the Early Learning Goals across seven areas of learning and development through planned, purposeful play with a balance between structured activities which are lead by the teacher, and those which are initiated by the children themselves. The Early Years Foundation Stage stresses the importance of children learning through play, and we plan opportunities for play into the school day and this is highly valued. The classroom extends beyond the walls of the building into the outside area. Children move freely between these two areas; so please ensure that your child has suitable clothing for all seasons.

School Lunches:

Your child is welcome to stay for lunch from the start. Our chef cooks delicious, well balanced meals and there is a choice of two hot meals (including vegetarian) and a cold option (hot in the winter) or you may bring a packed lunch from home. For your convenience children may switch between school meals and home packed lunch as required. Our lunch time supervisors take great care in providing a happy, welcoming place to eat lunch and give encouragement to children to eat healthily. We encourage a restaurant style approach where lunch is viewed as a social occasion for chatting. Children having school lunches are encouraged to eat as much as they can. Sometimes, in the first few weeks, children don't eat very much, but our lunchtime supervisors will monitor this and inform the class teacher accordingly. After lunch the children play outside.

Home Packed Lunches:

As part of our commitment to healthy eating we ask that you do not include chocolate bars, sweets, fizzy drinks or cans of drink in your child's packed lunch. So that you can monitor what your child has eaten, all rubbish from packed lunches is sent home.

End of the Day routines:

The school day ends with story time and then children prepare for home. Please wait outside the Acom Class and we will send the children out to meet you. The children will take their book bag and water bottle home daily. To ensure the safety of all children we need to know who is collecting your child. If we have not been told of a change, there may be a delay in your child leaving whilst we verify who is collecting them.

Milk:

School milk is provided free to children under-fives and there is a small charge made to those over 5. (Please see enclosed letter.)

Fruit:

Children in the infants are provided with a free piece of fruit every day. We have a mid-morning snack time where we all sit together and share experiences; this practice helps social development and builds self-esteem. At this point children are able to have school milk or they can drink from their water bottle.

Reading:

Shortly after your child starts school they will be given their first book to share with you. The book and reading record will be kept in your child's book bag and should be brought into school each day. We would encourage you to read with your child every day at home and to write in their reading record book to report on their progress. If your child is just beginning to read and does not recognise many words yet, they will enjoy looking at and talking about the pictures and making up their own stories.

Phonics:

Phonics is the prime strategy used for decoding text and the children will have a daily discrete synthetic phonics lesson to help them practice pre-reading and writing skills leading onto becoming fluent independent readers and writers. At Benington we follow the DfE Letters and Sounds Programme which has proven to be very successful in early reading and writing development. The letter sounds (phonemes) are taught in a structured order so that from very early on children can segment and blend sounds to make words. Each week we will share with you the sounds being taught in school so you can help your child at home. We also have high frequency word lists which include some words that cannot be decoded using phonics, and we refer to these words as 'tricky words'. These words need to be learnt and will also be sent home for you to share with the children.

Maths:

Maths is everywhere! Children are taught maths using everyday situations e.g. counting how many milks we need for the class, number of school dinners required etc. Maths is also taught through songs, rhymes games and stories. As children become confident with solving practical problems we begin to teach ways of recording their problems using number sentences. Times tables are taught by rote from an early age, we start with counting in 10's, 2's and 5's and then progress to linking the counting to 'sets of' eventually leading to the times tables. Division begins with sharing an even number of objects into equal sets e.g. 10 sweets between 2 bears.

Parent Partnership:

At Benington we believe that your child's education is a partnership between the school and home. We encourage home-school links so that we can work together to have a positive impact on your child's learning and development. Each half term we send home an overview of the learning, via Parentmail, linked to our topics so that you can support your child and share in their learning. We encourage children to bring topic related items, craft and models, photos and news from home to share with the class when it is their turn for show and tell.

School-Ready skills to practise:

Prior to your child starting in Reception there are a few skills which would make their transition smoother:

- Be responsible for their own personal hygiene
- Be able to dress and undress themselves
- Be able to use a knife and fork
- Recognise their own name

Contacting Acorn Staff:

If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact Acorn Class staff via the emails below. Alternatively, you can contact the school office to arrange a telephone conversation for more urgent matters.

Mrs Garlick: annie.garlick@benington.herts.sch.uk

Mrs Dean: jen.dean@benington.herts.sch.uk

Mrs Tyler: head@benington.herts.sch.uk

We look forward to working with your child,

Acorn Class Team