St Francis’ Nursery

Teaching and Learning Policy

Section One
General Statement

We the staff of St Francis’ Nursery Unit believe in the “Ten Principles of Nursery Education” drawn up by the pioneers of Early Childhood Education, namely Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852), Maria Montessori (1869-1952) and Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). We strive to adhere to these principles in teaching and caring for the children in our setting and in all that we practise.

We recognise that:

1. Childhood is a stage of life to be enjoyed in its own right. To see childhood as a preparation for something else yet to come, and to view nursery solely as a foundation for later, more formal, education is to minimise the vital importance of this stage in a child's life.
2. The development of the whole child is extremely important. Consequently we provide a curriculum which caters for the personal, social, emotional, physical, health, cognitive and spiritual needs of each child in our care.
3. Children in the Early Years learn and develop many skills through play. They need to be involved in a variety of well planned experiences so that they are exposed to learning situations designed to foster a range of skills. Through their play, the children discover the excitement of learning, the rewards of achievement, and acquire life skills.
4. Children learn best when all areas of an integrated, carefully planned curriculum are implemented informally using methodologies that are interactive, practical and enjoyable. We recognise that learning in the Early Years cannot be compartmentalised into subjects, as everything links.
5. Children at this age have individual differences and needs which must be recognised and met. We endeavour to treat all children equally with respect, regardless of gender, race, religion, family background and special educational needs.
6. There is a natural curiosity, and a sense of wonder and amazement in every child. It is through play that these may be fostered and accelerated. We therefore ensure that our planning caters for and values child-initiated, self-directed activity.
7. A child’s understanding comes slowly and that full knowledge and understanding evolve through repeated investigation and varied sensory experiences. We recognise that what the children can do, rather than what they cannot do is the starting point in the child’s education.

8. Young children need encouragement and help to learn how to learn. Therefore we believe that informed adult participation enables children to learn from their experiences and lays the foundation for later learning.

9. Teachers in partnership with parents, can build on the child’s experiences of love and care. Therefore we believe that those good experiences, which the child brings from the home should be supported and developed in our setting. We also recognise that the people, both children and adults with whom the child interacts are of central importance.

10. Children should be gradually weaned from home into the integrated social grouping within the setting, the whole school and later into the wider world. Pre-school education provides all children to be part of a community that is fully integrated in respect of race, gender, religion, family background and special educational needs.
Section Two
Our Aims for the Pre-School Year

We at St. Francis’ Nursery Unit, in developing the Nursery Curriculum, recognise that the needs of each individual child are paramount. We value the children as individuals and recognise that each child comes to our setting with a unique personality, set of experiences, background and level of development.

We realise that young children need to feel happy and secure in a homely atmosphere and as such we aim to provide a loving, caring and safe environment which is both stimulating and challenging.

The Pre-School Child needs opportunities to develop personally, socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively. We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit, therefore aim to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences in the six areas of the Northern Ireland Pre-School Curriculum and Areas of Play that are exciting, purposeful and relevant to each child’s age and stage of development and lives. These activities and experiences allow the child to develop concentration and a broad range of skills and competences as well as, to learn new concepts with the guidance and support of sensitive, understanding and interested adults. We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit see the need to participate sensitively in the children’s play/work and so help each child to develop a positive attitude to learning and make progress in all the areas of learning according to his/her ability. The young child learns best through “hands on experience” and as such we aim to provide lots of opportunities for investigating, exploring and creating without the fear of making mistakes which builds the child’s confidence and self-esteem and builds on his/her sense of wonder and amazement.

Pre-school children need to learn to interact with others and to become part of a group. Taking into account and valuing each child as an individual with a unique personality and background, we aim to provide opportunities and situations which enable the young child to play/work in solitary, parallel and co-operative fashions, with the hope that the young child will move through these stages and ultimately feel comfortable and confident at interacting in small and large groups, continually developing self-confidence, self-esteem and self-control. The young child needs time to talk and share with other children and interested adults and to listen to others speaking. Therefore, throughout the day in our setting we aim to ensure that all children are listened to and spoken to appropriately by adults and peers. All activities provided are aimed at enabling the young child to develop confidence in speaking to others and taking part in conversations as well as helping him/her to listen to others and begin to value other people’s contributions and opinions.

