



Junior Acorns Parent Handbook 2025-26

Acorns Manager and Contact	Katrina Godsell
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Acorns Administrator	Sarah Mitchell
Email	acorns@burlingtonjunior.org

ABOUT THE CLUB

Acorns Breakfast club is open from 7.30am until the start of the school day. Acorns After School club is open from the end of the school day until 6.30pm. The Acorns clubs run every weekday, during term time, excluding INSET days and bank holidays.

Please note that, on days when the school closes at 2pm, Acorns will run from 2pm to 5pm.

Aims

At Burlington, we aim to provide a safe, secure and relaxed environment, offering a range of activities to reflect the interests of the children in our care.

What We Offer

There will always be a selection of activities and resources available, including board games, construction toys, physical play, craft and reading. Some parents have asked if their children can do their homework at Acorns: we can do our best to find a quiet corner if a child requests it, but unfortunately we are unable to supervise the homework.

What We Provide

We ensure ALL staff members know of any children who have dietary intolerances or allergies. Please keep Sarah Mitchell informed via email about any food allergies your child may have or develop. We

recognise the importance of healthy nutrition for children delivered in a calm, friendly setting and the children are seated at tables to consume the food.

Children are served breakfast from 7.30am until 8.20am and are offered a choice of wholegrain cereals, toast and milk.

Our caterers, Nourish, provide a full menu for the children's light evening meal: a hot option (or sandwiches alternative) will be served from 4.15 - 5pm. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Child Induction Procedures

When children first join Acorns they will be allowed to settle in at their own pace. The new child will be introduced to all members of staff and to the children collectively.

If a child seems to be taking an unusually long time to settle in, this will be discussed with their parents or carers to see what can be done to make the transition easier.

Staffing

All of our staff have experience of working with children and will undertake professional development training. All staff members are DBS checked and trained in Safeguarding. The Acorns Manager holds a BA Degree in the Early Years.

Policies

Acorns Breakfast and After School provision adopts all Burlington Junior School's [policies](#).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Admission

Admission to Acorns is for children who are 7 to 11 years old. Enquiries should be emailed to Sarah on acorns@burlingtonjunior.org.

We use a waiting list system when the need arises. You will be placed on the waiting list and notified when a place becomes available.

After School Club Trial Period Policy

Objective:

To ensure that the after school club is a good fit for each child we are implementing a two week trial period for new children starting at Acorns. This trial allows parents, children and club staff to evaluate whether the club aligns with your child's interests and needs, and Acorns behaviour expectations.

Policy Details:

1. Duration of Trial Period

The trial period will last for two weeks from the date your child first attends Acorns.

2. Parental option to withdraw

At the end of the trial period parents may choose to withdraw their child if they feel the club is not suitable for their child's interests or needs. All monies for the remainder of the half term will be refunded.

3. School/Acorns Decision to Decline Participation

During the trial period the club staff will evaluate whether your child is able to access Acorns activities.

If it is determined that Acorns is not a good match for your child – for reasons such as difficulty engaging with activities or disruption of the group dynamic – the school reserves the right to decline the child's continued participation.

4. Criteria for Fit

The decision to continue or withdraw from the club will be based on the following considerations:

The child's interest and engagement in the club's activities.
The child's ability to follow rules and respect the group dynamic.
Feedback from both club staff and parents during the trial period.

5. Communication during the trial

Parents and staff are encouraged to communicate openly about the child's experience during the trial period.

A brief check in will be scheduled at the end of the trial to discuss next steps.

6. Final Decision:

After the two week trial parents will be notified of the final decision regarding the child's participation in Acorns verbally or in writing.

Registration Forms

Registration forms must be returned before your child starts at the club. Emergency contact details must be kept up to date at all times and it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify Sarah by email of any changes in details as soon as possible. Please include information about special educational needs, English spoken as an additional language or any other complex health matters that you feel play leaders should know about your child. This information will be treated as confidential and will be stored appropriately.

Re-enrolment Every New Academic Year

All existing Acorns families must go through the re-enrolment process during the summer term to secure their places for the new academic year starting in September. Existing Acorns families are given the opportunity of priority re-booking before we consider any new admissions for September.

During this re-booking process, families also have the opportunity to change or request additional sessions if required.

Please note, we cannot keep a place open for your child in the new academic year, unless you complete the re-enrolment process. Registration forms must be completed by all families (new or existing) prior to the start of a new academic year.

Payment of Fees

Fees are £6.50 per child per session for Breakfast club and £15.50 per session for After School club, **payable in full at the time of booking. We will not be able to hold your child's place if this payment is not received.** There is no sibling discount. The club fees will be reviewed annually and confirmed in advance of September.

Parents are able to pay online via School Gateway and with electronic childcare vouchers. Join School Gateway by visiting this website or downloading the app for your phone (available on the App Store and Google Play).

