



St Francis' Primary School and Bunscoil Naomh Proinsias

Nursery Welcome Booklet



www.StFrancisPS.co.uk

General Information

School Principal

- Miss Orla O'Dowd BEd, MEd, PQH

Vice Principal

- Miss Marie Rice BSc, PGCE, MEd, PQH

Nursery Teaching Staff

- Mrs Anne-Marie Mc Neice, (Bachelor of Education, Master of Early Years Education, High-Scope Cert.)
 - Nursery Teacher
- Miss Shauna Baylis (Bachelor of Education)
 - Nursery Teacher
- Mrs Ciara Grew (Bachelor of Education, PGDip)
 - Nursery Teacher

Nursery Assistants

- Mrs Lynda Mallon (NNEB Diploma, CACHE Advanced Diploma)
- Mrs Siobhan Murtagh (CACHE Diploma)
- Miss Edel Mc Geown (CACHE Diploma)

School Telephone Number

0283832316

School Website Address

www.stfrancisps.co.uk

Introduction

Welcome to St. Francis' Nursery Unit. We look forward to meeting you and your child and forming a working partnership with you over the next school year.

Our Nursery Unit comprises of a three classroom Nursery Unit. We are an educational setting where our aim is to provide a secure, happy learning environment, where the needs of your child are paramount. We provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum to promote the holistic development of your child, so that he/she will develop to his/her full potential.

Mission Statement

"In our school we are all friends who play, work and learn together so that St. Francis' will be a memorable steppingstone through life's journey".

Nursery Policies

All Nursery policies that you need will be on the Admissions and Nursery pages of our School Website- **stfrancisps.co.uk**.

The policies below are very important and you will be asked to sign that you have read, understood and agree to them at your child's visit.

Admissions & Settling-In Policy 2024/25

Introduction

We in St Francis Nursery Unit, recognise that the transition from home to Nursery for most children probably represents the first significant step from total parental / guardian care and education, to being cared for and educated in a pre-school setting. As such, in our Nursery classes we aim to build on the child's experiences of love and care in a warm, secure and happy learning environment. We recognise that each child is unique, with his/her own personality, experiences and needs. We find that each individual child copes with the transition from home to Nursery differently.

As a consequence of this, the children who gain a place in our setting are taken into Nursery in small groups over a settling-in period of four weeks. This gives each child and his/her parent/guardians(s) time to settle into Nursery, form a bond with staff, other children and parents/guardians and so integrate into the Nursery social community. This time gives staff the opportunity to get to know each child individually and so cater for each child's settling-in needs. This period also allows the staff and parents/guardians time to build the foundations of a partnership and so work together for the benefit of each child. We believe that if parental/guardian involvement and staff/parental/guardian relationships are not developed at the onset of the educative process, a valuable resource and learning opportunities will have been lost.

The length of time the children stay each day in Nursery will be increased over a period of four weeks. We find this is necessary to help each child to settle well into Nursery and so reduce the inevitable separation anxiety that most young children experience when starting any pre-school setting. As each child has unique settling-in needs and anxieties, staff will work with each individual child and parents/guardians, to ensure that each child will settle happily. Consequently, if a child is experiencing problems settling into Nursery particularly relating to separation anxiety, the time he/she will stay in Nursery will be shortened to accommodate the child's needs.

We believe that the needs of the child are paramount during the Settling-In period and this is reflected in our procedures and practice.

Procedures

Intake

Of those children who apply to our Nursery, 78 children are selected by the Board of Governors using the criteria set out in the Nursery Admissions Handbook.

Class Division and Start Dates

The children will be divided randomly between the three teachers, as far as possible, ensuring an even mix of age, gender, Special Educational Needs and needs such as those attending Speech Therapy in each class. This information will be gained through a questionnaire sent to the parents/guardians prior to the initial meeting.

Start dates are chosen randomly and will be as follows:

Open Day Visit

All children are invited to an Open Day in May where they will get to play in the Nursery. This will give staff the opportunity to meet and observe the children and speak to the parents/guardians about their child's development before the final division of children into classes. Each child will be given an allocated time to come to visit.

Parent / Guardian Introductory Information Meeting

Parents/guardians are invited to an initial introductory meeting in June. At this meeting the parents/guardians are informed about all aspects of Nursery life, including information on the pre-school curriculum and where to read all policies and procedures. All information talked about will be available for reading on the school website in admissions titled, "Nursery Welcome Booklet."