Young children need opportunities to explore the environment, both indoors and outside. Consequently, we in St Francis’ Nursery value the learning experiences
and opportunities provided both indoors and outdoors equally. Learning experiences are planned by the staff for both environments and weather permitting we operate an “Indoor/Outdoor” policy for a period each day, where the children have a choice of whether to work indoors or outside. Indeed we recognise that all children have different modes of learning and we feel that our “Indoor/Outdoor” policy caters for each child’s needs.

Finally the young child needs to feel secure in the knowledge that home and school work in harmony. Consequently we value parents and families of the children and aim to provide a welcoming atmosphere where they feel comfortable and valued and as such we can work together for the benefit of each individual child.

**In summary we aim to:**

- Create a relaxed, stimulating learning environment which encourages spontaneous discovery and enables children to develop skills and concepts.
- Provide opportunities for children to experiment without risk of failure, to develop self-esteem, self-confidence, and a positive attitude to learning.
- Encourage self-confidence, self-control and co-operation with others.
- Develop a range of social skills - sharing, taking turns, co-operation, working as part of a group.
- Develop successful learners eg. attitudes, motivation, perseverance, concentration, co-operation, reflection, autonomy, enjoyment of being a learner.
- Stimulate curiosity and encourage exploration and investigation.
- Encourage problem solving.
- Encourage creativity and imaginative thought.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop physical skills and co-ordination.
- Encourage the development of literacy, numeracy and scientific skills and concepts.
- Help children develop an awareness of the feelings, opinions and needs of others.
- Increase attention span and the ability to concentrate.
- Encourage respect and care for classroom resources and to help children to recognise the importance of class rules and routines.
- Provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to take responsibility and make choices and decisions.
- Ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all the children.
Section Three
Characteristics of Effective Learning and Teaching in the Pre-School Year

In St Francis’ Nursery Unit:

- We recognise the **holistic** nature of young children’s learning. As mentioned in Section One, we acknowledge that young children do not learn in subjects and that learning takes place across all aspects of the daily routine. We know that as children learn across a range of contexts, they will develop, personally, socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and intellectually.
- We recognise that children learn in a variety of ways and we endeavour to ascertain each child’s preferred **learning style** and support each learning style wherever possible.
- We believe that children’s emotional **wellbeing** should be nurtured. We acknowledge that emotional wellbeing and the development of positive **dispositions** for learning are central to success in all other areas of development. Consequently we aim to provide a happy, safe and secure environment with a consistent daily routine within which the children feel happy, settled, secure and safe.
- We value children’s **play as meaningful learning**. We recognise that play is extremely important in the Early Years and that while children are playing they are working and learning.
- We believe that children should learn strategies for **active** exploration, thinking and reasoning.
- We believe in helping all children to become effective **communicators**.

We believe that effective learning takes place when:

- Children determine their own actions and make choices and decisions.
- Children listen, pay attention, maintain concentration, persevere and become involved.
- Children feel confident, have high self-esteem and feel secure in expressing their own needs, emotionally, cognitively and physically.
- Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible.
• Children are not afraid to make mistakes and know that it is acceptable and natural to not know and be uncertain, and this is part of the process of being a good learner.
• Children know that trying things out, exploring and being curious are important and valued ways of learning.
• Children are encouraged to have a sense of wonder, awe and curiosity.
• Children develop self-control and positive strategies for resolving conflicts with others.
• Children create and solve problems, ask questions, guess, estimate and predict.
• Children experiment with a wide variety of materials, play around with ideas, and explore using their five senses.
• Children use oral language to interact socially with each other and the adults during play and throughout the daily routine.
• Children know that words and books will amuse, delight, comfort, inform and excite them.

