Acorn Day Nursery
Shenley Church End
Shenley Road, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes, MK5 6AB
Tel: 01908 507 282     Email: shenley@acornchildcare.co.uk
www.acornearlyyears.org.uk
Welcome to Shenley Church End

Our nursery is situated in Shenley Church End, a small village now enveloped by Milton Keynes and just 2 miles west of the city centre and railway station.

We offer full and part-time care for up to 46 babies and children from the age of four months to four years. We are open from 7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday, 49 weeks of the year, closing for 5 days over Christmas plus all Bank Holidays.

The building was formerly the village primary school, and retains the character of the original Victorian architecture. The rooms have been sympathetically refurbished to provide light and spacious play areas.

Our youngest children, the Ladybirds, have their own room. The older children have 3 rooms for play and learning; one of these is an art and craft room which includes our very own children's kitchen.

The nursery has extensive gardens and outside play areas, including our timber-framed outdoor classroom. Outdoor play is a key aspect of Acorn’s ethos and the children benefit from spending time outdoors every day, whatever the weather. We also take full advantage of our local setting, which has retained its village feel and has several attractive walks which we can enjoy.

Our fees are fully inclusive; there are no hidden charges. All meals, snacks, drinks (including formula milk), nappies and activities are included in our fees; you will find more information about our food and activities in this handbook. Fee information is towards the back.

You are very welcome to visit the nursery to see our facilities and meet the staff.

Please phone Joanne Colton, the Nursery Manager, to arrange an appointment on:

01908 507282, or you can email shenley@acornchildcare.co.uk
Meet The Team at Shenley

Nursery Manager: Joanne Colton (Level 6)
Nursery Administrator: Babishe Davy

Acorns - 15 months to 2 years approx (9 places)
Sarah Kingsmill: Deputy Manager (Level 4)
  Jackie Bull: Early Years Practitioner (Level 4)
  Lauren Taylor: Early Years Practitioner (Level 3)

Squirrels - 2 year olds (14 places)
Helen O'Donoghue: Senior Practitioner (Level 6)
  Nichola Aisthorpe: Early Years Practitioner (Level 3)
  Jess Fuller: Early Years Practitioner (Level 3)
  Claire Wood: Nursery Assistant

Oaks - Age group: 3-4 year olds (14 places)
Laura Cowen: Senior Practitioner (Level 3)
  Louise Yates: Early Years Practitioner (Level 3)
  Georgia Wilshire: Senior Practitioner (Level 3)
  Chloe Kilkenny: Nursery Assistant

Assistants
Barbara O'Brien: Qualified Nursery Assistant (Level 2)
  Pettina Willshire: Kitchen Assistant
  Lisa Marie Hanlon: Housekeeper
  Danielle Fuller: Tea Time Assistant

Catering
Simon Graham: Head Chef
  Brian Russell: Kitchen Assistant

Central Support Office

Acorn’s team at the Central Support Office provides administrative and specialist support to the Acorn Childcare settings and includes Administrators, Financial Managers and Specialists in Human Resources, Operations, Health & Safety, Marketing and Communications.

If you have any concerns or questions that your nursery Manager is not able to answer, please contact staff at CSO on 01908 510309 or by email info@acornchildcare.co.uk
Admissions and Settling In

We operate a free waiting list, and parents are encouraged to book early for places. At the time when a booking can be confirmed, a registration fee of £50 is necessary to secure the place. Each child has different needs when it comes to settling in at nursery, according to their age, previous experience and their personality. Ideally we prefer to “play it by ear” as it is often difficult to predict how many introductory visits will be needed.

As a general guide, we find the following stages work well. One or two visits when you stay with your child, followed by a visit when you leave your child with us for a short period (one or two hours). This may then be followed by a similar or longer stay, and gradually increasing this until you feel that he or she is ready for a full session. The child’s key person will ensure a lot more one-to-one attention at this time and closely monitor their well-being. Our experience also suggests that full-timers settle most quickly, and that if a child has difficulty settling in, more sessions per week, rather than less, is an effective tactic.

Please talk to a member of staff if you have any questions or concerns, and feel free to phone at any time to find out how your child is getting on. Part of the settling-in process will involve you filling in various forms, including accurate contact details for you and for other nominated contacts. We will take details of your child’s dietary and medical requirements and also ask questions to learn about your child’s individual needs and about their preferences and personality.

