



Welcome to Astbury Acorns Pre-School

Starting Pre-School is a very exciting time, but children and parents alike may also feel a little anxious. This information pack is aimed at providing an overview of the day to day running of Astbury Acorns Pre-School and aims to answer any questions that you may have, about your child's transition to Astbury Acorns Pre-School.

Our Ethos:

To prepare young children for their future learning experiences within a caring, secure, stimulating environment linked to our Church school.

We aim to:

- Provide high quality care and education for children 3 to 4 years.
- Work in partnership with parents to help children learn and develop.
- Add to the life and wellbeing of the local community.
- Offer the children and their parents a setting that promotes equality and values diversity.
- Provide a safe and stimulating environment.
- To give sensitive care and attention because of our ratio of qualified staff to children.
- Ensure each child has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play , work and learn together.
- Take forward children's learning and development by helping them to build on what he/she already knows and can do;
- Provide a setting that sees parents as partners in helping them to learn and develop.

Child Development and Learning

The provision for child development and learning is guided by the Early Years Foundation Statutory Framework, issued by the Department for Education. The Foundation Stage is a framework for children from birth to five years.

Our setting links to Development Matters to provide a range of play activities which help children to progress in each area of learning. Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research shows to be the means by which children think. In some of these activities, children decide how they will use the activity, and in others an adult takes the lead helping the children to take part in the activity.

There are seven areas of learning that shapes educational programmes in Early Years settings. These areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity, enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and grow.

The Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others to form positive relationships and develop respect for others. To develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and Language Development – Involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development – Provides opportunities to be active and interactive, to develop coordination, control and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Specific Areas

Literacy – Involves encouraging children to link letters and sounds and begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials to help ignite their interest.

Mathematics – Provides children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shape, space and measure.

Understanding the World – Guides children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design – Enables children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas, feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, dance, role play and design and technology.

For each area, the guidance sets out Early Learning Goals. These goals state what is expected for children to know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year.

Staffing

Astbury Acorns Pre-School is fully integrated with school with close involvement from Miss Blythe (head teacher) and a team of School Governors. Astbury Acorns Pre-School is led by Mrs Andrea Armitt as Manager, and supported by the Pre-School team.

We maintain the ratio of staff to children: children aged 3 and above - 1 adult: 8 children

Sessions and Fees

We are open for 38 weeks of the year and open from 9am to 3.20pm Monday to Friday.

INSET Days and term dates are available on the School website.

All day session - 8:50 am – 3:20pm

Morning session – 8:50 am – 11:50am

Afternoon session – 12:20pm – 3:20pm

Admission to the Pre-School is managed and controlled by Astbury St Mary's Primary School Governing Body. Any parents or carers wishing to apply for a place for their child must complete the relevant application form and hand it in to the School Office.

Invoices

You will be invoiced monthly. Details of how to pay by bank transfer are detailed on your invoice. Fees are non-refundable unless circumstances are deemed exceptional. They must be paid by the date given on invoice (usually 14 days). Where fees are overdue, a 10% charge may be added. Please note, if after two attempts have been made to recoup the payment without success, your child's place will be forfeited (unless there are very special circumstances).

Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has been absent over a long period of time please talk to Miss Blythe who will deal with each individual case.

If you wish to withdraw your child from Astbury Acorns Pre-School, four weeks written notice is required or full fees in lieu (this notice period does not apply if your child only attends for the Universal 15 free hours). Please ensure Mrs Armitt and the School Business Manager, Jodie Chapman are both copied in on such emails:

Mrs Armitt- aarmitt@astbury.cheshire.sch.uk

Jodie Chapman- sbm@astbury.cheshire.sch.uk

Merekats

We offer 'wrap around care' through Merekats who work in conjunction with the School offering a breakfast/after school club to children from age 3+ in term times, this is situated in the School Hall from 7.30am – 8.45am and after school from 3.20pm until 4.15pm or 6pm. Merekats also offer a holiday club in the school holidays which is run daily. <https://www.astburyschool.org.uk/page/astbury-merekats/53398>

Please note, Merekats is run separately to Acorns and Astbury School. Any bookings or messages for Merekats must be done directly and not through Acorns or School staff.

Child Care Vouchers

We accept payment through the child care voucher scheme. Please talk to Miss Jodie Chapman (Business Manager) in the school office who will be able to give you the information to register your company.

Late Collection

Whilst we understand that a busy parent may be running a few minutes late, please try to be prompt when collecting your child. Late collections cause all sorts of problems for staff and some children may become distressed if not collected on time.

There is a late collection charge of £5.00, however, if you know that you are going to be late please ring school on 01260 272528

Funding

30 hour funding is available for families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the national minimum or living wage, and earns less than £100,000 a year. 30 hour funding provides the child with 30 hours of free childcare per week, over 38 weeks or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year.

3 year olds will be able to start as soon as they turn 3 however their free 30 hours at Astbury Acorns Pre-School will start in the September, January or April following their third birthday.

Your child's birthday must be before:

31 March to be eligible for free nursery education from the Summer Term (April)

31 August to be eligible for free nursery education from the Autumn Term (September)

31 December to be eligible for free nursery education from the Spring term (January)

These are the cut off dates. If your child's birthday is for example on the 1st or 2nd January and the term starts on the 5th January, unfortunately their funding will not start until the Summer term after Easter because they have passed the cut-off date of 31st December.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure the appropriate funding is in place when applying for a place at Astbury Acorns. The Cheshire East Early Years team can be contacted on: 01270 685888

Application to Reception Class

Admission to Acorns Pre-School does not guarantee admission to the Reception class at Astbury St Mary's. Applications for Reception must be made by parents/guardians on a separate application and submitted to Cheshire East Council by the statutory deadline.

