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Arellian is a place where

everyone is valued for their uniqueness and positive qualities
there is a love of learning
children and adults learn together
everyone associated with the school works together in partnership
thinking, questioning enquiry, exploration, and creativity are
nurtured and prized
children and adults trust, respect, and care for one another
everyone is expected to take and accept responsibility
everyone reflects on their learning and achievements so that
they can continue to develop and extend their potential
the environment is secure, attractive and stimulating
members of the local community can join in the learning and use
the school as a resource
Background Information

School: Arellian Nursery School
Address: 50 Bentham Drive
         Belfast
         BT12 5NS
Telephone: 028 90325280
Fax No.: 028 90325280
Principal: Ms. Jenny Pogue M.Ed,B.Ed,PGDipEd
Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mrs. Elizabeth Wright
Number of pupils: 52
Arellian Nursery School was the first Nursery School in Ireland. It was founded in 1928 by Members of the Arellian Association (former pupils of Richmond Lodge School). The members not only built the school but also funded it from 1928 to 1948, until the school was handed over to the Belfast Education and Library Board. Throughout the years the members of the Arellian Association have continued to serve on the school management committee. We are fortunate to have members of the Association on our present Board of Governors.
The Staff Team

Classroom 1

Jenny Pogue (Principal)
Janine Keys (Nursery Assistant)
Lisa Gorman (Nursery Assistant, SULP Co-ordinator)

Classroom 2

Claire Foster (Teacher)
Ruth Smyth (Nursery Assistant)

Extended Schools Staff

Janine Keys (Co-ordinator)
Kirsty Boyd
Michelle Hegan

School Office

Sinead McKee (Manager)

School Meals Staff

Anne Bryans
The Board of Governors is a statutory body, which meets on at least one occasion every term. The Governors help with the overall running of the school and are especially concerned with:

- Setting school aims and policies in relation to the curriculum.
- Pupil admissions.
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Special educational needs.
- Child protection.
- Pastoral care.
- Selecting staff.
- Maintenance of school buildings and grounds.
- Financial matters.
- The production of an annual report and the organisation of an annual general meeting which provides parents with opportunity to raise any matter to the manner in which the Board of Governors or Belfast Education and Library Board have carried out their duties.

Members of the Board of Governors

Belfast Education and Library Board Representatives

Mrs. E. Wright (Chairperson)
Mrs. R. Goldie
Mrs. M. A. Duncan

Department of Education Representatives

Ms. M Sinnamon
Ms. M Lark
Mrs. S. Simpson

Parent Representatives

Mrs. A. Patton
Mr B. Robinson

Teacher Representative

Ms. C. Foster
Admissions Criteria

The Board of Governors will apply the DENI criteria in allocating places for September 2010.

1. Children born between 2 July 2006 and 31 August 2006 whose parent(s) / guardian(s) is / are in receipt of Income based Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support.

2. Children born between 1 September 2006 and 1 July 2007 whose parent(s) / guardian(s) is / are in receipt of Income based Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support.


5. Children born between 2 July 2007 and 31 August 2007 whose parent(s) / guardian(s) is / are in receipt of Income based Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support.

6. Children born between 1 September 2007 and 1 July 2008 whose parent(s) / guardian(s) is / are in receipt of Income based Jobseekers or Income Support.


Where the school is oversubscribed at any stage the following sub-criteria will be used in addition if necessary:

Proximity to the school of the child’s home address, that is, the address at which they sleep.

Late applications will be considered after these on a first come first served basis, the DENI criteria will apply.
Please remember our times.
9.00 AM - 1.30 PM.

Please try to bring your child as close to 9.00 AM as possible as a lot is packed into the nursery day and your child will miss out if they are late. In the afternoon the children are often participating in stories and rhymes from 1.00 - 1.30 PM and if you collect your child early they may miss out on important activities.

Teaching takes place throughout the day.

Extended Services

Breakfast Club 8.30 am - 9.00 am  
After School Club 1.30 pm - 3.00 pm

Summer Club

Available throughout July. Please check with staff for details.
The Nursery Day

A typical day for your child in the Nursery would be as follows:

9.00 AM - 11.00 AM
Structured indoor/outdoor play. Incorporating SULP, small group work and a healthy self service style snack.

11.00 AM - 11.20 AM
Story Time.

11.20 AM - 11.45 AM
Outdoor play.

11.45 AM - 11.55 PM
Lunchtime preparation.

11.55 PM - 12.30 PM
Lunchtime.

12.30 PM - 12.40 PM
Tooth brushing.

12.40 PM - 1.30 PM
Music, circle time, outdoor play.
When your child comes to the Nursery he/she will be acquiring and developing skills, knowledge, attitudes and values through 'play'. The staff through carefully planned activities will provide opportunities that:

- Arouse curiosity.
- Provide opportunities for initiating & choosing activities.
- Encourage experimentation, questioning, discovery and problem solving.
- Provide opportunities for the practice of skills.
- Provide for repetition.

Teaching and Learning

We believe that children learn best when they:
- are happy.
- are interested and motivated.
- achieve success and gain approval.
- are given tasks which match their ability.
- clearly understand the task.
- are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries.
- are challenged and stimulated.
The Learning Environment

This is organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:
- work individually, in groups and as a class.
- make decisions.
- work co-operatively.
- solve problems.
- be creative.
- discuss their ideas.
- develop social skills.
- develop independence.
- use initiative.
- receive support
- achieve academically

Learning takes place in an environment which:
- is challenging and stimulating.
- is peaceful and calm.
- is happy and caring.
- is organised.
- is well resourced.
- makes learning accessible.
- is encouraging and appreciative.
- is welcoming.
- provides equal opportunities.
- provides a working atmosphere.

