



School Handbook and agreement

How families & staff work in partnership to support children's learning and wellbeing

www.thelondonacornschool.co.uk



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Welcome from the Headteacher

Welcome to The London Acorn School - a truly unique and progressive school with a clear vision to provide a creative, academic and holistic education for all our pupils. We offer an exciting and stimulating place to be, which most importantly, results in happy, curious, well-balanced and motivated children ready to engage and contribute to our ever-changing world. Our community is a multicultural and inclusive environment where children of all abilities can flourish.

We pride ourselves in our academic lessons that challenge our pupils, and in our creative and alternative curriculum which offers all children the opportunity to explore their imagination and build creative resilience. Our children thrive in all areas of the curriculum and simply love coming into school. Student achievements at secondary destinations bear testament to the love of learning that we build here.

The partnerships we share between home and school are extremely strong. By supporting the philosophy underpinning the school, we partner each other to ensure the best possible experience for your child(ren) as they grow to meet their full potential.

We support that partnership by offering workshops and events throughout the year, where different aspects of our school approaches to childhood and how you can support them successfully in your own home family culture are explored.

Our school is an exciting place to be a part of with many opportunities for you to be involved and where every family can find a level of involvement where they feel comfortable.

We look forward to welcoming you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sarah' in a cursive script.

Sarah Thorne, Headteacher

Our School Ethos

“The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn’t need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.” **Ken Robinson**



The London Acorn School is a committed and vibrant community of pupils, staff, parents and carers united by a set of ten shared beliefs.

1. We believe the most valuable gift we can give our children is an innate curiosity and love of learning

In an ever changing world, the only certainty is uncertainty; the skills we learn today may be obsolete tomorrow. Our focus is equipping children to thrive whatever happens by imbuing them with the skills, resilience and desire to learn throughout their lives.

2. We believe that an over-reliance on technology is detrimental to children

Our increasing addiction to smartphones and other devices limits the downtime that the brain needs to process, wander and dream and is particularly detrimental to the development of young minds. While we introduce technology later on, in the early years we are very careful about exposing our children to screens.

3. We believe in the nourishing power of nature

Just as technology can be detrimental, so nature is beneficial, providing children with the space for their bodies and their imaginations to run wild. For this reason, we based our school in London's most eco-diverse park and ensure that all pupils spend time every day in nature.

4. We believe that children learn best in an intimate, un-hurried environment

Numerous studies have shown that the large class sizes and exam pressure heaped upon children from an early age is counterproductive, leaving them anxious and turning them off learning. So, we create a gentle environment where children in small classes learn at a pace in keeping with their developmental needs.

5. We believe that children thrive when they have clear boundaries

Being gentle does not mean being lax. A secure and ordered environment with consistent daily rhythms is essential to learning. We uphold the highest standards when it comes to behaviour.

6. We believe in academic excellence

We have high academic expectations for our children; indeed many educationalists have concluded that a gentler approach to education in the early years can be conducive to academic achievement later on.

7. We believe in educating the whole child

Though important, academics are not the 'be all and end all'. Supporting children's emotional, physical, creative, technical and spiritual development is as important as fostering academic accomplishment. We take a holistic approach, equipping children for life, not just for exams.

8. We believe in drawing from a variety of educational approaches

Rather than limiting ourselves to a single philosophy or approach, we stand on the shoulders of educational giants. Our curriculum is a blend of the National Curriculum with elements of Steiner Waldorf education and aspects from other pedagogies that align with our values.

9. We believe that we are at our best when we are open-minded and open-hearted

Situated in a truly global city and fortunate to count people from a wide variety of ethnicities and backgrounds as part of our community, we recognise the tremendous value that people with different experiences and perspectives can provide our community and embrace them.

10. We believe that we are stronger together

Our greatest asset is our community. Together we are charting our own course, creating a school for the future with every decision we take, dictated by the best interests of our children. We welcome others who share the passion to rethink what a school can be to join us.

What this means at Home

- All parents sign a school agreement confirming that they are in accord with these ideas, and that they have given them full consideration.
- Parents also agree to tell us if they experience practice which does not align with these 10 points or if they have ideas for how it could align better, using the proper channels detailed below.

What this means at School

- All school governing groups, staff faculty members and volunteers work with these 10 points in mind and they are charged to do their best to ensure that everything they do is aligned with our school ethos.
- The school works with this as an ongoing process.

Background information for this topic: Proactive and positive ideas about how we can align more closely to our ethos are very welcome and should be forwarded to the Head Teacher. We undertake to give all ideas submitted in this way full consideration as we are a reflective and learning organisation. We cannot undertake to implement every suggestion as available resources and consultation results may not allow this. We reserve the right to request any parent not aligned with our ethos or choosing to address concerns outside the proper channels to withdraw their family from our community. Our school policy for raising concerns or complaints is available on our website and gives clear guidance, including timelines, on how these will be addressed in a complete and proper manner.

The History of The London Acorn School



The London Acorn School first opened its doors on 15th September 2013 with just six children.

It began with a founding group of parents exploring the prospect of setting up a new school in London with a holistic approach. Taking inspiration from progressive educational settings, such as Steiner Waldorf and Montessori, the founders wanted children's wellbeing to be prioritised and their needs met beyond academic progress. At the same time, the governance, clear standards and robust, accountable structures of mainstream settings were regarded as equally important in establishing a school.

Where was the affordable school in London that understood that childhood is not a race and which was open-minded to see that there is not 'one method' to achieve this?

A visit to the Cotswolds to see the work of Sarah and Graeme Whiting at The Acorn School in Nailsworth was a key inspiration due to the high standard of work in their holistic setting. Our school is named in tribute to this original source of inspiration. The London Acorn School has since developed its own identity, curriculum, ethos and structures.

The first teachers were founders Cathy Brick and Sarah Thorne, joined by Eileen Riley, a wonderful Kindergarten teacher who formed the base ethos of the Kindergarten provision we have today.

In our first three years, the Junior School was primarily shaped by a blend of Steiner and mainstream approaches to robustly meet the developmental needs of all our pupils, and this work has continued since.

Founding and building a school from scratch is a huge endeavour, and there have been many challenges and learning points along the journey so far. Through all this, the strength of our community has been an inspiration. We are very much a community school at all levels, not only in terms of our ethos of family-school partnership, but also in terms of our governance.

Throughout our evolution the school has continued to build on the founding principles, and we are now proud to boast a talented and hardworking team, who are dedicated to nurturing and educating the children in their care.

What this means at Home

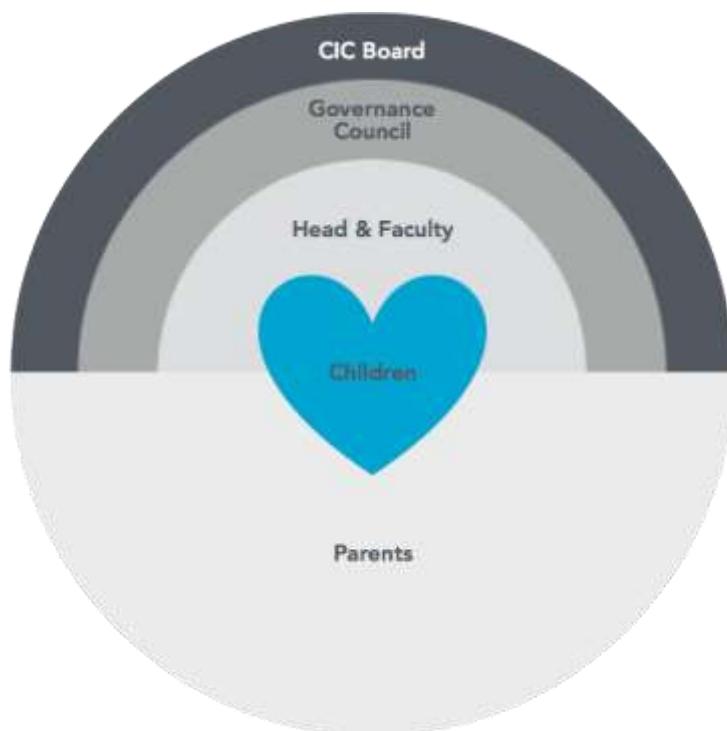
- Parents understand that their children are at a unique school that offers a blended approach of different pedagogies.
- Families enjoy belonging to a community where structured parent involvement and volunteering is encouraged, expected and respected.