After this visit the children will be allocated a class and parents/guardians will be informed of a time to come to visit their class, teacher and assistant.

Class Visit to meet the Teacher and Assistant

In June the children and parents are invited to visit their own class, teacher and assistant for half an hour on a specific day at a specific time. The children will receive a picture "Welcome Booklet", with photographs of their teacher, assistant, classroom, routine etc. on this visit.

This time gives the children, parents and staff time to meet, allowing the children to become familiar with their new surroundings and Nursery staff. During their visit the children will be introduced to the staff and will be shown round their Nursery class. They will be shown the different play areas and the toilet and cloakroom areas. The children will be allocated a symbol, which will be on their coat hanger and postbox. The children will then be encouraged to play with some activities to give staff an opportunity to interact with them, and so gain an insight into the child's personality and needs, so that these can be catered for when the child starts Nursery.

This visit also gives the parents and staff time to discuss each child. Parents hold valuable information about their child, such as information on their child's personality, needs, likes, dislikes, fears and their personal, social and emotional skills and development. Such information is invaluable to staff, who use it to try to make the Settling-In process as easy as possible for each child. Parents will be asked to complete information and permission forms on this visit.

Settling In Timetable

Start Date 8.50am - 9am to 10am

On their first day at Nursery all the children will stay from 9am to 10am. The needs of the children are paramount at this time and the strategy used to help the children to settle will be individual to each child. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to stay with their child, if necessary, but parents/guardians of children who appear to be settling happily will be encouraged to leave their child, if they are happy with this. The children will be encouraged to play/work with activities, interact with staff and their peers, have snack and begin to become familiar with rules and routines. The small number of children in each group enables the staff to cater for the needs of each individual child, providing them with support, guidance and encouragement.

Children needing more time to settle in Nursery.

It is hoped that most children will settle well and be able to follow the settling in timetable below. However, if a child is having difficulty settling-in, the teachers, in discussion with the Nursery Co-Ordinator, will use their professional judgment in setting times for these individual children. This ensures that each child receives the happiest possible start to their education in St Francis and so ensure positive Personal, Social and Emotional Development and consequently learning in all other areas of the Nursery curriculum.

However, if a child finds it difficult moving from one stage to the next, we will adjust his/her time as required.

The length of time they stay will be increased at the teacher's discretion as they begin to settle.

As the Education and Training Inspectorate states "it is important to remember that it is not the length of the pre-school day but the quality of the learning that matters".

Timetable for those Children who are settling well in Nursery.

Week One

Settled children will stay from **8.50am-9am to 10am**

Week Two

Settled children will stay from **8.50am-9am to 11am**

Week Three

Settled children will stay from **8.50am-9am to 12.15pm** and will have dinner.

Week Four

Settled children will stay for a full day from **8.50am-9am to 1.20-1.30pm** and will experience the full Nursery Day.

Staggered Intake 8.50am- 9am

We in St Francis' Nursery Unit, see the need to provide a settling-in period each morning. We operate a staggered Welcome Period each morning from 8.50am until 9am. This provides an opportunity for staff to greet children and parents individually and enables them to settle each child each morning. Parents at this time are very welcome to speak to staff about their child and any worries and concerns that may have, which they feel may be affecting their child's ability to settle and flourish in the Nursery.

Staggered Home-time 1.30pm-1.45pm.

A staggered home-time operates each afternoon from 1.20pm-1.30pm. This time enables staff to talk to the parents about how their child is settling and progressing and what they have done throughout the day.

Signed & Dated:

Principal: Miss O O'Dowd

Vice Principal: Miss M. Rice

June 2024

Positive Behaviour Policy

Introduction

Pastoral care is at its most effective when it is all pervasive and fully integrated into the school's daily routines, its curriculum and its extra-curricular activities. We the staff of St Francis' Nursery Unit are concerned for the personal, social and emotional development of all the children in our care, regardless of their age or ability. We wish to develop the children as individuals who are happy, successful and fully participating members of the Nursery, the school and its wider community.

