



# Castlebar School

## EYFS Policy

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## 1. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

- To create a warm, caring and well organised learning environment and provide quality learning experiences for all the children.
- Learning to be through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
- To provide a broad, balanced, creative and relevant curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities.
- To assess the children's individual needs and provide a range of relevant interventions and strategies that support each child to progress and realise their full potential.
- To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
- To provide a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all the children.
- To develop a strong relationship with parents and carers to work in partnership to support and enhance the development of the children.

## 2. Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classes at Castlebar School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure and stimulating environment. The curriculum is based on an Integrated model around "seven areas of learning":

### The prime areas:

- Personal, Emotional and Social Development. (PSED)
- Communication and Language. (CL)
- Physical development

### The specific areas:

- Mathematics.
- Literacy.
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

It is intended that this model should lend itself to making effective connections across subject boundaries. This creates meaningful opportunities to emphasise some key elements of learning and development that many of our students need over time i.e. social, emotional, fine and gross motor skills. Implicit in our planning is a focus on communication, independence, life and social skills and a capacity for critical thinking which should support our students to play a full and active role in the world.

We seek to provide equal opportunities to allow experience of a curriculum which is balanced, relevant, and reflects cultural diversity. The curriculum and creative means of delivery reflects our commitment to access and inclusion for all of our students.

The Speech and Language therapists and Occupational therapists work closely alongside class teachers and class staff to assess individual pupils' needs and to support the target setting process. Through a facilitative approach the Multi-Disciplinary team also support class staff with the delivery of specific programmes and interventions to further develop key areas including Communication, Independence and Socialisation. Individual children's sensory needs are also monitored closely and the class team follow individual sensory plans developed by the Occupational Therapists. The CLL team also liaise with class staff and the Multi-Disciplinary team to further develop the use of effective strategies and interventions used to support areas including language development and pre-writing skills. School work alongside home to further develop children's self-care skills including toileting, feeding and dressing. We aim to develop independence skills in order that our pupils will be able to function as independently as possible and not rely upon others to organise and direct them. It is therefore essential that we establish and maintain ways of

working, as early as possible, which enables the pupil to be able to organise themselves (over time) and gives meaning to their world. In order to do this we use;

- Visual timetables
- Separate work areas and individual workstations
- Individual daily schedules with a defined start and finish
- Use of Makaton and PECS
- Short, structured group introductions
- Visual aids for pupils to respond appropriately in terms of understanding and social understanding
- Visual aids to introduce and model activity
- Key vocabulary highlighted
- Move towards the development of self assessment skills
- Adaptations e.g. –software, hearing devices, magnifiers
- Programmes of work based on TEACCH learning principles
- Social stories – to promote understanding and improved behaviour/social skill
- Precision teaching
- Look and learn groups
- Elements of the Walden technique
- Intensive Interaction

### 3. Planning, Recording and Assessment

Topics are planned on a 2-year cycle, so that children will experience activities within each topic as they progress through the EYFS and into KS1. Adult focused and independent carousel activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, small group and 1:1 activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. In addition, children experience aspects of the Primary National Strategy throughout the day where appropriate e.g. mental and oral work, shared reading and writing, as well as phonics, using the letters and sounds materials as appropriate to the individual child.

#### Long Term planning

Our curriculum is based on the EYFS seven areas of learning (Prime areas -Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development. Specific areas – Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design). Each area has its own curriculum map which has been designed to meet the needs of all the children allowing them to access the learning.

#### Medium Term Planning

Our medium term planning develops the framework through the use of learning objectives that cover the needs of all the children in each year group. The medium term planning identifies the learning objectives, activities, assessment opportunities and differentiation for each unit of work. It also takes into account each pupil's IEP (Individual Educational Programme). Medium Term planning is completed at the beginning of each half term or term through consultation in team meetings that take into account each child's targets and needs for each unit of work.

#### Short Term Planning

Teachers are required to devise weekly plans which detail lesson activities, groupings, staff responsibilities, details of teaching and learning styles, group objectives and lesson evaluations. The learning objectives are informed from the medium term planning objectives and learning from previous lessons. Individual objectives should also be informed from previous lessons as well as from the child's IEP. It is an explicit expectation that formative assessment is carried out for all lessons and in turn this information informs both immediate learning needs and also helps inform accurate levelling of each pupil's achievement. It is expected that teachers will plan activities to teach each learning objective using a range of teaching and learning styles.

### Recording and Assessments

Teachers carry out detailed assessments of the children upon entry into Reception. Individual Education Plans are written and reviewed termly and assessments are recorded on the Pupil Progress. Termly progress meetings alongside the Cluster Leaders and Assistant Heads support teachers to effectively monitor the progress of pupils. Reception pupils are assessed against Development Matters on entry and at the end of the year.

Class staff also work alongside the Multi-Disciplinary team to assess individual children's progress and plan for appropriate strategies and Interventions to further support their development.

A range of systems are in place to support the gathering of information to inform planning and assessment procedures including:

- Photographs, particularly those demonstrating the process of learning
- Individual observations, both planned and on the spot.
- Individual Education Plans
- Behaviour/sensory plans if appropriate
- Pupil progress records
- Pupil assessment sheets
- Regular discussions with staff
- Multi-disciplinary team observations
- Sample work
- Moderation sessions

## 4. Transitions

In the prior summer term new Reception parents are invited to an Induction Meeting to be introduced to key staff across the school including therapists from the Multi-Disciplinary team and the school social worker. This is also an opportunity for staff to go through key information and expectations.

The child's class teacher will carry out a home visit in the Summer Term to gather information about the child including any medical and dietary requirements.

Children are invited into school for an afternoon alongside their parents to meet their new staff and peers and to explore the new classroom environment. The teacher will also send home photos of the new class staff to give families an opportunity to prepare the child for starting school and will offer advice to support them during this process.

A Castlebar New Pupil Transition Form is sent to all receiving schools and nurseries before pupils start at Castlebar. This ensures that staff have all the relevant information to work effectively with pupils and ease transition.

Before moving into KS1 children will attend up to 4 transition sessions in their new classes with their new staff and peers to prepare them for the coming changes.

## 5. Play and the Environment

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and challenging. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Alongside the Multi-Disciplinary team we work hard to develop individual children's communication and interaction skills which supports them to access the play opportunities.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Develop Independence and Interaction skills

- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate with others
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

We recognise the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to support the learning.

## 6. Partnership with Parents and Carers

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we believe that partnership with parents and families is paramount. To develop this partnership we provide the following opportunities:

- Initial home visit and school visits to meet the new teacher and class staff.
- Termly Structured Conversations – target setting process for home and school to work together.
- Daily communication in the 'Home School Diary' to let parents know about the days activities and progress made.
- Parent coffee mornings – guest speakers and a chance to build relationships with other families.
- Range of Parent Workshops including Makaton, Sleep Workshops, Developing Independence, Developing communication, How to play with your child etc.
- Access to the Multi-Disciplinary team to offer support and advice for issues at home.
- Support from the Behaviour Team, School Social Worker and teaching staff to develop strategies at home.
- Use of the 'Wow' cards for children to share with school some of the great things they have achieved at home.

## 7. Equal Opportunities

We will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences. When necessary we will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure all children can access all opportunities

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.
- To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.
- To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity.
- To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.
- To encourage children to respect their own cultural background and beliefs and those of other people.

## 8. Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.