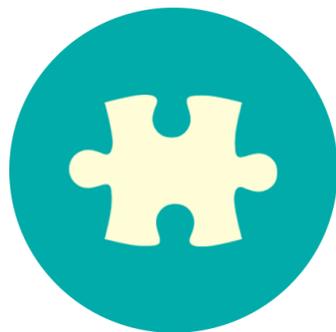
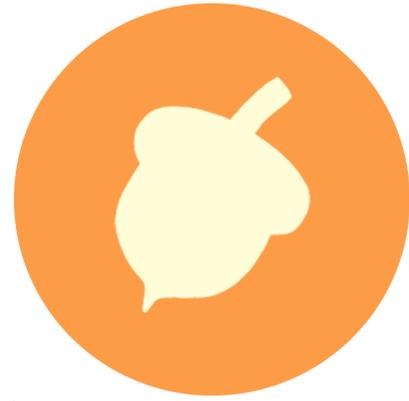


The Curriculum



Introduction



The core purpose of Little Acorns School is to equip every pupil with the skills and knowledge they need to lead healthy, productive lives. Many of our children have complex needs and challenging circumstances, we look beyond this to find the potential of each child. These circumstances include children looked after, disadvantaged pupils and, in particular, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We believe every child has the right to an exciting, varied curriculum to meet their individual needs. We work closely with others to ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.

We aim to foster an environment where pupils feel safe and develop a secure sense of belonging. The majority of our pupils have experienced turbulence in their schooling and many have severe, complex, or profound needs that have a significant impact on their cognitive development and their social, emotional and communication development. Many of our pupils have complex mental health issues. We aim to support pupils in a family school environment and support pupils to achieve the best they can in order to maximise their life chances and to ensure that they can be as independent as possible, participating in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

We believe all children have the right to an education and firmly believe all children are able to reach their full potential. We believe that if a child is not learning then we need to change the way we teach. We do not take a 'one approach fits all' approach and adopt a variety of approaches to suit the learning styles of individual children. Little Acorns has an interesting and relevant curriculum which is created around each individual pupil, taking account of their starting point to ensure that their academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are addressed in a way that captures and motivates them to learn. Building trust, self-confidence, resilience and belonging are key to our approach. Our end point is clear. We promote preparation for, and appreciation of, life in modern Britain, equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We believe all children should be provided with an education where they can thrive, no matter what their background or the challenges presented. Little Acorns have high expectations of what can be achieved by our pupils.

Many of our pupils have experienced a turbulent education pathway prior to starting at our school. Obtaining accurate baselines can be challenging. We seek to engage pupils so that this baseline can be found. We believe that it is important to understand the pupil in order that the curriculum is well matched, planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before, including pre-existing knowledge, and we can then build towards the curriculum defined end points.



Our curriculum is supported by rigorous planning and it is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards, and what pupils will need to know and be able to do at those end points. We work to securing each pupils EHCP target. These targets are set within a multi-agency forum and detail the objectives required to have been achieved by the end of the key stage they are working in. We work to this end point with the children's Provision Maps key the planning of each subject/intervention. We continually build, develop and adapt pupil individual provision plans to outline how we will achieve the targets.

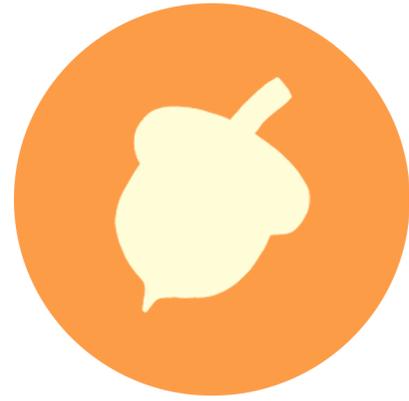
Assessments are ongoing but we formally report on progress to parents/carers three times a year. The curriculum captures elements of the National Curriculum as well as ensuring pupils Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets are met. We are compliant with the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the schedule of the Education (ISS) Regulations 2014.

Classes groups and curriculum content are not categorised simply by year group. Groups are categorised by learning styles, sensory needs and class grouping is completed considering the outcomes of the EHCP's, the stage the child is at and taking into account different personalities within the school.

Developing valuable life skills and skills to develop independence can be very difficult for children and young people who have attachment and/or educational learning difficulties. Specific time is dedicated for pupils to develop these skills in a safe and nurturing environment.

We have an emphasis on the basics of reading, English, 'spelling, punctuation, and grammar' (SPAG), and teaching functional numeracy. Reading is at the heart of the curriculum and reading is prioritised. We recognise that having a 'functional reading age' (age 8.0years+) is pivotal in enabling our pupils to access a broader and richer curriculum. On entry, many of our pupils have rapidly fallen behind their peers therefore we act quickly to close the gap and work towards accelerated progress. Our intent is for all pupils to read at an age-appropriate level through rigorous and sequential assessments so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and retained. These assessments identify barriers to learning and gaps. From this starting point we follow the Read, Write, Inc programme, leading onto RWI Literacy and Language when the children have reached this functional level. Weaknesses are addressed quickly so that potential can be unlocked. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a problem-solving mindset and in doing so, build resilience and independence.