It is our intention to provide a setting which promotes the moral, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development of all its children, where they will feel secure, free from emotional and physical harm and are able to discuss their interests and voice their fears and concerns in a safe environment. It is for these reasons that it is important for St Francis' Nursery Unit to establish a positive discipline policy; where the children's self-confidence and self-esteem are promoted; where good behaviour is rewarded and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with appropriately.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Positive behaviour strategies need to be appropriate to the age and stage of the young child's development. These are the keys to a happy and thriving Nursery environment and are the prerequisite to quality teaching and learning. Unacceptable behaviour within the setting disrupts not only the personal development of the child involved but may also deprive the other children of their right to be educated in a safe and secure learning environment. Good behaviour is that conduct which assists the setting in filling its function of providing a high-quality experience for all the children. This policy outlines a system of rewards, rules and sanctions that are the reasonable expectations that the setting holds in terms of behaviour. It aims to cultivate in the children an awareness that they are responsible for the consequences of their own actions. In so doing we hope to encourage mutual respect for the needs and aspirations of all within the setting, as well as fostering respect for the school environment and the wider community.

Aims

1. To create a secure and orderly school community based on Christian principles and values, which allow each child to fully develop his/her potential personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually.
2. To create an appropriate environment that is conducive to learning.
3. To foster mutual respect among the whole school community- children, teachers, assistants and all other adults.
4. To promote good behaviour through encouragement and praise.
5. To ensure the consistent application of the Nursery rules.
6. To encourage personal development, self-discipline, self-respect and self-worth, which will in turn lead to respect for others and proper regard for authority.
7. To promote responsible attitudes and values for life.
8. To foster respect for the setting's property and the property of others.
9. To make our Nursery Unit a safe, happy, caring environment for all our children where learning and development will not be affected by inappropriate behaviour.

Rules

Rules are implemented in our Nursery and are made to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our children. During everyday activities we discuss how the child should behave and we reinforce why it is more fun in Nursery if we all follow the rules.

Within the Nursery we emphasise the “Good Things We Do”

Inside & Outside

1. Always listen to the teachers
2. Share & take turns.
3. Use kind words, hands, feet & teeth.
4. Play safely.
5. Tidy up.

Good Listening & Mat Rules Song

Eyes watching,
Ears listening,
Lips closed,
Hands are still,
Feet are very quiet,
You should really try it.
Listening well, listening well.

Procedures

At all times, the Nursery staff aim to be consistent, fair and firm in our response to the children. We try to make them aware of how others feel and the need for an acceptable standard of behaviour. While the staff make it clear to the children that negative and unsociable behaviour is unacceptable, much more time is spent on the praise and reinforcement of positive behaviour always trying to catch the children being good.

In Nursery it is our policy to encourage effort and achievement and to positively promote good behaviour by developing a system of praise and rewards. These include:

1. A quiet word and encouraging smile.
2. The use of stickers on jumpers and work
3. Visits to other Nursery classes, the Vice-Principals or Principal for praise & rewards.

Procedures for Challenging Behaviour Incidents

1. The staff (the adult who discovers the poor behaviour incident deals with it) intervene if a child displays unacceptable behaviour and talks him/her through it. We endeavor to help the child to understand, in simple terms, why the behaviour is wrong and unacceptable. We ask questions to help the child try to understand why they did something and how he/she and others feel.

“Why did you hit/ not share with John?”

Do you know that you have hurt him/made him feel sad?

How would you feel if John hit you like that/ did not share?

Would you like John to hit you / not share with you?

The child is then encouraged to say sorry and the to act positively such as being a good friend, sharing, waiting a turn or looking after the resources.

2. If the child continues to behave inappropriately or in a very boisterous manner, he/she will either:
 - Be Withdrawn from the activity to another where a member of staff will talk about why the behaviour is wrong and the importance of acting in an appropriate manner.
 - Be given "Time Out" on a "Thinking Chair." Time Out is used as a de-escalation strategy in maintaining good behaviour. The child displaying inappropriate behaviour will sit out on the "Thinking Chair" to watch the other children playing. It will be explained to the child that they cannot play with any other children or toys for a few minutes. The behaviour will also be discussed. The child will then sit and watch for 3 or 4 minutes according to their age.

The staff will use their professional judgement, according to each individual child's needs, to determine which of the above actions will be taken. Parents will be informed of all such actions on that day.

