



*Annalong Primary School
Nursery Unit
Prospectus 2021*

Welcome

Annalong Primary School Nursery Unit is a cross community nursery offering learning for children between the ages of three and four years.

Situated within the Primary School grounds at the foot of the Mourne Mountains, the nursery boasts a bright, well maintained building, which has a comprehensive range of resources and equipment. It comprises an entrance hall, main play room, quiet room and enclosed outdoor play area.

The Pre-School year is a very special year in your child's life. We hope that the information in this prospectus will give you an insight into the day to day running of the nursery and the variety of experiences that we can offer your child.

Our prime aim is to create a caring, supportive ethos where all pupils are happy and learning effectively. We recognise the important role of parents in supporting this learning and so aim to foster open, positive relationships with parents at all times.

Covid-19 Statement (December 2020)

The School adheres to DE/EA and Public Health Agency guidance in respect of Covid-19. At the time of printing, the school promotes frequent hand washing and social distancing between children and adults where practicable. Adults also wear appropriate PPE.

The Nursery class operate in a "class bubble" within the Nursery unit and adjoining outdoor play area.

The curriculum and access to learning has been amended taking account of the need to minimise the risk of infection. Communication with parents and online learning is promoted through the use of the Seesaw App with "remote learning" organised in anticipation of a further lockdown.

Assuming that restrictions are still in place in September 2021, separate guidance will be issued to families on entry to Nursery regarding access to the school and the procedures to be followed by families and the school in the event of a suspected case of Covid-19.

School Information

Annalong Primary School
Nursery Unit
31 Kilkeel Road
Annalong
Co. Down
BT34 4TH
www.annalongps.com

Telephone No: (028) 43 768097
Fax No: (028) 43 768867

Nursery Hours

9.00am- 11.45am September (Week 1 -10am-11.45am)
9.00am- 12.30pm/ 1.30pm (Dinner start date on)

We operate a flexi home time to ease congestion in the entrance hall and the car park.

Holidays

In line with Annalong Primary School the Nursery will be closed for the months of July and August and for all statutory holidays. Information about other holidays i.e. Christmas, Easter and mid - term breaks will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term.

In the event of an emergency closure, every attempt will be made to notify parents to enable them to make alternative arrangements. The school operates "Text Local," an automated text and e-mail alert programme. Please ensure that you provide the School with both home and mobile numbers.

School Uniform

The Nursery uniform consists of:

- Royal blue sweatshirt
- Navy jogging bottoms
- Yellow polo T-shirt

Uniforms are available from Holmes drapers Annalong. Navy jogging bottoms are encouraged to promote independence at toilet time. It is recommended that children do not wear best clothing, as paint and glue are available throughout the nursery session. Please bring a complete change of clothes on your child's first day, this can be left in the nursery. As outdoor play is part of our daily routine please send a warm coat with your child everyday. **All coats and other clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name.**

Staff

School Principal: Mr Andre Goucher

Nursery Teachers: Mrs Helena Weaving
Mrs Lisa McCartan

Classroom Assistants: Mrs Carol Sutton
Mrs Sharon Annett



Mrs Weaving



Mrs McCartan



Mrs Annett



Mrs Sutton

Ethos

In Annalong Primary School Nursery Unit we are committed to the development of the whole child.

We provide the children with opportunities through play and other experiences to develop learning associated with; the arts, language development, early mathematical experiences, personal, social and emotional development, physical development and movement and the world around us.

While promoting the children's feelings of security, self-esteem and confidence we encourage them to care for and value each other, to appreciate one another's strengths and needs and to care for materials and equipment.

We plan to create an exciting and stimulating environment where children can experience success and begin to develop the skills and dispositions that they will need to be life-long learners.

