

Dundela Infants' School and Nursery Unit



Nursery Parent
Information Booklet
September 2021

Welcome to Dundela Nursery

Dundela Infants' School and Nursery Unit

Wilgar Street,

Belfast,

BT4 3BL

Tel: (028) 90471234

Principal: Ms S Wilson B.Ed. (Hons.) PQH (NI)

Email: info@dundela.belfast.ni.sch.uk



Dundela Infants' School Nursery Unit is an integral part of Dundela Infants' School. The Nursery has two full day classes of 26, each staffed by a teacher and a nursery assistant. The Nursery day is from 8.45 am - 1.30 pm and school dinners are provided. We work as an open plan setting with dedicated and experienced staff who work alongside the children to facilitate and develop their learning in the play activities that they choose.

We strive to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment, so that all children reach their potential by:

- Promoting a positive behaviour and discipline policy
- Promoting a caring ethos where there is mutual respect between staff and children
- Ensuring a bright and stimulating environment with lots to investigate and explore
- Encouraging a wide and varied range of visitors to nursery, to extend the curriculum
- Ensuring the environment is safe and secure
- Encouraging parents to work with staff as partners in their child's education
- Keeping parents informed of what happens in Nursery, through monthly newsletters

The Curriculum

We follow the Northern Ireland Pre-School Curriculum Guidance which aims to ensure that each child develops at his / her own rate through challenging progressive play. There will be a wide variety of well planned and spontaneous experiences so that children will be engaged in learning situations designed to foster a range of skills.

The Pre-School curriculum is broad, balanced and provides progression. The all round development of the child is kept at the heart of the curriculum with stimulating and child appropriate activities. Skilled early years practitioners also follow the lead from the child in their learning by taking an interest in what they are playing with and helping to develop their play through effective questioning and playful interactions.

The curriculum consists of six areas of learning:

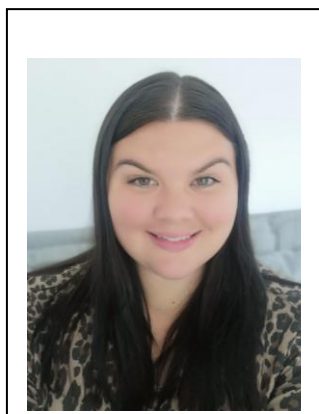
1. Personal, social and emotional development
2. Language Development
3. Early Mathematical Experiences
4. The Arts
5. Physical Development and Movement
6. The World Around Us



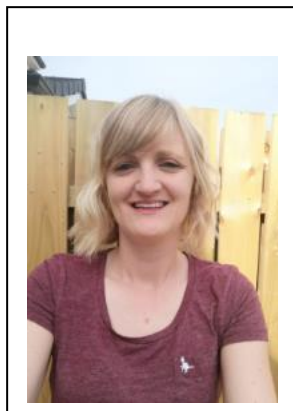
Please use the following link if you would like to learn more about the Pre-School Curriculum:

http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/pre_school

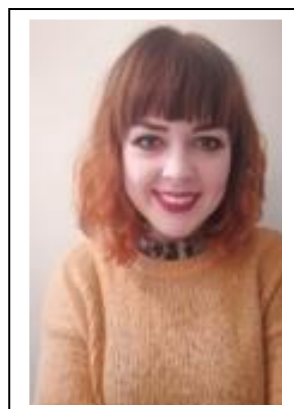
Staff



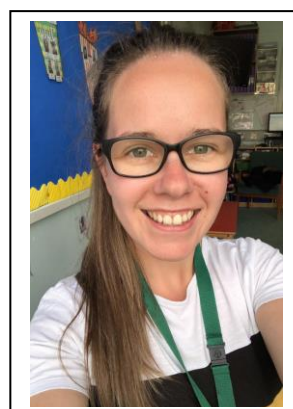
Mrs L Conly
N1 Teachers (Job share)
Nursery Co-ordinator
Deputy Designated
Teacher for Child Protection



Mrs S Bach



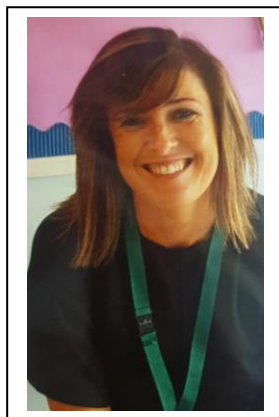
Mrs M Morris



Miss C McNeill
N1 Assistants (Job share)