What this means at School

- A stream of clear communication on the exact nature of our blended approach flows to families through class teachers, newsletters, and regular parent evenings.
- The school undertakes to maintain structures for parental involvement and to ensure that engagement is as easy as possible.

How The London Acorn School is Governed

Our school is governed in consultation with the following stakeholder groups in our school, working with them in a transparent, structured and accountable way.



The Children

The children are at the centre of our community, where they enjoy the stable and constant support of the adults around them. Within this held space, they safely explore and steadily develop the skills needed to interact successfully and meaningfully with the outer world.

Parents and Carers

Encircling the children are the parents and carers, who play an essential role in furthering each child's progress in education. By supporting the faculty and upholding the school's ethos and the School Handbook partnership commitments, parents ensure a steady learning experience for their children.

A London Acorn School education is best received when a child's home and school life are compatible. We believe this can be achieved through sharing a set of values that encompasses all aspects of their life. Refer to this School Handbook including the details of your Family Agreement, and your child's class teacher for guidance on how to make the very most of a London Acorn School education with your child.

Throughout the year, there are festival days and events where children, parents and staff come together. Parents attend many of these occasions, where they fully enjoy what it means to be part of this community school.

The Faculty

Also encircling the children is a caring team of teachers and support staff. This faculty supports the children as individuals and provides excellent role models to inspire them.

By having a thorough understanding of each child's progress within the overall scope of their education, class teachers are able to advise parents on each student's development.

The faculty is coordinated and guided by our Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which is responsible for the smooth and cohesive running of this group and for ensuring that the faculty creates warm and effective partnerships with parents.

The Governance Council

Faculty members join parents, independent governors and a CIC board representative.

The role of the Governance Council is to provide support to the day-to-day operations of the school. Also to challenge and regularly hold those in charge of day-to-day operations to account. This body meets regularly and takes care to ensure that all aspects of school life are correctly scrutinised, from policies and procedures to student attainment, through to school finance and accounts. The Governance Council regularly consults and seeks feedback from parents and faculty members, through conversations as well as through more formal school surveys.

The CIC Board

The proprietary body of our school is a community interest company registered at Companies House called The London Acorn School CIC. Community interest companies differ from standard limited companies in that they run for community benefit and are not-for-profit legal entities. This body meets less regularly than the Governance Council and supports the school by taking a broader overview of its progress. As the school develops, the CIC board ratifies any major decisions which may impact the broad stated objects of the company and has the power to audit any area of school activity to ensure that the school is still broadly aligned with its founding principles.

What this means at Home

- Families commit to giving regular honest and constructive feedback.
- Children are sometimes asked their opinion but in a very gentle way.
- Parents may be elected to Governance Council.
- Families agree to support the decisions of governing groups.

What this means at School

- The school ensures all groups meet regularly, keep clear records of minutes and goals and publish member lists.
- Governing groups hold each other accountable and make decisions based on consultation.
- School staff agree to support the decisions of governing groups.

Background information for this topic: Governance Council meeting minutes are available on request, but the school reserves the right to redact specific information to protect confidential details of our children. Governing group members and Chair details are displayed on the school website and in the entrance hall. Governors and working group members are allocated roles according to their expertise.

Meet the Faculty

All staff at the school are deeply committed to maintaining a high level of educational excellence and ensuring children's wellbeing throughout their time at school. With a considerable wealth of experience, each class teacher is well equipped to provide students with stimulating material presented in a creative and engaging way.

All Kindergarten children are guided by their Kindergarten Teacher, who works closely with a Kindergarten Assistant Teacher. Pupils between the ages of 6 and 11 are guided by their respective Class Teacher. Teachers often remain with classes for sequential years, ensuring continuity and stability, but this is reviewed on an annual basis and with the children's needs in mind. Any changes for the following year are communicated in the Summer Term.

Background information for this topic: Teacher contact details are shared with class families at the beginning of each academic year, plus a brief summary of their experience and qualifications.

Kindergarten 2023/2024				
Kindergarten Teachers and Assistants	<u>Little Acorns</u> 1-4 yrs (accompanied) Jo Pearce	<u>Rose</u> Helga Pinta Blerta Alushi	<u>Bluebell</u> Ya-Hsin Cheng Jessie Codner Aleksandra Wojcicka-Janik	
Junior School & Support 2023/2024				
Senior Leadership Team	<u>Headteacher</u> Sarah Thorne	<u>Deputy Head</u> Zoe Everett (Deputy DSL)	<u>Business Manager</u> Emily Maskell (DSL)	
School Office Staff	<u>Administrator & Admissions Officer</u> Tamara Chaplin	<u>Clubs Coordinator</u> Emma LeGendre	<u>Caretaker</u> Jody Smith	<u>School Housekeeper</u> Aneta Alshalby
Class Teachers	<u>Willow (6-7 yrs)</u> Sama Al-Falari	<u>Birch (7-8 yrs)</u> Stacey Brien (SENCo)	<u>Chestnut (9-10yrs)</u> Zoe Everett Martin Cooper	<u>Oak (10-11yrs)</u> Sarah Thorne
Specialist Subject Teachers	<u>Woodland Craft</u> Karin Jashapara	<u>Woodwork Teacher</u> Martin Cooper	<u>French Teacher</u> Howard Rogers	<u>Games Teacher</u> Jody Smith
Teaching Assistants	Arianna Boyd-Allen	Emma LeGendre	Lily Otten	

Curriculum



Head, Heart, and Hands

The key intent for our school curriculum is to create a positive purposeful and effective drive for learning in our pupils that will enable pupils to contribute to society and last a lifetime.

In order to fulfil our intent the TLAS curriculum engages the head, heart and hands in its thematic approach. Our curriculum is deep-rooted in a philosophy for education that allows all of our children to have the opportunity to access and engage in lessons that are creative, innovative with interconnectivity across subjects. Our intention is to enable our children to reach high levels of academic, creative, and artistic achievement and to grow into fit healthy young people.

How is TLAS wonderfully different?

Morden Cottage in Morden Hall Park is a nurturing environment which fosters a family atmosphere. Class sizes are small and relationships between teachers, children and families are strong. From the Kindergarten years to the Junior years the supportive framework at TLAS allows children to develop into curious learners, and creative and socially confident young people. TLAS employs a supportive framework which is relationship based and develops empathy, understanding and cooperation between children. There are no 'sticker charts' rain clouds or naughty steps for our children. In a small school the emphasis is on providing boundaries and working closely with children to support choices which demonstrate empathy and help to create a harmonious family atmosphere. We believe firmly that it is important for children develop positive habits through gentle approaches and routines rather than oppositional approaches.

We begin formal learning, in tandem with many education systems globally, at age 6. Our unhurried academic approach works brilliantly as is evidenced by worldwide research. Whilst we do complete assessments termly in literacy and mathematics we do not undertake SATS as we believe that a good education is more than just a summative assessment. With less pressure and more nurture and an ambitious thematic education our children remain enthused by their learning and are ready to join the secondary school of their choice when they leave TLAS.

TLAS has a low-tech approach. In a world which surrounds our children with tech our curriculum design prizes the creative, artistic and the outdoors. Rather than 'swiping right on an ipad' our children are to be found lighting campfires, creating a compass out of wood in our workshop and enjoying sport or yoga. We do have an IT provision for our oldest children and they all receive the skills they need to transfer to senior schools. Children need time and space to 'grow' their abilities and to discover their passions TLAS allows children this time.

How does our curriculum design and environment help to deliver a rich learning experience for children?

As our children enter into formal learning our curriculum design is such that it allows children the time, space and opportunity to be in a state of 'flow'. The connectivity of our curriculum themes and longer lesson times allow children the time, space and opportunity to be completely absorbed by a learning experience and task.

TLAS ensures learning is 'experiential' providing opportunities for pupils to use their full sensory intelligence, opportunities to create, be in nature and have real agency in their learning. Weekly forest school and woodwork sessions, partnership projects with Merton Music Foundation and daily access to Morden Hall Park ensure there is breadth to the curriculum.