3. It is our policy that any child displaying regular inappropriate behaviour will be on a reduced day in Nursery. This is particularly relevant when the children first start Nursery and the time will be increased in short increments of 15 minutes as the child learns to cope and behave better in Nursery. This will be at the joint discretion of the class teacher and Nursery Co-Ordinator. In such cases it may be necessary to use an individualised behaviour programme, which will be used at home and in school with the same rewards and behaviour strategies used both in Nursery and home.
4. It is our policy that our setting should be a safe, happy environment for both the children and staff to be in. Therefore, if a child (who does not have a Statement of Special Needs with an SEN assistant) physically hurts another child or member of staff the procedure is as follows:
 - **First Incident** - Follow Steps 1 & 2 – Parents/Guardians will be informed of the incident and the policy that is being followed.
 - **Second Incident** – Parents/Guardians will be informed of the incident and the policy that is being followed.
 - **Third Incident** – Parents/Guardians will be contacted to collect the child from Nursery and advised to seek advice from e.g., health visitor.
 - **Each Subsequent Incident** -Parents/Guardians will be contacted to collect the child from Nursery. After discussions with the parents/guardian's adjustments will be made and the child will be on a reduced Nursery Day to help them settle into the Nursery rules and routines. This will be at the joint discretion of the teacher and Nursery Co-Ordinator.

The Nursery staff have a 'Duty of Care' towards the children in our care. In an emergency situation if a child is likely to be at risk of harm (either to themselves or others) staff may need to take action that involves physically intervening. The action Staff taken will be dependent on the dynamic risk assessment that staff make at that moment in time. Anytime that staff are required to intervene in this way, it will be recorded and shared with parents/carers.

At all times, the staff will use their professional judgement in deciding what is in the best interests of the child.

Role of Parents

Our staggered intake time in the mornings and the staggered home-time period enable the staff time to speak to parents and care givers about each child's progress and behaviour daily. It is the role of each parent to support and reinforce the efforts of the staff in establishing and maintaining acceptable standards of behaviour.

Conclusion

We, the staff of St Francis' Nursery Unit, will endeavour to promote good behaviour. We believe that a positive approach to discipline, a strong Catholic Ethos and a family approach to Pastoral Care will provide an atmosphere and setting in which each child can fulfil his/her potential.

Signed & Dated:

Principal: Miss O O'Dowd

Vice Principal: Miss M. Rice

June 2024

Intimate Care Policy

Our aim in St Francis Nursery is to provide a happy, safe, secure and caring learning environment. Our Intimate Care Policy has been developed to both safeguard children and staff.

Principles Of Intimate Care - Rights of the Child

(Taken from the Southern Area Child Protection Committee, Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding Children)

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved in or consulted about their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Intimate Care may be defined as any activity required to meet the needs of each individual child such as:

- Cleaning and changing a child after a toileting accident, has vomited or feels unwell.
- Supporting a child with dressing and undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed child
- Assisting a child who is hurt & applying simple first aid.

At all times the dignity of all the children will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care will be very aware of child protection issues and will have completed Child Protection training.

Toileting Policy

We anticipate that all children who come to Nursery will be fully toilet trained before they start in our setting. Those children who are not yet toilet trained and do not have a Statement of Educational Needs will have their start date deferred until they are fully toilet trained.

*Toilet Trained means:

- *Being aware of the need to go to the toilet and being fully independent at using the toilet both at home and in other settings outside the home without a parent or guardian present to prompt them, such as school.*
- *Going into the toilet cubicle*
- *Pulling down trousers and underwear*
- *Using the toilet*
- *Cleaning his/herself (wet/soil)*
- *Flushing the toilet*
- *Pulling up clothes*
- *Washing and drying hands*

In terms of the cleaning and changing of the children, Nursery staff will always work openly with the children, treating all children equally with respect and dignity. Staff will gain permission from the child before any changing occurs. Physical contact with the children will be appropriate to their needs. Staff realise that children of Nursery age need to be reassured when toileting accidents occur and this is done with the utmost respect for the child, reflecting the needs of the child at that particular time.

All parents / guardians will be made aware of our Intimate Care & Toileting Policy at an Introductory meeting in May and will have access to the policy on the school website. Paper copies will be available to those who request it.

Parents/guardians must sign a permission slip if they wish their child to be cleaned and changed in the event of a toileting accident or for other needs, such as getting wet at the water tray.

Procedures When Toileting Accidents Occur:

- Each child is provided with a changing bag hanging on his/her coat hook which **must** contain a full change of clothes. Children will only be changed if a full change of clothes is in their child's bag. Otherwise, parents / guardians will be contacted to collect their child.
- It is rare that a child would object to being changed but if this is the case, we will respect their wishes and the parent/guardian will be contacted to come to change their child or take them home.

