



Foundation Years

I.S.N

Introduction

We would like to welcome you to our Early Years Foundation Department.

Through a thematic approach, children, staff and parents, learn to celebrate diversity and individualism.

You and your child/ren are members of this department and we shall work in partnership, being sensitive to the needs of your child and his/her future.

The teachers are hardworking, enthusiastic and dedicated. They are always welcoming.

The purpose of this booklet is to inform you of our aims and policies as well as introduce you to our curriculum and approach to learning.

You will notice that the enriching curriculum and the wonderful pastoral care offered to each child, achieve the quality we aim to provide.

The expected learning outcome of the Early Years are:

- The academic progress of each child
- The needs of children and parents
- The developmental needs of the children
- The importance of play
- Understand why they are 'Learning to learn'
- Becoming responsible, motivated young people

We trust that you will have a great year!

Remember, we are here for you, at any time!

MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that the purpose of our school, working in partnership with parents and the community, is to:

- Maintain a whole-school, student-centred approach, demonstrating the highest standards in the quality of teaching and learning, providing a broad curriculum that fulfils students individual needs.
- Set high but realistic targets for our pupils so that they always have something to aim for during their time at the school.
- Teach our children the skills to make informed judgments and decisions, giving them opportunities to develop a sense of personal responsibility, a caring attitude and respect for themselves, other people and their environment.
- Place emphasis on 'learning how to learn' and not on the memorizing of facts so that our motto 'wisdom before knowledge' is reinforced constantly.
- Provide our pupils with the transferable skills that are essential in the ever-changing world around us, so that they can adapt easily in any society and diversify if the need arises

Setting In

Children join our Early Years (Foundation Stage) department from the age of 2 years. Each child is unique and we recognize that every one will settle into the classroom routine in their own way.

There are several principles which we try to follow in our school and they are:

- Children settle in differently and at different rates.
- Settling in is a gradual process and cannot be rushed.
- Some children relate to one adult until they feel confident and therefore we provide Key workers for each child.
- Parents are welcome to stay at school for the first two weeks of their child beginning.
- Parents are encouraged to leave the classroom and return every 10 minutes.
- For the first three days children and parents are encouraged to stay for no longer than two hours.
- The teacher needs to establish a small degree of trust with the child as soon as possible.

RULES FOR THE EARLY YEARS CLASSES

In all our classes we encourage children to:

- Talk politely
- Be responsible
- Ask questions
- Enjoy learning
- Tidy up (correctly!)
- To collect and put away their snack bags

We encourage children not to:

- Throw toys
- Step on toys
- Tear books
- Run in the classroom
- Push
- Snatch
- Use inappropriate language
- Walk around with food/drinks in their hands
- Shout

Playground Rules

We play together nicely



We do not push or hurt our friends

We look after our playground, by putting rubbish in the dustbins.

We do not leave our snack boxes, water bottles lying around

When the bell rings, we line up quietly and sensibly, ready to go to our classrooms

We respect our teachers who look after us

We always tell our teachers if we feel frightened or sad



Language in the Nursery classes

The day, in Nursery 1 and Nursery 2, is organized in a way that encourages the children to spend time exploring the classroom environment, playing with their peers and listening to stories rhymes and themes presented by their teachers.

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.

Hence , we implement equal opportunities for our pupils embracing the follow- ing key principles which are essential for the development of a more interactive - diverse curriculum.

Setting suitable learning challenges

Responding to pupil's diverse learning needs

Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils who have two or three languages have diverse needs in terms of support in their language learning. Planning takes into account such factors as the pupil's age, length of time in a country, previous educational experience and skills in other languages.

Why is Multilingual Education important in the diverse Early Years classroom?

Because children have learnt skills in their home language which they can transfer to the second language. We need to know what they have already grasped so we can help them to apply these skills to their second or third language.

Some of the common questions parents may ask about their child learning a second or third language are:

Will maintaining the first language mean that children don't learn enough of their second language?

I want to use my language at home so my children can communicate with other family members.

The doctor (speech therapist, neighbour etc) told me that my child would be at a disadvantage if I continue to speak my language at home.

It is our aim that any teaching that takes place within our nursery setting addresses these needs, recognising and valuing our bi-communal, multi-cultural environment

It is well documented that supporting the development of a child's mother tongue will aid the English language acquisition of the bilingual child.

Valuing a child's linguistic and cultural heritage is a vital part of the process of education. Failure to recognise this can result in bilingual children lacking the confidence to face the challenges of school life and significantly underachieving.

We also aim to ensure that all our pupils acquire English in the most appropriate and fun way possible, including activities such as drama. The use of drama in young children's lives is of paramount importance, because it can enhance and embrace verbal and non-verbal activities. It also acts as a medium through which the barriers of language and cultural differences can be broken down. It simultaneously educates children and encourages an awareness of cultural backgrounds.