(Some of the above taken from Fiona Crawford ETI (Leadership and management Development for Leaders in the Pre-School Sector Conference, March 2004)

The Role of the Adults in our Setting

In St Francis’ Nursery Unit, we aim to be effective practitioners by:

• Giving priority to settling the children happily in the setting and continuing to promote their confidence, self-esteem, independence and co-operation.
• Providing a rich and stimulating environment which promotes the children’s holistic development.
• Valuing and encouraging children’s play, interacting with children as they play, and use it as the main vehicle to promote learning.
• Promoting children’s learning and development through planned experiences and activities that are achievable but are also challenging for all abilities.
• Having high expectations of the children’s developing abilities.
• Modelling a range of positive behaviours and explaining why some behaviours are unacceptable.
• Modelling a sense of mutual trust, respect and effective teamwork.
• Extending children’s language sensitively, helping children to develop speech using appropriate words and speech patterns.
• Using conversation and carefully framed questions to develop children’s knowledge.
• Being able to judge when each child is ready to be taught specific skills and knowledge.
• Encouraging children to help and teach each other.
• Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects children’s attitudes to learning.
• Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context in which children can develop independence, self-control and self-reliance.

• Carrying out skilful and well-planned observations of the children and using these to inform future planning.

• Assessing children’s development and progress and determining the next steps.

• Recognising children with special educational needs and taking the necessary steps to ensure that their individual needs are catered for.

• Providing differentiated activities to cater for all learning styles, abilities and special needs.

• Working with parents prior to the children starting pre-school, recognising and treating them as partners in the whole early education process, including the planning and assessment process.

• Keeping parents/guardians regularly informed of their own children’s progress, development and behaviour, giving them support and advice on how to help their children at home.

• Sharing written reports with the parents throughout the year at Parent/Teacher meetings.

• Evaluating constantly the quality of our practice and provision, making amendments where necessary, implementing change and identifying staff training needs.
Section Four
Promoting Learning

The Environment

We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit believe that it is the responsibility of the staff in our setting to provide a classroom environment both indoors and outdoors, which motivates children to learn and supports their growing independence. Therefore we strive to provide classroom and outdoor areas that are bright, colourful, well planned and resourced which stimulate the children’s interests, needs and curiosity.

Within our setting both indoors and out we provide clearly defined areas of play/activity, which contain a range of appropriate quality resources and materials which are well presented, clearly labelled and accessible to the children. The children then have the opportunity to think for themselves, make decisions, select materials for a task and know where to return them.

The Areas of Play/Activity provided in our setting both indoors and out are as follows:

- Water Area
- Wet Sand Area
- Dry Sand Area
- Painting Area
- Creative Area
- Snack Area
- Drawing/Writing Area
- Book Area
- Role Play/Imaginative Play Area
- Music Area
- Story and Discussion Area
- Large Construction Area
- Small Construction Area
- Small World Area
- Manipulation Area
- Dough/Clay Area
- Listening Centre Area
- ICT Area
- Library Area
- Cooking Area
- Sensory Area
- Sand, Soil, Gravel Area
- Fairy Glen Area
- Physical Development and Movement Area (Safety Mat Area)
- Grass Area
- Wheeled Toy Area
Refer to the Monthly Areas of Learning Plans, Play Plans and Daily Plans for the resources used and activities provided in our setting throughout the year, including learning outcomes.

**Continuity and Progression**

**Planning**

We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit value and respect child initiated learning. We acknowledge children's interests and motivations as being the starting points for planning, teaching and learning. Therefore we aim to make connections between what we plan and the children’s everyday experiences and interests. Each month we teach through a topic-based approach and provide activities relating to the children’s own experiences, the wider world around them and significant events and celebrations.

**Learning Intentions/Experiences/Activities/Spontaneous Response**

We recognise the need for planning to include learning intentions/outcomes as well as experiences and activities. Our long, medium and short term plans include experience/activities, teaching strategies and possible learning outcomes for all areas of the curriculum. Our daily planning sheet includes a spontaneous response section where we record any unplanned child initiated activity and we use this to inform our future planning.

**Resources**

We ensure that we provide a wide variety of both natural and man-made resources both indoor and out. (See long, medium and short term plans). We ensure that the resources used throughout the year allow for progression in the children's learning and development. We recognise that resources should be adaptable and interchangeable.