- If a child needs the help of a member of the Nursery staff to change their clothing, one adult will gain permission to help freshen up and change the child in the toilet area. The door will be open so that a second adult can observe but still maintain privacy for the child.
- Every change of clothing and toilet accident is recorded by staff, stating the date, the child's name, the reason for the change of clothing, the garments changed and the areas freshened/cleaned up. The staffing arrangements at the time of the change are recorded.
- Should a child accidentally **wet him/herself during the day**, it is our policy to freshen up the child and change the child's clothing if they give us permission to, with as little fuss and embarrassment to the child as possible.
- Should the child have a **second wetting accident** on the same day, we will change the child again if clothing is available but the parent /guardian will be contacted and must collect the child from Nursery.
- Should a child **be sick or soiled**, he/she will be changed and the parent/guardian will be contacted to bring the child home as soon as possible.
- **If a child has a total of 3 wetting/soiling accidents over a period of two weeks, parents/guardians will be asked to keep the child at home until he/she is fully toilet trained as defined above*.**
- If a child is experiencing a medical toileting issue as diagnosed by a doctor, we require written medical information to confirm this and we will endeavour to support the child and parents as best we can. **However, in the absence of one-to-one assistance to help with toileting and accidents, the children with toileting needs will be kept on a shortened day, with the time being set according to their needs.**
- If a child requires medicine such as Movicol for general bowel issues, parents/guardians will be asked to keep the child at home until they no longer require it or administer such medicines at time when it is likely to take effect at home rather than in Nursery.
- For those children with a Statement of Special Needs staff will meet with the parents/guardians to draw up an agreed toileting plan which will be reviewed and amended as the child's needs change.
- Children should be as independent as possible with taking off and putting on their own coats, jumpers and shoes before they start Nursery. When needing help with such tasks, the children will always be encouraged to try this themselves.

Positive Touch Policy - Providing Comfort & Support

At St Francis's Nursery Unit, we have a Positive Touch Policy. This means that members of staff are able to physically guide, touch or prompt children in appropriate ways at the appropriate times.

Why Do We Use Touch?

Staff may have physical contact with children for a variety of reasons, but in general terms they would normally do so for comfort, reassurance or reward. They may also need to physically touch, guide or prompt children if they require personal care, assistance with understanding, eating, dressing etc.

How Do We Use Touch?

Hugging

In our setting staff touch for comfort or reward using a 'school hug'. This is a sideways on hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child's shoulders. This discourages 'front on' hugging, and the adult's hands on the shoulders limits the ability of the child to turn themselves into staff. This can be done either standing or sitting. If a child seeks a 'front on' hug, staff will not refuse a child when they are seeking comfort.

Handholding

We recognise that children, especially young children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is perfectly acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. With older children, we encourage the use of the 'school handhold'. This is done by the adult offering a supportive arm, and the child is encouraged to wrap their hand/arm around the adult's lower arm. The adult's other hand can then be placed over the child's for a little extra security if it is required.

It is generally deemed appropriate to touch children on the upper arm which would appear to be regarded as a neutral zone in most cultures.

Lap-Sitting

At St Francis P.S. & Nursery Unit, we recognise that some children, especially very young children derive comfort from lap-sitting. Children should be encouraged to seek comfort/attention through other means, for example the school hand hold or hug, as they mature. Lap sitting should be used as a short-term strategy to re-assure and calm children if it seems appropriate. When using lap-sitting we sit the child sideways on.

Please note that although we have a positive touch policy and believe that contingent touch can be a positive experience for the children that we care for, this does not mean that staff have to touch children, it should also be recognised

that some children will not want to be touched and it can act as a trigger for emotional outbursts if it causes anxiety for a child.

Staff have a 'Duty of Care' towards the children in their care. In an emergency situation if a child is likely to be at risk from harm (either to themselves or others) staff may need to take action that involves physically intervening. The action that staff take will be dependent on the dynamic risk assessment that staff make at that moment in time. Anytime that staff are required to intervene in this way it will be recorded and shared with parents/carers.

First Aid

Young children of Nursery age can be very prone to minor physical accidents, such as grazing a knee or hand outside. Such minor injuries will be dealt with by any of the Nursery team ensuring that another adult or other children are present when helping the injured child. With more serious injuries the designated trained First Aider in the Nursery will assess and treat the child in the presence of another adult.

