

St Anthony's Nursery School



PROSPECTUS

September 2021 - June 2022

WELCOME - BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Dear Parent/Guardian

As Chairperson of the Board of Governors of St. Anthony's Nursery School, I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming you all and informing you of the aims of our school. We, the Governors and Staff, believe our school to be a vital part of our community and have an open door policy in welcoming all sections of our local community. Our school is a happy, safe environment for the fifty-two children in the care of our excellent staff.

Nursery is an important first step in education for life and we are firmly committed to providing effective education for all our children through our innovation, professionalism and pursuit of excellence. It is vitally important that children get the right educational start in life and are catered for as individuals in a caring environment.

We regard parents/guardians as an integral part of the education for life equation and our school aims to provide an environment whereby the children and their families, through partnership, can develop their confidence and self-esteem in a haven of learning. Parents/guardians can be assured that their child (children) will receive the best education and care possible.

The Board of Governors meet regularly and if you have any worries, concerns or suggestions that you would like discussed, feel free to contact me. Please remember that the success of our school depends on good co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and children – you have a vital part to play in creating a partnership with the staff and the local community. On behalf of the Governor's I would like to thank all parents/guardians for the support you have given to the school and the staff to date. The Governors acknowledge the commitment and co-operation of the school Principal, Mrs McDonald-Anakaa and her excellent staff, teaching and non-teaching. Our ETI Inspection March 2017 reaffirmed our status as **very good** in all areas inspected and are more than happy with the running of our Nursery School. We hope you are too.

Best Wishes

John Byrne Chairperson of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors welcome input from parents regarding any aspect of provision within the Nursery School. If an issue arises, parents/guardians are asked to talk to the Principal, your child's Teacher or contact the Chair of the Board of Governors.

THE NURSERY TEAM	
Principal & Teacher	Mrs Catherine McDonald-Anakaa
Teacher	Mrs Roisin Gamble
Nursery Assistants	Mrs Katrina McCormick Mrs Anne O'Lynn Miss Sarah Wright
Secretary	Mrs Roisin Lavery
Kitchen Supervisor	Ms Jackie McGarel
Building Supervisor	Ms Alexis Mullin

CONTACT DETAILS

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

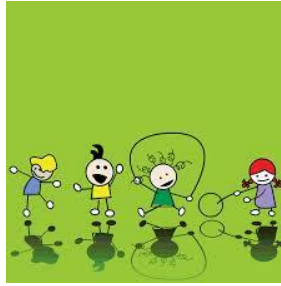
We, the Governors and Staff of St Anthony's Nursery, believe that each child entrusted into our care is individual and unique and is treated with respect, understanding and warmth by a highly skilled, nurturing and dedicated staff.

By working in partnership with our families, we aim to provide an environment which will support our children in becoming happy, secure, resilient, curious, independent, kind and enthusiastic learners.

We are firmly committed to providing an effective education, and boost the well being of all our children through our innovation, professionalism and our pursuit of excellence.

We will endeavour to provide a holistic environment whereby the children and their families, through partnership, can develop personally, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually in a haven of learning

Together we strive to lay the foundations for a life -long love of learning and a brighter future.



The Aims of St Anthony's Nursery School

The staff of St Anthony's Nursery aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment in which the children can develop respect for themselves and others, confidence, self-esteem, wellbeing, independence and resilience
- Provide an environment inside and outside the classroom, which extends the children's sense of wonder, lets them experience success and develop a positive attitude to learning & life
- Provide experiences that meet the children's physical, social, emotional and cognitive needs at their particular stage of development
- Develop and maintain a close partnership with parents/guardians where there is a respectful sharing of relevant information, which can be used to promote the development of individual children
- Value children as individuals and promote their welfare
- Provide the opportunity to discover that learning is fun
- Extend children's abilities to communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of ways



The Nursery Curriculum



We, the Board of Governors and Staff of St Anthony's Nursery School, believe that Nursery education is a highly valuable and important experience for all children.

Your child will learn through play in a carefully planned environment. Our monthly themes will be displayed on the Parent Notice Board and in our monthly newsletters.