Subjects are taught in the context of a purposeful and meaningful topic that inspires, excites, and enthuses learners, offering them transferrable skills for life-long learning. The progressive curriculum builds upon prior knowledge, challenges thinking and enables a higher level of understanding for long term memory acquisition, storage and retention.

Curriculum Overviews

Termly sample programmes of study from Kindergarten, Willow, Birch, Hazel, Chestnut and Oak classes

Kindergarten (ages 3-6)



Kindergarten

Curriculum summary

Spring 2023

Area of Learning	Learning experiences
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Children are encouraged in their 'serious business' of play and learn to take turns, include others and share with each other. Learn to manage feelings effectively Health education: children will learn about how to look after their teeth Develop the ability to ask appropriate questions Learning about friendships
Communication, Language and Literacy	Stories: The Snowmaiden, The Brown Glove, The Pancake Mill, Lazy Jack. Creative play Puppet show Ring time: The Woodcutter, I Like Winter, The Flippy-Floppy Pancake, Early Spring ring time Junior children will visit kindergarten and read books to kindergarten children.
Mathematical Development	Measuring baking ingredients Estimating amounts Count up to 20 Understand the composition of numbers up to 5 Learn the concept of half Count in twos Sorting and counting during play and tidy-up time
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Role play when participating in puppet shows and plays Pancake day Looking after our environment
Physical Development	Climbing trees Skipping, throwing and catching games Working in our allotment Enjoy nature by building dens, mud kitchens and having adventures! Activities to develop fine and gross motor skills
Creative development	Drawing, painting, baking, weaving, sewing, finger knitting Building small and big structures Dying and decorating Easter eggs

	Making bunny rabbits and chicks Making spring baskets and lavender hearts
Supporting at home	Building strong routines for your child, encouraging free play or crafts. Sharing books especially seasonal Winter stories. 'Screen free' downtime Encourage children to help with domestic activities
Trips and events planned for this half term	Enjoying daily walks to the Kinde tree and exploring new areas of the park Imbolc celebration Pancake day

Programmes of Study

Class/ Year class 2 year 3 **Term:** Autumn First half term

Unit title: STONE AGE

Literacy Genres stories about past times: *Stone Age Boy, Satoshi Kitamura* (3 weeks)

Information Texts (2 weeks)

Fables: *Aesop's Fables*, (2 weeks)

Reading Enhancements

Stone Age Boy, Satoshi Kitamura

Literacy

Grammar

To reread own writing to check for grammatical sense (cohesion) and accuracy (agreement) – identify errors and suggest alternative constructions.

Writing to entertain:

Stories (including re-telling, personal experiences real & fictional)
Descriptions
Poetry
In character role (letter to recount / diary entry)

Writing to Inform:

Recount – First-hand experience
Instructions – First-hand experience
NCR – Information booklet
Explanation – Observed process
Letter

Maths

Mental addition and subtraction

- Revising the understanding and use of place value and number facts in mental addition and subtraction
- Use multiple of 5 and 10 bonds to 100 to solve additions and subtractions

Problem solving, reasoning and algebra

Addition and subtraction

- add and subtract 1-digit numbers to and from 2-digit numbers
- using partitioning in adding and subtracting
- Use money to add and subtract and record using the correct notation and place value
- add and subtract 2-digit numbers using partitioning
- add three 2-digit numbers by partitioning and recombining
- use counting up to do mental subtractions with answers between 10 and 20, 10 and 30, and either side of 100
- Word problems

Number and place value

- revising the understanding and use of place value and number facts

Art

PAINTING – SILOUETTES AND WATER

COLOUR (STONEHENGE)

- Know that silhouettes are created by light being blocked by an object
- Create an outline to represent a silhouette through drawing and sketching
- Explore why block colour is best used to represent a foreground
- Know that tints and shades have the same base colour

Humanities

History

STONE AGE

- Know that the Stone Age was a time thousands of years ago, when early humans lived in caves and jungles.
- Place this period of time on a time line and understand its place in history
- Explore how archaeology has been used to find out about the stone age
- Identify what the lifestyle of humans in this period of time was like and know the 2 main things that they did (protect themselves from the wild animals and to gather food)

Relationships and Health	KEEPING HEALTHY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active life style • Know the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this (walking/ cycling to school) • Know the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity) • Know the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and concentration • Know how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health 	Forest School	Empathy and self-care: Story of Fog – friendship. Use soap from horse chestnut leaves, make shelters for animals – dead-hedges, hedgehog homes. Foraging for firewood. Carrying sticks safely. Practise safe fire technique, make Dragon Leaf spiral at equinox.
Design and technology / Woodwork	MECHANISMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and build an accessory that will help to keep a compass level when it is being used. • Use research and develop design criteria of innovative and functional bases • Generate, develop and model their ideas through discussion, annotated sketches, cross-sectional and exploded diagrams, prototypes and pattern pieces • Select from and use a wide range of tools and materials to perform practical tasks accurately • Explore whether the compass still works the same, or whether it behaves differently • Suggest alternative ways of making their product, if first attempts fail • Carry out appropriate tests before making any improvements 	Science	BIOLOGY – HUMANS INCLUDING ANIMALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the main parts of the skeletal system and know its function. • Name the main parts of muscular system and know its function. • Identify and name the different types of food groups and the importance of a balanced diet.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present their product to an audience highlighting its functionality, design purpose and aesthetics. 		
Religious Studies	CHRISTIANITY-SYMBOLISM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Signs and symbols in Christianity and other religions • Discuss the meaning and significance of stories as expressions of belief, the special uses of language and symbols, particularly in describing God and the Trinity. • Discuss the Lord's Prayer and other important prayers and their meaning for believers. • Understand the Church Year: its 	PE	SWIMMING To develop confidence in the water. To enter and leave the pool safely. Be able to answer questions about pool safety. Swims competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 10m. Begin to refine the technique of breaststroke and back stroke. Outcome: To swim a width unaided in recognisable stroke.
			FITNESS Develop and improve physical activity for sustained periods of time. Learn skills to solve problems, individually and as part of a team. Increase and improve on longevity of physical activity.

