

Welcome to *The London Acorn School*

Information for new families joining our Junior School



**The London
Acorn School.**

A proud member of the
Chatsworth Schools Family
**CHATSWORTH
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An introduction to the Junior School



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 Rhythmic Maths: a fun and fast-paced movement session focused on mental maths, rhythm and coordination. 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 humanities theme 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 theme of Vikings 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: trampolining, yoga, multisports, lego, etc.

Junior School Day 2023-24	
8.30am	Arrival, Registration and Rhythmic Maths
9.00am	Literacy
10.15am	Break time
10.45am	Maths
11.30am	Humanities, Languages and Science
12.15pm	Lunch time
1.15pm	Creative Lessons (Woodland Craft, Art, Music, PE)
3.15pm	Pick up or After School Clubs



Arrival and Collection

Monday - Thursday from 8.30am to 3.15pm

Friday from 8.30am to 1.00pm

Afterschool Clubs:

Monday – Thursday from 3.15pm to 4.15pm

Friday from 1.00pm to 2.00pm

Children must be collected by a parent or by a named person with parental consent. If your child is going home with someone other than you, please let your teacher and the office know by email.

It is very disruptive to the children and to the rhythm of the morning if there are late arrivals. It can be distressing for the children to miss some of the morning activities and for their morning routine to be broken. It can also be distressing for them if they are waiting for you after all the other children have been collected. Children should never be left unattended in the school buildings or garden, either prior or after school.

Extra-curricular Clubs

The London Acorn School provides a broad range of exciting extra-curricular clubs for all ages, from Kindergarten to Year 6. Each half term, clubs rotate, offering students a chance to try something new. Here is a typical club timetable:

Clubs Autumn Term 2023 (first half term)	Schedule	Fees (£)
Chill Club (Kindergarten)	Monday 2pm-3pm	Complimentary
Retro Bounce Trampettes (Kindergarten)	Tuesday 2pm-3pm	£10 per session
Multisports (Kindergarten)	Wednesday 2pm-3pm	£10 per session
Yoga (Kindergarten)	Thursday 2pm-3pm	£10 per session
Music Club (Kindergarten)	Friday 1pm-2pm	£10 per session
Art Club (Juniors)	Monday 3.15pm-4.15pm	Complimentary
Retro Bounce Trampettes (Juniors)	Tuesday 3.15pm-4.15pm	£10 per session
Multisports (Juniors)	Wednesday 3.15pm-4.15pm	£10 per session
Yoga (Juniors)	Thursday 3.15pm-4.15pm	£10 per session
Lego Club (Juniors)	Friday 1pm-2pm	Complimentary

There are a combination of complimentary and fee paying clubs. Club timetables are published at the end of each half term for children to sign up for the following half term. Clubs are booked and paid for half termly in advance. Any sessions missed are non-refundable.

Healthy Snack and Lunch



Please ensure that your child comes to school having eaten a substantial breakfast, it is important that they start the day with enough energy for our active mornings. Children will further require a healthy mid-morning snack and packed lunch. The school provides fresh spring water, but your child will need their own water bottle, with their name on it. With busy, creative learning, children use up a lot of energy and therefore need plenty of sustenance to keep them going until the end of the school day. It is much better that they return home with food uneaten than they do not have enough to eat throughout the day.

They need protein and carbohydrates. Fresh fruit and vegetables are good choices. Many bring flasks of warm food (from last night's supper perhaps). We do not allow sweets, crisps, biscuits or chocolate.

Please update us on any changes to your child's dietary needs.

At mealtimes we aim to establish sound social habits: preparing the table, waiting until everybody is ready, saying grace before eating and thank you at the end.

Festivals and Birthdays



A variety of festivals are celebrated throughout The London Acorn School. Seasonal festivals, such as Harvest Festival and the Maypole 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, harking back to our studies in Main Lesson and Humanities. From the 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 a wonderful opportunity for not only the whole school to come together, but the wider community of parents as well.

Here is an example of just some of the festivals we celebrate throughout the year. Many more are celebrated through assemblies, class plays, and a variety of events.

Festivals	Time of year	Celebration
Harvest	Early Autumn	A celebration of Harvest. Giving thanks to Summer and its bounty and finding inner strength as the days begin to noticeably shorten.
Lantern	Late Autumn	A Lantern Walk celebrating the transition from the end of Harvest to the beginning of Winter, reminding us to hold onto warmth and light within us, during dark, cold days ahead.
Advent Spiral	Advent	A celebration of wonder and anticipation as a candlelit procession brings light to a darkened room, until the room is aglow.
Lunar New Year	New Year	Celebrating the refreshing start to a new year, leaving behind darkness and negativity and readying ourselves for new life.
Shrove Tuesday	Easter	A celebration of giving thanks before, traditionally, the fasting of Lent.
May Day	Early May	A celebration of Spring and inner growth.
Midsummer	Late June	Celebrating the heat, life and colour of Summer's long days.

