

## **Northaw C of E Primary School: Starter Pack**

Dear Parents and Carers,  
Welcome to the Northaw family! We are delighted that your child will be joining our Acorns Class (Nursery and Reception class). This pack contains all the key information you'll need to help your child make a smooth and happy start to school life.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to give your child the best possible start to their learning journey.

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## Important Dates

Our priority for the first few weeks of the new term is to focus on ensuring your child settles into Acorns smoothly. We will play fun team building games and take part in lots of activities which will enable the children to get to know each other and become familiar with their setting. We therefore have a “slow start”, see below for timings.

### Slow start to September:

Date	Nursery	Reception
<b>Wed 10.9.25</b>	<b>Group A</b> attends with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>9.45am</b>	<b>Group A</b> attends with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>11:45am</b>
<b>Thurs 11.9.25</b>	<b>Group B</b> attends with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>9.45am</b>	<b>Group B</b> attends with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>11:45am</b>
<b>Fri 12.9.25</b>	All nursery children attend with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>9.45am</b>	All Reception children attend with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>11:45am</b>
<b>Mon 15.9.25</b>	All nursery children attend with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>10.45am</b>	All children attend with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>1:05pm</b>
<b>Tues 16.9.25</b>  onwards	Normal school day begins with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am and pick-up at <b>11.45am</b>	Normal school day begins with drop-off between 8:35–8:45am, and pick-up at <b>3:15pm</b>

**Home visits** are being held in September: Wednesday 4th, Thursday 5th and Friday 6th. These are a chance for us to get to know your child, your child to get to know us and for you to ask any questions or let us know anything you feel will help us to teach your child better.

Inset Days and Term Dates: <https://www.northawschool.org/term-dates>



## What your child will need:

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Plain black, grey or white socks	Plain black, grey or white socks/tights
Grey shorts/trousers	Grey shorts/skirt/trousers, grey pinafore dress or blue gingham dress
Plain black or white footwear (not sandals)	Plain black or white footwear (not sandals)
Light blue polo shirt	Light blue polo shirt
Blue sweatshirt	Blue cardigan/sweatshirt
Plain black, blue, grey or white hair band (long hair should be tied back)	Plain black, blue, grey or white hair band (long hair should be tied back)
Plain gold/silver stud earrings (removed or taped for PE)	Plain gold/silver stud earrings (removed or taped for PE)
PE: black or dark blue shorts, blue t-shirt, grey joggers, grey sweatshirt, and plain black or white trainers	PE: black or dark blue shorts, blue t-shirt, grey joggers, grey sweatshirt, and plain black or white trainer

- **Every Day**
  - Bag – this can be the Northaw bookbag or any bag you wish.
  - Named water bottle – please fill with water daily.
  - Reading record and book (reception only, this will be given out in the first few weeks)
  - Sun hat or coat (weather dependent!)
- **Please provide at the start of term to be kept in school**
  - Wellington boots (for forest and outside wet fun!)
  - Spare change of clothes in a named bag (to be kept on their peg for accidents or water play)

Please ensure everything is labelled with your child's name, so if it gets lost it can be returned quickly!

No child should wear hair dye, jewellery, make-up, nail varnish or temporary tattoos to school.



### Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- **Morning Drop-Off:** Between 8:35am and 8.45am at the Black gate (a member of staff will greet your child). If you should arrive after the door closes please bring your child to the main office to sign in.
- **Pick-Up Time:** 11.45am for Nursery and 3:15pm for Reception from the same gate
- Please inform the school office in advance if someone else is collecting your child.

### Snacks and Meals

- We provide free fruit snacks daily. The children each day have a choice of 3 different fruits. These include: apples, bananas, oranges, tomatoes, carrots, beans, raisins and cucumber.
- **Lunch Options:**
  - Hot cooked school meals (provided free for all Reception children)
  - OR packed lunch from home (nut-free please and no chocolate or sweets)
- A menu for school lunches will be emailed out to parents at the start of the school year.
- Please inform us of any allergies or dietary needs on the forms provided.
- Nursery only: After nursery children have settled into their routine and the class teachers alongside parents/carers feel the child is ready, there is a nursery lunch club available at a charge. For more details, please ask Amy at the school office.

### Ethos and Values

We are a Church of England School and therefore our Christian values are very important to us. At Northaw we celebrate the 6rs: Respect, Reflection, Resourcefulness, Resilience, Responsibility and Reasoning. The children receive house credits for showing these values and receive certificates in Going4Gold worship.



### Who is who?

Class Teacher: Miss Barker

Teaching assistants: Mrs Stratton and Mrs Nikolova

Headteacher: Dr Inglis

SENCO: Mrs Burton

Office: Amy

There are many more wonderful adults who work at this school who I am sure you will get to know well.