Six Areas of Learning

➤ **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Coping with change/ well-being/ behaviour/ turn taking/ respect for self/ others/ responsibility/ attitude to learning

➤ **Language Development**

Conversational skills/attention and listening/ early reading- aware of print-story, rhyme, song/early writing skills-mark making

➤ **Physical Development and Movement**

Self help skills, safety/ gross motor skills/ fine motor skills

➤ **Early Mathematical Experiences**

Awareness of number, shape, pattern, colour, sorting;
understanding of language- size, quantity, position; awareness
of the passage of time



➤ **The World Around Us**

Early exploration, construction
IT; curiosity /understanding of natural environment/ Eco aware



➤ **The Arts**

Create, imagine, explore, discover art/craft/Design experiences;
Drama/Role Play: Music Dance and Movement

Is your child Ready to Learn?

- Brain Development - Children's early experiences during the first years of life are strongly associated with long term cognitive, emotional and social outcomes.
- 80% of a child's brain development happens before age 3
- Brain connections increase by 25% with good stimulus
- The importance of having a safe, stable, positive and nurturing Nursery and home life

Special Educational Needs

In accordance with the SENDO Order 2005, a child is deemed to have special educational needs if he/she has either greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age or a disability which either prevents or hinders making use of the educational facilities for children of that age.

Special educational needs may arise as a result of one or more of the following:-

- Physical disability
- Sensory impairment
- Speech and language problems
- Learning difficulties
- Emotional or behavioural problems
- Difficulties in social integration
- Giftedness

Children with special needs are welcome in our Nursery. The settling in period may be more gradual in these circumstances. Your child's teacher will work closely with you to ensure the best and most meaningful educational experience for your child. We will work in partnership with you & your child, Educational Psychology, SLT, Audiology, ASD Clinic etc.

The individual needs of all the children and staffing requirements are taken into consideration at all times - we are always mindful of the need to maintain the quality of provision for every child within St Anthony's Nursery School.

Child Protection/Safeguarding

Our Nursery has a Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, which has been approved by the Board of Governors. Every parent/guardian is given a copy of this policy.

Mrs C Anakaa is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs R Gamble is Deputy Designated Teacher and Mr O Fisher is our Governor for Child Protection.

Vetting- The safety and welfare of every child is our paramount responsibility. **All parents/guardians who wish to help in the Nursery or accompany us on trips must complete a Code of Conduct Pro-forma.**

Any students on placement will have Access NI vetting before they can start their placement. All students will be advised on our Child Protection Policy and procedures

Families in Partnership

We offer a warm welcome to our parents/ guardians and encourage strong home/Nursery links that benefit everyone, particularly your child/children

Our aim is to ensure that your child enjoys coming to Nursery and is happy with us.

Please feel free to approach your child's teacher at any time if you have a query or are concerned.

We encourage parents/guardians to join events in the life of the school, eg. MacMillan Coffee Morning, Trips, Eco Events, Stay & Plays, Sports Day etc. (Covid restrictions allowing)

All children's rights are respected and we encourage all adults to maintain strict confidentiality on behalf of our children, inside and outside Nursery.

Stay and Play Welcome Day



Due to the Covid 19 situation we are unable to plan for this at the moment but will keep you informed. Before your child starts Nursery, we invite you and your child in August to come and see their classroom and become familiar while playing alongside you. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to talk with their child's teacher. It would be helpful to inform the teacher of anything which you feel is important to your child's wellbeing. All discussion will naturally be treated on a need to know basis.

Sickness

If your child is ill, please do not send her/him to school. When children are sick, they want comfort from someone very close to them. It is very difficult to give a sick child the attention he/she needs without neglecting the other children. In order to prevent the unnecessary spread of virus's/ 'bugs' like diarrhoea, vomiting and conjunctivitis, we would ask that you follow NHS directives. The office can inform you of Public Health Guidelines. If your child becomes sick or unwell in school we will need to ring you or a contact person who will be able to come to collect your sick child.

If your child is displaying any of the signs of covid 19 she/ he should not be sent to school and a covid test should be sought. Please follow all PHA guidance and email your child's positive or negative result into school

**Do we have emergency contact numbers for your child?
When your mobile number changes, we need to know!!**

Car Parking



Parents/guardians and visitors to the Nursery should park their cars in the car park at the rear of the school, not in the front driveway/entrance where parked cars cause obstructions for other road users. **There is a one way system around the car park, please follow this, passing the primary school and back round to our Nursery. There is a 5mph speed limit. Please access with extreme care – mindful of children/adults crossing.**

Parent/ Guardian Notice Board

The notice boards in the hall display information for parents/ guardians e.g. monthly newsletter, monthly planning themes, infectious diseases, magazine articles and topical issues, photos of events and our Eco Board.