<div> <div> The London Acorn School. </div> </div>			
Programmes of Study			
Class Three (Year Four) Term: Autumn First half term Unit Title: RUTHLESS ROMANS Literacy Genres: Stories with historical setting: Escape from Pompeii (Focus), Christine Bolt (2 weeks) Information Texts: (2 weeks) Exploring Form: (2 weeks) Reading Enhancements Escape from Pompeii (Focus), Christine Bolt			
Literacy	Writing to entertain: Stories – Myths & legends, Descriptive Poetry, Narrative Poetry and Characters/Settings Writing to inform: Recount, Letters, Biography, Newspaper articles and explanations Writing to persuade: Advertising – leaflets & brochures Letters and posters Progression in Reading Comprehension Vocabulary (inference) predict/ explain/ retrieve/ summarise Grammar To extend knowledge and understanding of adverbs through: -Identifying common adverbs with ly suffix and discussing their impact on the meaning of sentences -Noticing where they occur in sentences and how they are used to qualify the meaning of verbs -Collecting and classifying examples of adverbs, e.g., for speed: swiftly, rapidly, sluggishly; light: brilliantly, dimly -Investigating the effects of substituting adverbs in clauses or sentences, e.g. They left the house ...ly -Using adverbs with greater discrimination in own writing.	Maths	Finding pairs with a total of 100; adding to the next multiple of 100 and subtracting to the previous multiple of 100; subtract by counting up to find a difference; adding several numbers Read, write 4-digit numbers and know what each digit represents; compare 4-digit numbers using < and > and place on a number line; add 2-digit numbers mentally; subtract 2-digit and 3-digit numbers Learn 4 and 6 facts for the 6 and 9 times table and identify patterns; multiply multiples of 10 by single-digit numbers; multiply 2-digit numbers by single-digit numbers (the grid method); find fractions of amounts Tell and write the time to the minute on analogue and digital clocks; calculate time intervals; measure in metres, centimetres and millimetres; convert lengths between units; record using decimal notation Add two 3-digit numbers using column addition; subtract a 3-digit number from a 3-digit number using an expanded column method (decomposing only in one column)
	MIXED MEDIA – MOSAICS -Know the significance of mosaics in Roman art. -Know that mosaics are a form of decoration by arranging together small pieces -Investigate pattern and design in mosaics -Generate a mosaic style pattern of coloured squares to refine a design	Humanities (History)	ROMANS KNOW HOW ROME WAS FOUNDED AND HOW IT EXPANDED INTO AN EMPIRE. -Know the legend of Romulus and Remus - Investigate how Rome played on its strengths to expand into an empire and learn the facts about the length and location of Roman rule around Europe, Asia and Africa -Discover how Rome was ruled by emperor, consuls and senators and learn about the different groups of people in Rome and their rights (slaves, plebeians, patricians, women) -Describe aspects of daily life: technology; hygiene; children; food; houses -Learn what the ancient Romans did for entertainment and who the gladiators were?
Art			
	-To use the technique of fixing individual small squares to create a mosaic		-Identify the differences between leisure today and in ancient Rome -Know what the life of a gladiator was like: what they did and why; what weapons they used; where gladiator fights took place -Investigate the beliefs of the ancient Romans and know who were their gods and goddesses were. Describing some of the most popular Roman gods -Describe and understand the key aspect of Mt Vesuvius and learn about when it destroyed the city of Pompeii
Relationships and Health	RELATIONSHIPS- ANTI BULLYING -Know the difference between being unkind, teasing and bullying -Know what the school rules are in regard to bullying -Know what people can do if they are being bullied -Know what peer pressure is and that it could make us behave in a way that is unacceptable, unhealthy or risky -Know where pressure might come from -Know who to trust and where are how to get help	Forest School	Story : The Little Grey Men – what do we need for survival? Whittle: toasting stick, toast apple slices on fire. ID storage for sedge and birch twig, use for weaving. More dead-hedges, shelters for non-humans.
Design and technology / Woodwork	Woodwork projects connected to Man lesson themes in addition to projects derived from pupil interests	Science	PHYSICS - FORCES AND MAGNETS -Know what gravity is and investigate the force of gravity. -Know the effects of air resistance. -Know that some mechanisms including lever including pulleys and gears allow a smaller force to have a greater effect (ballista, onager, scorpio weapons).
Religious Studies	ISLAM -Learn about the Five Pillars of Faith -Explore the significance of Hajj to Muslim believers -Discuss the rise and spread of Islam; the meaning of Ummah (the worldwide community) in Islam. -Know how and why Muslims respond to the needs of others around the world.	PE	SWIMMING -To develop confidence in the water. -To enter and leave the pool safely. -Be able to answer questions about pool safety. -Swims competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 20m. -Uses the stroke of front crawl effectively. -Begin to refine the technique of breaststroke and back stroke. Outcome: To swim a width unaided in recognisable stroke. FITNESS -Increase and improve in higher intensity, physical activity for sustained periods of time. -Apply skills to solve problems, individually and as part of a team. -Increase and improve on longevity of physical activity.
French	-To introduce ourselves in French. -To learn body parts -To use phonics to pronounce numbers 1 – 20 -To learn a minimum of 5 colours in French -To learn 5 items of clothing in French -To learn 6 family members in French -To learn simple sentences in French -To re-cap what has been learned	Music	-Pupils will develop their performing, composing and listening skills -Pupils will learn about the interrelated dimensions of music -Pupils will use a range of classroom instruments to create and manipulate sounds, develop a strong sense of pulse and rhythm and establish good ensemble performance skills. -Pupils will sing a wide number of songs and develop their vocal range, intonation, articulation, blending and a joy for singing. -Pupils will learn to analyse music using age-appropriate musical vocabulary and to apply this knowledge in a musical context through solo and small group performance and composition activities.

Programmes of Study

Class/ Year Class 4 year 5 Term Autumn first half term

Unit title : Vicious vikings

Literacy Genres

Reading Enhancements

Literacy	Maths
<p>Grammar</p> <p>To extend knowledge and understanding of adverbs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying common adverbs with <i>ly</i> suffix and discussing their impact on the meaning of sentences Noticing where they occur in sentences and how they are used to qualify the meaning of verbs Collecting and classifying examples of adverbs, e.g., for speed: <i>swiftly, rapidly, sluggishly; light: brilliantly, dimly</i> Investigating the effects of substituting adverbs in clauses or sentences, e.g. <i>They left the housely</i> <p>Using adverbs with greater discrimination in own writing.</p> <p>Writing to entertain: Stories – Myths & legends Descriptions Poetry Narrative Poetry Characters/Settings</p> <p>Writing to inform: Recount Letter Biography Newspaper article Explanation</p> <p>Writing to persuade: Advertising – leaflets & brochures</p>	<p>Finding pairs with a total of 100; adding to the next multiple of 100 and subtracting to the previous multiple of 100; subtract by counting up to find a difference; adding several numbers</p> <p>Read, write 4-digit numbers and know what each digit represents; compare 4-digit numbers using < and > and place on a number line; add 2-digit numbers mentally; subtract 2-digit and 3-digit numbers</p> <p>Learn \times and \div facts for the 6 and 9 times-table and identify patterns; multiply multiples of 10 by single-digit numbers; multiply 2-digit numbers by single-digit numbers (the grid method); find fractions of amounts</p> <p>Tell and write the time to the minute on analogue and digital clocks; calculate time intervals; measure in metres, centimetres and millimetres; convert lengths between units; record using decimal notation</p> <p>Add two 3-digit numbers using column addition; subtract a 3-digit number from a 3-digit number using an expanded column method (decomposing only in one column)</p>

<p>Letter Poster</p> <p>Progression in Reading Comprehension Vocabulary /Inference/ predict/ explain/ retrieve/ summarise</p>	<p>-Double 3-digit numbers and halve even 3-digit numbers; revise unit fractions; identify equivalent fractions; reduce a fraction to its simplest form; count in fractions (each fraction in its simplest form)</p> <p>-Look at place value in decimals and the relationship between tenths and decimals; add two 4-digit numbers; practise written and mental addition methods; use vertical addition to investigate patterns</p> <p>-Round 4-digit numbers to the nearest: 10, 100 and 1000; subtract 3-digit numbers using the expanded written version and the counting up mental strategy and decide which to use</p> <p>-Convert multiples of 100g into kilograms; convert multiples of 100ml into litres; read scales to the nearest 100ml; estimate capacities; draw bar charts, record and interpret</p>
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Art	CHARCOAL & PASTELS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that the grade of pencil creates a different tone • Know that a H pencil indicates the hardness and the B indicates the blackness • Create a grade scale using different pencils and pressure • Understand the use of stippling, cross-hatching, tonal and blending to create a 3D image • Use proportion and scale to create representations of size • Use grading and shading to create a sphere 	Humanities	VIKINGS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To place the Viking period in a chronological framework • To recognise characteristics that placed Vikings a long time ago in the past • That the Vikings invaded Britain and that the period of conquest was followed by a period of settlement • To locate on a timeline the period when the Vikings made raids and then settled in Britain • Understand why the Viking people explored many parts of the world • Use a range of sources to find out about Viking longboats • To make inferences about Viking way of life • To order Viking raids in Britain chronologically • To know where and when the Vikings raided in Britain • To know that accounts of Viking raids are Anglo-Saxon interpretation of events • Describe and explain the reasons why the Vikings chose to raid monasteries • Use a range of evidence to ask and answer questions • Understand the impact King Alfred had on the Viking settlement
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	Apply the use of colour to the same techniques		
Relationships and Health	MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING Mental wellbeing Children will learn: • to recognise that anyone can experience mental health difficulties or mental ill-health and that it is important to discuss feelings with one of your identified trusted adults • to recognise warning signs about mental health and wellbeing and how to seek support for themselves and others Children should: • be able to challenge the stigma around mental health and wellbeing	Forest School	Story : The Hunter and the Wolf – positive connections. Make tarp shelters, rope swing, learn basic knots. Continue seasonal arts and obs of familiar plants. Deciduous/coniferous.
Design and technology / Woodwork	STRUCTURES- VIKING LONG HOUSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the features specific to a VLH including the materials used to construct them and the design features. • Know that VLH were single story and compartmentalised for various purposes. • Use floor plans to draw and mark out a plan of a long house from above showing the layout of rooms within the building • Use annotated sketches to identify design specifics • Use various tools and techniques, materials and methods to create a structure which includes interior sections. • Understand the purpose or strengthening joints using triangular axel supports • Critically evaluate the strength of the structure in relation to joints and intended design (floor plan) 	Science	PHYSICS -FORCES AND MAGNETS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the effects of friction in movement and how it slows, stops and speeds up with moving objects. Identify the effects of water resistance and friction between moving surfaces.
Religious Studies	Sikhism The 5 ks Where do Sikhs worship? The Gurdwara	PE	SWIMMING To develop confidence in the water. To enter and leave the pool safely. Be able to answer questions about pool safety. Swims competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 20m. Uses the stroke of front crawl effectively. Begin to refine the technique of breaststroke and back stroke. Outcome: To swim a width unaided in recognisable stroke.
			FITNESS

