



# Magherafelt Integrated Nursery School

Key Information for  
'Getting Started'  
2025-26

# Information

Address: 32A Castledawson Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6PA

Telephone: 028 7963 2981

School Mobile: 07930 950 824

Email: [info@magherafelt.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@magherafelt.ni.sch.uk)

Website: [www.magherafeltintegratednurseryschool.com](http://www.magherafeltintegratednurseryschool.com)

Facebook: search 'Magherafelt Integrated Nursery School' and 'like' to receive updates

School Classification: Controlled Integrated Nursery School –  
Education Authority – Locality South West

Age Range of Pupils: 3 - 4 years

Admissions Number: (1<sup>st</sup> September 2024) 130 children

## Term Dates

	<i>Provisional Closures (Inclusive)</i>	
Term 1 Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> August to Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	Mid-Term Break
	<i>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November</i>	<i>School Development Day*</i>
	<i>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December</i>	<i>School Development Day*</i>
	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December – Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	Christmas Break
Term 2 Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January to Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Mid-Term Break
	<i>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March</i>	<i>School Development Day*</i>
	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Non-Operational Day
	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April – Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Break
Term 3 Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April to Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	<i>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April</i>	<i>School Development Day*</i>
	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday
	<i>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May</i>	<i>School Development Day*</i>
	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May	Mid-Term Break

## School Development Days\*

*The Department of Education designates 5 days as 'School Development Days' - these are training days for staff. **Children do not attend on these dates.***

# Welcome to Magherafelt Integrated Nursery School

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to our nursery school. We trust that your child will thrive and learn in our nurturing and enabling environment and under the care and professionalism of our experienced and enthusiastic nursery team. We are very caring and approachable, so just ask if there is anything that you would like support with.



In partnership with you, we aim to provide high quality teaching and learning in a developmentally appropriate environment. We hope that you and your child will feel welcome, share in and celebrate the 'enriching' learning experiences that our nursery school has to offer.