Aims

It is the intention of Annalong Primary School Nursery Unit that each child should be given opportunities to

- Settle smoothly into the nursery environment.
- Make the vital link between home, nursery and eventually compulsory schooling.
- Play in a safe, secure, healthy and stimulating environment with adequate adult supervision.
- Investigate, satisfy their curiosity and explore the environment both inside and outside the playroom.
- Grow in self-confidence, experience success, develop a positive self-image along with a positive attitude to learning.
- Develop at his/her own rate through challenging, progressive play.
- Form relationships and communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings with increased clarity to the teacher/ nursery assistant and their peers with a view to forming friendships.
- Lengthen their concentration span and maintain attention through his/her natural curiosity and interest.
- Choose and explore a wide range of materials which allow him/her to express him/herself appropriately and creatively.
- Talk about and value their own work and that of other children's and share this with parents.
- Appreciate, understand and practice social skills by working as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly.
- Develop an awareness of his/her body's capabilities and limits in a safe environment.
- Recognise the importance of keeping healthy and develop good habits of health and hygiene.
- Share in the wonder and excitement created by books, stories, rhymes, songs, music and the natural environment, and develop a love and respect for books. [A BOOK IS BRAIN FOOD!!]
- Experience a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Transfer smoothly to the next stage in his/her education.

Organisation

Admission Criteria

Parents of prospective pupils should complete the online application for pre-school which can be obtained on the Education Authority NI website at:
www.eani.org.uk

A "Parent Portal," has been developed for use by parents. You can apply for a nursery place *online between Thursday 7th January (12 noon) and Friday 29th January 2021 (12 noon). You can revisit your application at any time between these dates and times and make any changes necessary.

Please also note that the admissions criteria for all nursery settings will also be available to view via the parent portal. The Board of Governors applies our admission criteria to all applications in accordance with required Education Authority Southern Region procedures.

Settling In Procedures

The Nursery staff invest significant time and effort into settling children into the nursery environment. In addition to an open afternoon in June we hold an informal parent information morning in August to discuss any concerns parents may have as well as looking at the nursery curriculum and the day to day procedures in the nursery. Our 'staggered intake' approach allows more time to be spent with children and parents in their first week.

On a child's first day at nursery they are greeted by a member of the nursery staff, making them feel welcome and special. They will then be shown their coat peg and symbol in the entrance hall. We encourage both parents and children to come into the main playroom, look around at the choice of activities and equipment and select one to sit at.

Although it is important to encourage independence as soon as possible, no one knows how each child will settle and parents are welcome to stay as long as it takes. Children take different lengths of time to settle and need different approaches. Some children may need more time before they are ready to say goodbye.

Please be assured that if a child is not settled in the nursery environment or is distressed in any way parents will be contacted immediately.

To and From Nursery

Drop off and collection by car is permissible using the main school entrance gate and parking in the **main school car park**. In the interest of safety, parking is not permitted outside the nursery building. Children arriving on foot must use the school pedestrian path (to the right of the main entrance). Please make use of the school crossing patrol if necessary. The main drive must not be used as a footpath.

It is our policy that children should be brought to nursery and collected by a responsible adult. A child will only be released to someone other than a parent if staff have been informed in advance.

Please note that you must collect your child punctually as it is unfair to them to be kept waiting when everyone else has gone.

Contact Details

A Personal Contact/ Medical details form is supplied to all new parents on our June open afternoon. It is vital that we have correct contact details in case of an emergency.

This form must be completed and brought to the nursery on a child's first day. Staff should also be informed of any change of address, phone number or doctor during the year.

Medication/ Illness

If your child has any specific medical needs it is important to let us know, however it is not our policy to administer medication in the nursery.

If for any reason your child is unable to come to nursery, please let us know before **9.00am**. (A note giving a reason for the absence is also required).

To prevent the spread of infection please do not bring your child to nursery if they are ill. If they become ill during school hours we will contact you so that you can collect your child.

Nut Allergy Awareness

Please note that we may have a child attending the nursery who has a severe allergy to nuts.

Children with this condition may have a severe reaction, which may prove fatal if they come into contact with nuts. **Please note that nuts or products containing nuts or "traces" of nuts will not be permitted in nursery.** Products produced in a factory using nut ingredients are acceptable.

In addition raw eggs and strawberries must not be brought into Nursery for the same reason.

Lay-out and Routines

The main play room is divided up into discrete play areas with labelled resources to promote free choice and independence. During our periods of sustained play (morning and afternoon) the children may use any part of the playroom.

During the morning a healthy snack is available to the children. Each child can go to the snack table once during the morning where they have the opportunity to sit and chat while they are eating. Children are encouraged to pour their own milk or water and may choose from a selection of healthy snacks e.g. fresh fruit, toast, bread, crackers and pancakes. Mrs Weaving will collect a contribution of £3.00 on Monday mornings for your child's snack fund.