Programmes of Study

Class/ Year class 5 year 6 Term autumn first half term

Unit title : HEROES

Literacy Genres Classic Fiction: War Games, Michael Foreman (3 weeks)

Classic Narrative Poetry: Dulce Et Decorum Est Anthem for Doomed Youth in Flanders Fields (1 wk)

Autobiography/Biography: Women in Science [Babcock], Rachel (gnots)sky (3 weeks)

Reading Enhancements Stay Where You Are and Then Leave, John Boyne

Literacy

- Writing for Purpose

Diary Entry – WW1 A Loved One Returning Home
Planning a Narrative Using a Story Mountain – A Spooky Halloween Story
Writing a Letter – A Soldier's letter home

- Grammar

To understand and use the terms "active" and "passive" when referring to verbs, and to be able to apply their knowledge in their own writing
Transforming a sentence from active to passive and vice-versa and to note and discuss how changes from active to passive affect the word order and sense of a sentence
To know how sentences can be re-ordered by changing from one to the other
To understand the term "impersonal voice" and to be able to write in this style
Transforming a sentence from active to passive and vice-versa
To note and discuss how changes from active to passive affect the word order and sense of a sentence
To investigate further the use of active and passive verbs
To know how sentences can be re-ordered by changing from one to the other
To consider how the passive voice can conceal the agent of a sentence, e.g. The chicks were kept in an incubator

Maths

Number and place value

- Read, write and compare 6-digit numbers and know what each digit represents
- read, write and compare 1-, 2-and 3-place decimal numbers

Mental multiplication and division

- multiply and divide by 10, 100 and 1000
- Use mental multiplication strategies to multiply by numbers such as 4, 8, 5, 25, 19, 29 and 99

Decimals, percentages and their equivalence to fractions

- round decimals to nearest tenth and whole number and place on a number line
- convert decimals (up to 3 places) to fractions and vice-versa
- solve problems involving number up to 3 decimal places
- choose an appropriate method to solve decimal addition
- Word problems

Fractions, ratio and proportion

- Word problems

Mental addition and subtraction

- Use mental addition strategies to solve additions incl decimal numbers;
- Word problems

Written addition, subtraction, multiplication and division

- use column addition to add 5-digit numbers, decimal numbers and amounts of money
- Word problems

To understand the term "impersonal voice" and to be able to write in this style
To understand features of formal official language through, e.g. Collecting and analysing examples, discussing when and why they are used
Noting the conventions of the language, e.g. use of the impersonal voice, imperative verbs, formal vocabulary
Collecting typical words and expressions, e.g. "Those wishing to ...", "hereby ...", "forms may be obtained ..."

- Spelling

ch (k)
ex-
-dge
ph

- Comprehension

(extend vocabulary; inference; predict; explain; retrieve; summarise)
The Birds of Flanders Fields
The Causes of WW1
The History Of Halloween

- revise using short multiplication to multiply 4-digit numbers by 1-digit numbers and use this to multiply amounts of money
- use long multiplication to multiply 3-digit and 4-digit numbers by teens numbers.

Problem solving, reasoning and algebra

- Express missing number problems algebraically and find pairs of numbers that satisfy equations involving two unknowns
- Use mathematical reasoning to investigate

Geometry and Measurement

- Find missing lengths and angles;
- measurement in and conversion of SI and imperial units; the use of 24-hour clock and calculation of time intervals
- Convert between grams and kilograms, millilitres and litres, millimetres and centimetres, centimetres and metres, metres and kilometres, and miles and kilometres
- revise reading the 24-hour clock and convert 12-hour times to 24-hour
- read and write Roman numerals

BIDMAS – Order of Operations

- understand how brackets can be used in calculation problems;
- use knowledge of the order of operations to carry out calculations involving the four operations,
- solve addition and subtraction multi-step problems using knowledge of the order of operations.

- know cause of the WW1 and the war years
- know how war broke out and how it ended
- know when it took place and which countries and world leaders were involved
- Understand what life was like on the 'front line' and in the trenches
- Understand chronology by using a WW1 Timeline
- name and know significance of famous wartime figures
- What life was like for families e.g. air raid shelters, shops, rationing, evacuation, travel, food, drink, school, clothing
- Impact of propaganda

Art

Look at a wide variety of Propaganda posters
To draw / paint Propaganda Poster

Humanities

How WW1 ended and significance of remembrance

- Locate world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (incl location of Russia) concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries and major cities
- Find and identify the countries involved in the triple entente and triple alliance.
- Use symbols and arrows to demonstrate the movement of alliances during the war
- Explore human geography during the war

Relationships and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits/risks of sun exposure; how to keep safe from sun damage, sun/heat stroke and reduce the risk of skin cancer • facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccinations • what is meant by first aid; basic techniques for dealing with common injuries, incl. head injuries (recap on making a 999 call) • to understand the effects, risks and laws in relation to drugs • about mixed messages in the media about drugs, incl. Alcohol, smoking/vaping <p>about organisations that support people concerning alcohol, tobacco and nicotine or other drug use; people they can talk to if they have concerns</p>	Forest School	<p>land use, trade links, distribution of natural resources</p> <p>Use the eight point compass, four and six figure grid references, symbols and keys to build their knowledge of the UK and wider world</p> <p>Story - Winkles Make Rivers – trophic cascade, effects of large mammals on a landscape. Autotroph/heterotroph. Weaving with diverse twigs, boats, small shelters, Catalan tension tray</p> <p>Pupils identify more flora and fauna, consider needs of fauna and undertake projects for these.</p> <p>Use tools with more confidence, make simple knots</p> <p>Written scientific vocabulary and work well as a class team</p> <p>Children expand their environmental awareness in terms of conservation of the Merton Hall Park.</p> <p>Children taken on leadership roles with Forest school days with younger children</p>
Design and technology / Woodwork	Wood work projects connected with (in addition to) projects derived from pupil interests	Science	<p>ELECTRICITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how bulb brightness or volume of a buzzer relates to the number and voltage of cells used. • Compare how and give reasons components in a circuit function including bulbs, buzzers and switches. • Know the difference between series and parallel circuits. • Know how buzzers are used to create sirens. <p>Use recognised symbols when representing circuit diagrams.</p>
Religious Studies	<p>CHRISTIANITY (TEACHING & AUTHORITY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know human beings are believed to be made in the image and likeness of God, to have become sinful and yet to be capable of redemption. • Explore where the values are drawn from: the two greatest commandments, the Ten Commandments, and the Sermon on the Mount; they include: courage, forgiveness, peace, self-sacrifice, commitment, love and justice; Christian beliefs about marriage and about death. <p>The life and teachings of Jesus as told in the Gospels; his birth and its meaning; baptism and temptations; disciples, friends and followers; teaching about the Kingdom of God in parables and miracles; the Beatitudes and the two greatest commandments; Holy Week and the Passion Narratives and the Resurrection. Understand how these are closely connected and linked to the beliefs and teachings today.</p>	PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWIMMING • To develop confidence in the water. To enter and leave the pool safely. Be able to answer questions about pool safety. Swims competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 20m. Uses the stroke of front crawl effectively. Begin to refine the technique of breaststroke and back stroke. Outcome: To swim a width unaided in recognisable stroke. • FITNESS • Fitness increase and improve in higher intensity, physical activity for sustained periods of time. Apply skills to solve problems, individually and as part of a team. Increase and improve on longevity of physical activity.