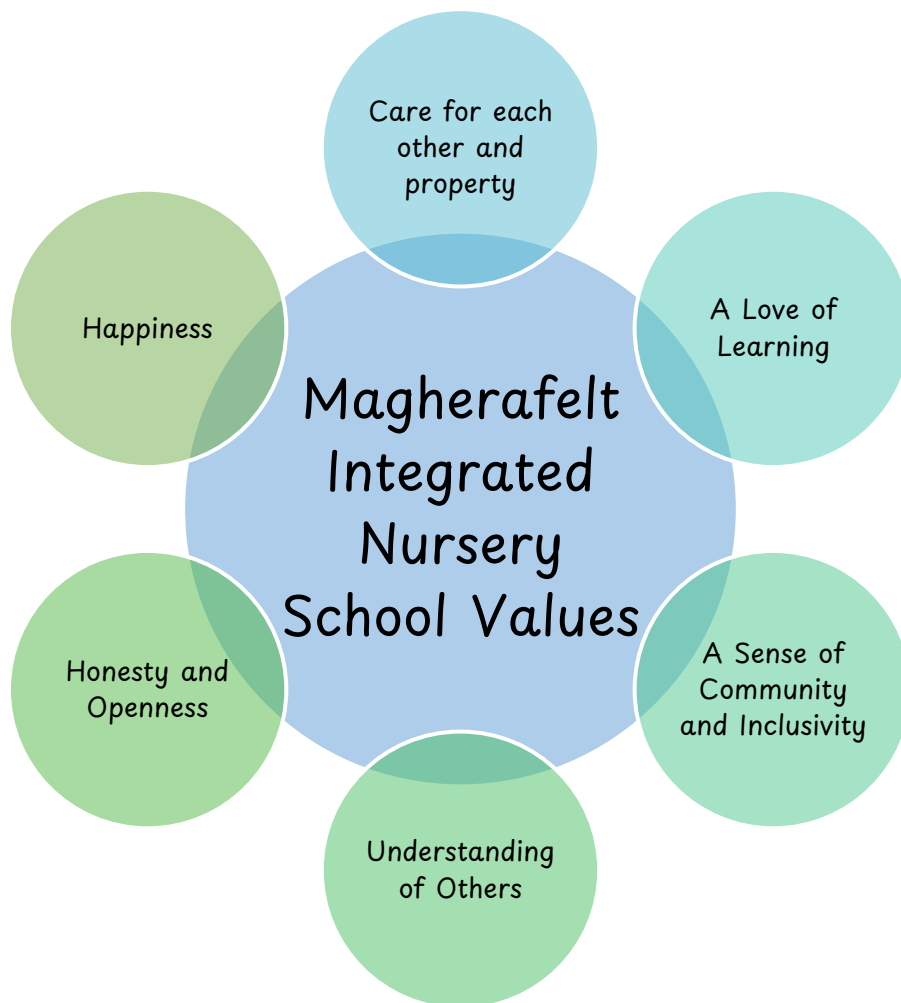
## Vision, Values and Ethos

### *'Exploring, Learning and Celebrating Together'*

We hope that our school vision permeates the fabric and ethos of our school. We will strive to provide rich and meaningful learning experiences, encouraging your child to progress and learn through playful learning experiences and connecting themes. Working together with you, the parent, we will seek to:

- ☺ Be warm and welcoming to all.
- ☺ Enable your children to learn in a holistic way.
- ☺ Build upon what your children already know.
- ☺ Support your children towards independence.
- ☺ Foster self-esteem in, and build trust with your children.
- ☺ Create a sense of wonder and a love of learning.
- ☺ Encourage your children to be active learners.
- ☺ Motivate your children to be physically active, and to develop healthy lifestyles.
- ☺ Support your children as they learn to play alongside and with others.
- ☺ Encourage your children to be inclusive and understanding of others.
- ☺ Celebrate progress and success with every child.

Please keep this booklet for reference throughout the year.



## Meet the Team



Mrs L Whiteside  
Principal/Teacher



Mrs L McGill  
Teacher



Mrs C Quinn  
Teacher



Mrs D Campbell  
Teacher



Mrs K McCreesh  
Nursery Assistant



Mrs L Gilmour  
Nursery Assistant



Mrs A McLernon  
Nursery Assistant



Mrs G McCullagh  
Nursery Assistant



Mrs J Walker  
Senior Clerical Officer



Mr M Whiteside  
Building Supervisor



Mrs F Young  
Cleaner / Morning Club

## School Management: Board of Governors



Mrs SJ Knox  
Chairperson



Mrs M Sheridan  
Vice-Chair Person



Mrs C Cawley  
Safeguarding and Child  
Protection

Nominated by DE: Ms M McSorley  
Mrs C Cawley

Nominated by EA: Mrs SJ Knox  
Mr N Richardson  
Mrs M Sheridan

Parent Representative: Mrs A McCullagh  
Mrs B Watterson

Teacher Representative: Mrs L McGill

Secretary: Mrs L Whiteside (Non-voting Member)

\*To be reconstituted in preparation for the new academic year\*

# A Typical Nursery Day

*Once the settling in period is complete, please aim to drop your child off on time for their nursery school session, as missing 10 minutes per day equates to 50 minutes per week!*

## Part Time Class Daily Schedule

<b>Morning Class</b>	<b>Afternoon Class</b>
Greeting Time (9:00 – 9:05am) via side gate	Greeting Time (12:30 – 12:35pm) via side gate
Indoor Learning (includes snack time)	Indoor Learning (includes snack time)
Tidy Time	Tidy Time
Together Time including story time and music	Together Time including story time and music
Outdoor Learning	Outdoor Learning
Home Time (11:20-11:30)	Home Time (2:50-3:00pm)

## Full Time Class Daily Schedule

Greeting Time (9:00 – 9:05am) via side gate
Indoor Learning (includes snack time)
Together Time including story time
Outdoor Learning
Tidy Time
Small Group Time
Together Time including music time
Lunch Time
Outdoor Play and Tidy Time
Music and Movement
Home Time (1:20 – 1:30pm)

Drop your child off promptly, but you are welcome to return early and join in with your child during the 10 minute collection time.