Signed & Dated:

Principal: Miss O O'Dowd

Vice Principal: Miss M. Rice

June 2024

THE PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

By the time your child enters Nursery, they will already have had a wide range of experiences and have developed in several ways. In St Francis' Nursery Unit we aim to build upon and develop these experiences and so we plan a curriculum, which provides your child with a rich variety of play activities and other experiences in a stimulating and challenging environment. Our curriculum is divided into six areas. Religion also plays an important role in the Nursery.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

This area of learning is of the utmost importance for young children in all aspects of their lives. Within the warm, secure environment of the Nursery we encourage the children to gain confidence in what they do and develop their self-esteem. Through activities, conversations and example, they express their own feelings of anger and frustration and to have respect for the feelings of others. We encourage the children to become more independent, to accept responsibility for themselves and for the equipment that they use. Through activities they will be encouraged to develop their concentration and perseverance.

Physical Development & Movement

A range of equipment both indoors and outdoors is used to develop the children's self-confidence, self-awareness and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. Fine motor skills are developed as children learn to use and handle small objects and tools (such as scissors, pens, brushes etc.) with increasing control and precision. The children's gross motor skills will be enhanced as they climb, balance, jump, ride, throw and catch etc. The children enjoy physical play and it is also an ideal time to develop social skills as they co-operate with each other and show consideration for each other.

Language Development

Language development is an integral part of the curriculum. In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening. On a daily basis the children are given the opportunity to listen to, respond to and join in with stories, songs and rhymes. The Book Area gives the children the opportunity to look at books individually or with their friends and to be able to learn how to handle them appropriately, to develop a love of books and become aware of their uses as a source of pleasure and information. The children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning and they are given the opportunity to experiment with writing in their play i.e. making shopping lists, writing menus, filling out forms, making cards etc.

Early Mathematical Experiences

During their time at Nursery the children will experience a range of activities that will develop their skills in sorting, matching, counting, ordering and sequencing which form the basis for early mathematics. On a daily basis they will hear and be encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary, identifying objects by shape, size, colour, position, number etc. Rhymes, songs, stories and incidental occurrences during the day are all used to help the children develop mathematical concepts. They will be given the opportunity to explore and investigate the properties of materials, solve problems that arise in play and talk about their experiences and findings with others.

The Arts

Creative play is about making new things, taking risks and experimenting, coming up with new ideas, solving problems and coping with uncertainty. Children are given the opportunities to work with a wide range of materials, both natural and man-made which helps them to experiment with colour, shape and texture. The children are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings through painting, drawing, making models and moulding or shaping with clay or dough. They will see their work displayed and valued by children and adults. The children will join in with and respond to music and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play and dressing up, both individually and in-group situations.

The World Around Us

Children have a natural curiosity and enthusiasm about the world around them and often ask questions about their environment and the people they meet. At the Nursery the children are given the opportunity to investigate and explore a wide range of topics, such as: Myself, Healthy Eating, People Who Help Us, Mini beasts, The Farm, the seasons, weather etc. Through discussion, use of their senses and making things, the children acquire more knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The children are given plenty of opportunities to learn about and experiment with sand, water, clay, magnets etc. and they will begin to develop skills and concepts in observation, experimentation and free exploration of their surroundings. The Nursery curriculum seeks to extend these skills and concepts through careful interaction and discussion with adults.

Books, pictures, posters and photographs are also used to let the children learn about themselves, their environment and how things work. Topics such as: mini beasts, animals and transport, etc. take account of a child's natural curiosity and with help and guidance they are encouraged to care for and respect all living things.

Observation and Assessment

Our assessment of the children's learning and development is based on day-day observations of, and interactions, with the children in a range of situations. These observations allow us to learn about the children's interests, strengths and areas of development. The information we gather is essential when deciding how the children's learning can be taken forward, both individually and collectively. Well-planned, regular and skilled observations of the children's play and language ensures that, over time, an accurate picture emerges of the progress your child is making in each area of learning. The information gathered includes details on your child's strengths, areas where he/she may need additional support or opportunities to learn, and what action is to be taken.

Our assessment process includes sharing the information with you the parents. This is often done informally daily. We hold two possible parent/teacher meetings throughout your child's year in the Nursery:

- In November a "Settling-In" report is discussed.
- In February/March a general discussion on your child's progress will take place if required or requested.
- In June, a "Transition" report will be passed to you and your child's Primary 1 teacher based on the information in your child's profile. This is a general report and is a summary of your child's development to date.

