



Castlereagh Nursery School  
Prospectus

September 2026 entry



Dear Parent

Welcome to Castlereagh Nursery School, we hope this prospectus gives you a flavour of what you and your child will experience here.

All the staff are happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact the school at another time if there is anything else you need to know.

Ashleigh Morrow  
(Principal)

## School Staff

Principal :	Mrs Ashleigh Morrow
Assistant Teacher :	Mrs Claire Jones
Nursery Assistants :	Mrs Heather Quinn Miss Louise Logan
Language Support Assistant:	Mrs Lorraine Montgomery
Clerical Officer :	Mrs Kathryn McAteer
Building Supervisor:	Mrs Colleen Nesbitt

## Our School

Castlereagh Nursery School is a large purpose built school based at the top of the Castlereagh Road. It was built in 1978 and welcomes children from around the immediate community and beyond. We have two large well equipped classrooms which lead into a sunroom area and then directly onto the garden area. Parents play a key role in our school community and are very welcome in our nursery.

We provide a rich, stimulating and challenging curriculum for our children. Within a bright and exciting learning environment, children are encouraged to be confident, secure and independent learners so that they have the best possible start in their journey of education.

Our school motto is:

"Hand in Hand we Learn together"

Our friendly staff hold a variety of professional early years qualifications, and are committed to ensuring that all of our children learn and develop to the best of their ability.

In order to enhance the children's learning experiences we organise a number of educational visits and have many visitors working within the nursery. Parents are invited to join us for many of these activities and they are always enjoyed by everyone.

The opening hours of our school are 9.00 - 1:30. The school is staffed by a Principal, 2 teachers and 2 nursery assistants. We also currently employ 1 member of staff to support communication and language development.

The Board of Governors is keen, enthusiastic and closely involved in all aspects of school life. They are dedicated to the welfare and education of the children and strongly support the Principal and her staff. This dedication is very much appreciated by staff and parents.

This is a Controlled Nursery School within the Education Authority (South Eastern Region), funded by the Department of Education (DE).

The maximum enrolment number is 52 pupils.

Castlereagh Nursery School  
135 Clonduff Drive  
Belfast  
BT6 9NT

Controlled Nursery School  
Admissions No: 52 (Full-time)  
Session Times: 9:00am – 1:30pm

Principal: Mrs A Morrow BSc PGCE  
Chair of Board of Governors: Mrs Alanna Drennan  
Open Afternoon Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025 11am – 1pm  
Virtual tour is available on school website [www.castlereaghnurseryschool.co.uk](http://www.castlereaghnurseryschool.co.uk)

Telephone: 028 9070 4539  
E-mail: [castlereaghnursery@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:castlereaghnursery@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Respective Functions of the Board of Governors and the Principal in relation to admissions.**

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates to an Admissions Sub-Committee, which includes the Principal, the responsibility for applying these criteria.

### **Admissions Criteria**

A timetable of pre-school admissions procedures setting out the dates by which an application is to be submitted is available at [www.eani.org.uk/admissions](http://www.eani.org.uk/admissions) under 'Pre-School Admissions'. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 07 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 21 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 21 January 2026 will be treated as a late application.

As the pre-school admissions procedure is in two stages the timetable also specifies the relevant dates at Stage 2 which will determine if an application is to be considered as punctual or late.

In response to the Regulations issued by the Department of Education, the Board of Governors have drawn up the following admissions criteria. In the event of more applicants than places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set down to select children for the available places.

### **Statutory Criteria**

1. Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year who were born:
  - on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school; or,
  - on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
    - have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged child; and,
    - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2027.

*Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.*

2. Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by Criterion 1).

### **Sub-criteria**

In the event of over-subscription in any of the criteria 1-2 (children in their final pre-school year) the following sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down.

- (a) Children whose parent has listed Castlereagh Nursery School as their first preference;
- (b) Children whose parent is a permanent member of staff or current governor at the school;
- (c) Children whose siblings (including half brothers/sisters, foster/adopted siblings) have previously attended the school for the majority of the school year (**full name and year attended must be included in the application**);
- (d) Children whose home address at the time of application is nearest to the school as measured electronically (Google Maps). Distances will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address front door to the front door of the school;
- (e) In order of parental preference (parents who list Castlereagh Nursery school as second preference will be considered before those parents who have listed Castlereagh Nursery School as third preference and so on)

In the event that it is not possible to distinguish between applicants due to oversubscription in any of the preceding sub-criteria, then children will be selected for admission on the basis of the initial letter of the surname of the child as indicated on the Birth Certificate in the order set out below:

**LAQCIHOUGZVBFKWXPENDSYRTJM**

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the first forename of the child as indicated on the Birth Certificate will be used for selection using the randomised alphabetical order set out above followed by the remaining letters in normal alphabetical order.