We will also create a Family Book for your child, using 6 to 8 photos that you will be asked to bring in of people or objects in your family and home. Your child will then be able to share this with their key person or other staff and talk about his or her family and friends.

Here at Shenley we value ‘Home Visits’ as past experience has shown that when a child meets their keyperson at home in their familiar environment they are more receptive to someone new and are likely to engage and play during this first meeting.

When the initial introduction has taken place in this way we find it has built a foundation which enables us all to move forward and begin settling in sessions within the nursery. After the Home Visit has taken place we can arrange appropriate dates and times for your child to visit the nursery so they encounter a variety of nursery experiences, leaving them with good memories. Parents/Carers will then begin the separation process by leaving their child with the keyperson and spend a few minutes in the next room and we can extend this during each visit. The keyperson will continue to form a bond with your child and be by their side during their journey through the nursery whenever possible. Communication between the parents and keyperson is vital to ensure continuity of care and education for your child.
A Day In The Life Of Our Nursery

No two days are the same at nursery as we are very responsive to the children’s interests, and to external influences such as the weather. However, it is important to have familiar routines so that the children feel confident and comfortable within our setting. It also helps the younger children to recognise the pattern of the day to gain a basic understanding of timescales.

In the morning, the Ladybirds go to their own room for breakfast and then join in play activities throughout the morning. The Acorns, Squirrels and Oaks will have breakfast in the big room, followed by free play in the big room. At about 9am the three groups separate for registration and circle time. Activities are prepared for all ages in our 3 playrooms and children are able to choose from a variety of activities, for example in our central art and craft area the children can explore messy play, sand, water, malleable materials, painting, mark making and collage work.

Within the nursery, the pattern of the day often relates to meal and snack times. Mealtimes are very important social occasions, where the children have time to socialise with their peers and staff. After lunch the Ladybirds will have a sleep, as will the Acorns and Squirrels if they choose, the older Squirrels and Oaks will take part in quiet activities listening to stories, drawing, or playing a game with their key person.

We have a rolling snack time in the morning and afternoon, giving the children choice when to have their snack, so that it doesn’t interrupt their play and learning. The older children help to prepare the snack and serve themselves, developing their independence within their group.

Tea time is at 4pm and after tea the children have free play until they are collected. This is when we give feedback about your child’s day, what they have eaten, what activities they have enjoyed and other little anecdotes of their day.

Many of the activities take place outdoors in our extensive garden, which we regard and use as our “extra room”. For periods of the day, the older children will have free flow indoors and outside, allowing them the choice of where they want to play. We have waterproof suits and wellies so that the children can enjoy active play outdoors in all weathers. We also like to take the children out for walks in the local area going to the parks and woods and playing on the field. We also take the children to the local shops where they can help buy ingredients for cooking activities or post a letter.
Activities At Our Nursery

The activities listed below are included in the nursery fees.

These activities are chosen to enhance children's learning and development and therefore vary throughout the year. The day for each activity may also vary from term to term so that part-time children have a chance to take part.

Additional activities:

**Forest School**, alternate Thursday and Friday mornings (Oaks)

**Spanish**, Friday afternoon (Oaks)
Children will learn simple Spanish words and phrases, such as greetings, numbers and colours. The spoken session may then be followed with a practical activity, such as mark making or drawing, to consolidate a word or phrase that has been learnt.

**Swimming**, Monday morning (Oaks)
Our swimming lessons take place at Stantonbury Leisure Centre with a qualified instructor. The children work towards recognised achievements, gaining badges at each stage.

**Zumba**, Thursday morning (Squirrels & Oaks)
Zumba is an extremely popular and well-known dance exercise for all ages, and we are now able to offer this at nursery, structured for young children. A qualified Zumba teacher uses fun and energetic music, with different rhythms and beats and the children follow the instructor in a combination of dance and exercise moves, which develop their physical skills and coordination.
Forest School

Forest School sessions take place at our nearby site in Shenley Toot.

The children are greeted by our very own Forest School Leaders: Gemma and Donna.

During the sessions, which take place throughout the year and in all weathers, children have the opportunity to experience the changing seasons, the natural environment, with plenty of time and space to explore.

Children are encouraged to develop independence and self-confidence, and will have hands-on experience of learning new skills such as building dens, making and using tools, finding and identifying woodland creatures and plants and cooking on the open fire. Through all of these activities the children learn to respect their environment and keep themselves safe.