Special Educational Needs

The term "Special Educational Needs" refers to a child who has a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her. Some of the difficulties that young children experience are temporary and will be resolved as they develop. Others will have difficulties that are long term and will require additional support to ensure that they make progress.

We also take account of those children who need to have their learning challenged and extended beyond what is normally provided in Nursery settings, but do not fall into the category of having Special Educational Needs.

We aim to identify early any difficulties that a child is experiencing. From the earliest stage we consult with the parents of a child who is experiencing difficulties.

It is our policy to draw up "Personalised Education Plans", known as PLP's to meet such children's needs or to identify appropriate support during play and other planned activities. These plans are reviewed and discussed with the parents/guardians regularly.

Nursery Daily Routine

8.50 am - 9 am Doors open at 8.50am and all children must be in for 9am	Staggered Intake
9 am-10.30 am	Indoor Play Snack on going. Tidy Up Time
10.30 am -11.20 am	Outdoor Play Weather Permitting
11.20 am - 11.30 am	Tidy Up Time Toileting & handwashing Table Setting
11.30 am - 11.50 am	Whole Group Time Songs, Rhymes & Story
11.50 am - 12.30 pm	Dinner
12.30 pm -12.40 pm	(Whole Group Time to allow room to be cleaned and set up after dinner and to ensure correct adult ratios)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time	Music Express	Music & Movement	Language Activity (e.g. Rhyming games/ Sound Discrimination Games)	Songs & Rhymes

12.40pm - 1.20pm	Free Indoor or Outdoor Play - Dependent on the weather Tidy Up Time
1.20pm-1.30pm Doors open at 1.20pm and all children must be collected by 1.30pm	Staggered Home-time Songs/Rhymes

Dinner, Packed Lunch and Snack

Dinner

Our Nursery Unit has always encouraged children in our policy documentation to eat a school dinner and that continues to be the case. We believe that good eating habits, table etiquette, manners and socialisation skills are learned at this early stage in children's lives. It is also noteworthy that children who have an early aversion to some important food groups such as vegetables can be persuaded to enjoy them as they sit with others who are precisely doing this.

- Dinner Money: Currently £2.50 per day. You will be informed of any changes before your child stays for dinner.
- All dinner money should be paid on Eduspot.co.uk the night before you wish your child to have dinner. It cannot be booked on the day.
- Should your child be absent, dinner money will be carried over to next day.
- If you are entitled to free dinners, please obtain a form from the school secretary as soon as possible.

Packed Lunch

If you wish your child to take a packed lunch, we suggest a well-balanced healthy meal such as:

- Sandwiches/bread (which should be wrapped in tinfoil or a snappy bag, so your child is able to open it easily)
- A plain biscuit
- A piece of fruit or yoghurt for dessert (spoon for yoghurt – to be labelled)
- A choice of water or milk to drink will be supplied by the Nursery.
- To avoid upset among these young children and to promote healthy eating please do not give your child crisps, sweets, chocolate bars, chocolate biscuits or fizzy drinks for his/her lunch.
- Please choose a lunch box which is easy for your child to open and close. It should be labelled.

Nuts, nut spread or food containing nuts are not permitted to ensure the safety of children in our setting with nut allergies.

Snack / Nursery Funds

- We provide a healthy nutritious snack each morning.
- Snack /Nursery Funds is £3 per week and we ask that everyone pays this money on a Monday morning in a clearly labelled envelope.
- This money is used to buy snack, replace broken resources, ripped books and to purchase any spontaneous resources that are required over the course of the year. This money is used for the benefit of your child.

Uniform

Our uniform is supplied by J&R Clothing/Fashions, 3, North Street, Lurgan and Noel Campbell's North Street, Lurgan.

Girls and boys must wear:

- Blue sweatshirt (with embroidered logo)
- Light blue polo shirt (with embroidered logo)
- Black jogging bottoms
- Black Velcro shoes – Laced shoes are not permitted.

Important

- All children in Nursery must wear jogging bottoms.
- Skirts and trousers are not to be worn.
- Black shoes must be worn throughout the whole year – even during the summer months. We find sandals and trainers with laces are unsafe and unsuitable for outdoor play.
- Summer dresses and summer playsuits are not to be worn for safety reasons on outdoor equipment. School PE shorts can be worn.