French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hold an introductory conversation about yourself • To describe someone else • To review how to tell the time • To learn reflexive verbs to describe our daily routines • To re-cap what has been learned 	Music	<p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will develop their performing, composing and listening skills • Pupils will learn about the interrelated dimensions of music • Pupils will use a range of classroom instruments to create and manipulate sounds, develop a strong sense of pulse and rhythm and establish good ensemble performance skills. • Pupils will sing a wide number of songs and develop their vocal range, intonation, articulation, blending and a joy for singing. • Pupils will learn to analyse music using age appropriate musical vocabulary and to apply this knowledge in a musical context through solo and small group performance and composition activities. <p>Exploring Sound Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamics • Duration • Tempo • Pitch • Texture • Structure • Singing
Trips and/ or events		ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to protect my password and other personal information. • Explain the consequences of sharing too much about myself online. • Support my friends to protect themselves and make good choices online, including reporting concerns to an adult. • Explain the consequences of spending too much time online or on a game. • Explain the consequences to myself and others of not communicating kindly and respectfully. <p>Protect my computer or device from harm on the Internet.</p>

For further information on curriculum please visit our website:

www.thelondonacornschoo.co.uk/curriculum

Assessment



At The London Acorn School we believe in developing creative thinkers and curious learners. Assessment is very much part of the cycle of learning at our school and not the 'end' of a journey.

In the Kindergarten years the teachers are guided by the 'Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS) criteria for assessment from Birth to 5 years. It sets out both learning and developmental requirements, as well as safeguarding and welfare requirements. This information is shared with our parents at parents evenings and in annual reports.

In our Junior School classes we use the PUMA and PIRA Maths and Literacy termly assessments. All of our teachers are skilled at working with children individually to plan their next steps in learning. Emphasis is given to providing written and verbal feedback regularly to the children and this is a part of the daily classroom experience. Small class sizes and a nurturing atmosphere ensure that assessment in this context really helps children to progress academically.

The curriculum breadth ensures that children experience time and space within a school day to discover a talent, explore, and learn through nurture not pressure.

Assessments administered in the Junior School:

SWRT – this is a single word reading test	The pupils read a list of words. This is useful at the beginning of an academic year and at the end of the year, so that value added can be observed. All pupils at the school read the same list. This assessment is useful in terms of looking at the children's abilities to decode words and can also be an analysis tool in terms of identifying where more work on phonics may need to be deployed, or booster literacy sessions offered. It also help us to pinpoint pupils who may need screening for dyslexia.
PUMA and PIRA Maths and Reading Comprehension assessment booklets	These are termly child friendly assessments. Easy to administer with progress tracked termly, these assessments provide the school with prior attainment data every year. They provide Reading comprehension and Maths 'ages' and also standardised scores. These assessments provide a diagnostic capability allowing teachers to focus on concepts and skills which the pupils need.
Spelling test	All children take the same test. This test is often taken at the beginning of an academic year and the end of an academic year.
Writing Assessment	The whole Junior School receives the same stimulus and completes a similar task based on age-related success criteria. This is assessed using the schools internally developed 'Learning Steps'. While we cannot compare this with peers nationally at the same age, it does provide the teaching team the ability to see the progression in writing throughout the school.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)



If Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have been identified or become apparent to the Class Teacher and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), then a meeting will be held to address what additional support can be made available for the individual child. Please make us aware of any previous assessments your child may have had so that we can work together to provide appropriate support. Relevant external professionals will also be consulted if required.

For further information, please consult our SEND Policy:

<https://thelondonacornschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TLAS-SEND-Policy-Sept-2021-.pdf>

Little Acorns (Age 1-4)



The London Acorn School is hosting Little Acorns Parent and Child groups with Jo Pearce during school terms, designed to help support the connection in your formative relationship with your child. Heart held space offers Waldorf craft and songs, with inspiring weekly puppet shows, snacktime and role modelling of the adults role in child led play. Supporting material provided. Holistic Baby Childcare practices stem from Steiner/Waldorf and are inspired by Emmi Pikler and the EYFS.

Outdoor play is encouraged all year round – come dressed for outdoors. We also have a wonderful indoor environment in our beautiful Morden Cottage in the Rose Garden in Morden Hall Park.

For further information, please see our website: [Little Acorns \(ages 1- 4\) - The London Acorn School](#)



Kindergarten (3 – 6 years)



“Nothing is rushed.

The children sense that there is plenty of time to do things well.

Nothing to fear.

Each child has come to trust the certainty of the morning rhythm.

Nothing to fail.

In place of failure is the satisfaction which children experience when they are allowed to play.

No instructions.

Instead, self-direction and the willingness to imitate.”

Lynne Oldfield, *Free to Learn*

The London Acorn School Kindergarten forms a bridge between home and school, creating a secure and unhurried environment for children aged 3 to 6 years that is safe, warm and loving. Our Kindergartens are mixed age groups, which provide a traditional large family atmosphere, helping children to acquire social and emotional skills through experience, imitation and learning through play.

The Kindergarten curriculum is based on Waldorf Steiner Kindergarten practice. Children of this age learn through imitating the world around them. We aim to provide examples worthy of imitation and nourishing opportunities for children to learn experientially and feel the joy of discovery. We create a space for the child to unfold: to reveal themselves, develop their imaginations, and encourage natural creativity and curiosity.

The strong rhythm, repetition and reverence of the Kindergarten day, week and seasons support these aims. Sensitively structured and regular activities include, drawing, painting, baking, sewing, weaving, woodwork, outside expeditions, ring games, fairy tales, singing and poetry.

Our Kindergarten is a community of ‘doers’ and through ‘work’ children learn not only social and domestic skills, but are able to develop good motor and practical skills, too. Young children learn for life from life, that is why in Kindergarten, we aim to prioritise meaningful work, such as food preparation and looking after our environment. To look after our environment, we encourage activities like cleaning and tidying up, laying the snack table, washing up after we have eaten, etc.

Furthermore, throughout the year, the children experience the natural world during outdoor play or nature walks. In these walks the children are free to balance on logs and branches, explore the bushes, climb trees, run, hop, skip, roll and crawl. They encounter the world with all their senses, playing with stones, rocks, shells, leaves, earth, mud, snow, sand and water, or feeling the wind, rain or sun on their cheeks.

As the last year of Kindergarten unfolds, older children are gently introduced to following a teacher as they build a portfolio of craft projects through ‘daily work’ sessions and begin ‘Phonics Raptors’ in preparation for formal learning in the Junior School.

In the Kindergarten years the teachers are guided by the ‘Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage’ (EYFS) criteria for assessment from Birth to 5 years. It sets out both learning and developmental requirements, as well as safeguarding and welfare requirements. This information is shared with our parents at parents evenings and in annual reports.

Kindergarten 2023-24	
8.40am	Arrival
8.50am	Circle Time
9.10am	Mini Snack and Indoor Play/Activities
11.00am	Tidy up/Story time/ Hand wash
11.30am	Lunch
12.00pm	Getting ready for Outdoor Time
12.15pm	Outdoor Time (Kinde Tree/Garden/Adventure Playground)
2.00pm	Pick up or After School Clubs

NB: On Fridays the entire school finishes at 1pm (after school clubs run until 2pm).

What this means at Home

- It is worth researching how you can bring rhythm and repetition into your home to support your Kindergarten child.
- Think about how you would like to model meaningful work to your Kindergarten child at home or set up things to encourage imaginative play. It will help them academically long term.

What this means at School

- The school undertakes to assess your child in a continuous manner and to contact you should any issues arise.
- Parents are invited to two formal meetings each year, and receive an annual written report.
- In Kindergarten, children unfold in a safe, homely, rhythmic and creative environment.

Background information for this topic: *The London Acorn School uses a Steiner-Waldorf inspired approach to education in Kindergarten. You can find out more about the EYFS in this setting with the 'Guide to the EYFS in Steiner Kindergartens' which you will find in Kindergarten or on <http://www.steinerwaldorf.org>.*

Lynne Oldfield is a UK Kindergarten practitioner and her book 'Free to Learn, Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood Care and Education' provides a good outline of Kindergarten practice.