Mrs L Clement
Mrs J Yohanis
N2 Teachers (Job share)



Mrs V Quinn
N2 Assistant

Help your child prepare for nursery

Here are some suggestions to help prepare your child before coming to school:

- Talk to your child about going to school and how exciting it will be. Talk about the nursery staff and the different areas of the nursery, i.e. playroom, quiet room, toilet area, outdoor area etc.
 - Allow your child to have opportunities for messy play, i.e. water, sand, dough and paint;
 - Read lots of stories and sing nursery rhymes with your child;
 - Create opportunities for your child to mix with other children and adults;
 - Go over our Golden Rules with your child (page 16);
 - Encourage your child to "help" at home and to become independent in certain tasks, e.g. using the toilet independently, eating independently and tidying up toys independently;
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- Fill in your special book with your child;



We regard you, our parents, as partners and your interest, support and co-operation are very important to life in the nursery, particularly as you have been your child's first and foremost educator. We hope you will support your child, realising the benefits of early years' education and extend the school experiences at home.

Settling in stages

This is a very new experience for your child and for you. We aim to work along with you to ensure that your year at nursery will be a positive and happy experience. We will treat each child as an individual and the pace at which he/she settles, will be determined by his/her particular needs.

Stage 1

A short visit will be arranged in **August** for you and your child to become familiar with the nursery environment.

Stage 2

Starting nursery- Children will attend in small groups of 13 for one hour. (Children with a statement of educational needs will be brought in prior to this.)

- This benefits your child as during the settling in period we aim to get to know the children very well and help them quickly get used to the rules and routines of nursery. This will work best when there is only a small number of children present.
- The children will be able to form friendships and gain confidence in themselves and their surroundings in a less intimidating setting.

Stage 3

As the weeks progress, the time your child spends in the nursery will be increased until your child is staying for the full session.

As your child becomes familiar with the new surroundings and gets to know the other children and the staff, he/she will become more confident and happier. The staff will observe your child closely and if we feel he/she is having any difficulty settling we will discuss this with you. Also, if you feel your child is having difficulty settling in then please let us know.



Arrival and collection arrangements

Arrival

The Nursery operates from 8.45am - 1.30pm each day. We regard the first 10 minutes of each session as a flexible arrival time to allow for primary school drop offs. The doors to the nursery will be locked 10 minutes after each session has started. If you are late, please ring the buzzer at the left-hand side of the doors. Please do try to arrive within the flexible time.

When you and your child arrive, please help to hang up his/her coat and bag. As the year progresses we will be encouraging all children to become more independent and do this themselves. Please make sure your child is safely in the classroom and do not leave your child in the cloakroom in the mornings. Please assist your child in finding their picture to sign in with at the registration station before you leave. Ensure he/she is safely handed over to the care of the teacher and that the teacher has acknowledged his/her arrival.



Leaving your child into nursery can be a very emotional time for both the adult and child. We fully understand this and will do everything we can to facilitate a smooth transition from home to nursery each day. Please take the advice of the nursery team - we do have lots of experience!

Collection

The safety of your child is of paramount importance to us. Therefore, the following procedures have been put in place: -

- You must complete the collection form giving the names of the 2 or 3 people most likely to be collecting your child during the year and state their relationship to the child. Names can be added throughout the year if needed.
- Unfortunately, we are not able to send a child home with anyone other than those named. The named persons must be over 16 years of age. (We also cannot release children to siblings who are under 16 years of age).
- If there is a problem with the collection of your child you must phone the school as soon as possible.
- It is very distressing for young children when parents arrive late. However, we do realise that on rare occasions this cannot be helped. If your child is going to be picked up late, please phone the school as soon as possible so we can prepare and reassure your child.

The Nursery has a very busy day and for the last 15 minutes children will be engaged in quiet activities in their room. There is a flexible collection time from 1.20pm onwards each day. Parents are invited to come into the classroom to collect their child and complete a task with them and see the art work and play.



Cars should be parked outside the school gates. The car park is for staff only. PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE CAR PARK TO TURN YOUR CAR WHEN THE GATES ARE OPEN.