St Francis’ Nursery
**Observation and Assessment**

We the staff of St Francis Nursery recognise that good assessment of children’s learning and development is based on the day to day observations of, and interactions with children in a range of situations. These enable us to learn about the children’s interests, experiences, strengths and areas for development. The information gathered is essential when planning for each child and the class as a whole. Well planned, regular and skilful observation of the children’s play and language ensures that over time, an accurate picture emerges of the whole child and progress each child is making in each area of the Pre-school Curriculum.

**Initial Visit to the Setting, Parent Assessment & Initial Observations**

When the children first come to visit the setting with their parents in May/June, the parents are asked to fill in an assessment sheet about their child’s development to date and any relevant information they feel we should know about which may affect their child’s learning and development. They are asked to be open about visits to Child Development Clinic, Speech and Language Therapy etc. This also gives the staff an opportunity not only to meet the children but to make initial observations of the children. These observations help us to plan for each individual child settling in Nursery and also help us to identify children who may have Special Educational Needs, that we have not been informed of and so begin the process of adding the children to the SEN register.

**Baseline Observations & Target Setting**

When the children first come into Nursery we make initial observations of their Personal, Social & Emotional Development and start to make initial Baseline observations in each area of the Nursery curriculum to obtain a holistic picture of each individual child and their specific needs. A checklist is used for this purpose as well as spontaneous observation taking. These observations are used to set our first term targets (See Target Booklets) for the children and to inform our weekly/monthly plans. New targets are set for each child for each term or when the target is achieved.

**WellComm Speech & Language Assessment**

We carry out the WellComm language assessment on all the children in early October to ascertain their level of receptive and expressive language. On completion of the assessments referrals are made to the Speech & Language Therapy Department of the local Child Development Clinic.
Daily Observations and Record Keeping

In our Nursery, we carry out Focused/Target and Spontaneous Observations each week.

Focused/Target Observations

On a five weekly cycle we carry out focused target observations on each area of the Nursery curriculum. These observations are focused on the target skills and concepts highlighted in each teacher’s Target Booklets. These observations will be recorded either by a short comment in the Target Booklet or by a label in their profile. All the information gathered is transferred into each child’s Pupil Profile, named “All About Me” at the end of each term. This is a record of each child’s holistic development and highlights the children’s achievements & areas for development over the three terms in Nursery in the six areas of the Pre-School Curriculum.

Spontaneous Observations

On a daily basis we take spontaneous observations of the children. We write these on address labels and then stick them into the Pupil Profiles.

We also keep a portfolio of each child’s work, including for example drawings, collages and photographs to show progression in their learning and development.

Our observations are used to inform planning to ensure that we cater for the needs and interests of each child. This information is then recorded on two reports throughout the year and includes details on each child’s strengths, areas where he/she may need additional support or opportunities to learn, and what action is to be taken.

Settling In Report

In mid to late October we complete a Settling-In Report using the information gathered from our findings. This includes information on Personal, Social & Emotional Development, Physical Development & Movement and Language Development. This also includes any other additional information relevant to the child.

Sharing Of Assessment Information

Our assessment process includes sharing the information with the parents/guardians of the children in our care. This is done informally on a daily basis. However, we have one formal parent/teacher meeting in November and informal meetings when required throughout the child’s year in the Nursery:
- At the end of October a “Settling In” report is discussed at a Parent Teacher Meeting.
- In February/March parents are free to make an appointment for a general discussion on their child’s learning and development, in the six areas of the pre-school curriculum if they wish.
- In June, a “Transition” report is given to the parents and passed to and discussed with each child’s new Year 1 teacher. This is a general report and is a summary of each child’s development to date in the Nursery Curriculum.

During parent teacher meetings, we emphasise the children’s achievements and also identify any areas where further support may be required. We also discuss the next steps in each individual child’s learning and how the parent can support this learning at home. Parents are invited to comment on these reports and to sign them.

**Providing for Children with 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, while 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 pre-school 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 parent’s of a child who is experiencing difficulties. It is our policy to draw up “Individualised Education Plans”, known as IEPs 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.