For more info visit: www.acornchildcare.co.uk/forestschools

Forest Schools Holiday Clubs

In addition to the above we also run Forest School sessions for school-age children in most school holidays. Children are given the opportunity to make dens, climb trees, use tools in craft activities, go exploring and mini-beast hunting, and cook their own lunch on the open fire.

To find out more about Forest School sessions during the school holidays and book online, please visit: www.acornchildcare.co.uk/forestschools
Sample Menu - *Fresh fruit is available everyday*

**Monday**
Lunch: Sweet and sour chicken with brown rice  
Vegetarian: Sweet and sour quorn with brown rice  
Dessert: Chocolate sponge with vanilla sauce  
Tea: Jacket potato and beans  
Tea Dessert: Fruit and yogurt

**Tuesday**
Lunch: Lamb tagine with cous cous  
Vegetarian: Tofu tagine with cous cous  
Dessert: Rice pudding  
Tea: Chicken Fajitas (Chicken, onion, peppers, salsa & sour cream)  
Tea Dessert: Peaches and cream

**Wednesday**
Lunch: Cottage Pie (beef) with seasonal vegetables  
Vegetarian: Cottage Pie (quorn) with seasonal vegetables  
Dessert: Greek yogurt and honey  
Tea: Cheese, tomato and pineapple french bread pizza  
Dessert: Apple and cinnamon cake

**Thursday**
Lunch: Fish pie with broccoli  
Vegetarian: Vegetable and butterbean pie with broccoli  
Dessert: Strawberries and grapes  
Tea: Tuna pasta salad  
Tea Dessert: Fromage frais

**Friday**
Lunch: Macaroni cheese with seasonal vegetables  
Vegetarian: Macaroni cheese with seasonal vegetables  
Dessert: Fruit salad and ice cream  
Tea: Pitta breads with quorn, coleslaw, grated cheese and salad  
Tea Dessert: Fruit flapjack
All About Our Delicious Food

All the nursery meals are freshly prepared in our kitchen by our cook, and we follow the guidelines set by the Children’s Food Trust to ensure we are providing nutritionally balanced meals which are both healthy and appetising.

Breakfast is provided for all children arriving between 7.30am and 8.30am. Please make sure that your child has had breakfast beforehand if they arrive after this time. We provide a mid-morning snack, and then lunch is served at noon. There is a mid-afternoon snack and then tea at about 4pm. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the day.

Menus, including the vegetarian menu, are displayed each week; the lunchtime meal is a cooked dinner, and tea is a lighter meal. We use fresh, seasonal vegetables and fruit wherever possible, free range eggs, and as little processed food as is practicable.

We encourage all children to learn about healthy choices in relation to food. Your child’s key person will give daily verbal feedback about what and how much your child has eaten, they will be happy to discuss your child’s eating habits and to address any concerns you may have.

Our mealtime policy is for staff to sit with children while they eat, and to encourage polite habits in a relaxed, sociable atmosphere with conversation. Older children are encouraged to help serve drinks, lay the tables and clear away.

All children are encouraged to serve their own vegetables onto their plates, and to try a little of everything, younger children will be assisted as necessary. Cooking is also an important part of the nursery curriculum, contributing to our policy of encouraging an understanding of ingredients and a wide range of foods, including foods from different cultures.
**Important Information Q&A**

**Are there any additional charges?**
The fees include everything your child will need while attending nursery: food and drink, including approved formula milk, nappies and wipes as well as the activities listed above. The only occasion when an extra charge may be made is for trips to external events, for example to a pantomime at Christmas.

**What should my child bring to nursery?**
When your child starts at the nursery we will provide them with a bag to store a change of clothes, and your child will have a peg where they can keep their personal belongings such as coat, bag and wellies. We ask that all personal belongings are labelled with your child’s name. We do have spare wellies on site as well as waterproof suits to ensure we can play outside whatever the weather. We ask that children do not bring in toys from home, unless for a show-and-tell activity, as they may get lost or broken. There is no need to bring nappies and wipes as these are all included in the nursery fees.

**Can my child bring food from home?**
Due to possible allergens, we cannot allow food to be brought into nursery, the only exception being birthday cake, which must be provided with a full list of ingredients. Our menus are devised following the Children’s Food Trust guidelines and are therefore nutritionally balanced for the needs of the children. We cater for children with medical allergies and intolerances, vegetarian diets or those with cultural and religious preferences. Whilst we do not encourage fussy eaters, we do present the food in such a way that allows children to choose, but will still encourage children to try a little of everything.