Holidays

Children are entitled to one week's (term time) holiday free of charge per academic year (September-July). A holiday form must be filled in and returned to Astbury Acorns Pre-School team with at least three weeks' prior notice.

Clothing

Please try to dress your child in comfortable clothing to enable them to make the most of their time at Astbury Acorns Pre-School and be prepared to get messy! We love our outdoor environment and use it in all weathers. We do have sets of waterproof clothing for children to wear. Leaving a spare set of clothes on your child's peg and keeping a pair of wellies in Pre-School would be a great help. Please ensure these are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Learning Journeys

Staff keep a learning journey for each child. Your child's learning journey helps us to celebrate together their achievements and to work together to provide what their next steps are for learning. To do this staff will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable staff to identify your child's stage of progress.

Learning Opportunities for Adults

The Pre-School staff take part in training to help them to keep up to date with developments in Early Years care and education.

Routines

Our Pre-School believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the session are provided in ways that:

Help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the setting

Ensure the safety of each child

Help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group and provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

Explore and Play

We organise our sessions so that the children can choose to work at a range of activities and doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in small adult led group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have an opportunity and are encouraged to take part in outdoor child chosen and adult led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor environment.

Snacks and Meals

We make snacks and meals a social time at which children eat together supported by an adult. We offer fruit each day and other snacks (such as toast / teacakes) can be purchased from the kitchen through ParentPay (our online cashless payment system). Alternatively, please send your child with a snack which is healthy and nutritious. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met. We take the children to eat their lunch in the school dinner hall and a member of staff supports them. At lunch time, children can eat a school dinner or they can bring a packed lunch. Parents and careers are requested to provide each child with a drink bottle to allow free drinking water throughout each session.

A hot school dinner can be purchased for £2.40. All snacks and meals from the kitchen need to be booked onto ParentPay by 8am on the day required.

Policies

Copies of our policies are available for all parents and carers to read, they can also be found on our website.

Our policies help us to make sure that the service provided by Astbury Acorns Pre-School is a high quality one and an enjoyable and beneficial experience to each child.

The staff work together to adopt the policies and all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review on the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the setting to provide the quality service for its members and the local community.

Special Needs

Staff in the setting work to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and the Special Needs code of practice (2014)

Miss Welch is our Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) within school and supports the Astbury Acorns Pre-School team.

As part of the settings policy, to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. Parents must inform us of children's medical background and known special needs.

Toileting

It is preferable that children are toilet trained before attending, however, if there is a medical requirement please let the Pre-School staff know. If required, nappies, nappy sacks and wet wipes must be supplied each day that your child attends. If all parents could also please make sure that there is a spare set of clothes for each child in school at all times.

Administration of Medication

Our medicine policy advises you that children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting. Only prescribed medication can be administered. It must be in date and prescribed for the current condition.

Please ensure that your child's prescribed medicines are stored in the original containers and are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Parents will be asked to give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The administration is recorded accurately each time it is given and is signed by staff.

Sickness

We have a policy for the exclusion of sickness of ill or infectious children. This includes procedures for contacting parents or other authorised adults if a child becomes ill whilst in the care of Astbury Acorns Pre-School.

We don't provide care for children who are unwell, have a temperature, sickness and diarrhoea, or who have an infectious disease.

Children with sickness or diarrhoea should be kept from Astbury Acorns Pres-School until they are free of symptoms for 48 hours.

Children with headlice are not excluded, but must be treated to remedy the condition.

Parents are notified if there is a case of headlice in the setting.

Parents are notified if there is an infectious disease such as chicken pox.

COVID – children that have had a positive COVID test or children that are showing severe symptoms should be kept at home for 3 days.

Please refer to the following table for guidance.

Infectious Disease	Symptoms	Incubation Period	Infectious Period	Prevention and control.
Chicken Pox	Fever for 1-2 days. Small red pimples will appear and turn into blister	10-21 days	A few days before the rash develops and not more than six days after the first crop pimples appear	Do not give aspirin it can cause a liver reaction. Child to be kept at home during fever and rash.
Measles	Cough, runny nose, high fever for four days, then a rash at the back of the neck.	7-14 days	Child is infectious until 7 days after developing the rash	MMR Vaccine, Child to be kept at home.
Rubella	Headache, fever, cough, sore throat	2-3 weeks	1 week before to 5 days after onset of rash	MMR Vaccine, child to be kept at home.
Mumps	Swollen, painful gland behind ear, Dry mouth, acute pain on swallowing acid. Face swelling.	14/28 days	1-2 Days prior to the appearance of the swelling five days after	MMR Vaccine, Child to be kept at home.
Hand, foot and Mouth disease	Sores in mouth, tongue, throat lips .Clear blister on fingers, hands, toes and feet	3-5 days	1 week or so	Provide bland food and drink while mouth is sore.
Acute viral Gastroenteritis	Diarrhoea and vomiting	1-3 days	Entire period of infection.	Isolate during diarrhoeal

				disease.
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