Educational Enrichment Curriculum

Due to the Covid 19 situation, school trips and visitors into Nursery may need to be curtailed

During the year, we offer a variety of enriching activities to places of interest or invite visitors into school, to enhance the children's learning opportunities. These activities are usually linked to the themes we are covering.

The cost for trips (buses) is usually subsidised by the school with your weekly Nursery fund, to ensure our children can participate in activities which we feel will be of benefit.

We greatly appreciate your help on trips in order to fulfil our adult to child ratio, to safeguard our children. In line with our Child Protection Procedure, all parents/volunteers must sign up to a code of conduct. See any member of staff if you would like to assist. We welcome your support on trips to make them successful for the children.

Coming to Nursery and Going Home

Due to the Covid 19 situation start and end times may be staggered

It is important for your child to make the most of the Nursery session. Please be on time every day - all good habits begin in Nursery. If you do sleep in, please bring your child regardless of the time.

Your child must be brought to school and collected from school by a parent/ guardian or other responsible adult. Please inform staff if someone different is going to collect your child. **(over 16yrs old only)**

Our policy is not to allow your child to leave Nursery with:-

- Someone we do not recognise or is not on your Collection from Nursery list
- Children under sixteen
- Or to go home on their own

Please try to collect your child promptly after the Nursery session each day. Young children get easily distressed when all their friends have gone home. If you do get held up, please phone us so we can then reassure your child.

The Nursery Session

Due to the Covid 19 situation session times may differ. We appreciate your understanding. The health and safety of our children, staff and families is paramount in any decisions taken.



Full Time Session

9.00 am - 1.30 pm

5 days a week

The Nursery Day

- Golden Rules in place for safety and comfort of structure and routine
- Visual Timetable so children are aware of the structure of the day
- All Children involved in all routines- tidy up/ independent at snack/ dinners and lunches/ teeth cleaning etc

All areas of curriculum are in everyday play;

- Story
- Songs and rhymes
- Sensory Play
- Outdoor Play
- Construction
- Mark Making
- Talking and Listening
- Technology
- Eco Awareness
- Sharing/ Turn Taking
- Positive Behaviour
- Developing independent skills
- Sorting
- Counting





Settling into Life in the Nursery

The settling in period is a very important time for you, your child and the Nursery team. We gradually admit small groups of children over the first few weeks.

When your child starts school, she/he will only stay for a short session. The length of time that your child stays will gradually be increased until he/she is staying for the full session- this will be at your child's Teachers discretion.

Most children settle into school very easily, so just relax and don't be in a hurry to rush this very special time.

Your child has to adjust to a new environment, new adults, new children and finding their own feet without their mum, dad, granny - it's a big step!!

Time spent getting your child smoothly settled in and ensuring your child is happy coming into Nursery every day will have long term positive effects on how they manage with long term schooling.

When you are leaving your child to 'fly solo', please check what time your child is to be collected from the list you will be given in your pack.

Try to keep your anxieties to yourself and only promote all the positives about Nursery to your child. Remember, they can sense/react to your emotions.

Getting Ready for Nursery School

Talk with your child about coming to Nursery and help him/her to look forward to this big step. Try to prepare him/her in the following ways:-

- Ensuring your child is emotionally and physically ready
- Talking positively about Nursery and use staff name
- Practice separation if necessary
- Good bedtime, toileting, eating routines
- Familiarise with our Golden Rules
- Draw, paint, use dough
- Ride a tricycle, throw and catch a ball
- Sit for story
- Join in rhymes and songs
- Talk about their experiences/try new experiences



- Interact with other children
- Tidy/clear away their toys
- Take off their coat and hang it up
- Change shoes/wellies
- Use a knife and fork
- Wash and dry their face and hands
- Dress and undress themselves
- Use the toilet independently for no 1's & no 2's. Pull down/up our own clothes, clean themselves, flush, wash hands.
- Use a hanky/tissue to blow their nose
- Find time to read stories and talk about the pictures
- Teach your child Nursery rhymes and songs
- Give them 'away' time from you, so they are used to being apart from you