# Coming and Going – Parents and Carers

- It is important to establish good timekeeping. Please aim to drop off and collect your child within the greeting and home times.
- Follow the signage for drop off and collection points, and ensure your child is handed over to a staff member (mostly via the side gate).
- School will require a contact and collection list. **All collectors must be age 16 or over.**
- Your child will only be released to the people named on the collection sheet.
- Please inform the school of any changes to collection arrangements.
- Always ensure the school has the correct contact details, providing updates as needed.
- The staggered home time is to reduce congestion in the carpark and to enable exchanges between teacher and parent/carer.
- The carpark is extremely busy so please make sure you hold your child by the hand as you enter and exit. Your child is your responsibility.
- Use the raised zebra crossing to cross the road.
- Greet your child with a smile and not a mobile phone!
- Early collections are permissible but your child will need to be signed out.
- Late drop off and collections will be monitored and should a 'persistent pattern' emerge, the class teacher and/or principal will discuss this matter with you.

## Morning Club

The club will start in mid-September, when your child has settled into school.

One member of staff is available from 8.30-9am each morning to supervise up to 13 children in our Morning Club at a cost of £5 per week. This club is designed to facilitate working parents. Places are limited and a waiting list is kept. Please let the class teacher / school office know if you are planning to use this service. A light breakfast can be provided at an additional cost of 50p per day.

## Nursery Fund



At the beginning of each term, we will ask for a contribution of £30. All 3 terms (£90) can be paid in advance in September if you wish. An instalment plan is available if needed; please ask at the school office. This fund helps to subsidise the cost of daily snack food, baking activities, dough making, class



parties and treats, gifts for visitors, curriculum enrichment experiences and the purchase of additional resources.

*We are introducing a new online payment system through our school website and communications app (Schools NI). You will receive a message and a link to make a payment via Stripe.*

## Snack Time

This is a lovely social experience and a time to connect with each other. All children are encouraged to have a morning or afternoon snack. The children help with the food and table preparation and are encouraged to pour their own drink of milk or water. The staff will spend time chatting to the children and encouraging them to get to know each other. From time to time, the children will take part in cooking and baking activities and will enjoy making their own food to eat at snack time. All snack food is provided so you will not need to bring food into school. We aim to promote healthy food habits in line with our Healthy Eating Policy. There will also be themed days to encourage our children to taste and try foods from around the world.



Apples	Cheese	Pancakes	Natural Yogurt
Bananas	Ham	Wraps	Oranges & Pears
Grapes	Bread	Crackers	Other seasonal fruits

### Food Intolerances and Allergies




If your child has a **medically diagnosed** food intolerance or allergy, e.g. dairy-free or gluten-free diet, please let your child's teacher know. You will be asked to complete an online form so that alternative arrangements can be made for your child.

### Full Time Class Only – Dinner Time Arrangements

After the settling in period, we will start to phase the children into the dinner time routine.

***This part of the day will only be added when your child is settled and shows readiness to cope with the longer time in school.*** There are 3 options for lunchtime:

<b>Send a Packed Lunch:</b> 	You will receive a 'Healthy Lunchbox' Sheet outlining suitable foods. All drinks and cutlery are provided in school. Your child will need a small carry handle lunch box, and a cool pack is a good idea to keep lunch fresh and cool! Preheated food in a food flask is also encouraged (staff cannot heat food).
<b>Free School Meal:</b>	Children who are entitled to a free school meal will receive a meal from the School Meals Kitchen at Magherafelt Primary School. If you think that your child may be eligible for free school meals, it is your responsibility to complete the online application form. You should apply online as soon as possible, in readiness for September. Free School Meals cannot be backdated. More information is available at: <a href="https://www.eani.org.uk/">https://www.eani.org.uk/</a> .
<b>Paid School Meal:</b>	If you wish to purchase a school meal, this is available to order (current charge is £2.50 per day). Please provide the payment each Monday morning, in an envelope clearly labelled with the child's name and on which days meals are required.