**What if I am running late to collect my child?**
If you are running late, please contact the nursery as soon as possible. You may arrange for someone else to collect your child, however they will be asked to provide identification. If a child is left at nursery at the end of the day without any message being received, we will phone the parent/carer and if necessary the emergency contacts. If it proves impossible to contact anyone, and the child is still at the setting 30 minutes after closing time, Social Services will be contacted.

**What happens if my child is ill?**
If your child falls ill while at nursery, staff will contact you to inform you. We have infant paracetamol on site for emergencies, which can be administered with your permission if your child has a raised temperature. If your child is suffering with sickness and diarrhoea you will be asked to collect your child from nursery and keep them at home until they have been symptom free for 48 hours.

**What happens if my child has an accident at nursery?**
There are always staff on site who are trained in paediatric first aid. If your child has an accident whilst at nursery, be it a graze to the knee or a bump on the head, our staff will write up an accident form and inform you when you come to collect your child. If your child is distressed after an accident, or it appears that medical advice should be sought, we will contact you immediately.

**My child has additional learning needs, can he still attend?**
Yes, we pride ourselves in being a fully inclusive setting ensuring we are accessible to all children in the local community. Our setting employs a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) who is trained in working with, and supporting, children with additional needs. When your child starts nursery we will ask you for all the information we need to care for your child and meet their needs. If we, or you, feel that staff need more specialised training, we will do our very best to organise appropriate training for the staff team.

Full details of all our policies are in the Parents’ Policy Pack, available at each nursery or on request from the Central Support Office.
Government Funded Hours

Every child is entitled to free nursery education for up to 15 hours a week from the term after their third birthday. These 'free entitlement' hours are usually taken within longer sessions and the cost of the additional hours to make up full sessions is calculated by deducting the cost of the funding received from the normal session cost. Unless attending on a term-time only basis, this will be spread across the year (so usually 11 hours a week all year round instead of 15 hours term-time only).

Some places may be available for funded only sessions, but the availability of these will be limited, as priority is given to parents wishing to book full sessions. Funding for two year olds may be available for families that are in receipt of benefits. Please speak to the Nursery Manager or our Central Support Office for further details.

Three and four year olds may also be eligible for 15 additional funded hours, if both parents are working. Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to find out how to check your eligibility and apply for your verification code. This is the so-called ‘30 hours free childcare’, which covers most of the cost of 1140 hours per year (so 95 hours per month or around 22 hours per week all year round. It is only 30 hours if taken on a term-time only basis).

The funded hours do not cover the cost of 'extras' such as meals, drinks, snacks and extra-curricular activities. As Acorn are keen to provide a fully inclusive service, we do not charge for these separately, but we do include the cost of these in the full session fee rates, and the hourly rate for the additional hours to make up full sessions is therefore higher than the funded rate.

Booking priority is given to parents wishing to incorporate the funded hours within normal sessions. If parents wish to only take up the free hours, these are allocated according to availability two weeks before the start of the term in which a child becomes eligible. We then ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of meals and activities in order to minimise the shortfall between the funded amount and the cost of the session being provided.

As a not-for-profit provider, we are keen to make the funded hours as accessible as possible for parents, and we are happy to share full details of how much funding we receive for your child, to ensure financial transparency. Funding rates vary from nursery to nursery, so please ask your nursery Manager or Administrator for details, or contact jo@acornearyears.org.uk.

The childcare choices website also contains details of tax-free childcare and childcare vouchers. We accept all the major vouchers.

Childcare Vouchers

Many parents now choose to pay part or all of their fees using childcare vouchers, saving on tax and national insurance. Please ask us for further details if your employer does not currently offer vouchers.
Training Days

As part of Acorn’s commitment to staff development we have four staff training days each year. This is so that our hard-working team can attend training sessions together without having to give up their evenings and weekends.
The closure dates for 2017 will be as follows, and we hope that you will agree that the benefits of the training time will outweigh the inconvenience of us being closed on those days. We have deliberately chosen days other than a Monday or Friday so that closure days, which include bank holidays, are spread across the week. Please note that weekly fees for part-time places are calculated over 49 weeks of the year, then divided by 12.

Remaining Closure Days for 2017 - (in addition to bank holidays)
• 24th October
• Christmas 2017: 27th - 29th December

Closure Days for 2018 - (in addition to bank holidays)
• Friday 16th February
• Tuesday 3rd April
• Friday 27th July
• Friday 26th October
• Christmas 2018 Closure: Thursday 27th, Friday 28th, Monday 31st December 2018

Any Queries?

