

Prospectus

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to introduce you to the work of The Grove Nursery School which is a well established school with the reputation for excellent high quality education. We welcome children from in and around Armagh and from the wider rural community. We appreciate diversity in our community and strive to meet the needs of all children from a variety of cultures and backgrounds.

Our experienced staff aim to ensure that all our pupils are happy and learning effectively. We believe that 'every child is special' and we will do our utmost to ensure that each achieves their full potential. We follow the N.I. Curriculum for Pre-School Education and aim to develop skills and attitudes that will prepare your child for primary school and indeed for life long learning.

We promise to provide a stimulating environment, resulting in a very positive and rewarding first experience of 'school' for your child. We recognise the important role of parents in supporting the learning and look on you as our 'partners' in the education of your child.

I hope that the information in this prospectus will give you some idea of the variety of experiences we can offer your child. However, this is only a 'snapshot' of our daily activities. You are welcome to contact me if you require further information or would like to make an appointment to view our school.

Looking forward to getting to know you and your child.

Joan Thompson .

Mrs. Joan Thompson B.Ed DASE
Principal



School Information

The full name and address of the school is:

The Grove Nursery School
Ballinahone Avenue
Armagh
BT60 1EE
Telephone: 028 3752 4644
Email: jthompson473@c2ken.net
Web: www.thegrovenurseryschool.co.uk



School Hours and Holidays

School hours are as follows:

8.45 - 1.00pm (until Hallowe'en)

8.45 - 1.15pm (after Hallowe'en)

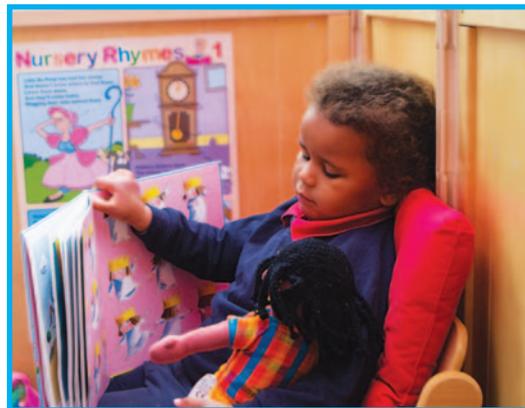
We operate a flexi home time in order to ease congestion in the entrance hall and in the car park. Doors open 15 mins before the end of school. Please be punctual!

The school has the usual holidays, the exact dates of which will be provided at the beginning of each school year.

School Uniform

The Grove Nursery School uniform consists of:

- **Navy blue jogging bottoms**
- **Navy blue sweatshirt**
- **Navy blue 'mistral' coat (water resistant with fleece lining)**
- **Red Polo T-shirt**



The uniform, with the exception of the red polo T-shirt, are obtained from Lila's, Armagh. The polo T-shirts are widely available at a reasonable price. School bags bearing the school logo may be purchased at the school.

Staff

Principal and Teacher: Mrs. Joan Thompson

Teacher: Mrs. Debbie Gervais

Classroom assistants: Mrs. Sharon Grimley

Mrs. Louise Rowe

Mrs. Karen Finlay

Cook: Mrs. Dawn Huston

Building Supervisor: Mrs. Christine Martin

Secretary: Mrs. Janette Carson



Aims



The Grove Nursery School aims to provide an education appropriate to the needs of three and four year old children. We aim to contribute to the physical growth and development, to the social and emotional experience and to the aesthetic and intellectual development of each child. We know that nursery education is a very valuable experience in itself, but also provides a sound foundation for further learning. We aim to provide a stimulating and secure environment in which children's individual differences and needs can be recognised and met, so that all aspects of their growth and development are promoted.

Each child is given opportunities to:

- Settle smoothly into the nursery environment
- Enjoy good relationships with other children and with adults
- Develop confidence, independence and self-discipline
- Use his/her initiative
- Play alone or be part of a group
- Respect others and acquire social skills
- Experience success and enjoy the consequent satisfaction of achievement
- Develop at his/her own rate through exploration of a wide variety of materials and equipment
- Experience the pleasure of books, stories, poetry, song, drama, movement and music
- Experience the wonder of science and the natural world
- Make an informed choice from a range of activities and materials available
- Maintain vital links between home and school
- Have fun - children who are not happy will not learn effectively

Organisation



The classroom is organised on an open plan basis. All children in attendance may use any part of the playroom, ie. children from the two classes mix freely. Each teacher takes her own group for 'together time' (ie. story, rhyme, music, drama, movement etc) and is with them at dinner.

During the morning a healthy snack is available to the children. Each child can go to the snack table during the morning where they have the opportunity to sit with other children and chat while they are eating. They are encouraged to pour their own milk or water and may choose from a selection of healthy snacks eg. fresh fruit (available daily), toast, bread (we provide a variety), crackers, scones (which we make ourselves with the children), pancakes etc. For variety we may have vegetable sticks or unusual fruits.

A meal is served in the middle of the day in a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. The meal is served by our staff each of whom sits with a group of children and eats with them. Nutritious, balanced meals are prepared by our own cook. Children are encouraged to try whatever is available but may themselves choose what to eat. In keeping with our health education policy we always have a choice of fresh fruit as well as a convenience desert such as shortbread, muffin, yoghurt.

Some families may be entitled to free school meals. Application forms are available from the principal or the Education Authority.



If your child has particular dietary needs relating to a medical condition eg. diabetes, lactose intolerance, celiac disease etc., these can be catered for.