The first day

Please ensure that you have the following ready to bring on your child's first day at nursery:

1. A clearly labelled bag with a change of clothes for your child.
2. A box of tissues for 'runny' noses and two packets of baby wipes
3. A pair of wellington boots in a clearly named bag.
4. A small book has been provided for you to stick in photographs of people, places and events which are special to your child and we would ask that this is returned to nursery on your child's first day. Your child can then use this special book as a source of comfort throughout the year as he/she looks at the familiar people and places. Feel free to write captions underneath the photos as this will be a great help to the nursery team when discussing the book with your child.
5. Please bring in completed consent forms and contact information sheets when you come for your visit. If you are unable to do this please make sure all forms are completed and sent in before your child starts, preferably before the end of June.
6. We will email you information and nursery newsletters so please make sure we have your email address (one per household). If you do not have an email address, please let us know. We will also use the Seesaw app to communicate with you and to share photos.

A typical day

Every day in nursery is busy and packed with lots of fun filled things to do:

- Arrival and self-registration
- Play based learning
- Snack
- Outdoor play
- Quiet room time: story, songs, circle time
- Lunch
- Small group time
- Table top play
- Home time



Online Payment System

We are delighted to inform you that we have recently signed up to the online payment system **SchoolMoney**. This means that you will now have the facility to make payments for Nursery expenses online with your debit or credit card.

It will not be necessary for you to sign up to this system as this is done automatically when your child is admitted on the school system. At this stage you will be sent a welcome message and a password to log on.

This new payment system will benefit both us as a school and you as a parent. Not only will you be able to pay for items from the comfort of your own home but you will also be able to access your account at any time to see if there is anything you need to pay for.

If you have a child at Strandtown, you will already be familiar with the system.

Due to the current situation it is planned that all money be paid online to avoid the handling of cash by staff.



Nursery fund



This money is payable for the whole term at the beginning of each term. Nursery Fund pays for snack, educational visits to nursery, seasonal activities and some additional resources. Money should be paid online.

Payment may be made on a monthly basis if this is more suitable.

For 2020 / 2021 Nursery Fund is as follows: Term 1 £60; Term 2 £45; Term 3 £45 (£15 per month = 75p per day).

School Dinners

£12.50 per week (£2.50 per day)

It is important that dinner money is paid online by Monday morning for the week. If you think your child may be entitled to free school meals a form is available from the class teacher or the School Secretary. Children are unable to be placed on the free meals register until written confirmation has been received from the Education Authority. It is essential that these forms are returned to the Education Authority prior to your child starting Nursery.

Uniform

Children in Nursery wear a uniform that is comfortable and practical. Uniform consists of the following:

Bottle Green Sweatshirt with school logo

Navy Blue Jogging Bottoms

White Polo shirt with school logo

Sweatshirts and jogging bottoms are available from school. We ask that you name all items of clothing and that comfortable shoes should be worn.

Additional information

Medical details

It is important that parents keep the class teacher informed of any medical details relating to their child. This includes the use of inhalers, allergies, dietary needs, speech therapy, occupational therapy, wearing of glasses, along with details of any other illnesses about which it is important we have information.

School staff are not permitted to administer medicines. If your child has a specific problem which may require medication in school, you are asked to discuss the matter with the class teacher. Children who are unwell should not be sent to Nursery and kept at home until 48 hours have passed from the end of their illness. Asthma cards will be provided for children who require medication during the school day.

Birthdays

Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic we are unable to accept birthday cakes in school. We enjoy celebrating every child's birthday by singing to them, presenting them with a special birthday certificate and letting them choose a special treat from the Birthday Box.

Personal details

If you move to a new house or change your phone number during the year, it is very important that you send us your updated information. We may need to contact you if there is a problem concerning your child.

Progress meetings

Parent teacher meetings will be held in October and March each year. You will be invited for a ten minute appointment to discuss how your child has settled into nursery and the progress that they are making will be shared. End of year reports are sent out at the beginning of June and sent on to your child's P1 teacher. If you wish to speak to your child's class teacher at any other time, please make an appointment to do so after school.

Child Protection

We have a responsibility towards the children in our care and each child has a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Dundela Nursery School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. You will receive a copy of the Child Protection and Intimate Care Policy before your child starts nursery.

I have a concern about a / my child's safety.



I can talk to the class teacher.