# Getting Your Child Ready for Nursery School

In order for children to learn, they must have high levels of wellbeing and be happy and settled into the school environment. It is similar to an adult starting a new job or adjusting to change – exciting and daunting at the same time! Building a bridge from ‘home’ to ‘school’, the following ideas will help your child to be ready to start nursery school:

- ☺ Make sure your children have given up bottles and dummies!
- ☺ Teach your child to wash their hands properly.
- ☺ Teach your child to use the bathroom independently.
- ☺ Talk about your child’s teacher and assistant, and about the fun your child will have.
- ☺ Get your child involved in household and garden jobs!
- ☺ Encourage your child to play with messy materials such as mud, paint, water, dough.
- ☺ Give your children experience of being away from their family.
- ☺ Give your child opportunities to stay with a friend or family member.
- ☺ Encourage your child to eat fruit, vegetables and healthy snacks.
- ☺ Sing songs and rhymes and enjoy books of all types together.
- ☺ Teach your child to make a choice between 2 things / 2 activities.
- ☺ Bring a complete set of named clothes to stay in school.
- ☺ Your child will not need a school bag.
- ☺ Talk about school in a positive way, as you drive past in the summer months.
- ☺ Sometimes, the less fuss is made, the better!

## Getting Involved

- ☺ Become a parent volunteer (volunteer Access NI form to be completed) – speak to class teacher.
- ☺ Help out in the garden with various jobs – speak to Mrs Whiteside.
- ☺ Come in and share a hobby / talent / job with the children (later in the year).
- ☺ Try out the Learning Together Programme on the school website / curriculum enrichment sheets on Seesaw.
- ☺ Come in and read a story / book that interests you and your child.
- ☺ Take an interest in the life of the school and our Shared Education programme.
- ☺ Join in with your child’s Learning Journey on the Seesaw app.
- ☺ We are open to your ideas!



# Top Tips for September

Encourage your children to:

- ☺ Say 'please' and 'thank you.'
- ☺ Wear pants, be able to use the toilet and have a go at 'wiping!'
- ☺ Pull up their pants and trousers.
- ☺ Use a tissue to blow their nose.
- ☺ Wash their hands.
- ☺ Take off their own shoes.
- ☺ Have a go at putting on wellington boots.
- ☺ Attempt to put on their own coat.
- ☺ Put away their toys when asked.

## Tips for the First Days of Nursery School

- ☺ Give us time to get to know your child.
- ☺ Get to know the teachers and nursery assistants.
- ☺ Complete the 'Getting to Know Me' book together and return it to school (August).
- ☺ Children can bring a teddy or small comfort toy for a few days (or until settled).
- ☺ Give your child an item of yours to keep until you return.
- ☺ Suggest a play activity that your child might like to try.
- ☺ Explain to your child that you are going to do a job and will be back.
- ☺ Go promptly even if your child is upset – we will ring you if we need you.
- ☺ The class teachers will let you know when your child is ready to stay longer.
- ☺ Share key information about your children – you know them best.
- ☺ Be prepared to stay close by if your child is unsettled.
- ☺ Our school is a mobile phone free zone (except in an emergency).
- ☺ Ensure that the office has up-to-date contact numbers and email addresses.

## How to Help When Your Child is at School

- ☺ Take a look at the learning boards to find out what your child has been doing in school.
- ☺ Take an interest in what your children are doing when you come to collect them.
- ☺ Tell your child about your day and ask your child about theirs.
- ☺ Talk to your children and let them ask questions.
- ☺ Try out the 'learning together' activities on the MINS website and on Seesaw (shared monthly).
- ☺ Try out some of the activities that you see on Seesaw.
- ☺ Follow your child's learning journey on Seesaw. Ask your child what they have been learning in school.

# The Golden Rules

Our rules are designed to keep children safe and are framed positively so that children learn 'what to do' rather than a list of 'Nos' and 'Don'ts!' The adults will model these rules to the children. Social stories, role play and books are used to explain the rules and encourage the children to understand and apply them. A summary of our school policies will also be shared with you at the time of Induction.

- ☺ We are gentle using safe hands.
- ☺ We are kind and helpful.
- ☺ We listen to others.
- ☺ We are honest and learn to tell the truth.
- ☺ We look after stuff and each other.
- ☺ We try hard and work hard.



