

Teaching and Learning Policy

It is the aim of Knockbreda Nursery School to ‘*nurture learning for life*’ and to lay the foundations for a lifelong love of learning. Through the teaching at Knockbreda Nursery School we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for their everyday lives. We believe that the purpose of teaching is to prompt effective, active learning experiences which enrich the children and help them to lead happy and rewarding lives.

This policy seeks to secure consistency in classroom practice and management, and to identify the ways in which teaching and learning are characterised in order to create a consistent, effective and well managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met.

School Aims

- Develop at his/her own rate through challenging, progressive play.
- Learn to share with others and play co-operatively.
- Appreciate and care for others and practise social skills.
- Deepen and lengthen concentration through his/her natural spontaneous curiosity and interest.
- Choose and explore a wide range of materials which allow him/her to express himself/herself appropriately and creatively.
- Become aware of his/her body’s capabilities and limits in a safe environment
- Communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings clearly to both adults and other children.
- Share the wonder and excitement created by books, stories, songs, rhymes, music and the natural environment.
- Grow in self confidence, experience success and thus develop a good self image.
- Enjoy the satisfaction of work well done and share with his/her parents.
- Recognise the importance of learning outdoors and to play purposefully in the many outdoor spaces available at Nursery.

Teaching and Learning

At Knockbreda Nursery School, we acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow each child to learn in the ways that best suit them. We believe that effective and purposeful learning will take place when children are;

- Feeling safe, secure, confident and aware of boundaries.
- Interested and motivated.
- Aware of routines which define the classroom day.
- Given tasks which they clearly understand and which match their ability.
- Engaged in problem solving, investigational activities and structured play.
- Involved in creative learning experiences.
- Are challenged and stimulated.
- Able to work independently using their knowledge and skills relative to their ability.
- Given praise and approval for successful work and achievement.
- Interacting positively with peers and adults.
- Working with others to achieve their learning goals.
- Asking questions to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The Learning Environment

Children learn best when the environment in which they find themselves is ordered, well managed and carefully planned to motivate and engage. In order to maximise the learning environment in the school, we believe that;

- Everyone should take pride and responsibility for the environment provided at Knockbreda Nursery School.
- Classrooms should be welcoming, well organised and resourced.
- Classrooms should celebrate the children's learning and should reflect throughout the school year the breadth of the Pre-School Curriculum.
- Classrooms should be organised to enable the children to use and follow clearly defined procedures and routines through the visuals on display (e.g. daily classroom routines, snack time etc.)
- The layout of the furniture in the classrooms is reviewed and varied to meet the requirements of the subject matter or particular learning need.
- Resources should be reviewed continually to ensure that only those suitable are offered to the children.
- Resources should be appropriate, well maintained, labelled and organised in such a way to enable the children to be as independent as possible.
- Reading areas /quiet areas should be welcoming and encourage children to explore books and enjoy quiet time.
- ICT equipment should be available and used as a tool to aid learning.
- Art /creative material resources should be presented in an attractive manner and promote independence.

Displays

In each classroom the children's work should be celebrated, valued and displayed attractively. Attention should be drawn to the displays to stimulate further the work in progress and reward completed efforts.

The work displayed should be representative of the children's efforts and ability. They should use both 2D and 3D in a variety of media, colours and themes. Displays should be changed and updated frequently and cover different aspects of the Pre-School Curriculum.

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules provide a context within which children can learn and contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be;

- Shared with the parents and children and be clearly understood.
- Realistic and positive.
- Kept to a minimum, but always enforced.
- Fair and consistent.

The classroom rules and daily routine should result in the children clearly knowing the boundaries of behaviour, as set out in the terms of the Behaviour Management Policy.

Opportunities for Learning

Through our teaching and daily routines we offer opportunities for the child to learn in different ways both indoors and outdoors, which include;

- Experimentation, investigation and problem solving.
- Group work
- Story time and discussion (small groups and whole class)
- Independent work
- Structured play.
- Role play.
- Physical activities.
- Asking and answering questions.
- Use of ICT facilities.
- Creative activities and mark making.
- Watching educational videos and responding to musical or tape recorded material.
- Making and building models.

Characteristics of Teaching

In order to secure consistency in classroom practice and management and therefore promote an effective and consistent learning environment and learning opportunities, teaching in our Nursery shall have the following characteristics;

- Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives. These objectives shall be taken from the Pre-School Curriculum Guidance. The lesson plans shall be prepared in line with the planning requirements set out in the individual curriculum policy.
- The lesson plans recognise the differing abilities of children and will differentiate the learning tasks and appropriate challenges to children's needs.
- Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child, the use of the information on observation sheets and discussion during regular staff meetings. The information gathered during the assessment process will then inform and influence the planning for individual/group needs.
- The teaching staff will endeavour to manage time, resources, children groupings and classroom assistants effectively to develop the learning of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The teaching staff will ensure that the visual displays in the classroom are effective, relevant and kept up to date with the topics being taught.
- It is a priority of all staff to ensure that the children feel safe, secure and motivated at all times in the school.
- All staff will use a variety of teaching methods, strategies and styles to suit the topic being taught and whole class/group/individual needs.
- All staff will endeavour to give the children simple, clear explanations/instructions so that the children know what is expected from them and why.
- All staff will encourage high expectations with regard to behaviour, quality of presentation of work and personal effort. When children misbehave the sanctions and guidelines outlined in our Behaviour Management Policy will be followed.
- All staff will make it known that individuals matter, and that all children's contributions are valued.
- All staff will provide the children with opportunities for self expression and self reflection. The staff will endeavour to provide the child with positive and constructive feedback. We praise children for their efforts, and in doing so help build positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- The staff will strive to develop and work in an effective partnership with the children's parents/carers and will ensure that they are kept informed about their child's development and progress.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the school's policy review schedule.