Planning - Why and how we plan

Staff plan together to ensure we cover all areas of the pre-school curriculum

- Yearly Planning
- Monthly Planning
- Weekly Planning
- Generally two topics a month/ Seasonal (you will be notified of these through monthly newsletter)
- Desired Learning Outcomes - Observations
- Special Educational Needs
- Parents informed through website, newsletter, notice boards, text service, See Saw- if in doubt ask a member of staff

Assessment and Record Keeping

We carry out observations to help build up a record for each child

- Monitoring pupils progress
- Informing planning
- Pupil Files
- Monthly Observations
- Parent Meetings
- Settling In Report (October)
- End of Second Term Report (April)

➤ Transition Form for Primary School (June)

Clothing

All children wear Nursery uniform. This ensures they are free to play without worrying about getting messy. You can purchase our Nursery uniform from Woodsides Larne and Square Wear in Carrickfergus. **We advise thinking ahead and buying a sweatshirt in a bigger size for later in the year.**

Uniform - Choice of Blue/Red/Yellow/Green/Purple sweatshirt, navy/ black joggers and a polo shirt- **No belts, zips, buttons etc if possible.**

Children can wear navy/black shorts/ cropped leggings in the warm weather.

Shoes - It helps us if shoes do not have laces, so **Velcro please** (laces are a tripping hazard) and safer for your child. For health and safety reasons, shoes need to be suitable and safe for climbing/running so no sandals/flip flops.

All items of clothes **must** have your child's name on it, even shoes!

A coat is a must for **everyday** in the Nursery as the children will have an opportunity to play outside - our Nursery site experiences cold winds.

Children may leave a sunhat in school for use in spring/summer months.

If a child is not well enough to go outside, then she/he is not well enough to be in Nursery.

Nursery Fund

The Nursery Fund is £5 per week. You may pay this weekly/monthly. This money helps to cover the cost of school trips, snacks, art supplies, gardening, cookery, special events like parties, entertainment, Christmas/Easter/birthdays/graduation etc. This money also helps to provide fruit and other healthy foods on a daily basis for snack as well as basics such as tissues/wipes etc.

From time to time we run fundraising events for our Nursery, eg Movie Munch Nights, Sponsored Easter Bunny Hop, Christmas Hamper raffle etc.

From time to time we also run fun/special events for charity e.g. Macmillan Coffee Morning, Pyjama Day for Children in Need, Spots and Stripes Day for the World Wildlife Fund.

Due to the Covid 19 situation we are not currently able to plan for these events.

In common with all schools our financial situation is 'challenging'

Our budget does not cover any extra and we heavily reliant on parental/guardian contributions/fundraising to provide best opportunities and experiences for our children

School Snack



Morning Snack - The daily snack is a learning experience for all children. The snack is varied to give the children the opportunity of tasting different types of food, including a variety of fresh fruit & raw vegetables, toast, bread, pancakes, crackers, muffins, cheese, milk and water. Water is freely available for the children through the Nursery day from our water cooler.



The children brush their teeth every day after snack or lunch time. (covid restrictions allowing)

Your Nursery Fund donation pays towards a daily healthy snack

Mid-Day Meal

Children have a choice at lunch-time. They can bring a packed lunch or they can have a school dinner, which currently costs £2.50. You will be given more details about this in the new term.



The monthly dinner menu is displayed in the entrance hall and updated monthly on our website. The Monthly Newsletter, upcoming diary of events and the monthly dinner menu will also be emailed to Parents/Guardians.



If you child has any particular allergies, please tell us as it is important for all staff to have this information. We will require a letter from your Doctor regarding any food allergies/special dietary requirements before our Kitchen can make special provisions for your child. The Kitchen can provide for cultural/religious kosher/halal etc food requirements. We operate a Healthy Eating Policy and to ensure we maintain our Healthy Eating Award status, we request that crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks are not given for lunch. Only water should be sent in for packed lunches (no juice). We can provide a glass of milk. We operate a nut free zone policy, so please do not send in any food that may contain nuts.

In maintaining our accreditation as a Healthy Eating School, and our Eco Schools accreditation we aim for 'No Waste Lunchboxes'. For those bringing in a packed lunch to Nursery, we ask that containers are used for all lunch items, no papers, plastic spoons &

single use plastics. Uneaten food will be sent home. We also have one vegetarian meal per week for our school dinners.