**Action for Specific Children/Differentiation**

We recognise the need to meet the individual needs of all the children and the specific needs of individual children, including children with special educational needs. Our observations of all the children enable us to ensure that we are catering for the needs of each child, for example, we provide a range of puzzles of varying degrees of type, size and difficulty and may encourage different children to use a range of different strategies to complete them.

For children with special educational needs we:

- Organise activities and materials for the special needs of each specific child.
• Ensure that SEN children have equal access to the curriculum where appropriate.
• Provide the necessary support when special needs are identified and write and implement Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
• Seek appropriate help and advice from other relevant professionals.
• Keep the parents fully informed and involved.

For newcomer children we:

• Organise monthly language plans to enhance their learning
• Use our Polish Assistant where applicable
• Use relevant information from the Inclusion and Diversity Service File
• Provide monthly newsletters in their relevant language

Evaluation

In our setting we recognise the importance of being self-reflective practitioners, reflecting on planning, practice and all aspects of pre-school life. As a whole Nursery each week, we evaluate how we feel each day has gone, the activities/experiences provided, the learning outcomes of the children and the children’s interest in what was going on. We state how things went and how they could be improved if required. These evaluations are used to inform future planning.

At the end of every month we evaluate our provision and planning in the areas of the pre-school curriculum and the areas of play, both indoors and out. These too are used to inform future planning.

Adult/Initiated

We recognise that staff must interact with children to ensure optimum learning and development. We acknowledge that learning through play is a balance of adult initiated and child initiated learning. We acknowledge the role of spoken language as a key skill in thinking and learning. Consequently we aim to:

• Interact easily and spontaneously with children.
• Support the child’s chosen play.
• Promote safe productive play.
• Exploit the learning potential of the activities and equipment.
• Encourage through open questioning and comments, children’s curiosity, imagination and abilities to solve problems.
• Develop children’s language and learning across the curriculum.
Equal Opportunities

In our setting we acknowledge our responsibility to make appropriate provision for all the children in our care. We believe that all children have the right to be treated with respect, as an individual with individual needs and have equal access to play, regardless of their gender, cultural and linguistic background, class, family background and abilities. (See Pastoral Care Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy)

Positive Behaviour

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.

The Need for Discipline through Promoting Positive Behaviour

Discipline through promoting positive behavior needs to be appropriate to the age and stage of the young child’s development. It is one of the keys to a happy and thriving Nursery environment and it is 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, that 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 are made to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our children.

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

Inside & Outside

1. Always Listen to the Teachers
2. Share & Take Turns
3. Use Kind Hands
4. Play Safely
5. Tidy up

Mat Rules

1. Eyes Looking
2. Ears Listening
3. Lips Closed
4. Brain Boxes On
5. Do good sitting
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.

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. Sending home “Bessie Bear” with the children who have behaved really well and worked hard through the week.
4. Visits to other Nursery classes, the Vice-Principals or Principal for praise.

Discipline Procedures

In Nursery we rarely have serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour but if there is an occurrence of such behaviour the procedure is as follows:

1. The Staff intervene if a child displays unacceptable behaviour, talks him/her through it and encourages the child to act positively.
2. If the child continues to behave inappropriately or in a very boisterous manner he/she will either:
   - Withdrawn from the activity to another or
   - Be sat on the “Thinking Chair” for 3 or 4 minutes to calm down and think about his/her behaviour.

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. With very serious destructive, violent or continuous disruptive behaviour the child involved will be taken into the other Nursery class, where the teacher will have a word with the child about his/her behaviour and may be sat on the Thinking Chair to think about his/her behaviour.
4. In some cases it is necessary to use an individualised behaviour programme, which will be used at home and in school.
5. In extreme cases, such as a child being violent or abusive towards another child or member of staff, an incident report will be written for the child in question and will be dealt with accordingly by the Principal or Vice Principal.
6. In extreme cases you will be called by the Principal to collect your child from nursery.
7. It is our policy that any child displaying regular inappropriate behaviour will have the time they stay in nursery shortened until the behaviour improves. This is particularly relevant when the children first start nursery.

