St Francis’ Nursery Unit
Emergent Language and Literacy Policy

We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit recognise the importance of Early Language and Literacy Development. From the onset the children in our setting are immersed in an environment of high quality Language and Literacy building on the foundations already formed at home.

- In the Introductory Parent/Guardian Meeting in June, prior to the children starting the setting, parents/guardians are given advice on helping their children over the summer to prepare for coming to the Nursery. With regards Language and Literacy Development parents/guardians are advised for example, to read with their children to foster a love of books, to recite/sing nursery rhymes and songs to develop speech and language, to bring their children to the local Library, to make their children aware that print has meaning and to provide them with materials for drawing and "writing”.

- Prior to the children starting the setting and throughout the year, parents/guardians are invited to DELTA meetings. One of these meetings focuses on Early Language and Literacy Development. A speaker is invited to talk to the parents/guardians about how they can enhance development in Language and Literacy at home. The parents/guardians are given information booklets and a booklet of songs and rhymes form the DELTA team at this meeting.

- When the children start Nursery they are given a pictorial symbol that represents their name. These symbols are placed on each child’s coat hanger, his/her post box into which he/she places work to take home, his/her place where he/she sits on the mat, his/her place mat for dinner, his/her magnetic snack symbol & his/her stickers for labelling his/her work. These pictorial symbols are replaced with a name for those children who are able to to recognise their own name and all children will be encouraged to recognise their own name in the third term.

- From the onset the children are encouraged to use language and early literacy skills in our setting. They are encouraged to talk to and listen to the staff and their peers. They are encouraged to take part in one to one conversations, small group and large group discussions on a daily basis and in Circle Time once a week. They are encouraged to use books appropriately and with enjoyment.

- Throughout the day the children when doing paintings and drawings are encouraged to go to their post box, collect a sticker and then place it on the top left hand corner of his/her page. When the children complete their work, they are encouraged to tell the story about it and the adults write it on the page for them.

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• We provide Writing/Drawing Areas both indoors and outside. All the children are encouraged to use these daily to draw and write. We provide materials associated with the topics eg. Autumn is one of our topics for October. As such we provide Autumn Coloured writing implements and paper in various shapes. The children are encouraged to place their sticker on their work to label it. We also encourage the children to write their names (make marks) on their work. When their work is completed and their story has been written by the adults they are encouraged to place it in their post boxes to take home.

• The children are encouraged to use the Book Area and books displayed around each of the classrooms. Books associated with the topics are provided in these areas. However should a child request another book or require one to enhance his/her work and knowledge, we have a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books in our classrooms that are classified into our Monthly Topics.

• Each day before dinner after the children have set their place mats for dinner, we have Whole Group Time. During this time we say our prayers, have a story, discussion based on the story and topics for the month and sing/say our songs and rhymes associated with the topics. Every month the children receive a Curriculum Newsletter. In this letter we inform parents of what we are covering in the 6 Areas of the Pre-School Curriculum and how they can help their children at home. This includes Language and Literacy Development and we provide information on what we are covering every month in this area. The parents are sent home a sheet of songs and rhymes every month associated with the topics for that month. They are encouraged to add these to the “Big Book of Songs and Rhymes” that the children are given when they first start nursery and to sing/say these songs and rhymes at home. At Christmas and in June we invite the parents and families of the children to a concert in the Nursery to listen to a range of songs and rhymes that the children have learned throughout the year.

• During Whole Group Time we read and look at a range of Big Books, Fiction and Non-Fiction Books associated with the topics. We also use a range of Story Books and tapes/CDs. When introducing the books we name the type of book, for example, Fiction or Non-Fiction, talk about and point to the front, back, spine, pages, words and pictures of the book. We talk about the Title, Author, Illustrator and Publishers in the first term. In the second term we talk about the Blurb, the Dedications and the Sleeve of the book and in the third term we talk about the Preface and Bar Code. During the fiction stories the children are encouraged to join in repetitive and rhyming phrases and to dramatise parts of the story. There are always opportunities for the children to express their opinion of the book and to take part in discussions about it.
- Each term we provide a wide range of Library Books in our foyer. Parents are encouraged to use the Library with their children in the mornings or afternoons. (See Nursery Library Policy).

- We have an Outdoors Book Area where we provide a wide range of topic based books and books related to the outdoors. The children are encouraged to use this Book Area daily during outdoor play.

- All the areas and storage boxes and trays within the setting, both indoor and out are labelled for the children to “read” with both pictures and words. Interesting captions are used on the displays of the children’s work for children, parents and visitors to read. We put relevant posters with captions around our classrooms and encourage the children to read them.

- We put up Nursery Rhyme Posters and provide Nursery Rhyme Books in the Book Areas and encourage the children to “read” and recite them.

- We display photographs of the children at work in our setting in the Home Areas and around the room with captions of what the children are doing & saying in the photographs. We encourage the children to “read” the captions.

- We provide newspapers, magazines and comics in both the Book and Home Areas. Children are encouraged to bring some of these in from home to share with their friends. They are also encouraged to bring in their favourite books from home to share with others in the setting.

- Each month we provide appropriate reading and writing materials in our Role Play Area for example, in January when we talk about the Hospital and Pharmacy, we provide appropriate story and factual books and medical leaflets from the Hospital, Doctor’s Surgery and Pharmacy. We provide forms, note pads for prescription writing and clipboards, paper and pens.

- We provide Listening Centres daily for the children to listen to stories or play nursery rhyme/sound lotto games.

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