A meal is served in the middle of the day in a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. The meal is served by our staff who each sit with a group of children and eat with them. Nutritious, balanced meals are prepared by the dining staff in the Primary School. For dessert a choice of fresh fruit is always available as well as a convenience dessert such as shortbread, ice cream, muffin.

Meals cost £2.50 daily and this will be collected each Monday morning in the **main School office**.
(* At January 2021 prices)

Children will be introduced to the dinner routine in a staggered manner. Children starting nursery in the first week of September will begin to stay for dinner first. Children starting nursery in the second week of September will be the second group to stay for dinner and so on.



If your child has particular dietary needs relating to a medical condition you should contact the principal. Should you decide to send a packed lunch with your child you will be asked to adhere to our Healthy Eating Policy.

* Please note that financial support is available for the purchase of Nursery meals if you are currently in receipt of:

- Income support/ Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance/ Income-Related Employment & Support Allowance, or if a pupil claims income support in their own name
- Guarantee element of state pension credit; or
- Child Tax Credit and are not receiving Working Tax Credit because you work less than 16 hours a week and have an annual taxable income of £16,040 or less; or
- You are an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS)

Curriculum

We aim to provide each child with a broad and balanced curriculum of challenging play activities and learning opportunities including the following:

- Working with natural materials e.g. clay, sand, water, dough and wood.
- Cooking and baking
- Construction activities.
- Imaginative play in a variety of situations e.g. house, shop, vets, hospital etc.
- Creative play using a variety of materials and mediums.
- Listening to and taking part in music, song, movement and drama.
- Investigating and using books.
- Physical play (both indoor and outdoor) with a variety of climbing equipment, wheeled toys, ball games, large construction blocks.
- Gardening.
- Experimenting with drawing/ writing tools and a range of paper.
- Developing basic ICT skills.
- Using table top toys- puzzles, sorting and matching games to develop fine motor and early mathematical skills.
- Participation in outings.

Each activity is carefully planned by the Nursery teachers and assistants [in line with the Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education DENI] to promote your child's learning in the following key areas:

Personal Social and Emotional Development

Each child will enter the nursery with a variety of personal and social skills, values and attitudes that he/she has acquired from relationships and experiences within the home and surrounding environment. It is important that these are recognised and indeed fostered within the nursery setting.

Young children need time to form relationships, as they recognise their thoughts and feelings are valued in the nursery their self worth grows and they find it easier to make friends. They show increasing self-confidence, self-control and self-discipline.

Opportunities will be provided for the children to develop these skills and attitudes further as they learn to:

co-operate with their peers; relate to the nursery teacher and assistant; share; take turns; express their emotions through song, dance and role play; experience the therapeutic value of working with clay, sand, dough and paint.

Through caring for plants and animals in the nursery environment children can become aware of the needs and feelings for others. Both outside and inside play provide opportunities for children to become aware of the importance of personal safety. By sharing snack and lunch times the children can become familiar with good table manners, acceptable standards of hygiene and the art of conversation.



Physical Development

Young children enjoy physical play and the sense of freedom it brings. As they play they develop both small and large muscles, hand and eye co-ordination, self-confidence and self-awareness and a sense of size and space. As they co-operate and show consideration for one another social skills are extended. Within the nursery opportunities will be provided for the children to use a wide range of large and small equipment with increasing confidence and skill. The children will be encouraged to keep simple rules and use tools and equipment appropriately and safely.



Language Development



Language development is crucial to living and learning. Language is used to talk to others, share ideas and feelings, give and receive information. Children have the opportunity to develop both listening and communication skills as they talk to the nursery teacher/ assistant and as they play with other children. Pre-writing skills develop as children play and experiment with pencils, crayons and paint. At story time or in the quiet room as children look at books they become aware that the words have meaning. Pre-reading skills also begin to develop as the children have the opportunity to enjoy and handle books. Through the use of symbols and name tags the children begin to recognise their own and other children's first names.

The Arts

Creative play assists emotional development, promotes aesthetic awareness and provides an avenue of self-expression. It is a natural means of communication and learning for young children. It helps them to think through ideas, to develop visual, spatial and tactile awareness and develop investigative and manipulative skills.

