

## Acorn Playgroup and Pre-School Newsletter

### Summer Term 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome Summer!!

All the team at Acorn would like to welcome you all back following the Easter holidays, we hope you all had a wonderful break. Thank you for sending in your holiday activities via your child's Tapestry account, it has been wonderful to share these with the children.

We are very much looking forward to another term filled with fun, learning and sunshine.



Our planned Topics for the Summer Term 2025 are ...



23.04.25 Spring/The Hungry Caterpillar/Things that grow

28.04.25 People that help us – Vets and Hairdressers (28<sup>th</sup> April St George's Day)

06.05.25 People that help us – Police and Firefighters

19.05.25 People that help us – Doctors and Ambulances



#### May Half Term

02.06.25 Teddy Bears Picnic and Sports/PE

09.06.25 Summer and Sun Safety (15<sup>th</sup> June Father's Day)

16.06.25 Dinosaur Week

23.06.25 Zoo Week

30.06.25 Under the Sea

07.07.25 Holidays and the Seaside

14.07.25 Schools and Transitions

21.07.25 End of Term Fun



#### SUMMER TERM DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

May Bank Holiday (Acorn Closed) – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May

May Half Term – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June

Zoo Lab Visit – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 9:30-10:25am

Parent's Evening - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June, 3:45pm-5:00pm

Welwyn Festival Street Market – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June, time tbc

Welwyn Festival Children's Parade – Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June, time and theme tbc

Graduation Celebration – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, 4:30-5:30pm

End of Term Party - Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 4-6:30pm

Last day of Term – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 12pm

#### TERM DATES

Full details of our 2024/25 and 2025/26 term dates can be located on our website at [acornwelwyn.com](http://acornwelwyn.com)

#### TRANSITIONS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL

We will shortly begin the transition process for the children who are moving on to primary school in September 2025.

As required by Hertfordshire County Council, individual child information will be sent to all schools, helping them to understand your child and the level of help they will need to support their transition into primary school. We will also prepare transition reports for each child which will be shared with you and their new schools.

All reception teachers are invited to come into Acorn to meet the children and to talk to their Key Workers. These visits usually take place before the end of the summer term 2.

If you have any concerns about your child moving to their new school, please do not hesitate to speak with us.

### **WARMER WEATHER**

We are sure that you are all as delighted as we are that summer has finally arrived, however, with the change in weather we need your kind support in ensuring the safety of the children whilst the sun is shining.

It is of utmost importance that suncream is applied to your child at least half an hour prior to each of their sessions with us. For children attending all day sessions, please can you provide a named bottle of sun lotion to remain at Acorn which will be replenished by our staff prior to their afternoon pre-school session.

It is essential that all children arrive at Acorn wearing a sunhat to protect their heads from the hot sun. Please can these be clearly labelled with your child's name to help us identify which hat belongs to who and to easily return any misplaced items.

As the temperature in our garden can vary greatly throughout the day, please can children be dressed in layered clothing (including a coat/jacket) which can be added or removed as necessary.

Please may we also ask that children do not wear flip flops or flimsy sandals as these do not offer the correct support or protection for little feet - closed toe croc style shoes or sturdy sandals with Velcro straps are ideal. Velcro fastenings are always welcome as most young children find it tricky to do up buckles or laces.

We would very much appreciate it if you could please pack at least two sets of spare clothing for your child as we often enjoy water play outdoors and many children find it uncomfortable to wear wet clothing.

We have a new freshwater station which the children are free to access during their sessions, making water readily available to ensure they remain hydrated.

### **EYFS SAFEGUARDING REFORMS**

The statutory national implementation of the EYFS Safeguarding Reforms will begin on 1st September 2025. These reforms aim to formalise best practice and ensure all early year's practitioners have the knowledge and support needed to provide the safest, highest-quality early education and childcare.

#### **Child absence and additional nominated contacts**

From September 2025, all early year's providers must follow up absences in a timely manner. For prolonged or absence without notification from parents/carers, attempts must be made to contact the parent/carers or the additional emergency contacts and must:

- Consider patterns/trends/personal circumstances and use professional judgement and consideration as to whether the absence is prolonged
- Consider any concerns which must be referred to children's social care or police
- Where possible, hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child
- Have an attendance policy, which should be shared with parents/carers and includes:
  - Expectation for reporting child absences
  - Actions and procedures the setting will take for prolonged or absences without parents/carers notification e.g. safeguarding procedures and actions where parents/carers are not contactable

To enable us to implement the reforms, we must hold contact information for an additional two people, nominated by yourselves, who we can contact in an emergency or prolonged absence scenario. Where we do not hold contact information for a minimum of four people for your child, we will be in touch with you shortly to collate the information. If you do not receive contact from us, please assume that we currently hold sufficient information for your child.

Following EYFS guidance, we have created an Early Years attendance, Punctuality and Absence Policy. Please be advised that this policy will be implemented in September 2025.