### Learning in Acorns Class

We believe that each child has the right to a secure, happy, and safe childhood and we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) standards to ensure that children learn and develop well in an environment that encourages their independence and creativity, alongside providing them with a quality education. Through a topic based approach, which we let the children choose to suit their interests. Each term a leaflet is given out covering exactly what the children will be learning that term.

There are seven areas of learning which shape our teaching. The three prime areas which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, emotional development.

The additional four specific areas which we address through the EYFS curriculum are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

### Wellbeing and Support

We understand starting school is a big step. Your child's wellbeing is most important to us. We support your child's wellbeing through a variety of strategies such as nurturing relationships, circle times and emotional literacy work and clear behaviour expectations. If you have any concerns about your child's development, behaviour, or wellbeing, please speak to us.



## Our Daily Routine

Children enter our classroom and we encourage them to be responsible by hanging up their belongings on their pegs. They then enter our calm corner and select how they are feeling using an emoji. Children then complete a busy finger activity to help improve their fine motor skills.

After the register our morning session starts, this includes a mix of play-based learning, adult-led activities and outdoor learning all linked to our curriculum.

We then stop for a shared snack time where children are encouraged to socialise with their peers. Children then have break time outside on “the big playground”. After this it is back inside for more child initiated learning both inside and outside and adult led activities.

Just before lunch we have rhyme time where we sing songs and learn rhymes, we then pray and get ready for lunch. Children enter the hall to eat and then the playground for playtime.

After lunch we continue with our curriculum learning, with a more heavy focus on the reception curriculum.

We end the day with “daily mile” which is a run around outside, story time and maths mastery before getting our belongings ready for home. We pray at the end of each day.

The children quickly settle into the routine and use the visual timetable in class well, and we are here to support them every step of the way.

## Timetable

**PE** for reception children will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday, therefore children can come to school in their PE kits on these days.

**Forest** - On Friday please can both Reception and Nursery come to school in their PE kits as we have forest in the morning.

**Library** will take place on a Monday. Children can visit our school library and choose a book weekly. Therefore please ensure their book is in their bag on this day.

**Church** – As a Christian school, we pride ourselves with our fantastic link to Northaw Church. The vicar is our Chair of Governors. We therefore visit church for Harvest, Christmas and Easter services. Our vicar Chris also comes into school during some of our RE lessons.



### **Stay and Learn**

A few weeks into the autumn term, we usually invite parents to join us for our 'Stay and Learn' sessions, this usually happens half termly, during which time you can support your child and join in with some activities. It may give you ideas of how you can support your child at home with their learning. Each stay and learn has a different focus e.g. Fine motors, rhymes etc. We will give you these dates in advance. They run from 8.35am till 9.15am. It is also a chance for your child to show you around the classroom and you to help them with their learning.

### **Tapestry**

Tapestry is an online journal that records all of the learning and fun that your child will be having in Acorns. When we have observed your child in their learning, you will receive a notification and you will be able to view the photos and/or notes of their experiences at school. We love seeing parent/ carer comments about your child's learning and also receiving photos or observations of what your child has been doing at home, via Tapestry. At the start of the year you will receive a link from tapestry to access your child's online learning journal.

### **Forest sessions**

On a Friday morning the children take part in Forest session on our lovely school grounds. The philosophy of Forest is to encourage and inspire individuals through positive outdoor experiences. By participating in engaging and motivating tasks and activities in an outside woodland environment, each child has the opportunity to develop their understanding of the world, and their emotional and social skills. It also helps build team working skills whilst encouraging the children to be more resilient. Please provide your child with wellington boots that should remain in school.

### **Getting involved**

There are many ways you can get involved in school life and we actively encourage this. We have an excellent PTA (parent-teacher association) who put on multiple events throughout the year. They often need new volunteers to support them. Events this year have included: Christmas fair, mothers day and father day shops, cultural event night, school disco – the list goes on and on!



### **How you can help at home**

There are many things you can do to support your child at home. My personal top 3 things are:

1. Talk to your child every day about what they see, do, and feel – this builds confidence and language skills.
2. Share stories and books together regularly to develop a love of reading and help them learn new words.
3. Encourage independence by letting your child practise dressing themselves, tidying up, and using the toilet on their own.

In Reception, we send home textual books for your child to read to you (beginning with single letter sound books) and we expect the children to read or discuss the story everyday. Please record that you have listened to your child read by writing in the reading record which you will be provided with at the start of the year. Please ensure the reading record is in your child's bag everyday so we can also listen to your child read the books at school.