Junior School (6 – 11 years)



The Junior School starts with children aged 6 (turning 7 during the academic year) and continues until the child reaches the age of 11. The curriculum for these younger students is designed to help them form an understanding of the world and their relation to it through lessons and activities that encourage the development of their inner senses, such as intuition and imagination, along with important skills such as literacy, numeracy, arts and crafts.

These primary years are when the children are actively discovering the world around them through their senses and growing faculties. Lesson subjects are therefore shaped to support this aspect of pupils' growth and incorporate an abundance of physical and practical activities, which support this stage of development.

A Typical Day in the Junior School

The London Acorn School prides itself on offering a balanced and diverse curriculum; therefore, to an extent, no two days are the same. Despite this, rhythm and routine are regarded as highly important teaching tools in the Junior School: from helping children to feel safe and secure with daily timetables, to celebrating seasonal festivals throughout the year, rhythm and routine ground us in the present moment and are essential for health and well-being.

The day begins with greeting the Class Teacher at the threshold of the school building, marking that transition from home life to school life. The children put their belongings away and swap into slippers to wear indoors, which further marks that readiness for learning. As the children move throughout the building, the sound of song fills the corridors.

For each year group, the day begins with a Morning Rhythmic Time: songs, poems, movement, reading, and mental maths are just some of the activities that take place within this time. It is an opportunity for children to settle into the school day through familiar exercises.

Throughout the morning, academic subjects are taught in the context of a purposeful and meaningful topic that inspires, excites, and enthuses learners, offering them transferrable skills for life-long learning. This progressive curriculum builds upon prior knowledge, challenges thinking and enables a higher level of understanding for long term memory acquisition, storage and retention. Therefore, the topic of Romans may offer pupils the chance to develop their literacy skills in the morning, their geography knowledge before lunch, and their arts and craft techniques in the afternoon.

English and Maths are taught daily, combining this thematic approach with the National Curriculum. After a busy, creative morning, the children eat their lunch together and then play outside.

The afternoon is an assortment of different Arts and Craft activities: from engaging with the natural world and practising bushcraft skills in Woodland Craft, to developing wet-on-wet painting techniques in Art, to learning to play new instruments in Music, the afternoons at The London Acorn School are a chance to unleash one's creativity.

Finally, at the end of the school day, children sing farewell to each other and their teacher, closing the school day with rhythm. Children can then stay on at school to engage in one of the many extra-curricular clubs on offer: games, drama, woodwork, etc.

Junior School Day 2023-24	
8.30am	Arrival, Registration and Rhythmic Time/Maths Practice
9.00am	Literacy
10.15am	Snack time
10.30am	Play time
11.00am	Maths
11.45am	Humanities, Languages, PSHE, RE etc.
12.30pm	Lunch time
1.15pm	Creative Lessons (Woodland Craft, Art, Music, PE, Science etc.)
3.15pm	Pick up or After School Clubs

NB: On Fridays the entire school finishes at 1pm (after school clubs run until 2pm).

What this means at Home

- Please support literacy by modelling your joy in reading books and listening to your child read on a regular basis.
- Don't hesitate to ask your Class Teacher any questions on pedagogical approach, curriculum or assessment.

What this means at School

- The school delivers a broad curriculum, tailored to the needs of each class, the plans for which are shared with you at the start of each year.
- Twice a year, parent-teacher conferences are held and an annual report is arranged to discuss your child's progress.

Background information for this topic:

'Ofsted inspection of The London Acorn School, 2023', PDFs available online.

'School as a Journey' - Torin M Finser. Straightforward and humorous, 'School as a Journey' provides an excellent introduction to the daily activities of a classroom using the Steiner curriculum.

'The Tasks and Content of the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum' – Martyn Rawson. This is a thorough summary of the Steiner curriculum for every age group. Please note that although, we use this as reference, The London Acorn School may diverge from this curriculum and devise its own curriculum for the teaching of mathematics.

Technology

The London Acorn School has a low-technology approach to education for the Kindergarten and Junior School (ICT is introduced in Chestnut Class [ages 9-10] to prepare pupils for the transition to Secondary School). This is supported by our community approach to technology at home through limiting screen time as a family.

With recent research urging caution as extensive use of smartphones has been linked to decreased levels of happiness and increased incidences of mental illness, our aim is to produce young people who are at home in today's world of electronic communication, but not overwhelmed or ruled by it.

A high ability to discern the right data and edit and create intelligently will be a valued asset of the future. The key is not to bring on too much, too soon. Many tech company founders have famously restricted access to technology for their own children for these reasons.

What this means at Home

- Families undertake to support low-tech childhoods and maintain a low tech homelife to support the ethos of the school - especially in Kindergarten and The Junior School.

What this means at School

- The school undertakes to support low-tech childhoods and maintain a low -school community, especially in Kindergarten and The Junior School.
- Teachers are on hand to help coordinate whole class strategies and approaches from age 9 onwards.

Background information for this topic: *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy – And Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* by Jean M Twenge. *The Collapse of Parenting* Dr Leonard Sax.

Kim John Payne gives a talk on childhood and screens, accessible on YouTube [by following this link: https://vimeo.com/157472229](https://vimeo.com/157472229).

Behaviour

At our school we recognise that the most fundamental requirement for all children is that they feel safe and secure physically, emotionally and socially. Students need to feel safe in order to thrive and learn. They need to feel secure in order to want to participate.

We take our responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the pupils in our care very seriously. Please read our [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) which sets out the policies and procedures we have in place. We will take appropriate action if we have concerns about a child's physical, emotional or social well-being. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns.

Bullying is not tolerated at The London Acorn School and is taken very seriously. We would urge any parent or child to inform us if they are concerned. Any other behaviour that encroaches on child safety in any way will also be addressed with care. We will contact the parents of any child if we feel that a pattern of behaviour of their child encroaches on safe boundaries.

A secure daily rhythm with regular patterns of sharing food, creating quiet space, and sleeping is essential for your child's health and well-being and will help them to work positively with social groups at school.

A quiet regular bedtime routine is important for the quality of every child's sleep. Please keep 'sleepovers' with friends to weekends or holidays, so your child can fully benefit from school each weekday morning.



What this means at Home

- Parents and school partner up in maintaining strong consistent boundaries. This may involve being asked to a school meeting.
- Good communication is essential.
- Children should be listened to if they talk about events at school, but be aware that there may be many sides to one story, and do not hesitate to talk with a member of staff at an appropriate time if you have any concerns.
- Parents are responsible for maintaining children's boundaries appropriately out of school hours and when attending school events with their child.

What this means at School

- The school maintains a commitment to keeping all children safe and secure.
- We maintain a high standard of behaviour at school and have a School Code in the Junior School which we expect pupils to follow, according to their age ability.
- The school undertakes to contact parents in the event of a child repeatedly forgetting basic boundaries.
- Staff always speak respectfully to children and they expect children to respond in this way in return.
- The school is responsible for maintaining children's boundaries within school hours.

Background information for this topic: Parents have reported that the following titles were helpful and gave results: *'Simplicity parenting, using the extraordinary power of less to raise calmer, happier and more secure kids'* by Kim John Payne; *'Stress free parenting in 12 steps'* by Christiane Kutik and Matthew Barton; *'You are your child's first teacher'* by Rahima Baldwin Dancy.

'The soul of Discipline' by Kim John Payne is a recommended read for setting clear and consistent boundaries and there are many other writers on this topic to ponder as you hone your style. For more reading on the development of resilience and impulse control, *'The Marshmallow Test, understanding self control and how to master it'* by Walter Mischel.

Festivals



A variety of festivals are celebrated at The London Acorn School primarily drawn from the traditional calendar of the British Isles, and they are treated as communal days rather than religious occasions, following the inclusiveness and tolerance innate in British values that we promote with students. Festivals help to mark the pace of the school year and offer students the chance to reflect on how far they have come in the past year and what they would like to aim for as they move forward.

Seasonal festivals, such as Michaelmas Festival and The May Day Festival, serve to connect us with the cyclical rhythms of the year, fostering a natural reverence for the wonder and beauty of life and nature.

Children of any ethnic or religious background are welcome at our school, and we respect the individual beliefs of families. We celebrate a range of religious festivals, connected to our studies in RE and Humanities. From Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, to Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, Sikh and Buddhist festivals throughout the year, we strive to celebrate what is universal.