Opportunities will be provided for the children to freely explore natural and man made materials such as clay, dough, paint, scrap materials [cotton, wool, velvet], paper, card, pens, pencils, wood, leaves, shells, musical instruments and to experiment with colour, shape, pattern, texture and sound.



The children will be encouraged to use their imagination and talk about their own and others work. A greater emphasis is placed on the process, the children's enjoyment and the learning that is taking place rather than producing a finished product. The uniqueness of each child's work is valued by the nursery teacher, assistant, the other children, parents and any visitors to the nursery. Opportunities are provided through role-play, dance and mime for children to express their ideas and feelings, to recreate situations at home, in school, in the community and in their imaginations. Taking part in such activities helps children to develop self-esteem and confidence as well as contributing to their social, emotional and oral language development.

Early Mathematical Experiences

Early mathematical concepts are important for everyday life and develop slowly in young children. As with personal, social and emotional development many children have already experienced mathematics within their home environment [shopping with mum, sorting the washing], this can be extended in the nursery setting. Through play your child can develop a positive attitude towards maths.

Experiences in maths will happen informally throughout the nursery day. In the home corner children will develop a variety of maths concepts such as size as they dress dolls; number and one to one correspondence as they set the table for dinner. In the water tray children begin to use mathematical language such as heavy, light, full, empty, more, less etc. During play children have the opportunity to solve problems, predict and experiment. They sort, match, order and count. Rhymes, stories, songs, seasonal events, birthdays and routines also help children to develop mathematical concepts.



The World Around Us

Young children are curious about what is happening in the world around them and they are always asking questions. They enjoy using their senses to explore the immediate indoor and outdoor environments.

Through play opportunities are provided for children to nurture their curiosity and develop a range of skills and concepts including observation, experimentation, exploration, selection of materials and equipment and prediction. Interaction with adults further develops these skills and concepts and helps to promote the use of appropriate language.

Through discussion children learn the names of materials and equipment and observe how they work. They develop an awareness of space as they tidy away equipment and become familiar with some positional and directional words- on, under, behind, in front, beside. As children work with a variety of materials and resources they develop physical skills such as cutting, sticking, folding, pouring and building.

Through role-play, stories and rhymes children learn about themselves and their body parts. As the children learn to talk on a one-to- one basis or in a group situation with the nursery teacher, assistant and their peers they have opportunities to talk about themselves, their families and their homes. They become aware of environmental issues and talk about items of interest, seasonal changes and festive events.



The Role of the Adult in the Nursery

In the nursery school the adult's role is one of facilitator rather than instructor. Teachers and nursery assistants are constantly engaged in:

- Responding to children's comments, questions and requests.
- Talking with children, offering views, suggestions and observations.
- Sensitive and informed involvement and, when necessary, intervention in the play.
- Careful observation.
- Planning and preparing curriculum details - on the basis of observed interests, abilities and needs

At all times staff:

- Are aware of their influence as a role model
- Value each child as a unique individual.
- Hold high, but realistic expectations of all children.
- Collaborate and co-operate with parents, and any others who may be involved in the child's development.
- Recognise their own need for professional development.
- Recognise the need for ongoing curriculum review.

Parental Involvement

Our nursery unit prides itself on positive relationships with parents. We recognise the importance of parental involvement in children's learning and encourage parents to become involved in the life of the nursery. Good communication between parents and nursery staff is essential to the smooth running of the school and to the children's well-being.

- All parents are invited to an informal information morning at the end of August prior to their children starting school.
- The organisation of our day enables us to meet parents informally on a daily basis as children are arriving at school or being collected.
- We communicate regularly with parents through our nursery newsletter.
- Parents are invited to come into the nursery and contribute to their child's education through a variety of activities e.g. making buns, reading stories, talking about their jobs, helping with the snack and dinner routines, assisting with nursery outings etc.
- Parents are invited to the Christmas concert.
- Parent teacher interviews are conducted twice a year - in November and February. Further meetings can be arranged by appointment.

How can parents help us?