**If any places remain vacant after the above criteria (1-2) have been fulfilled,**

**applications will be considered from Non-statutory criteria**

**Note: Applications falling under Criterion 3 are processed only during Stage 2 of the admissions process, after final pre- school year (Statutory 1 and 2) applications.**

1. Children who were born:

- on or between 1 April 2022 - 1 July 2022 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
  - and have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and,
  - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1, or
- on or between 2 July 2023 and 1 July 2024 (inclusive); or,
- on or between 1 April 2023 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2028.

Children within Criterion 3 will be selected in Chronological Order of Age – eldest child first. In the event of two or more children having the same DOB Children whose home address at the time of application is nearest to the school as measured electronically (Google Maps). Distances will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address front door to the front door of the school;

Applications received after 1<sup>st</sup> September will also be subject to the same criteria.

### **Supporting Information**

\*All applicants should provide at the time of application any **two** of the following documents to enable the Board of Governors to verify address information contained within applications. Only documents from the list below will be accepted.

- A recent bank or building society statement which shows the address at which the child is resident
- A recent utility bill (electricity, gas, television licence or phone) which shows the address at which the child is resident
- A recent letter awarding child benefit to the child or another recent letter relating to this benefit

- Electoral Identification
- Driving Licence for parent/ guardian showing the address at which the child is resident
- A recent payslip
- A recent mortgage or rental document
- A recent land/ property document

Recent documents are defined as being within the last 6 months, with the exception of mortgage or land property documents, where within the last 12 months is accepted

This is in addition to the standard requirement to provide a Birth Certificate in order to verify the age of a child.

#### **Duty to Verify**

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application form. The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by pre-schools will result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's application.

#### **Waiting List Policy**

Should a vacancy arise after the Open Enrolment Procedure concludes, all applications that were initially refused, new applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated in line with Castlereagh Nursery School's Waiting list policy which can be viewed on the school website.

The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the school by this method.

Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish your child's name to be removed from the list.

<b>Applications and Admissions to Pre-School</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>Total Admissions</b>
2025/2026*	83	52

*\*The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all pre-school children admitted to the pre-school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS.*

*(SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)*

## Aims

At Castlereagh Nursery School we aim to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment where children are nurtured and cared for in an enabling environment, by staff who are trained in delivering the Northern Ireland Pre-school Curriculum. Children are encouraged to become confident, independent learners, through the use of carefully planned activities and encouraged to develop their own individual interests and potential.

We treat each child as an individual and aim to challenge and extend their learning. We work in partnership with parents and value their insight into their own particular family life. We encourage regular contact with each carer at the beginning and end of each session. All staff are open, approachable and available to parents every day.

The policy, practice and provision in Castlereagh Nursery School are underpinned by the following principles:

- ✓ Children's wellbeing is of utmost importance, children should feel safe, secure and happy in nursery
- ✓ Parents are a child's first educator and all staff work in partnership with every parent to ensure their child fulfils their full potential during their time in Castlereagh Nursery School
- ✓ We believe that children's learning never stops. Everyone at Castlereagh Nursery School ensures that everyday, every experience, is a learning experience.
- ✓ Play is the business of childhood and staff plan a stimulating and progressive curriculum largely based on the interests of the children.
- ✓ We provide our children with the foundation to develop a love for lifelong learning.
- ✓ We want all of our children and their families to experience a positive beginning to their journey of learning.
- ✓ We work with our children, families, governors and others within our local community to ensure the best possible opportunities for our children.
- ✓ We encourage our children to be independent learners through developing their own natural curiosity so that they are able to make choice and decisions and solve their own problems.