## Clothing (Put a name on it)

Parents have requested the introduction of a practical clothing option for nursery school.

The Signature Works has been selected as an NI-based company providing quality clothing for our youngest learners, which is sustainably and ethically sourced.

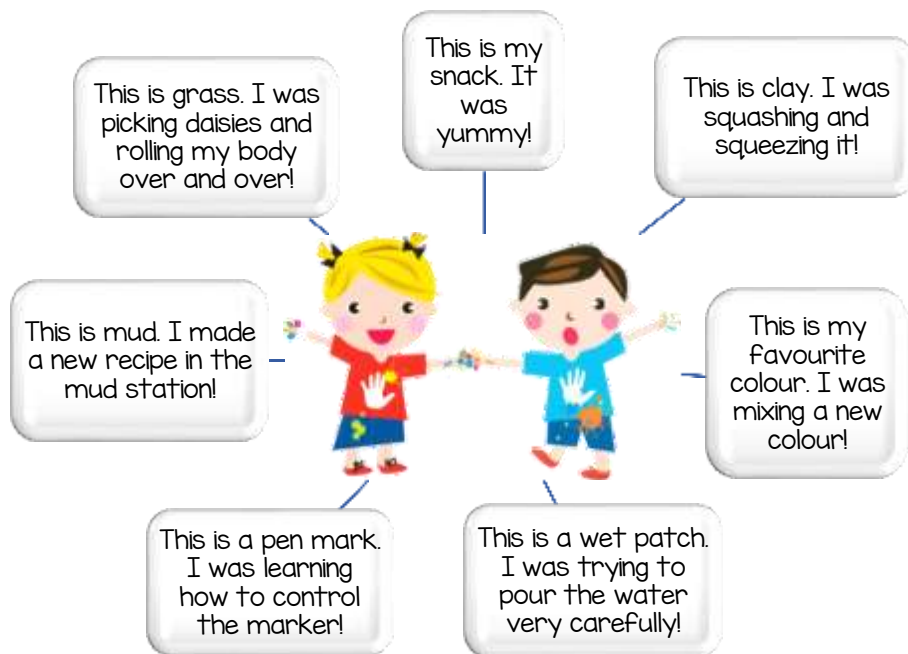
As nursery activities can be messy and children are always on the move both inside and outdoors, it makes sense that your child wears clothes that are easy to manage and that can get dirty! **All clothing must be named.**



- ☺ Sturdy, waterproof shoes with velcro fastenings (no laces unless your child can tie them)
- ☺ Tracksuit bottoms / leggings (shorts in warmer weather)
- ☺ T-shirt and microfleece
- ☺ Warm / waterproof coat
- ☺ Hat in winter / cap in summer
- ☺ Snood and gloves (no scarves)

For safety reasons, scarves, open-toed sandals / crocs, and jewellery are not permitted.

## A Day in the Life of My Jumper!



# Keeping In Touch

Working together, we will strive to provide the best quality education for your children. We plan to keep you up to date with the themes and learning experiences in several ways:

- ☺ Seesaw Learning Journey (details to follow in September)
- ☺ Learning Boards in each classroom
- ☺ Newsletters / Updates
- ☺ Curriculum Enrichment Experiences
- ☺ School website
- ☺ 'Learning Together' Programme on the school website and on Seesaw
- ☺ Schools NI App (please download and turn on notifications)
- ☺ Facebook posts
- ☺ Messages / emails via Schools NI app
- ☺ Settling-in Parent-teacher Meeting and Term 2 Progress Meeting (either by phone or in person)
- ☺ Meeting with Health Visitor at 3+ Health Review
- ☺ End of Year Transition Report when moving to Primary School

If you need to share important information with teachers, they are available at the start and close of each session. If you are a parent who cannot regularly leave to or collect your child from school, you are welcome to talk to the class teacher by phone (outside teaching contact time). Please contact the office.