At all times, the staff will use their professional judgement in deciding what form of discipline is necessary to suit the individual needs 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 on a daily basis. It is the role of each parent to support and reinforce the efforts of the staff in establishing and maintaining acceptable standards of behaviour.

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 fulfill his/her potential.

Links with Parents/Carers

The transition from home to nursery, for most children probably is the first significant change from total parental care to being cared for outside the home, as well as being the child’s first contact with teachers.

Teachers, in partnership with parents, can build on the child’s experiences of love and care. Parental involvement eases the transition from home into the nursery situation and the integration of the child into the wider social community.

We in St Francis’ Nursery Unit, recognise the need for a working relationship with children, parents and significant others. We realise that for the partnership between staff and parents to be effective there must be mutual understanding and respect, a continuing dialogue and a sharing of information and knowledge. We realise that if parental involvement is not developed at the onset of the educative process, then a valuable resource will be lost.

Partnership and support for families include:

- Parents/Primary Care Givers will be made welcome and are free to visit the nursery at all times.
- Prior to the child starting nursery, parents will be invited to Nursery Introductory Meeting in late May/early June.
At the Introductory Meeting the parents will be issued with a “Welcome Booklet” giving the child’s visit and starting date, as well as relevant information which will be delivered by the staff at the meeting, from which discussion may arise. Parents will be encouraged to sign up for DELTA meetings which will be held throughout the first term of the child starting nursery.

Parents have access to all our policies and procedures which are displayed in a file in our entrance hall. They are invited to read these and ask staff about them if they wish. A number of policies are included in our “Welcome Booklet” and parents are asked to read and agree to them by signing.

Parents are invited to bring their children to the nursery for a visit on a specific date at a specific time. This enables staff, parents and children to meet informally and to get to know each other. School Information Forms, Early Years Forms and Parental Assessment Forms will be given out for parents to complete during this time and clear instructions and help will be given if required.

Our monthly plans are displayed in the foyer for parental perusal.

During the settling in period, parent’s fears and anxieties should be allayed by positive interaction. Parents must be prepared to stay until such time as the child feels comfortable in nursery.

Staff will welcome parents and children each morning and afternoon, providing opportunities for verbal interaction and sharing of information.

Parents will be invited to attend DELTA meetings throughout the year.

Parents will receive a Monthly Newsletter which contains curriculum information on what we will be covering in the six areas of the nursery curriculum, tips on how to help the child at home and other relevant information. They will also receive monthly songs and rhymes sheets so that they can continue teaching the songs and rhymes related to the topics at home.

Parents are encouraged to help their child to select a book from our Library in the foyer to read and enjoy at home on a daily basis.

Parents will be invited for two formal meetings and optional informal discussion throughout the year. One meeting will be in November when the children’s Settling-In Reports will be discussed, the optional meeting will take place in February/March and the other in June when the children’s Transition Reports will be presented to the parents.

Parents of children with Special Educational Needs will receive continuous support.

Parents will be invited to the Halloween concert.

Parents will be invited to a Christmas Concert in December.

Parents will be invited to Sports Day to watch their child take part and will be invited into the unit for light refreshments. At this the children will receive a “Graduation Certificate” and their portfolio of work kept over the year.

Parents with specific talents, hobbies and jobs will be invited into the nursery to talk to the children about these and help out if required, for example in the garden.
• Parents are kept fully informed on Nursery activities through the parent’s notice board in the foyer and notes are posted on the entrance door of the classrooms.
• Parents can view monthly newsletters, school closures and photographs of Nursery children on our website.
• Parents are invited into the setting to look at the children’s work and the photographs displayed of them at play/work.
• Parents and past pupils are always welcome to visit our Nursery Setting. (See also our Community Links Policy and School Links Policy)

Section Five
Review and Evaluation

Our Teaching and Learning Policy will be constantly monitored and reviewed. This will be done through:

• Weekly team meetings.
• Peer and senior management observations.
• PRSD.
• Parental questionnaires and comments.
• Listening to the children.
• Observation Booklet.
• Self-evaluation.
• Using the “Together towards Improvement” (TTI) Pre-School document and DVD.