

Phoenix Integrated Nursery Unit



Home to School Policy

L. Simps

Ratified by Board of Governors: _____ 20.1.21 _____ (date)

Reviewed: Yearly or as per DE recommended change

At Phoenix Integrated Nursery Unit we believe that children learn and achieve to their full potential when they feel safe and secure in their environment.

We aim to have a happy, caring and safe environment in conjunction with the provision of the Northern Ireland Pre School Curriculum.

As an integrated school we are committed to the principles of integrated education.

1. Faith and Values
2. Child centered provision
3. Parental involvement
4. Social responsibility

The aim of this transition policy is to ensure that all children have a smooth and happy transition from home to Nursery.

Staff from Phoenix Nursery Unit will seek to work in partnership with the pre-pre school settings (Sure Start, Playgroups) which feed into the nursery.

In preparation for the children commencing Phoenix Nursery Unit:

*Prospective parents will be invited to visit the Nursery Unit in December or January for an open afternoon / evening.

*All new parents of children who have accepted a place at Phoenix Integrated Nursery Unit will attend an induction meeting (May/June). To help ensure children have a smooth transition from home to school, parents will be asked to share any information they may feel is relevant. For example, if their child attends Speech and Language Therapy or if they are known to Educational Psychology.

*Children will visit the Nursery Unit for a stay and play visit with their parents/carers in June and again at the end of August.

*Parents will complete information booklets which will contain important information which will help staff build up an initial profile of the child. This information will be used by the nursery staff to aid a smooth transition for pupils. Information will be

sent via email to new parents. Parents will be asked to complete, and return, the information booklets electronically where possible.

*With consent from parents/carers, the nursery teacher(s) will make contact, via telephone or email, with pre-pre-school providers to seek information and request reports.

*Children will commence Nursery in small groups of between 8 and 13 children. Children's start dates and times will be staggered to ensure the needs of all children are effectively met. Children who are identified as having additional needs may be prioritised (in terms of a starting date) in order to facilitate a smooth transition and help staff assess their needs.

*The settling in process will take place gradually throughout September. It is anticipated that all children will be attending nursery for the full session (3.5 hours) by the end of September.

*The nursery teacher (s) will liaise closely with parents to ensure they are aware of how their child is settling in.

*Parents/carers will be invited for a settling in meeting at the end of October. At this meeting parents/carers will receive an individual progress report.

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the school's policy review schedule.

Annex to Policy COVID-19

September 2020

Nursery staff will continue to support the transition from home to school for all pupils starting Phoenix Integrated Nursery Unit.

To promote a smooth transition, staff will be familiar with children's likes and dislikes along with their strengths and areas for development. This will help build a secure relationship between staff and pupils. Staff will also liaise with parents (where necessary) to discuss any concerns about children. For example, for children who are separating from parents or carers for the first time.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, perspective parents will not be able to visit the setting to look around and meet staff. Information including photographs and videos, will be shared on social media and the school website for perspective parents to view. Staff will also be available to speak with perspective parents on the phone.

After parents have accepted a place a Phoenix Integrated Nursery Unit, they will be given information, via letter or email, about their child's induction visits to the setting. Initially parents will be invited in for a short induction meeting (May / June) to discuss the induction process. This will be done, in line with relevant guidance, at the time of the induction meeting being held. In the event that this cannot take place, staff will send out relevant information and documents via Seesaw or the class email. Any person visiting with school for a visit will be required to wear a face covering. Only one parent, per child, will be able to attend the induction meeting.

Staff feel it is very important for children to feel secure about their new setting. Therefore, where possible, parents and children will be invited into the setting for a short induction stay and play visit in June and August. Where this is not possible, staff will communicate with parents and children primarily through the school website,

social media and Seesaw. Again, parents will be required to wear a face covering and observe social distancing guidelines.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, children will be encouraged to come into the setting independently. Parents will be asked to support this arrangement and reassure their children in order to alleviate separation anxiety. Children will be asked to sanitise their hands on arrival to the setting (at the Nursery entrance) and wash their hands before starting to play. Children will have a staggered arrival time (8.45 – 9.15 am) at school to help maintain social distancing. However, children will be given a specific time slot for collection. These will be sent individually to parents via Seesaw. Collection times will be organised, by surname, in alphabetical order.

Throughout the settling in period, updates and photographs will be sent through Seesaw to parents. This is to minimise face-to-face interactions with parents. Updates will also be made via telephone when necessary.

Parents meetings may also be held via telephone in the event that they cannot be carried out face-to-face. Settling in parent meetings (October) may be postponed to a later date. In this case, staff will speak to parents if they have concerns about their child.

Staff will wear a face covering at all times during children's arrival and collection times. Staff will also try to observe social distancing from parents.