TIPS TO HELP MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM HOME TO NURSERY EASIER FOR YOUR CHILD

Toileting and Dressing

- At school, your child will be expected to know when he/she needs to use the toilet and be able to pull up his/her own pants, wipe his/her bottom, flush the toilet and wash his/her hands. Practise skills like getting dressed and changing clothes. Velcro is easier than laces.

Mealtimes

- Being able to use a knife and fork and take foil tops off things like yoghurts means he/she will be able to cope with snack and dinnertime.

Sharing

- It's important that children can work together. When friends come round, encourage turn-taking and sharing games, and resolve quarrels by negotiation and compromise.

Talking and Listening

- Listening is essential at Nursery, so get him/her to contribute and listen to others. Encourage language skills by asking open-ended questions, such as: "What did you like most about that story?"

Storytime

- Children love recognising familiar stories or repeated rhymes. Reading stimulates their imaginations, so ask questions about the story and get him/her to predict what will happen next.

Drawing

- Encourage your child to hold and use different writing tools correctly and to do lots of drawing and painting.

Concentration

- Memory games and jigsaw puzzles encourage concentration. He/she should be able to follow simple instructions like: "Please get your shoes from upstairs and put them on".

Be Creative

- Get your child used to being creative by introducing him/her to things like scissors, glue, paint, crayons and playdough. Use puppets, build things out of boxes, and play charades or role-play - you could even make tunes with saucepans!

Physical Fun

- If he/she is encouraged to take part in physical activity from a young age, it means he/she is more likely to enjoy sport when he/she is older. Encourage jumping, hopping, and skipping and running. Include ball games, dancing, climbing and bike riding to prepare children for gym and other outdoor activity sessions.

Medical Information

- Please ensure that we have all relevant medical information regarding your child.
- Do not send medicines to school, the only exceptions being inhalers for asthma and medication for children with specific medical conditions, who have one to one assistance for this reason.
- If your child has asthma, it will be expected that he/she knows how to use his/her inhaler with staff assistance. It is expected that we have written confirmation from your child's doctor with regards dosage and frequency of use of the inhaler.
- Should your child feel unwell prior to coming to Nursery or through the night, please keep him/her at home until he/she is fully better. It is up to the parent, not the child to determine whether he/she is well enough to attend school or not. Experience has shown that children who are unwell but say they want to come to school, are often overwhelmed when they arrive. A child who is unwell will not learn effectively and will demand an undue amount of attention from staff, which is unfair on the other children.
- Should your child appear to have head lice, conjunctivitis or any other contagious infections, please consult your Pharmacist or Doctor for treatment as soon as possible.
- Should your child have Chicken Pox, we ask that he/she is kept off school for five days after the last spot is crusted over.
- With diarrhea and/or vomiting, please keep your child off Nursery for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea and or vomiting.
- Please refer to the **Public Health Agency Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings** for further information on illness' and the period of time required to keep your child off school. **E.g. With diarrhoea and/or vomiting – 48 hours from last episode.**

General Information

Photographs and Video Recordings

- Throughout the year we take photographs of the children at play and at specific events. These are displayed in the setting and on the school website.
- You will be asked to sign a permission slip to permit us to photograph and film your child if he/she so wishes.

Internet Use

- We require signed permission for your child to use the Internet with supervision in the setting.

Contact Numbers

- It is most important that at least TWO telephone numbers are left with the school in case of an emergency. If mobile phone numbers are given as contact numbers, please ensure that the mobiles are turned on.
- Please remember to inform the school in the event of change of address or telephone number.

Safety

- We ask you not to send toys/jewellery/watches to school.
- Stud earrings are the only earrings permitted.

If you require any more information, please do not hesitate to speak to the Nursery Staff.

Thank You

Signed & Dated:

Principal: Miss O O'Dowd

Vice Principal: Miss M. Rice

June 2024



A Day in the Life of the Under Fives

Oh, what a busy day. I've been playing with the dough.
And with a little help upon a card, I've even learnt to sew.
I've helped my friend 'nurse Sarah' perform an operation.
Then fixed the track together for my train and built a station.
I popped inside the home corner to make a cup of tea.
And stood beside the cooker making lunch for 23.
I completed three whole jigsaws and played a new board
game.
And had a turn on all the bikes, the slide and climbing frame.
I handed round the biscuits at milk and biscuit time.
Then I listened to a story and sang a Nursery rhyme.
But now the day is over and the mummies are all waiting.
I hope my mother doesn't say "Oh darling, where's your
painting?"