***Everyone is Welcome!***

# DAILY ROUTINE

8.50 - 9.10 Children arrive at nursery and self register  
(Mrs Morrow's class start time is 8.50am, Mrs Jones' start time is 9.00am)

9.00 - 11.50 Free flow play within classroom and in the nursery garden

9.30 - 10.15 Self Service Snack time (Healthy Snack and Milk/Water)

11.50 - 12.10 Songs/rhymes  
Toilet routine

12.10 - 12.45 Dinner Routine

12.50 - 1.10 Outdoor Play/Story Songs Time

Mrs Morrow's class finish at 1.10pm-1.20pm

Mrs Jones' class finish at 1.20pm - 1.30pm

## Nursery Curriculum

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Opportunities will be provided for children to develop personal and social skills. Children will be encouraged to: co-operate, share, take turns, experience the therapeutic value of working with clay, dough, paint, sand and water, explore their emotions through role play, eg in hospital play where they may learn to come to terms with fears.

### Physical Development

Children enjoy physical play both indoors and outdoors. They develop fine manipulative skills, which are essential for pencil, brush and scissor control and large motor skills which develop spatial awareness, balance, and co-ordination. At the same time children learn social skills as they co-operate and share.

### Language Development

Language development is crucial to living and learning. It is used to talk to others, share, give and obtain information. Children's listening and communication skills are encouraged. Opportunities will be provided for children to listen and respond to stories, rhymes and songs. They will be encouraged to talk about their experiences, ideas and feelings.

### Early Mathematical Experiences

Through play, children can develop a positive attitude to maths and number. Mathematical experiences happen informally throughout the nursery day. Opportunities will be provided to develop mathematical skills through songs, rhymes, table games and construction toys. They will be encouraged to explore, investigate and discuss their experiences.

### **Creative and Aesthetic Development**

Creative play assists emotional development and promotes aesthetic awareness. Children will be given opportunities to explore materials, paint, dough, clay, scrap paper etc. The children will learn songs, listen and respond to music. They will be given opportunities to express their ideas, communicate their feelings and use their imagination.

### **The World Around Us**

The children will have opportunities to develop knowledge and an understanding of the environment through talking about the weather, seasons, their family members, events past, present and future, exploring items on the interest table. The children will become aware of environmental issues such as litter, personal safety in the sun and road safety. They will become aware of and appreciate colour through their play. Through their natural curiosity and the opportunity to play with a wide range of activities, children will begin to develop skills and concepts in science and technology. There will be opportunities to explore, observe, use their senses, make models, and put things together in a variety of ways and to learn about themselves.

## Induction and Settling in

In June the nursery holds an induction day where the children and parents are invited to attend for a short play session. These sessions are an opportunity for the children to meet the staff and visit the nursery.

There will then be an Information Evening for parents only. This will consist of a short address from the Principal and information about nursery routines and Welcome pack will be given out.

Home visits will begin at the end of August. This is a short 10 minute visit when the child's teacher and nursery assistant will visit them in their home and bring out a transition booklet and a goody bag about starting nursery school. This is a great opportunity for parents to talk to the class teacher in a comfortable environment and share any concerns they might be having about their child.

When your child starts nursery school, please stay until he/she is happy in their new surroundings. This will help to make a secure and happy start. To achieve this, children are admitted to the Nursery during September in small groups. This also allows staff to give time to each new child starting and to get to know them. Initially your child will only stay for 1 hour. This will be extended until your child feels secure and is able to stay for the full session. We aim to begin dinners (for those children who are ready) by the third week of September.

As no two children respond in the same way, please don't worry if your child becomes shy and uncertain, it is quite normal. We will work with you to help your child feel happy and secure in this new situation.

## **Birthdays**

We celebrate each child's birthday in the Nursery, making the event special for the child by providing a cake and allowing him/her special privileges on that day (wearing a crown, choosing the songs, etc). If the birthday occurs during a holiday, it is celebrated on the closest school day before or after the event, similarly if the actual date falls on a weekend, the event is celebrated on a Friday or a Monday.

## **School Meals**

School dinners begin in the second or third week of September for those children who are ready to stay for the full nursery day. The children are invited to stay for dinner in small groups as and when the staff feel that they are ready to cope with the dinner routine and longer day. Parents will be informed on a weekly basis as to when their child is ready to stay. This gradual settling in gives the children time to adjust to the new routines.

School Dinners currently cost £3 per day

## **Snack and School Fund**

A mid-morning snack is prepared each day, consisting of fresh fruit, a bread based snack, and a drink of milk or water. A weekly charge of £3.50 is made for snack and school fund.

Castlereagh Nursery is a cashless school as we use the School Money App to collect all payments.

**Thank you for expressing an interest in our nursery school.**