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Ms S Wilson) or in her absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher (Miss J Davidson) or the Deputy Designated teacher in Nursery (Mrs L Conly).



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (Mr W Pinkerton)
C/O Dundela Infants' School.

At any time I can talk to the Duty Social Worker at Gateway, Children's Social Work Service Tel: 02890507000 or (out of hours) 02895049999 or PSNI Tel: 02890259299 or 101 ext. 30299.

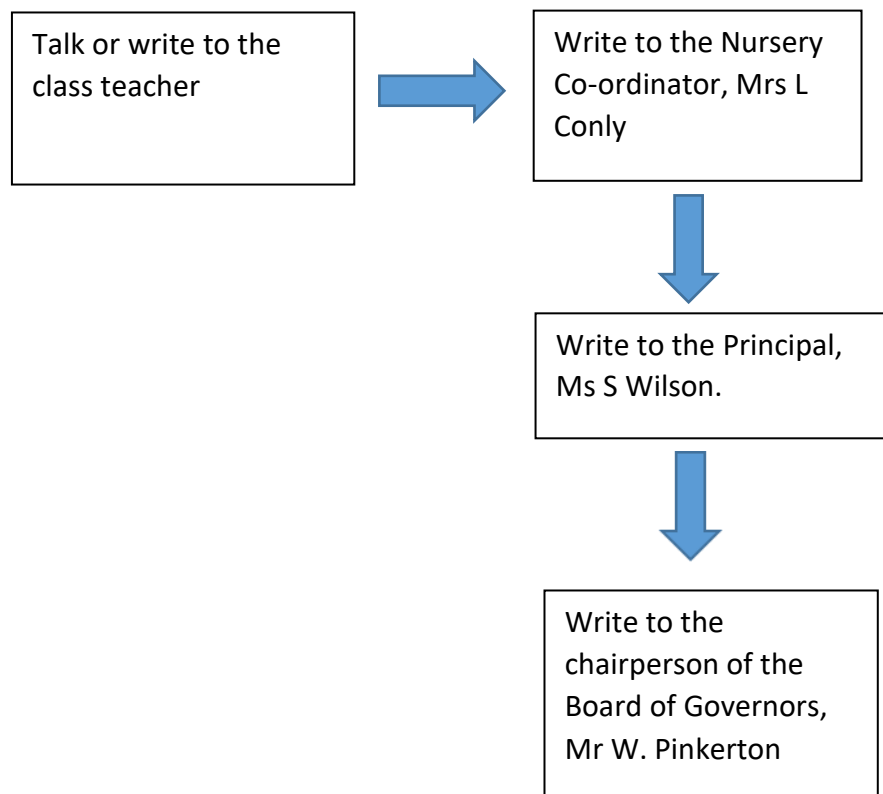
If you have escalated your concern as set out in the previous flow chart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

The full Child Protection Policy is available on request from the office and can be found on the school website.

The staff at Dundela Nursery School are very willing to listen to any concerns you may have and will endeavour to sort out any issues, should they arise.

If you feel a more formal approach is necessary, the full Complaints Procedure Policy is available on request.

Complaints Procedure - At a glance



Intimate Care

It is presumed that all children will be toilet trained before coming to nursery.

A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean themselves where possible.

Whilst children in the nursery may be at differing developmental stages regarding toileting or managing clothing, staff will always offer an appropriate amount of assistance with changing.

Please note- Staff do not routinely provide assistance such as wiping bottoms.

If a child has a toileting accident the Nursery Child Protection Policy Guidelines will be followed.

However, if this becomes a regular occurrence the staff will discuss with the parent the most suitable approach to take. Should it become apparent over a period of time that a child is not fully toilet trained and is having frequent toileting accidents, this will be raised with parents by the class teacher with a view to putting a suitable plan in place to support the child's developmental progress in toilet training. In some circumstances this may mean an individual phased induction process so that the child can benefit from an emotionally and developmentally appropriate toilet training experience. Parents will also be advised to contact their Health Visitor for advice and support.

If a child has a statement of educational needs, the nursery staff will determine the most suitable approach to toileting on an individual basis.

Intimate Care which may include nappy changing.

Dundela Infants' School and Nursery Unit is an inclusive school and welcomes children with a wide range of needs.