For Reception, logins will be provided to access Monster phonics ebooks (reading platform) and Numbots (Maths games). These can be used at home as little or as often as you like.

### **Before Starting Acorns**

Please encourage your child to begin to dress themselves by practising at home in the weeks before they start.

We encourage you to play board games with your child so that they will get increasingly familiar with the format of games and skills such as turn taking. This will support their learning at home. If you feel your child is ready to write their name and wish to help them do so, this will support your child's progress at school.

You will be provided with an 'All About Me' booklet in the information pack. Please complete this with your child and return it to school on their first day. These booklets will be used to help your child settle into school and for us to get to know them better.

### **Admin and Forms**

Before starting, please return the following forms: Enrolment form, medical information, image consent, ethnic background form, pupil first language form.



## Communication

We believe strong communication between home and school is key.

- **School Office Email/Phone:** Amy [admin@northaw.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@northaw.herts.sch.uk) 01707 652869
- Newsletters, event reminders and updates are shared via email and Arbor
- We use Arbor which allows parents to give consent for trips and events, make payments, and check their child's attendance, all in one easy-to-use platform.
- Feel free to speak to the staff on the gate at drop-off or collection or request a meeting via Amy.
- Our website is: [www.northawschool.org](http://www.northawschool.org). It provides lots of information for parents, children and the community such as: Term dates, Curriculum information, Uniform details, Admission details, School policies, class pages, home learning ideas as well as links to fun games the children can play.
- Instagram: See what we've been up to and get a glimpse into everyday life at Northaw C of E Primary School. @northaw\_ce\_primary\_school

## Health and Safety

- **Illness:** Please keep your child at home if they are unwell. Please call or email the office to report absence. When your child has a stomach upset and/or sickness you must allow a period of 48 after vomiting or diarrhoea to elapse before sending them back to school.
- **Medical appointments:** Please make routine check ups such as dental check ups during school holidays or after school hours. If you do need to take your child out of school for a medical appointment, please notify your child's teacher by letter in advance wherever possible.
- **Toileting:** Children should be toilet trained before starting. We understand accidents happen which is why we ask for a bag of spare clothes to be kept on their pegs. If we lend out clothes please return back to school washed as soon as possible.
- **Medication:** If your child needs a prescribed medicine during the school day, please come to the school office to complete the relevant form. All medications should be in the original packaging and be clearly named. Parents must inform the school of any medical conditions including allergies. Any regular or emergency medication must be registered with the school office.
- **Allergies:** We are a **nut-free school**. Please inform us of any allergies on the appropriate forms.



## Wraparound Care – Breakfast & After School Club

We are pleased to offer **wraparound care** to support busy families.

- **Breakfast Club** runs from **7:30am** until the start of the school day.
- **After School Club** runs from the end of the school day until 4.30pm or you can book extended until **5:30pm**.

Both clubs are delivered on site by **Premier Education**, a trusted provider of high-quality, fun and engaging childcare.

**Booking Information:** You can find full details and make bookings directly through the Premier Education website: [www.premier-education.com](http://www.premier-education.com)

If you have any questions about the sessions or booking process, please contact Premier Education directly through their website or speak to Amy in the office.

## How to Download and Sign Up to Arbor (for Parents)

We use Arbor which allows parents to give consent for trips and events, make payments, and check their child's attendance, all in one easy-to-use platform.

To get started with Arbor, follow these simple steps:

### 1. **Download the App**

Search for "**Arbor Parent Portal**" in the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android) and download the app.

### 2. **Set Up Your Account**

Open the app and select "**First time logging in?**"

Enter your **email address** (the one registered with the school).

You will then receive an email with a link to **set your password**.

### 3. **Log In**

Once your password is set, return to the app and log in using your email and new password.

If you have any issues logging in, please contact the school office for support.



## Free School Meals – Why You Should Still Apply

All children in Reception are entitled to **Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)**, meaning they can have a hot meal at school every day at no cost to you.

However, we still strongly encourage eligible families to **apply for Free School Meals (FSM)** through the local authority.

### **Why Apply?**

If your application is successful:

- Your child may be entitled to **additional support and funding** (known as Pupil Premium)
- The school receives extra funding to support your child's education

### **How to Apply:**

Visit <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Schools-and-education/At-school/Free-school-meals/Free-school-meals.aspx> to apply for Free School Meals, even if your child is in Reception and already receives meals through UIFSM.

If you're unsure whether you're eligible or need help applying, please contact the school office in confidence – we're happy to help.

### **Thank you!**

Well done for getting to the end of this leaflet! We understand it is a lot of new information and can be overwhelming. If you have any questions or anything else you would like to discuss, please speak to a member of the Acorns team or contact the school office. We look forward to a fantastic year!

