

My Learning Journey

Information for Parents and Carers

Your child's Learning Journal celebrates his or her experiences. Over time it will tell a story about your child - his or her learning, friends, and the experiences he or she enjoys sharing with others.

Staff watch and notice each child at play because it helps us to understand and support their individual wellbeing and development. We really get to know the children as unique people with special skills, interests and ideas. The more we understand about your special child, the better we can support them in the way that is right for them.

The adults working in Acorn Class build this Learning Journey as a record of your child's development during their first year at school. We value the Learning Journeys and they will be sent home at the end of the year for you to keep as a record of your child's first year in school and the progress they have made. Throughout the year there will be opportunities when you will be invited to look through, and contribute to, your child's Learning Journey, but we encourage you to contribute and look through on a more informal, regular basis – please just ask

What might I see in my child's Learning Journey?

Your child's creations - These could be photos of models, photos of their role-play, marks they have made, or art-making – with an observation to explain what your child did or said.

Learning stories or detailed observations - These detailed observations give snapshots of learning that your child has initiated themselves. Staff then think about what and how your child is learning, their development and how best to support them further.

Photographs - These capture moments and sequences of your child's experiences, their interests and explorations. You can add some of your own from home. Sometimes, we will write down exactly what your child says about the photographs, so we know your child's point of view. This is also an accurate record of language development. Pictures of important people and things from home will help your child to feel secure when making the link between home and their educational setting. Please feel free to add any photos to the Learning Journal. You could also write down the names of family members or friends pictured in the photos and we will then be able to talk with your child about things that are important to them.

Observations - These are quick notes of significant moments we notice in your child's learning.

Amongst all the notes and observations you may see reference to areas of the Early Years Curriculum known as Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which supports children from birth to the end of their Reception year at school.

This curriculum is planned around four main themes:

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.	Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.	The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.	Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

There are then 7 areas of learning and development:

3 Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Communication and Language (C&L)

Physical Development (PD)



4 Specific Areas

Literacy (L)

Mathematics (M)

Understanding the World (UtW)

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)



The 7 areas of learning and development are further divided into strands and age bands. Your child's progress is recorded in order to support and encourage them throughout their journey in the EYFS. For example, you

may see 'PD 40-60 months'. This tells us that the child is currently demonstrating an activity or skill that relates to Physical Development within the age band of 40-60 months.

At the end of the Foundation stage we will draw upon all the evidence gathered as well as our professional knowledge of the child and will decide if they have achieved the Early Learning Goals (ELG) and reached the expected level. To do this the children will need to demonstrate that they have the skills and understanding to demonstrate the ELG independently and consistently. This will be reported to you in an end of year report. We have attached a copy of the ELGs to this letter. Please remember that these are end of year expectations.

Alongside these areas of development there are also the Characteristics of Effective Learning which describe **how** your child learns best.

The 3 Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

1. **Playing and Exploring** - Engagement - Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.
2. **Active Learning** - Motivation - Being involved and concentrating, keep trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - Thinking - Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

Staff will refer to these areas of learning and characteristics when planning and preparing activities and also when assessing and observing your child. Adults will consider the Characteristics of Effective Learning within the observation, assessment and planning cycle of the EYFS.

How Can I help with my child's Learning Journey?

If this book is completed just by us then it will not be a complete picture of the child. Other adults in the school contribute to the book with observations of the children in different environments – the lunch hall, playtime or assembly for example. The children are also encouraged to add things to their 'special book' and they enjoy looking through them.

At this age, so much happens so quickly and we would love to hear about events, activities or achievements which can be put into your child's Learning Journey. Feel free to write us a note, have a chat to a member of staff or bring in a photo, drawing or souvenir to share with us. It could be something academic such as reading a word or taking a greater interest in numbers around them, counting the correct number of knives and forks needed to help set the table, or it could be that they tie their shoe laces by themselves, have the confidence to try something for the first time, use an interesting word, ask an interesting question about something they see or hear, help a younger sibling to do something, help care for a pet, show empathy for another person, help count the cows as they are brought in, want to get involved with some DIY, help to build a bird house or sing along to a favourite song on the radio....the possibilities are endless! It also helps us to know about experiences that the children have outside of school for example; clubs they attend, days out, favourite family activities, weekends spent with Grandparents, trips to the dentist – anything that helps to build a picture of each individual child.

If your child does something that makes you go 'wow!' or you take a photo of something they are doing or have made, have us on your list of people that you tell! Every contribution will be valued.

To make it easier for parents to send us photos and comments we have set up a class iCloud account for you to email photos/comments to straight from your computers or phones. The email account is password protected with only ourselves as teachers having access to it, so that your child's photos will remain secure. We will not use your contact details in any way. The email account will not be checked on a daily basis so please do not use it to send messages or ask questions as we may not see it in time.

If you do email a photo please also include a comment to explain the context.

Our class iCloud address is

acornclass@icloud.com

When you tell us about your child a clearer picture unfolds and together we can plan more effectively to help your child's learning and development. Though it is mainly kept here in school it belongs to you and your child. These books are not meant to be works of art or contain great essays, they are a celebration of your child's development and a chance for us to give your child credit for the wonderful learning they do at school and at home with you. We can then use that information to plan for what your child needs to do next.

We look forward to sharing your child's Learning Journey with you

Kate and Sarah