For childcare vouchers, search for the respective OFSTED registration number or provider code, as shown below, on your provider's system. Please note, vouchers need to be allocated to the correct school, and this may mean you need to set up 2 separate accounts with the same provider if you have children in both the Infant and Junior schools

OFSTED registration number	102564
Queries regarding childcare vouchers, please contact:	Julie Kerr bursar@burlingtonjunior.org
Common provider codes:	
Edenred	P21278880
Sodexo	907155
Computershare	0026587727
Care-4	77715406
Fideliti	BUR113C
Fair Care	BURL0820
RG Childcare	13920395054

Please ensure that fees are paid promptly. Non-payment for more than one week may result in your place being terminated. If you are having difficulty paying fees, please speak or email in confidence to Sarah Mitchell.

Temporary Changes

Please remember that we need to know if your child will not be attending the club for any reason. If you know in advance of any days when your child will not be present, please email the School Office. If you have changes for that same day or the next day you should call or text Katrina on the club mobile.

Please note that we do not refund or credit any odd days that your child does not attend. Fees are payable for all regular, allocated sessions including when your child is sick, away on a school trip or residential, or on holiday (regardless of the amount of notice given). This is because we still incur staffing costs, regardless of pupil numbers per session. We do not charge for bank holidays and professional training days (i.e. INSET days).

When the school closes at 2pm (e.g. parents evening / end of term) the club will run from the end of the day until 5pm. Early closure days are detailed on the schools website on the term dates page. Parents will be reminded at least 1 week in advance of such occasions.

Changes to Days and Cancelling Your Place

To change or cancel a session or to terminate your place at Acorns, we require 6 weeks' notice. If you need to change the days that your child attends, please email the respective Acorns Administrator. We try to accommodate such changes wherever possible but you may be placed on a waiting list if space is not available. If you do not give the required notice before cancelling a session(s) or terminating your Acorns place, we will ask for fees to be paid in lieu.

Participation in Burlington Activity Clubs

Acorns After School club charges are based on the opening hours of the provision. Burlington Junior School will continue to offer separately run activity clubs. These are booked and paid for individually and charged in addition to the fees for Acorns After School club. Children will go straight to their school based clubs at the end of the school day and will be collected at 4.30pm from the main school atrium or their year 3 classrooms.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Katrina or her deputy will ensure that an accurate record is kept of all children in the club, and that any arrivals or departures are recorded in the register. The register is kept in an accessible location on the premises at all times.

Arriving to Acorns

Our staff will greet each child warmly on their arrival at the club and will record the child's attendance in the daily register straight away, including the time of the arrival.

Escorting Children to and from School

The club and school have a clear agreement concerning the transfer of responsibility for children's safety to and from the club.

- Acorns staff will collect Year 3 children from class.
- Year 4, 5 and 6 will be collected from the main school atrium. If a child is booked into the club and we haven't received a phone call/e-mail informing us of their absence, we will check whether the child was present at school that day.
- If a Year 5 or 6 child will be walking to Acorns Breakfast club by themselves each session, parents must let Sarah know by email.
- If a child has failed to arrive for After School club without explanation, staff will contact the parents/carers or school office to check where the child is. If staff still have concerns about the child's whereabouts after attempts to contact the parents have failed and the child's whereabouts is not known, staff will immediately inform Katrina or her deputy who will implement the Missing Child procedure (see below).

Missing Child Procedures

At Acorns we are always alert to the possibility that children can go missing during sessions. To minimise the risk of this happening, staff will:

- Make sure doors/gates are always locked and secure
- Use a radio to alert staff of children moving between areas

In the unlikely event of a child going missing, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will contact the parents/carers or school office to check where the child should be.
- All staff will be informed that the child is missing including the Head Teacher.
- Staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and surrounding area. If the child is not located the police will be informed. Katrina or her deputy will then update the child's parents/carers.
- Staff will continue to search for the child whilst waiting for the police and parents to arrive. We will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children at the club. The manager will liaise with the police and the child's parent/carer.

Departing from Acorns – Breakfast club

- Year 3 will be escorted to class in the mornings.
- Year 4 will be escorted to the main school playground at 8.40am.
- Year 5 and 6 will be dismissed into the playground at 8.35am to make their way to class.

Departing from Acorns – After School club

- Staff will sign children out before they leave, including the time of collection.
- Children must be collected by a parent/adult who has been authorised to do so on their registration form. If parents require another person who is not listed on the registration form to collect their child, the child's parents or carers must inform the club in advance and provide a description of the person and a password that they will use. If Katrina or her deputy has any concerns regarding the person collecting, he/she will contact the main parent or carer for confirmation. Children will not be released into the care of a person unknown to us without parental/carer authorisation.
- The parent or carer must notify the club if they will be late collecting their child. If the club is not informed, the Manager / Deputy will follow procedures for an Uncollected Child (see section below).

Uncollected Child Procedures

The Acorns After School Club finishes at 6.30pm. It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure their child is collected by this time. If unavoidably delayed, the club must be contacted and alternative arrangements made for collection. A late payment fee of £5.00 for up to 15 minutes' delay will be charged for late pick-ups and a payment slip issued. This will rise to £10 for 30 minutes' delay and £15 for 45 minutes' delay. Persistent offenders will result in the cancellation of the child's place.