Curriculum

We have a wide curriculum designed to give each child as broad and as rich an experience as possible. Throughout the year children are given the opportunity to take part in a range of activities including the following:

- Work with natural materials eg. clay, sand, water and wood
- Creative work using a variety of materials mediums and methods
- Cooking and baking
- Construction activities
- Listening to and taking part in music, song, poetry, stories, movement and drama
- Participation in a range of outings
- Imaginative play in a variety of situations eg. house, shop, hospital, office, restaurant etc
- Outdoor and indoor gardening
- Using books and quiet areas
- Using a range of paper and drawing/writing tools
- Physical play with a variety of climbing and balancing equipment, wheeled toys, ball games, large construction blocks etc.
- ICT - developing basic skills and enhancing learning using computers and iPads
- Using jigsaws, puzzles, games etc designed to develop early mathematical skills



Enjoying Active Play

Physical activity is important for enhancing the co-ordination and motor skills of young children. We emphasise the importance of movement and exercise and encourage children to be active. We play outside every day unless it is very wet. Even then, we sometimes take groups of children out with raincoats and umbrellas so that they can experience the weather at first hand. In our outdoor area there are opportunities for ball play, climbing, pedalling, balancing sand play, running etc. as well as gardening in beds and tubs, imaginative play, drawing, construction, woodwork, books etc. We have a large covered area between indoors and outdoors which contains our sandpit, workbench and a range of other activities. We have recently established a sensory area at the side of the school which provides the children with different outdoor experiences.

Being Creative

We see art for young children as a pleasurable, fun activity which allows them to express themselves freely, use their own ideas and to explore and experiment with various materials, tools and methods. We use a variety of paints, drawing materials, fabric, card, paper, junk etc and a wide range of tools. We believe that, through being allowed to demonstrate their creativity while being supported by informed, sensitive staff, young children can develop many other essential skills eg. motor skills, language, early maths and technology, mark making and early writing skills, social skills associated with sharing materials, tools, space etc. While we recognise that for young children the process is more important than the product, we also recognise that we can build children's confidence and self-esteem by appreciating their achievements and the beauty of their work.





Parental Involvement

At the Grove we recognise the importance of parents in their children's learning and we encourage parents to become involved in the life of the school. Good communication between parents and school staff is essential to the smooth running of the school and to the children's well-being.

- All parents are invited to an information evening at the end of June prior to their child starting school
- The organisation of our day enables us to meet parents informally on a daily basis as children are arriving at school or being collected. We are aware that daily contact with the school may be difficult for working parents. However, parents with an issue or query are welcome to ring the school any afternoon and speak to their child's teacher or to make an appointment to come in and meet the teacher.
- We communicate regularly with parents through newsletters, curriculum information, notices, home/school links on the School Website and SeeSaw Learning App.
- Parents are invited to concerts at Christmas and in the summer term and other events during the year.
- Parent teacher interviews are conducted twice a year - mid Autumn and Spring Terms. Further meetings can be arranged by appointment at any time.
- We encourage parents to assist on school outings to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the children.
- As an eco school we encourage parents to assist us with recycling and other eco projects.





Special Educational Needs

We recognise that all children are individuals and do not make progress in learning at the same rate. We make full provision for those children who, for one reason or another, may be experiencing difficulties. This may, for example, entail short term support with behaviour or speech or it may be that a child requires longer term support for an ongoing difficulty.



Children who are identified before admission as having special educational needs are integrated into the school as far as possible. An additional classroom assistant may be employed to assist with any

statemented children at the discretion of the Education Authority. We liaise on a regular basis with the Child Development Clinic, therapists and parents in order to support our SEN children.



Pastoral Care

It is our policy to do our best to ensure that the children enrolled in The Grove and their families receive the care and consideration to which they are entitled. We aim to support families and children by 'lending an ear' for parents, being readily available, giving extra assistance in emergencies. We try to see things from a parent's point of view so that we are best able to support parents' and children's needs. It is our policy to treat all children with respect and consideration at all times.

We have in place a Child Protection Policy which is circulated to parents at the time of admission. The aim of this policy is to ensure that we are providing a safe and secure environment for all children and staff.





Encouraging positive behaviour

The policy of the school is to re-inforce positive attitudes and encourage self-discipline, self-esteem and respect for other people and for property. If we experience ongoing problems with a child's behaviour we consult with parents as to how this might best be managed. We have various behaviour management strategies in place and we can take advice from the Education Authority behaviour management team if necessary.

Our School and the Community



Throughout the year we take the children on a number of outings in the local community. These are planned to promote aspects of their learning and development and to provide new experiences. Examples might include walks in The Folly, visits to other schools, theatre, museum, W5, Stream Vale Farm etc. An element of our safety procedure is that the children always wear fluorescent tabards and red hats when out of school.

We invite people from the community to visit the school eg police/fire personnel, road safety officer etc. We have lots of visits from artists, musicians, animals, etc.

We liaise with other statutory agencies eg. Child Development Clinic, Speech Therapists, Community Dental Service, Educational Psychologist.

Links with local primary schools are maintained throughout the year. We are often invited to events at other schools. Primary 1 teachers are invited to the school in May/June so that each child can meet his/her teacher in a familiar environment.

Admission Information

Parents of prospective pupils should obtain an application online from EA Website in early January of the year of admission. The Board of Governors applies our admission criteria to all applicants in accordance with required DENI procedures. Further information can be obtained by contacting the school.





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