- A Personal Contact/ Medical details form (Supplied to all new parents on our June Open afternoon) must be completed and brought to the nursery on a child's first day. Staff should also be informed of any change of address, phone number or doctor during the year.
- Please talk to your child about the nursery school every day and inquire about the play activities in which they have been involved.
- Welcome and value any 'creations' your child brings home. Please do not assume that your child has not been busy if few works of art appear!
- Teach your child about the enjoyment of books, read to them as much as possible and try to have a bed time story every night.
- Encourage your child to become a little more independent, perhaps they could learn to put on and take off their coat and shoes.
- An early bedtime routine is vitally important if your child is to be ready to enjoy the next day's nursery activities. Tired children usually find it much harder to settle in school than those who have had a good night's sleep.
- In the nursery we encourage the children to complete a given task and tidy it away before moving on to the next activity. At home perhaps you could encourage your child in the same way.
- If you wish to discuss an issue or query with the nursery staff please delay your arrival or collection until after the initial greeting and collection periods or make an appointment to meet the nursery teacher (**Wednesday afternoons from 2.30pm to 3.30pm.**) An appointment can be made through the school Principal.
- **Parent Helpers** - We have developed a 'Volunteer Pool' of parents who are willing to give up some of their free time in support of the children. If you are interested please ask a member of the nursery staff.

Special Educational Needs

The term 'special educational needs' (SEN) has a legal definition, referring to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn or access education than most children of the same age.

Children with special educational needs may need extra help because of a range of needs such as:

- Cognitive and learning- thinking and understanding
- Physical difficulties
- Sensory difficulties
- Communication and interaction difficulties (Speech and language/ expressing themselves/ understanding what others say)
- Social, Emotional and behavioural difficulties (making friends, relating to adults, organising themselves)
- Medical Conditions.

We recognise that all children are individuals and do not make progress in learning at the same rate. Many children will have special educational needs of some kind at some time during their education. We make full provision for those children who may be experiencing difficulties. This may entail short term support with behaviour or speech for example or it may be that a child requires longer term support for an ongoing difficulty.

It is vital that children who have special educational needs are identified early and that strategies can be employed to meet those needs during the child's nursery year. It also ensures that children with the most significant special educational needs have their needs identified before they enrol in primary school ensuring that they have the best possible start in education.

Children who are identified before admission as having special educational needs are integrated into the nursery as far as possible. An additional nursery assistant may be employed to assist with any statement children at the discretion of the Education Authority Southern Region.

At all times the staff liaise and co-operate with parents and any other professionals who may be involved with our SEN children. It is felt very strongly that a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary if special needs are to be addressed effectively.

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and language therapy is offered through the Small Talk N I programme. This scheme is funded by the Extended Schools Programme and is designed to complement existing support. It is not a substitute for it. Therefore, if your child is already in receipt of speech therapy you should inform Mrs Weaving and continue to attend these sessions.

Pastoral Care

In line with the School policy of maximising the potential of each pupil, the Nursery recognises that it has a responsibility to do everything possible to care for each pupil's physical and emotional well being.

We have in place a Child Protection Policy which is circulated to parents at the time of admission. The Nursery Unit will endeavour to provide a comfortable and safe environment for learning for all children and staff.

It is the responsibility of the Nursery teacher to look after the pastoral needs of children and attempt to resolve the worries of new pupils and relieve their anxieties. However in the event of a suspected child abuse the School Child Protection Policy will be implemented. Mrs Weaving & Mrs McCartan are the designated teachers for Child Protection in the Nursery Unit. In the Primary School Mrs G Stevenson (The Vice-Principal) is the designated teacher for Child Protection and Mr Goucher (The Principal) is the assistant designated teacher. Anyone with a concern about a child should first bring it to the attention to one of the members of the safe-guarding team named above.

Positive Behaviour

It is the policy of the nursery to encourage positive attitudes, self-esteem, self-discipline and respect for other people and property. If we experience ongoing problems with a child's behaviour we consult with parents as to how this might best be managed. We have various behaviour management strategies in place and a full copy of our Behaviour Management Policy is circulated to parents at the time of admission. If necessary we can take advice from the Education Authority Southern Region Behaviour Management Team.



The Annalong Primary School App

The Annalong Primary School App can be used to pay for school meals using a PayPal account. Parents can also record absences, communicate with the school and apply for free school meals via the App.

The APS App can be downloaded from the App Store to your mobile phones/ or tablet/ iPads. To access the App for the first time, use code 11111.

Parents are also kept fully informed about nursery and school life through the "Nursery News" newsletter and Nursery section on the school website at:
www.annalongps.com