## Attendance

We encourage your child to come to school each day (illness or medical reasons excepted). **It is important that all absences are explained.** You can do this using the form on the school website ([Parents > Reporting Absence](#)). Should you need advice, please contact the school office. The class teacher will follow up on unexplained or prolonged absences. The principal will also be kept informed and your child's nursery school place may be reviewed in line with the School Attendance Policy.



## Illness

Children who are ill will not be fit for the nursery activities including outdoor play, and require higher levels of care. They may need to take regular medicine which cannot be given by staff.

To prevent the spread of infection in our young children, please adhere to the following guidelines provided by the Department of Health.

Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting	48 hours after last episode
Chickenpox	Until all vesicles are crusted over
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24 hours after starting antibiotic
Starting Antibiotics	At least 48 hours after starting medication
German Measles	4 days from onset of rash
Whooping Cough	At least 48 hours after starting medication
Scarlet Fever	At least 24 hours after starting medication
Covid-19	As per updated PHA Guidelines

*\*Please contact the school for guidelines on other infectious conditions or check PHA information*

Parents will be informed (via the Schools NI app) if there are known cases of infection within the school (important for pregnant ladies and children who have low immunity).

If your child becomes unwell or injured during the nursery day, we will try to phone you or another adult in the order listed on the emergency contact list. Should we be unable to contact you, we will act in the best interests of your child and seek medical assistance or advice.

## Using the Bathroom

It is important that children are toilet trained before starting school. Teach your child to be as independent as possible in the bathroom and this will really help them to settle in quickly.

Should a persistent problem occur (the staff maintain a record book), the teacher will contact you to make a plan and may advise you to contact your child's Health Visitor. **Your child will not lose his/her place at nursery school.** The Principal will be informed and the School's Intimate Care Policy will guide these procedures.

## Medical Needs

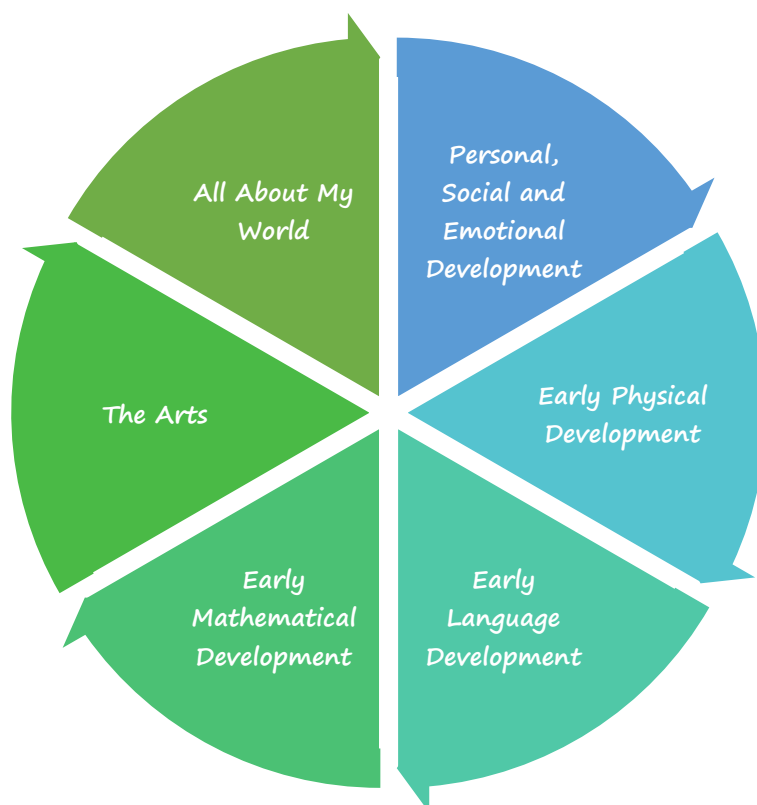
If your child has a diagnosed medical condition which will require medication, or will impact on your child during nursery hours, the school must receive a **medical care plan** from the relevant nurse or GP e.g. asthma, diabetes, coeliac, epilepsy, anaphylaxis.



# What will my child be learning?

## The Pre-School Curriculum

Knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding are key, and will be taught in an inclusive and integrated way using research and evidence-based approaches and pedagogy.