If you have any queries or problems that your child’s key person, or another member of staff is not able to resolve, please speak to the Nursery Manager.
If you are unhappy with any aspect of your child’s care, or the way the nursery is run, please ask to speak to Laura Andrews (Early Years Manager) or Zoe Raven (CEO) in the Central Support Office on 01908 510309.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write to:

Zoe Raven,
Acorn Childcare
Unit C, Lincoln Lodge, Castlethorpe
Milton Keynes, MK19 7HJ

If you are not happy with our response to your concerns, you can also contact the regulator, Ofsted, by phoning them on 0300 123 1231. You can also visit their website www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents for more information about Ofsted’s role as the regulator of childcare.
Terms & Conditions

Please be aware that in signing your registration form you are agreeing to abide by the following terms and conditions. The rules about notice and payment of fees are necessary for the smooth running, proper resourcing and staffing of the nursery.

- To register your child at the nursery, a non-refundable registration fee of £50.00 is payable to secure a place.

- No registration fee is required for siblings if the first child is still attending the nursery and 15% may be deducted from the eldest child’s fees for regular booked sessions for attendance at the same time. Sibling discount cannot be applied to ad hoc sessions or if payment is not made in accordance with the terms below.

- Please note that we cannot apply the sibling discount to the free entitlement hours covered by the Nursery Education Grant.

- Fees include all meals, drinks (including stage 1 formula milk), snacks, nappies and activities.

- All fees are charged monthly in advance and must be paid by direct debit or voucher on the first day of the month to which they relate.

- Please note we are unable to accept cash or cheques

- Fees are payable during periods of absence from the nursery, including sickness and holidays.

- Fees for part-time attendance are calculated by multiplying the weekly total by 49 (weeks) and then divided by 12 (months). The nursery is closed for all bank holidays plus an additional 10 days throughout the year, hence the fees are payable for 49 weeks.

- Late payments are subject to a surcharge of 5% of the amount outstanding. Acorn Childcare reserves the right to charge interest on late fees at the rate of 2% over the National Westminster Bank rate.

- A charge of £10 will be made for each occasion of re-presented payments.

- Children may be excluded from the nursery if fees remain outstanding more than 14 days beyond the 1st of the month and their registration terminated.

- A charge for late collection will be made if your child is not collected before the end of their session time, at the rate of £5.00 for every 5 minute period.

- Six weeks’ written notice is required if you wish to cancel or reduce the number of sessions required and fees are payable throughout the notice period.

- Once a place at the nursery has been confirmed, the notice period applies and fees are payable if there is any delay in taking up the place. Attendance may not begin until the first month’s fees are paid.

- Acorn Childcare does not accept responsibility for accidental injury or loss of property.

- Please read our policies for further details of our procedures and practice regarding illness and absence, medication, dietary requirements, safeguarding children, security, behaviour management, equal opportunities and complaints.
## Acorn Childcare Contact Information

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<th>Location</th>
<th>Nursery Type</th>
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<td><strong>MILTON KEYNES:</strong></td>
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<td>Acorn Day Nursery, Castlethorpe and the Wolery</td>
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<td>Acorn at New Bradwell</td>
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<td>Acorn at Jubilee Wood, Fishermead</td>
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<td>Acorn at Kents Hill</td>
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<td>Acorn at Westcroft</td>
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<td><strong>NORTHAMPTON:</strong></td>
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<td>Acorn Day Nursery, Burton Latimer</td>
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<td>N BC AS HC</td>
<td>Acorn Day Nursery, Stanwick</td>
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<td>Unit 18A Blands Yard, Church Street, Stanwick, NN9 6PS</td>
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<td>BC AS</td>
<td>Acorn at Barton Segrave</td>
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<td>Barton Segrave Primary School, Barton Segrave, NN15 6QY</td>
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<td>BC AS</td>
<td>Acorn at Oakley Vale</td>
<td>07714 133327</td>
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<td>Oakley Vale Primary School, Corby, NN18 8RH</td>
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<td><strong>BEDFORDSHIRE:</strong></td>
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<td>Acorn Day Nursery, Sharnbrook</td>
<td>01234 222589</td>
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<td>Colworth House, Unilever Estate, Sharnbrook, Bedford, MK44 1LQ</td>
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_N = Nursery, BC = Breakfast Club, AS = After-School Club, HC = Holiday Club_