The children are actively involved in the preparation for each celebration through activities, songs and stories. Furthermore, festivals are times when the entire community can come together and enjoy creating a shared experience of joy and celebration. Whether it is coming together to illuminate the darkening days of the winter months or to delight in the refreshing signs of spring and summer sunshine, these annual celebrations are central to sustaining the community's sense of vitality and togetherness.

Upcoming festivals will be published in the weekly digital school newsletter, '*In a Nutshell*'.

At The London Acorn School we have zero tolerance for intolerance of difference in others. We do not discriminate on the grounds of difference in age, physical or mental capability, gender, sexual orientation or identity, status, race, religion, or belief. This applies equally towards our student, staff and family member communities. Difference is something to celebrate.

Regarding private occasions such as birthday celebrations and outings, we ask that parents are mindful of the need to be respectful and considerate of other pupils in their child's class. Birthday cakes, for classes to share are always welcome in school.

Whilst the school cannot be directly involved with families outside school hours, members of the London Acorn community are asked to uphold the values and attitudes that reflect the community's integrity, providing a family setting within which their children can socialise with friends in a safe and inclusive environment.

We welcome fundraising initiatives from parents for specific projects or equipment that might benefit our school. If you feel that you would like to be involved in an initiative of this nature, please contact our School Office.

What this means at Home

- Festivals are special community occasions and attendance is encouraged.
- Your generosity in taking part is appreciated at our school and volunteers offering help, including fundraising, are welcomed.
- The school requests that you work with social events involving children responsibly and with thought to any impact on class groups and individuals.

What this means at School

- The school appreciates that some festivals are not possible for working parents to attend and endeavors to hold at least some festivals at times when everyone is more likely to be able to make it.
- Birthdays are festivals too. Parents are invited to celebrations in Kindergarten and cakes are welcomed for snack time in the Junior School.
- We do our best to welcome and cater for everyone and their needs at school.

Background information for this topic: If you would like to follow seasonal festivals at home, and we strongly support you doing so, we recommend Ann Druitt, Christine Fynes-Clinton, Marjorie Rowling – *'All Year Round – A calendar of celebration's*.

Christine Fynes-Clinton has also written a book all about sensitive and fun birthday celebrations – *'The Birthday Book'*.

Morden Hall Park

We are very lucky to have a school amidst 125 acres of parkland, yet still in our nation's capital, and this is all due to our good relations with National Trust. Please help us to continue to maintain these. By-laws for the park are set out on the notice board beside the park gate through to the garden centre. Please make sure that you comply with these.

The historic rose garden contains large, colourful and beautifully scented blooms in summer and hips in autumn, and children will find them attractive. Please ensure that children and adults take great care of this asset; the picking of flowers there is strictly prohibited for obvious reasons.

Here at Morden Hall Park, we are blessed with a range of sustainable options for travel to school, from tram, to bus, to tube, to a major green cycle route. Of course, if these cannot work for your family there is always the car.

What this means at Home

- Your child needs to have the right kit at school to engage with the natural world on a daily basis. Please ensure that wellies fit & the wet weather gear detailed in your class equipment list is on hand.
- Be prepared for clothes coming home needing a wash.
- We ask all our families to tread lightly on the planet and where at all possible to choose environmentally friendly ways to travel to school.

What this means at School

- The school uses Morden Hall Park as an additional outdoor classroom and all children regularly work and play outside, often closely observing changes in the season.
- The school offers gardening on the park for appropriate main lesson topics and gardening club, in association with National Trust.

Background information for this topic:

This book is very accessible: '*Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*' by Richard Louv.

Policies and Procedures

The following policies can be found on our website:

- [Absence and Cover Arrangements Policy June 2022](#)
- [Accessibility plan June 2022](#)
- [Admissions Policy – May 2022](#)
- [Anti Bullying Policy May 2022](#)
- [Anti-Radicalisation Policy June 2022](#)
- [Appropriate Physical Contact with Children Including Restraint and Intimate Care Policy – June 2022](#)
- [Attendance Policy September 2022](#)
- [Behaviour policy June 2022](#)
- [Complaints Policy November 2022](#)
- [Confidentiality Policy June 2022](#)
- [CPD Policy June 2022](#)
- [Curriculum Policy June 2022](#)
- [Data Protection Policy June 2022](#)
- [Dogs on School Grounds Policy June 2022](#)
- [EAL Policy June 2022](#)
- [Educational Visits Policy June 2022](#)
- [E-Safety Policy June 2022](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy June 22](#)
- [First Aid Policy June 2022](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy May 2022](#)
- [Lone-working-policy June 2022](#)
- [Low Level Concerns Policy September 2022](#)
- [Major Incident Plan June 2022](#)
- [Manual Handling Policy – June 2022](#)
- [Missing Child Policy June 2022](#)
- [Mobile Phone, Camera and Device Policy June 2022](#)
- [Nominated Persons June 2022](#)
- [Non Collection of Children Policy June 2022](#)
- [PSHE Policy June 2022](#)
- [Risk Assessment Policy June 2022](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy September 2022](#)
- [School Lockdown Policy June 2022](#)

- SEND Policy June 2022
 - Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy June 2022
 - TLAS PSHE Consultation Document
 - TLAS PSHE and Wellbeing Framework for Primary Schools
 - TLAS – School Code & Principles June 2022
 - Whistleblowing Policy June 2022
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Kindergarten Policies:

- Kindergarten Administration of Medicines and Control of Infectious Diseases Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten First Aid Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Food Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Mobile Phone and Camera Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Nappy-Clothes Changing and Toileting Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Observation and Assessment Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Physical Intervention Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Positive Behaviour Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Settling-in Policy June 2022
 - Kindergarten Supervision Policy June 2022
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Copies of The London Acorn School's policies and procedures are available at the School Office by request and can be downloaded from our school website:

<https://thelondonacornschool.co.uk/our-school/school-policies/>

Our School/Family agreement

Family of:

Child
name

Child
name

Family/
School
partnership
agreement:

I have examined the school handbook and agree to take all reasonable steps to uphold its principles and commit to the actions outlined in the boxes of this colour that appear within it.

- If I have any concerns (no matter how small), I will raise them with our class teacher or head teacher. If I have any serious concerns or complaints I will follow the school policy (published on the school website) to address these. I will not publicise or broadcast complaints or concerns without giving the school reasonable opportunity to respond using the complaints procedure. I understand that persistent breaches of this agreement or total failure to comply may result in a termination of contract by the school and withdrawal from school classes.
- I will support all school staff as they strive their best to fulfil the obligations of the school set out in the right hand boxes at the end of each section of the handbook.

Family
Finance
Agreement:

I agree to make appropriate arrangements with the school office to pay school fees promptly and ensure that prompt payment is sustained.

If my family departs the school, I understand that one full term's notice is required, or payment in lieu, to recover any deposit. Finance terms and conditions on the school website.

I understand that any extra educational support necessary for my child, or optional coaching sessions (ie. Music), will be subject to additional charge.

School
agreement:

The School undertakes to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the educational principles outlined in this handbook are upheld and the actions outlined in the boxes of this colour are delivered. The school will do all it reasonably can to support each family to maintain this agreement.

(please tick where appropriate)

Image data
and
personal
data
instruction:

- ☐ I understand that in order to comply with good educational practice and statutory requirements, the school will hold personal data on my child(ren) and my family, but will share this only on a 'need to know' basis and in accordance with the school data policy, available on the school website.
- ☐ I agree that images of my child(ren) may be made to document their education and that this will be done within the school policy regarding use of camera and image, available on the school website.
- ☐ I agree that appropriate images of my child(ren) may be used to promote and grow The London Acorn School, now and in the future, according to the school policy regarding use of camera and image. I reserve the right to withdraw my agreement at any reasonable time.

Signatories

For Family

Name:

Date:

For Family

Name:

Date:

For School

Name:

Date:

Position:

Many thanks for joining our learning community; every family brings a special contribution.

A second copy will be made of this agreement to be kept by the school. The school may, from time to time, issue a revised agreement wording which you will be required to examine and sign.



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The London Acorn School CIC is a not for profit
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