If a child remains uncollected after 6.45pm and no contact has been made by the child's family, staff will ring the local authority duty social worker in SPA (Single Point of Access) to report this as a safeguarding concern.

Breakfast Club Drop Offs

For children accessing Acorns Breakfast club, children must be accompanied by an adult and signed in each morning.

Breakfast Club Drop Offs For children accessing Acorns Breakfast club, children must be accompanied by an adult and signed in each morning.	Junior drop off point	Access via the black gate by The Bridge; ring the buzzer
After School Club Pick Ups	Junior pick up point	Access via the black gate by The Bridge; ring the buzzer Please note the black gate will be staffed from 5pm. If you would like to collect your child earlier, please ring the Junior club mobile when you are at the black gate and we will bring your child to you.

If you have children across both schools, you may enter and exit through either gate

CHILD SAFEGUARDING

We do our utmost to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately addressed. We comply with local and national child protection procedures and ensure that all staff are appropriately trained. Please see our [Safeguarding Policy](#)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our club provides a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination, for everyone in our community including children with additional needs. We respect differing racial origins, religions, cultures and languages in our multi-ethnic society so that each child is valued as an individual without racial or gender stereotyping. We will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices. We will not tolerate any form of racial harassment.

SEND

We welcome applications for children with special educational needs and disabilities and support their time at Acorns through liaising with the class teacher and/or SENCO, speaking to parents/carers, getting to know the child and planning their transition carefully. Our aim is for all children to be able to access the club activities safely and positively. However, needs of the child will be assessed on a case by case basis by the head teacher and Acorns manager as to whether we can meet those needs. Please see the SEND Policy on the schools' website.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Closure in an Emergency

Should there be a reason to close Acorns (i.e. heavy snow) parents must check the school's website where a message will be on the home page and a message will also be sent via School Comms. If a decision has been made to close school, Acorns will also be closed.

Behaviour (children)

The club promotes an atmosphere of care, consideration and respect for everyone attending.

We encourage appropriate behaviour through: praise for good behaviour; emphasis on cooperative play and sharing; talking to children with the courtesy that we expect from them and engaging children in activities.

If a child is violent, or if their behaviour poses an immediate danger to themselves or others, we will require them to be collected from the club straightaway. In exceptional circumstances, and only when all other attempts at behaviour management have failed, we reserve the right to permanently exclude a child from the club. Depending on the seriousness and frequency of the behaviour, we may give as little as 1 week and up to a maximum of 4 weeks' notice. The notice period will be determined case by case by the Head teacher.

Behaviour (adults)

We will not tolerate, from any person (whether a parent, carer or visitor): bullying; aggressive, confrontational or threatening behaviour; or behaviour intended to result in conflict towards any member of staff or child within the club. Our club is a place of safety and security for the children who attend and the staff who work here, and we reserve the right to ban anyone exhibiting inappropriate behaviour from our premises.

Illness, Accidents and First Aid

If a child becomes unwell whilst at the club we will contact the parent/carers and ask them to make arrangements for them to be collected as soon as possible.

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of the children at all times. Staff are trained in first aid and a first aid kit is kept on the premises. In the event of an accident requiring urgent medical attention, the parent/carers will be contacted immediately. In the event that we are unable to contact a parent or carer, and a pupil needs to be taken to hospital, a member of staff will always accompany them and will stay with them until a parent arrives. The club will try to ensure that the staff member will be one the pupil knows.

We follow a 48 hour rule for children with vomiting and diarrhoea. Your child may return to the Breakfast or After School club 48 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Medication

Please let the play leaders know if a child is taking prescribed medicine or has a medical condition, including asthma. If a child needs to take medication whilst at the club a Permission to administer medication form must be completed in advance.

Involving Parents and Carers Procedures

At Acorns we recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that every child is happy, healthy and safe whilst in our care.

We therefore aim to keep parents and carers fully informed of policies, events and activities at the club, by sharing information with them, answering questions and addressing any concerns.

We do our best to keep parents informed about the club by:

- Giving all parents a copy of our club's Parent Handbook which outlines how the club operates and includes contact details.

We actively welcome parents and invite their input into the club in the following ways:

- We collect information from parents which will help their child to settle at the club (via the Registration Forms).
- We consult fully with parents to establish the care requirements for children with additional needs.
- We greet all parents when they arrive to collect their children, and exchange any relevant information (e.g. any accidents, participation in today's activities, etc.).
- We conduct a satisfaction survey every year for parents and children at the club to gain regular feedback.
- All of our staff wear uniforms so that children and parents can easily identify them.
- We obtain parental permission for photographs.
- We respect parents' input and opinions by responding promptly and appropriately to any complaints, in line with our Complaints procedure (see below).

Complaints Procedure

Queries, comments or the need to discuss any matters concerning a child, should be directed to Katrina or her deputy. Please speak to them in person in the first instance or if you wish to put it in writing please send an email for their attention via Sarah Mitchell. Please refer to the school's complaint procedures on the school website if you feel your concerns have not been adequately addressed.

We hope your children will be happy at Junior Acorns. Please feel free to contact Katrina or Sarah if you have any concerns or questions that you would like us to address.