When a pupil has identified needs, which mean that he/she requires nappy changing during the school day, this will be discussed with the child's parents prior to beginning school. At present we do not have nappy changing facilities and so an appropriate intimate Care Plan will be drawn up in consultation/agreement with the parents.

We recognise that every child has different needs and each intimate care plan will be flexible and responsive in order to meet these needs.

It is very important you ensure a change of clothes is always available in nursery.

If we have had to change your child, we will place a record of the change in your child's drawer and ask you to sign this when you collect your child and speak to a member of staff.

NB If a child has diarrhoea

- The staff will contact the child's parent or guardian, and ask them to collect the child as soon as possible.
- The staff will follow the Public Health Guidelines and will remind the parent or guardian that the child can return to nursery after being free of symptoms for 48 hours to avoid the spread of infection.

Health Policy

You will be asked to complete a form giving a brief outline of your child's medical history so that we are aware of any problems such as allergies, speech or hearing problems. Please send this in as soon as possible.

- Children, who are unwell, have a temperature, or sickness, or who have an infectious disease should remain at home.
- If a child has suffered from any diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they must not attend the nursery until they have been symptom-free for at least 48 hours.
- If a child becomes ill during a session, every attempt will be made to contact one of the people listed on the registration form, to arrange collection of the sick child.
- If a child has a communicable disease, they should not attend the nursery until they are no longer infectious.
- If your child has taken medicine in the morning, please pass this information to the nursery staff.
- Any accidents that occur in nursery will be recorded on an Accident Form.

- A record slip, which you will be required to sign, will be placed in your child's drawer to inform you of any accidents on your arrival to collect your child.
- In the event of a more serious accident or any kind of head injury you will be contacted immediately.
- If your child has had chicken pox, the health guidelines state it is recommended that your child returns to nursery no earlier than 5 days after the rash has fully developed (e.g. 5 days from the appearance of the last spot).



Positive Behaviour

Dundela Nursery School encourages positive behaviour reinforcement at all times. This strategy aims to focus on 'good' behaviour instead of dwelling on the negative. Children will be rewarded for displaying positive behaviour.

We have a set of statements or "Golden Rules" which the children will be introduced to when they start nursery. It is important that you share and reinforce these at home to avoid confusion.

Our Golden Rules

- We share
- We take turns
- We listen
- We walk
- We tidy up

We explain to the children that rules are made so that everyone can Be Happy in school.

1. Be Kind
2. Be Safe
3. Be Ready to Learn



A child may not realise that certain behaviours are unacceptable in nursery as they may be acceptable in other situations, e.g. we can run outside but it is unsafe to run in the classroom. We take time throughout the day to explain to the children why we need the golden rules.

We also point out Indoors and Outdoor Rules and Rules of the Bathroom e.g. Bathroom Rules include that we flush the toilet and wash our hands afterwards.

It is our policy that children, who display disruptive behaviour, will be channelled and directed into more constructive, challenging and meaningful play.

The staff will consult parents in the event of any particularly serious problems arising with a specific child.

The full Positive Behaviour Policy is available on request.

Parents Comments

My daughter and I have felt very supported in Nursery 2. My child has gone in happily every day and has really enjoyed the outdoor space. (which I know the staff have worked very hard on).

The staff in Nursery 2 have been wonderful and I can't thank them enough.

K. McCann

I was an amazing year with Dundela Nursery. My son was such a happy child attending there. We have received extraordinary support from the teachers and I really feel we couldn't have picked a better place to start my son's education.

Anna Bednarczyk

My child has thoroughly enjoyed nursery but as any 4 year old does she has her off days sometimes. On these days the teachers are very understanding with her and send photos through the seesaw app to give me some reassurance that she is ok and is being cared for. It has been a wonderful experience even throughout lockdown there has been regular communication and online learning activities.

Thank you

Dundela Nursery has made our entire family feel so welcome and at home. There is always a friendly smile at the door. During the pandemic they have been incredibly supportive, staying connected with Hugo and checking in with us as a family. Hugo loves his nursery school so much and each morning is so excited to go.

K. Hendry

Josiah has loved Dundela Infants' from day 1- he loves going to nursery and telling us about what he has learned about. It has also been a joy to see him develop friendships with some of his classmates. We have found Dundela Infants' to be supportive, welcoming and friendly. We so appreciated all that the staff did during lockdown to encourage and support the kids while at home and not in school.