Birthdays are special occasions at The London Acorn School, marked by singing, birthday messages and decorations. Healthy birthday cakes or fruit treats are welcomed, although please ensure they are low in sugar.

Settling-in Process



First Day

The children say goodbye to their parents, and we start our day. Sometimes a child might find it difficult to separate from his/her parents. In few situations a child may become distressed, but this soon subsides as they join the group on their wonderful morning adventures. We have found that the children often imitate their parents' mood, and that the children whose parents are reassuring and confident about letting their child go, find the transition process easier.

The first day will act as an Orientation Day. The Class Teacher will show the children where to put their belongings (shoes, spare clothes, wellington boots, waterproof clothing, etc.); where they will learn, eat and play; and introduce them to other members of staff. By the end of the first day, the children will be familiar with the environment and have a sense of belonging; it will start to become "their school".

What to wear/ Dress code

We ask for the children to come to school in clothes that are weather appropriate, comfortable, allow movement and are not too precious. Children will get dirty so please keep the "Sunday best" for home.

Footwear

Indoors, children will wear slippers that need to be labelled and remain at school. We recommend a style with a knitted cuff which fits snugly around the child's ankle and has a non-slip rubber sole (Haflinger, Living Kitzbutrel, Flossie and Giesswen provide good quality slippers). Plimsoles are also acceptable.

Woodwork is the only indoor lesson when children require alternative footwear: closed-toe preferably leather sturdy shoes. These can also remain at school, labelled.

Outdoors, children will require appropriate footwear for the season, weather and activity: labelled Wellington Boots for Woodland Craft, labelled Trainers for outdoor games, sensible closed-toe shoes for playtime.



Waterproofs and warm-weather gear

Please make sure your child has a full set of labelled waterproofs (waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers or dungarees). At The London Acorn School, we are not deterred by wet weather, so it is important that your child is appropriately dressed.

Likewise, please make sure your child is prepared for the winter months with adequate warm clothing (hat, scarf, gloves, warm jacket, thick socks – all labelled - are suitable). In summer months, sun hats are also suitable.

Please do not bring your child to school in:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faded, torn or dirty denim jeans • Ragged, un-ironed or scruffy clothes • Oversize/undersize clothing • Any clothing with slogans, even for games • Brands or letters on clothing • Low cut or strappy tops • Short skirts/shorts • Hats inside school buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat ballet-style shoes • Trainers, except for outdoor games • Bare feet • Jewelry, except pierced ears (with retaining studs only) or faith items (out of sight) • Make up/nail varnish of any kind • Dyed hair • Piercings other than ears
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Hair

Hair must be neatly combed/brushed at all times. Hair that is longer than shoulder length must be tidy and kept off the face at all times.

Spare clothes bag

All children should have a complete set of labelled spare clothes, including underwear, which is to be left in a labelled bag at school.

Summary of items to leave at school:

- Slippers
- Woodwork shoes (can be brought in on specific day)
- Wellington boots
- Full set of waterproofs
- Spare clothes bag
- Trainers for games (can be brought in on specific day)



Parent Meetings and Reports

National Curriculum Assessments take place each term in Reading, Writing, Spelling and Maths, with ongoing teacher assessments a regular part of learning at The London Acorn School. While we emphasise the importance of an unhurried approach to academic learning, relieving children of unnecessary stress and anxiety caused by over-testing, it is equally important to mark the progress of our students against national benchmarks. These assessments will be shared with you in Parent Evenings and in the End of School Year Report.

Parent Evenings are held twice a year, during which teachers aim to share information about your child's progress across our broad curriculum, covering academic and creative subjects, as well as their social and emotional development.

Junior Curriculum Evening is held at the start of the academic year, an opportunity for parents to come together to hear about the class, learn more about the curriculum and developmental stage, and share experiences and support for one another as the wider community.

End of School Year Report

Summative reports for each child are sent to the parents giving a picture of the child's progress across all subjects and social and emotional development that year. Targets will also be set to focus on for the subsequent year.

Contacting Staff Members

Senior Leadership Team:

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school in all its departments and, in conjunction with the Governors (Chatsworth Schools) for long term development planning. The SLT comprises the Headteacher, the Business Manager and the Deputy Head.

Safeguarding Team:

Our Safeguarding Policy can be found on our website.