Our individualised assessment and teaching of phonics correlates directly with 'Read, Write, Inc' and provides a sharp focus to enable us to sort out any confusions, target gaps in learning and evaluate impact. Barriers to learning are identified in order to implement tailor made programmes with appropriate coverage, content, structure, and sequencing, to unlock the potential of our struggling readers. The texts we use provide opportunities for speaking, listening, and writing and connect closely to pupils' phonics knowledge. Our systems, methods and resources facilitate reciprocal links between reading and writing and ensure all pupils have every opportunity to gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read for meaning and the skills to communicate, giving them the foundations for future learning and better outcomes in life.



We encourage pupils to become independent thinkers allowing them freedom to explore, create and think critically and actively learn. Where possible they will be encouraged to challenge themselves to build their confidence and resilience, given the opportunity to develop the capacity to surprise themselves and others and to become confident and self-assured. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. We have realistic, yet challenging expectations and plan opportunities to extend their knowledge, experiences, and interests, motivating and supporting every pupil to reach their individual potential. All planning is based on each individual pupil to ensure their goals are realistic and achievable. Adult led and child-initiated activities are equally important; adults interact sensitively, encouraging perseverance and practice, reinforcing that we all learn at a different pace and can all learn when things go wrong.

A therapeutic approach is key to the daily teaching of all the children. All children are offered a therapeutic plan which includes (but is not exclusive to) Equine Therapy, Music Therapy, Therapeutic Life Story and Yoga and Meditation. These help us to ensure that all children are able to achieve in line with their potential. We address cognitive and emotional development as one cannot make good progress without the other. Little Acorns School provides experiences that help the children to grow in every sense of the word.

Our environment and delivery of our curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning;

1. Playing and exploring – pupils will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. Active learning – pupils will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties to allow them the opportunity to enjoy their achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support pupils to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.



PE is taught on and off site and pupils can work towards entry level qualifications and unit awards. Swimming is also offer and national swimming awards can be obtained. We offer trampolining at the local leisure centre and athletics at the Julie Rose Stadium. We have had instructors onsite to teach fencing, football and been off site with use squash and tennis courts.

We offer a range of therapies including Equine, Animal Assisted, Music, Yoga and Meditation and Therapeutic Life Story.

We also offer forest school provision where pupils are able to undertake land based practical work. This is completed at March Wood and/or Eco-Sensory Therapy and Oak Therapies.

Our 'Prevent' work promotes and ensures that all pupils are aware of the fundamental British values of democracy and mutual respect for, and tolerance of, those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.

We comply with the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance on relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education. Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way. Our guiding principles to delivering relationship and sex education is that the content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law. We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and we seek to build on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We seek to deliver outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of our pupils. We work flexibility to shape the curriculum content and delivery according to the needs of the pupils particularly being mindful to the backgrounds of the residential pupils.

We enrich the school-based curriculum by broadening pupils' experiences within the local community and beyond through visits, trips and where suitable having visitors on site. We create a culture of respect for difference.

Teachers have access to a range of schemes of work which enable lessons to be planned and adapted around the needs of the pupils.

Schemes of work and resources include: - Hamilton Trust Schemes of work which Little Acorns subscribes to covering EYFS until KS3 in maths, English, science, and topic work - Twinkl schemes of work - Read, Write, Inc- Numicon, Breaking Barriers- AQA specifications and schemes of work - NSPCC share aware lesson plans and teacher guidance - NSPCC lesson planning Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. - Switched On Computing Schemes of Work. White Rose Maths.

At Little Acorns School we offer:

**Personal Learning- EHCP outcomes- Therapeutic Plan-
SMSC- British Values and links within the local community**



Pre NC/ Early KS1

Read, Write, Inc / Literacy
Numicon / Numeracy
Communication and Language
Physical Development
Expressive Art
Personal, Social and Emotional De-
velopment
Understanding the World

Full Therapeutic Programme

AQA Unit Awards if appropriate

KS1/KS2

Core Subjects
Literacy / Read, Write, Inc
Numeracy
PHSE

Foundation Subjects

Art and Design
Computing
History
Geography
Physical Education
Religious Education

Full Therapeutic Programme

Preparation for Adulthood

Careers
Life Skills

AQA Unit Awards

KS3

Core Subjects

Literacy / Read, Write, Inc
Numeracy
PHSE

Foundation Subjects

Art and Design
Computing
History
Geography
Physical Education
Religious Education
Sex and Relationships Education

Full Therapeutic Programme

Preparation for Adulthood

Careers
Life Skills

AQA Unit Awards