Free Meals

If you think your child is entitled to free School Meals and require an application form, please phone the Education Authority 028 2565 3333 or speak to our Secretary Roisin who will have forms available.

Even if your child does not intend to have school dinners, but you are entitled to these, it would be appreciated if you would send off an application form anyway as this effects our school budget and ensures the Nursery gets additional funds into our budget

It is advisable to send this form off as soon as possible, as we are unable to provide free school meals until we have had confirmation from the Education Authority.

Positive Behaviour in the Nursery

The staff encourage the children to develop self-control, discipline and wellbeing by talking about their feelings instead of expressing anger, jealousy etc... in a negative and physical way.

Our Golden Rules are :-

- We use our gentle hands
- We take turns & share
- We look after our toys and books
- We use our 'quiet' voice indoors
- We listen to our teachers
- We play safely outside



You will be provided with a copy of our Positive Behaviour Policy.

The safety and wellbeing of all our children is of utmost concern. Children who misbehave will be talked to in a positive manner and told why their actions are not acceptable. A 'Time Out' on the 'Thinking Chair' for 3/4 minutes may be used. Your child's teacher will keep you informed of any behaviour concerns. Ideally, school and parents/guardians work together to promote safe and positive behaviour.

Please feel free to discuss any concerns with your teacher and do let us know if your child is upset or anxious about anything. All discussions will be on a need to know basis.

CODE OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDREN ATTENDING ST ANTHONY'S NURSERY SCHOOL

Please explain these to your child

- We are kind to our friends
- We all help each other
- We share and take turns with our friends
- We tell our grown-ups if we or someone else is hurt or upset



Indoor Play

- When we start something, we finish it
- We look after our toys and books
- We help tidy up
- We recycle our paper/plastics
- We walk in the Nursery
- We put things back where they belong
- We brush up the sand/mop the spilled water (we have child size brushes & mops)
- We pick things up when they fall on the floor

Toilet Routine

- We use the toilet when we need to
- We close the toilet door
- We flush the toilet
- We wash our hands for 20 seconds using soap
- We dry our hands & put the paper towel in the bin
- We ask our teacher for help if we need them



Eating Together Routine

- We wash our hands for 20 seconds
- We sit at the table

- We say please and thank you
- We talk quietly with our friends and grown ups
- We like to try new things
- We try to finish our meals
- We recycle our food scraps, plastics, paper and cardboard



Talking and Listening

- We talk quietly in our Nursery
- We speak one at a time
- We wait our turn to speak
- We listen at story time
- We join in songs and rhymes
- We listen to our grown-ups and our friends
- We come when our teacher asks us
- We ask our teacher if we are not sure about something

Outdoor Play

- We play safely outside
- We look where we are going
- We hold hands when we go for a walk
- Our bikes stay on the play road
- We come when our teacher asks us
- We use the ladder to climb up
- We slide on our bottoms coming down the slide
- We cross the play road at the zebra crossings
- We are gentle with our friends and our toys



In Conclusion...

Please feel free to ask your child's teacher about any queries you may have - we are here to help both you and your child.

During this year at Nursery your child will receive an excellent foundation for the future in a safe, comfortable, stimulating and caring environment. Our ETI Inspection March 2017, reaffirmed our status as **very good** in all areas.

Our Nursery School is a haven of learning for preschool children enhanced by a highly qualified enthusiastic and motivated team who will endeavour to encourage your child and ensure they have the best possible start on their educational journey.



Comments from Parents/Guardian Questionnaire

- “my child has been very happy at your Nursery”
- “It is an excellent, nurturing environment with lovely staff”
- “A fabulous Nursery School where all my children have been extremely happy”

- “I was made to feel very involved in my child’s education”
- “My child has loved going to Nursery School every single day”
- “Such a caring & positive environment for my daughter”

Comments from our children

What do you like best about Nursery?

- “playing with my friends”
- “seeing my teachers”
- “Playing outside”
- “being the line leader”
- “playing with the teachers who make me feel so happy”
- “My teachers, my friends and the play frame”
- “playing on the slide, swings, scooter & balancing frame
- “making things with play dough”

