

EYFS CURRICULUM

The Kindergarten at Annan follows the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive, they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are:

Communication and Language – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

Physical Development – Moving and Handling and Self-care

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The specific areas are:

Literacy – Reading and Writing

Mathematics – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures

Understanding the World – People and communities, The world and Technology

Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Our pedagogy

The aim of our kindergarten is to provide children with a high quality learning environment led by well-educated early year's practitioners who are committed to our pedagogy.

Our Froebelian approach to learning ensures that learning is child-centred, active and led by observation of children's interests and learning styles.

Our enabling environment affords children space and opportunity for open ended play, social play, conversation, risk and challenge and self-regulation. We place high importance on pro-social skills encouraging respectful communication and respect for the environment and other people.

Our play and other learning materials are usually made of wood and other natural materials that allow for open ended play and the opportunity for each child's imaginative and creative play to develop.

We aim to create a calm unhurried feel to the Kindergarten which begins as the children listen to the sounds of relaxing music at candle time and carries on throughout the day. Interruptions to children's time are limited to allow children to wallow in their play and become fully immersed in their learning. Snack time is fitted around where the children are and can be inside or out, in large or small groups.

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities with child led activities making up the majority of the activity.

Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is central to our philosophy and the adult is there to support children's learning, joining in when and where required to enable children to engage in deep meaningful experiences and develop sustained shared thinking.

Classroom organisation

Our kindergarten indoor classroom is arranged in zones with resources easily accessible to children. The classroom is set up in a way which provides children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. The indoor environment has a writing area, a focus area for literacy, maths and science, a creative area, book and carpet area, role play area, block play, small workshop area, small world area and an extensive outdoor area. There is a small kitchen where children can cook. Adults move to wherever the children need most support.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom. There are areas for different activities such as large water play with a working hand-pump, water tray, large block play, tuff-spot, climbing frame and swing, sand pit play, a mud kitchen and a wooded area for imaginative play. There is a pagoda for craft, stories, dressing up, dancing and a covered area for large block play, and gardening beds.

The outdoor area has numerous "loose parts" to support play anywhere in the garden such as crates, planks, tyres and logs. There are also tools, wheelbarrows and a workbench for woodwork.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years environment. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world.

Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

Teaching and Learning

Each day includes several carefully planned, adult led experiences for children. These might be aimed particularly at the Silver Birch (Reception) age group helping children develop specific skills such as phonics or pencil control skills. There are also teacher led activities for maths work or science and writing which aim to model new skills or develop and practice skills which have often come up from observation of the children at play. These are left out as child-led activities for children to return to and self-initiate. There are also sessions for key groups such as news time, music making, story time, phonics or game playing or time to use a story sack in a small group. There are also opportunities for movement, yoga and dance/Jabadao. These sessions can also help children to learn the skills of working in a group, listening to the adult and other children, and turn taking.

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and there are many opportunities to enjoy books around the setting. There are also books to borrow to read at home. Horse chestnut (preschool) children borrow books to share at home. Silver Birch (reception) children borrow reading scheme books and are also heard to read regularly in school.

Children are encouraged to engage in “risky play” and challenge themselves. They are also be involved in the planning for the setting through mind-mapping and regular discussions at circle time.

There are opportunities for discussion, for hearing the children’s voices, and time to be calm and reflect at candle time and other times.

Planning

Staff use daily observations and interactions of children to inform their weekly planning for children’s next steps. All kindergarten staff join together for a weekly meeting to discuss the following week. They also record thoughts about their key groups and incorporate gaps in children’s tracking into their key group times. Weekly plans are available for parents in the classroom. The class teacher is responsible for writing up the plans. Kindergarten staff have longer meetings half termly to discuss topic plans and plan trips and projects.

Kindergarten staff use their observation of children’s characteristics of learning and schemas (learning styles) to inform their practice ensuring that resources and activities are provided for each child.