**With immediate effect, we will contact you by 10am following an unknown absence.**

#### FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!



Acorn Playgroup and Pre-school has a Facebook page which we use to share our termly topic activities and events.

To access, simply copy and paste the following link into your browser

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/AcornWelwyn/>

#### Government childcare funding



The Government has recently expanded their funded childcare allowance for working families. Children from working families are now entitled to 15 hours free childcare per week, during term time, from the age of 9 months alongside the existing 30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds.

To apply for a childcare code each parent needs to be working and earning the equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and under £100,000 adjusted net income per year. This means that each parent needs to earn from just over £8,600 per year to be eligible.

To check your entitlement, please complete the eligibility check as soon as possible via the following link <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working> **To enable the allowance to be utilised in the Summer term 2025 (April-July) term, the funding must be applied for and approved by March 2025.**

Where your application is successful, please forward your unique funding code and national insurance number via return email, prior to the end of term.

Other childcare support is available, including two year old funding for families receiving additional government support. Further information is available to parents on the Childcare Choices website at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>, where you can explore the early education entitlements and other government help with childcare costs.

If your child's weekly hours exceed their government funded hours, the additional hours will be charged at our current rate of £7.70 per hour which will be invoiced half termly via your child's Tapestry account.

#### GENERAL ILLNESS

If your child requires Calpol or ibuprofen before coming to Acorn, the best place for them to be is at home to recover.

Where children have experienced a case of sickness or diarrhoea, they should only return to Acorn following a 48-hour period following their last episode.

We would like to thank you for your continued support in keeping Acorn safe.

#### SPEAK TO A MEMBER OF THE TEAM

Drop off and pick up times can be busy, therefore if you need to talk to your child's Key Person please don't hesitate to ask. We will always endeavour to organise a suitable time for you to discuss any concerns you may have. Our door is always open!

## TAPESTRY ONLINE LEARNING JOURNALS

We hope you are enjoying viewing your child's observations and photographs within their Tapestry account. Please do continue to send us photographs/videos of any special events, activities and/or outings that your child may have outside of Acorn. This is a fantastic way for your child's key worker to share and discuss these experiences with your child and build upon the connection between their life at home and Acorn.

Did you know Tapestry contains a section called 'All about me' and allows you add up to date information regarding your child including their likes and dislikes which we can use to incorporate into the setting. The information can be updated at any time in line with your child's ever-changing needs.

To access the relevant page; -

- Access your child's Tapestry account via the main web address.
- Select 'Menu' in the top left-hand corner of the page
- From the dropdown menu, select 'Children'
- Click on your child's name
- Select 'All About Me' from the dropdown box
- Select 'Edit about .... '
- Complete the relevant sections
- Select 'Save' at the bottom of the page.



Finally, if you have any questions about your child's Tapestry account, please contact us via email at [acornwelwyn@gmail.com](mailto:acornwelwyn@gmail.com)

## SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

### CHILD COLLECTION

At Acorn, we ask all parents to provide us with a list of authorised adults who have your permission to collect your child from Acorn, alongside a unique password. All authorised persons must be aged 18 and over.

In line with our Safeguarding Policy, we will not allow a child to be released to an unknown person without your prior consent or where we cannot verify the identity of the authorised person.

Please may we ask that where an authorised person collecting your child is not familiar to all members of Acorn's staff, that they have photograph ID (passport/driving licence) and your child's collection password when they come to collect.

In the event of an emergency, where a person not listed will collect your child, please telephone us on 01438 840132 prior to the collection time.

### ANY SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS?

Roxanne Speede and Linda McLellan are Acorn's Designated Safeguarding Officers.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, regarding yourself; your child or another family, they are available to discuss these with you at any time.

### CHANGES TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

In the event of any change to yours or your child's information, e.g. contact telephone number; address; medical information, it is essential that we are advised of these changes as soon as they occur to ensure the correct care is provided for your child. This is best done via email to [acornwelwyn@gmail.com](mailto:acornwelwyn@gmail.com)

### **FAMILIES IN NEED OF SUPPORT**

We all experience difficulties at some point. Families First can help you find early help and information to prevent issues from getting worse.

If you need more help than your usual support network - for example your health visitor, school, doctor or family centre – Families First can work with you and your family to create a package of support. Please Ask for support.

- You can always talk to us and/or your Health Visitor if you have concerns about your child.
- Talk to your GP if you have health or wellbeing concerns.
- If you need help with any of the following, Families First are likely to be able to help.
  - Parenting
  - Mental and physical health problems
  - drug or alcohol dependency
  - domestic abuse
  - school related concerns – such as your child is not attending school
  - debt problems
  - risk of becoming homeless.



### **WHAT IS FAMILIES FIRST?**

Families First is the term used in Hertfordshire for services that work together to support families who need extra help - also known as early help services.

Families First is available to all Hertfordshire families with children under the age of 18 (25 if they have a learning need or disability) and further information can be found via the following website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/families-first/families-first.aspx>