If you have a safeguarding concern, please raise it with one of the following members of staff:

Emily Maskell – Safeguarding Lead:

emily@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk

Zoe Everett – Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

zoe@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk

Vivianne Thompson – Designated Safeguarding Lead Chatsworth Schools:

vthompson@chatsworthschools.co.uk

Staff Members:

Senior Leadership Team	
Sarah Thorne (Headteacher)	sarah@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Emily Maskell (Business Manager, DSL)	emily@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Zoe Everett (Deputy Headteacher, DDSL)	zoe@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Leader	
Jo Pearce	jo@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk ; littleacorns@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Kindergarten Teachers	
Ya-Hsin Cheng	ya-hsin@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Helga Pinter	helga@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Kindergarten Assistants	
Blerta Alushi	blerta@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Jessie Codner	jessie@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Aleksandra Wojcicka-Janik	aleksandra@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Junior School Teachers	
Sama Al-Falahi (Willow Class, RE Lead)	sama@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Stacey Brien (Birch Class, Maths Lead, SENCO)	stacey@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Martin Cooper (Chestnut/Oak Class Woodwork Lead)	martin@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Zoe Everett (Chestnut/Oak Class, Literacy Lead)	zoe@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Sarah Thorne (Oak Class, Art and Crafts Lead)	sarah@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Karin Jashapara (Woodland Craft Lead)	karin@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Howard Rogers (French Lead)	
Jody Smith (PE Lead)	
Teaching Assistants	
Arianna Boyd-Allen	arianna@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk
Emma Le Gendre	emma@thelondonacornschoool.co.uk

Lily Otten	lily@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk
School Office	
Emily Maskell (Business Manager)	emily@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk
Tamara Chaplin (School Admissions)	tamara@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk ; admissions@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk
Emma Le Gendre (Clubs Coordinator)	emma@thelondonacornschoo.co.uk
Jody Smith (Site Manager)	
Aneta Alshalby (Housekeeper)	

Your child's Class Teacher will be happy to speak to you about school and home-related matters, or to direct you to helpful literature. In general, arrival and departure times are not appropriate for lengthy conversations. The teachers will be available to speak to you by arrangement, on all other matters please contact the school by email.

As parents, we often want to know how our children have spent the day but find that sometimes our children are not forthcoming. The Class Teacher welcomes your enquiry and is always willing to share their insights and listen to your concerns. It is good practice to discuss difficulties you are having at home, sooner rather than later, with the teacher. Please let the teacher know if there is anything affecting your child's well-being.

Contact Telephone Numbers

School Office: 020 8544 9769

Diary Dates

Term and Events Dates have been published and are currently available at the School Office. For upcoming events please see our weekly digital school newsletter, *In a Nutshell*.

Parent Participation

Parents/guardians support their child at The London Acorn School through:

- making the school aware of circumstances that might affect behavior, or that cause absence or lateness
- attending Parent Evenings
- attending school events including festivals and performances
- upholding the education, teachers and school
- abiding by the School's Handbook, and supporting the positive Behaviour Policy

Class Representatives

Each class has a Class Representative. This is a parent who helps the teacher by supporting communication with other parents about reminders, events and various activities. The Class Rep will attend a termly meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to share thoughts, suggestions and feedback from the parent community with the school. The work of the Class Representative is very much valued by the staff. Please speak to your child's teacher if you are interested.

Volunteering

The presence of volunteers, students, supply teachers and visitors at The London Acorn School is always appreciated and valued by the staff and the children. All volunteers will be interviewed, and DBS checked.

Policies and Procedures

Copies of the School's Policies and Procedures are available at the School Office by request and are also available on our school website: <https://thelondonacornschool.co.uk/our-school/school-policies/>

Updates

Updates from your family

Please notify the school office about changes in address and contact details (immediately with any change of contact number).

Importantly, keep open communication with regards to child illness, family illness, bereavement or new births (including in the lifetimes of all pets), change of behaviour, and any situation which may be of value to those entrusted with the care of your child.

Updates from the Junior School

The Lower School team will keep parents informed through daily encounters, our weekly newsletter, emails, and parent evenings.



Emergencies

If you need to relay an urgent message, please call the School Office: 020 8544 9769. Please be assured that the teacher will contact you if she/he is concerned about your child.

Travel to school

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

All full member families of the school will be asked to discuss their planned sustainable travel arrangements with us so that we can keep track of how families are coming to our school and thus comply with our school planning permission and enable us to work well with The National Trust. The school has a travel plan which will be shared with you at full registration.

Please note:

Parking for school families is in the main carpark next to the garden centre (free for 90 minutes upon obtaining a ticket). There is no parking in front of the school.

Looking after Morden Hall Park

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

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 is strictly prohibited.



The London Acorn School
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