*\*Ref DE Curricular Guidance for Preschool Education*

The wellspring of learning comes from the children as they share their experiences with us and we scaffold and celebrate their learning.

## What Themes Will Be Used to Springboard Learning?

- All About Me and My School
  - Playing By Myself and With Others
  - The Adventures of Mr Hullabaloo and Friends
- Traditions, Festivals and Celebrations Around the World
  - Keeping Healthy and Safe
  - Exploring the Seasons and Weather
- Finding out about animals, habitats and our environment
  - Amazing Me, Amazing You, Amazing World
  - Moving On and Moving Up

# Shared Education and Curriculum

## Enriching Experiences

With large groups of children, it can be costly and challenging to go on class trips. We have found that bringing visitors and community members into school is a more effective, manageable and cost-effective way to enrich the learning experiences of the children. All experiences are risk assessed and a risk–benefit assessment is completed e.g. Mr Hullabaloo’s Interactive Theatre, Fit Minds, Relax Kids, NI Water, Jo Jingles and parental visits.



## Documenting Learning

The staff will keep detailed records of each child’s progress. This will take the form of photographs, videos, mark making examples, written observations and assessments, and anecdotal evidence. Learning will also be shared through Facebook, Seesaw App and Class Learning Boards. Information will be shared with you at parent teacher meetings and informal discussions. You will receive a link by email to sign up for ‘Seesaw’, thereby enabling you to share in the learning journey of your children. Your ‘voice’ and that of your child are integral to all that we do.

## Involving Others

The children and staff of the school benefit from the involvement and expertise of other key professionals from the education and health sectors. You will be informed before we liaise with these professionals and information will be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Examples include:

- Health Visitor e.g. 3+ Review
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist / Physiotherapist
- Paediatrician
- Social Worker
- Interpreter
- EA Impact Teams
- EA Educational Psychologist
- EA Behaviour Support Team
- EA Autism Spectrum Disorder Service
- Paediatric Autism Intervention Service

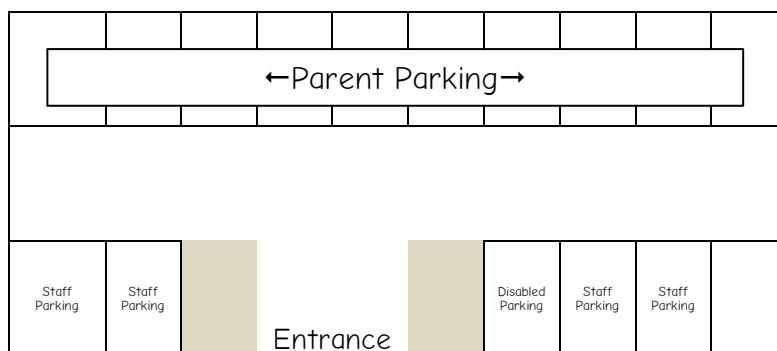
# Learning Support and Pastoral Care

We are a welcoming and inclusive school and will endeavour to support your children in whatever way we can, using the resources that we have available to us and the Graduated Response Framework (GRF).

In order to best provide for your children who may have emerging / confirmed additional needs, please talk to your child's class teacher who will signpost you in the right direction. Mrs Whiteside is the Learning Support Coordinator for the school and she will be happy to chat to you about any concerns that you may have. Working together, we will make a plan for any reasonable adjustments and adaptive arrangements to make in the provision for your child.

## Car Parking

**Please do not stop on the double yellow lines, on the yellow boxes, or in front of the emergency access lane to the left of the school. Also please adhere to the speed limit on the school grounds and any signage.** 4 parking spaces along the front of the car park, and spaces to the rear of the school building have been allocated to staff. 10 parking spaces to the rear of the car park are available for parents at pick up time, along with additional drop-off points in the laybys. We appreciate the busyness of the car park and the 5 minute drop off / 10 minute collection window for your child should help to reduce any parking difficulties.



Please keep this 'Getting Started' booklet for the duration of your children's preschool year.