Language Development in the Pre-Reception class

The focus of the language work in our Pre-reception class will be the development of the children's oral English. Through a wide variety of activities we will aim to extend their vocabulary and increase their confidence and ability to communicate with their peers and adults, both in and out of the school environment.

The activities will help the children develop in the following areas:

Listening



The children will be encouraged to listen attentively and respond to what they hear. It would be important to set the right atmosphere before expecting the children to respond or listen to each other and to the adult.



Talking

The children will be encouraged to talk through all their play activities with other members of the group, with all adults and helpers and to take turn in contributing to the conversation or discussion.

The children can be involved in the following types of activities to enhance their learning:

Big Book

sharing

They listen to stories read from big books; all the children can be encouraged to talk about the pictures. They begin to distinguish between the print and the picture. Also they begin to predict events and make comparisons to other known stories.

Class book

making

All children can be encouraged to contribute to a class book, which they can share



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with their friends.

- Individual book making

There can be many opportunities for the children to produce their own story-books.

Phonics

Children can begin to learn the name and sound of the letters of the alphabet. They begin to identify words beginning with those letters.

What parents can do to help:

In order to help your child with an activity such as the above, it would be very helpful, if you were to play games which encourage looking for letters in the environment. When you are in the supermarket together, spend time looking at the names of the item you are buying, when walking along the road, look at the names on the shops and the writing on advertisements.

Reading

Children can take home reading books, which may not contain words. The purpose of these books, is to encourage the children to talk about the things they can see in the pictures and the sequencing of events.

When sharing a book with your child, there are many questions you can ask, for example:

- 'What do you think will happen next?'
- 'What would you do in this situation?'
- 'What are the characters in this picture doing?'

There are no correct answers to any of these questions, the aim is to encourage your child to talk about what they can see, to make predictions and to make comparisons with their own situation/experience.

Sharing books with your child should be relaxing and fun! Therefore, choose a time when you are not busy and can give your child all your attention.

Story telling and sequencing

Through reading and other story telling activities children become able to consider the sequencing of events. It helps children to understand this if you talk with them as you carry out activities around the house. When cooking or baking you can explain the order in which you do things. Talk about the different things we do throughout the day, and why certain things can be carried out in the morning while other take place in the afternoon and evening.

Tracing and pre-writing skills

Children can be involved in activities that will encourage writing skills i.e. drawing, tracing and copying. They will learn to write their names and several of the letters of the alphabet.



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Rethinking Language in our hidden curriculum

Our classroom is organised to encourage and support talk.

The layout of the room encourages talk.

The displays about the room include references to children talking together.

The children take responsibility for finding, using and returning materials that they need.

The children use talk purposefully, while going about their tasks.

Adults listen to the talk of the children; they note what kinds of talk takes place, and in what situations. Also, how often they refer to the adults for permission, advice or approval.

Consideration is made for individual children when planning.

Teachers look specifically, for opportunities for talk in their planned activities.

Teachers record observations, they write down when children, in moments or occasions talk in pairs, small groups, or whole-class discussion, when they approach and speak to the adult, when they make verbal contact with other children. We encourage children to enhance their learning by talking about their work or presenting their work.

We recognise the importance of the children's use of talk.

At times we make a tape recording or video-film of children talking (with a child, or pair, or group)

Teachers share observations and use the agreed policies of the school to reflect the child's personal stage of development.

Children are always encouraged to talk in groups about what teachers do.

They always have much to say, which is of interest and which is of course, based upon their experience of teachers, or parents.

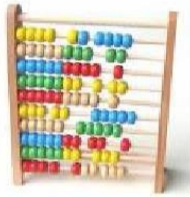
The imaginative play area of the classroom, is a mini-classroom, based on themes covered each term. A lot of talk happens there!

Bilingual Support

We support children's development in English as an additional language using the following strategies:

- Welcoming new children by allocating a partner to look after them on the initial days at the school, placing the child with a friendly and helpful peer who will be communicative despite not sharing a common language
- The teachers try to gain as much knowledge as possible about the child's previous educational experiences
- The teachers find out about the home language and background of each child
- Partnered with children with the same language at times
- Partnered with other sensitive class members
- Direct teaching of language of immediate need (using a consistent form of words when asking questions and giving instructions)
- Working in the same small group
- Ensuring that the child has the opportunity to listen to English - listening corner, tape recorder, stories, computer, picture books etc.
- The child is guided and supported in collaborative/practical activities
- The child is offered independent and differentiated activities
- The child is offered opportunities to experiment with talk (drama, role play, class singing, rhymes, tongue twisters, imaginative play)
- Games - opportunities to follow instructions, inquiring, asking, taking turns
- Providing opportunities to develop literacy skills in tandem with oral skills and an emphasis on reading with meaning and writing with a purpose

Mathematics in the Pre-reception class



The foundation of mathematical experiences are established long before children start school. Many of the activities they carry out at home through play, or while they are helping their parents; all these have a mathematical base. As adults, we use mathematics daily without realising it; for example when:



- Cooking a family meal
- Following a knitting pattern
- Reading music or playing an instrument
- Following a map with getting lost
- Doing a week's shopping for the family
- Checking a bank statement

All of these activities involve mathematical skills. In the same way when Children are playing they use mathematical skills. For example, when:

- Getting up in the morning (Is it still dark? Are the others awake? - children make a logical deduction.)
- Getting dressed (sorting, matching, making decisions)
- Going shopping (counting, size, money)
- Putting the shopping away (sorting, categorising)
- Playing with teddies and puzzles (counting, size, shape)
- Helping to lay the table (planning, sorting, matching, counting)

At

school

Many of these activities will be reproduced through the creative play areas developed in the Pre-Reception class. The children will also begin to learn

mathematics in a more structured way, through games, number rhymes, stories and other practical and written activities.

The children will be bringing homework which will be in the form of either a game (which can be played by the whole family) or a worksheet, the child will need the support of an adult or other member of the family to complete this work.

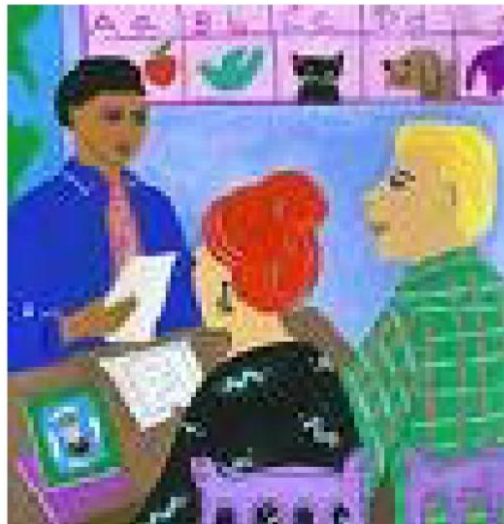
Just as with supporting reading development at home, parental participation in encouraging and helping their child with mathematics, is very important!



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Meeting the Teacher

- All teachers are approachable and friendly, but you must remember that they are there for the CHILDREN, therefore early in the morning and at the end of the day would not be good times to see them. Remain behind until all children have gone home - they would be very happy to speak with you.
- Messages that you need to give to the teacher can be pinned up on the 'Daily communication' board which is clearly labeled in the classroom.
- Be sure that you ask questions, raise concerns with your class teacher. But remember the teacher is not at liberty to discuss other children, or comment on children's behaviour that you may have encountered outside school.
- Your teacher is the first contact person but if there are issues you feel you need further clarification with, or remain unresolved, then the Early Years Coordinator should be approached or the Senior Coordinator.



Contacting the School

Please contact the school if you are going to be:

- Late - it is important that the teacher prepares your child for this.
- Sickness / absence - if your child is unwell / or if you are unable to come in.
- Holiday - if you are taking your child on holiday longer than 3 days.
- Emergencies and unable to collect your child - for any personal reason that you may have, please call the school office.
- If you need to make an appointment to meet with any of the Senior Management.

You are always encouraged to come to school to offer personal time for an activity to any age group, i.e. to read a story or carry out a cooking or art task.



HOME-SCHOOL AGREEMENT

This is part of the School's Admission Policy

The Parents/Guardians

I/We shall try to:

- See that my child attends School regularly, on time and properly equipped.
- Notify the School and provide a note of explanation if the child is absent.
- Provide the school with a Doctor's certificate if the child is recovering from contagious disease.
- Let the school know about any concerns or problems that might affect my child's work or behaviour.
- Discuss with School staff, as soon as possible, any problems that may occur; with another child, homework, or any other.
- Support the School's policies and guidelines for behaviour.
- Support my child in home activities and other opportunities for home learning.
- Attend Parents' Evenings and discussions about my child's progress.
- Get to know about my child's life at the School.
- Discuss the School rules with my child to ensure that they understand them.
- Submit, in writing, names of people who may escort my child from School premises, in case of emergencies or parent absences.

The School will:

- Contact parents/guardians if there is any problem with attendance.
- Let parents know about any concerns or problems that affect their child's work or behaviour.
- Provide information on their child's progress at regular meetings and in written reports.
- Keep parents/guardians informed of activities undertaken at school.
- Encourage children to do their best at all times.
- Encourage children to take care of their surroundings and other people around them.
- Liaise with parents/guardians about appropriate home activities.



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- Report to parents/guardians at once if their child is taken ill at school.
- Strictly enforce a written permission from a parent/guardian concerning the accompanying of their child/ren from school premises.

The Child

This section must be explained to the child by the parent/guardian, before Admission.

I will:

- Obey the School rules throughout the School.
- Treat other people and my surroundings with respect.
- Wear my School Uniform with pride.
- Try to do my best in work tasks and listen well.
- Always try to do homework on time and with effort.
- Be helpful and friendly to all around me.

Together we will:

- Tackle any special needs.
- Encourage the children to keep the School rules.
- Support the child's learning to help them achieve their best.

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