Children are encouraged to develop organisational skills and independence through:
- appropriate tasks.
- confidence building.
- example.
- co-operation.
- provision of suitable opportunities.
- responsibilities.
We often have regular trips to places such as the farm, gym, W5, and the park.

**Achievement**

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on going process in all aspects of school life, by:

- verbal praise by staff, peers and parents:
- displays of work;
- opportunities to perform or share;
- encouraging self esteem;
- sharing success with the community

Staff arrange time to observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each child on a regular basis. This process is discussed and shared with parents on a formal and informal basis throughout the year.
Within Arellian Nursery School we have a very simple yet highly effective policy which promotes positive behaviour. During the settling in period, staff will help the child observe and internalise the Six Golden Rules.

The Six Golden Rules

1. We are gentle - we don’t hurt others.
2. We are kind and helpful - we don’t hurt anybody’s feelings
3. We listen - we don’t interrupt.
4. We work hard - we don’t waste time
5. We are honest - we don’t cover up the truth
6. We look after property - we don’t damage things

These rules apply to everyone within our school building - children, staff, parents and visitors.
If behaviour may cause harm to another, staff will intervene to channel the child in question energies into a more productive activity. Children are encouraged to feel responsible for their actions and to develop peaceful methods of resolving problems using the 6 Step Conflict Resolution Model.

**Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** Place yourself between the children, on their level; use a calm voice and gentle touch; remain neutral rather than take sides.

**Acknowledge children's feelings.** Say something simple such as “You look really upset;” let children know you need to hold any object in question.

**Gather information.** Ask “What's the problem?” Do not ask “why” questions as young children focus on that what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it.

**Restate the problem:** “So the problem is...” Use and extend the children’s vocabulary, substituting neutral words for hurtful or judgmental ones (such as “stupid”) if needed.

**Ask for solutions and choose one together.** Ask “What can we do to solve this problem?” Encourage children to think of a solution but offer options if the children are unable to at first.

**Be prepared to give follow-up support.** Acknowledge children’s accomplishments, e.g., “You solved the problem!” Stay nearby in case anyone is not happy with the solution and the process needs repeating.

Adults respect children’s ideas for solving problems, even if the options they offer don’t seem fair to adults. What’s important is that children agree on the solution and see themselves as competent problem-solvers.

Respect for ourselves and for others forms an important part of our curriculum. If an issue arises or remains a persistent problem for an individual child, parents will be asked to work closely with their child’s teacher to help overcome difficulties.
Assessment and Record Keeping.

In order to ensure the children are progressing in all the areas of development, staff keep records of their learning. The children are monitored on a monthly basis and relevant achievement targets set. By using this method we can identify gaps in individual children’s learning and meet need. Parents are kept informed of their child’s progress through an individual parent - teacher interview every term and a transition profile for Primary School. Staff are available to talk to parents when the children have gone home, so do not feel you have to wait for these times if there are any queries you might have.

It is important that your child comes to Nursery School every day unless they are ill. It is only by coming each day that your child can fully experience all the different activities and make progress in their learning.
Our aims and ethos:

We welcome the inclusion of all children whatever their individual needs may be. All children have the right to be educated and to develop their full potential. We believe that having an inclusive policy benefits all children, and is a positive experience that reflects the diversity of our society.

We aim:

· To value all children equally and to provide opportunities for equal access to the curriculum

· To plan our curriculum to meet the needs of individual children

· To recognise that some children will need additional support to ensure access to the whole curriculum

· To recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational needs, and work within the DENI Code of Practice

· To work in true partnership with parents, valuing their views and keeping them fully involved in their child’s education

· To work collaboratively with other agencies to meet the child’s individual needs, for example the local authority, health officials and voluntary groups where necessary.
The Co-ordination of Provision for Children with Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Claire Foster with additional assistance from Jenny Pogue

The role of the SENCO is as follows:
· To support the children with practical measures
· To monitor and review the practical intervention
· To co-ordinate the planning for individual needs
· To support other members of staff
· To liaise between the setting and other professionals involved in working with the child, for example Health Visitor, Speech Therapist
· To liaise with, and offer support to parents
· To attend regular training on special educational needs issues and to keep other staff members informed

Identifying Special Educational Needs and Intervention

All children are given time to settle in and become familiar with the routines at preschool. If staff have concerns about a child the SENCO will observe the child and share concerns with the parents. If appropriate we will seek advice from BELB, and other professionals who may be involved with the child. We may work with parents to develop strategies to support the child. This will be recorded in the form of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). IEP’s are reviewed with parents after a period of time and further strategies put into place if necessary. At all times parents are fully involved in the process.

Transition

When children transfer to another setting or to school we pass on information and records in order to make the transition as seamless as possible. We also make a visit to the new school with the child. When a child with specific needs transfers we will arrange a meeting with the receiving school and the parents, in order to discuss the child’s strengths and difficulties.
The Nursery School aims to achieve strong home/school links to enable both parents and teachers to work together for the benefit of the child. These relationships between the home and school are important for your child’s well being.

Parents are asked to keep staff informed of any changes or events in the child’s life that may effect them in school. ALL INFORMATION is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Parents can also help with the children’s lending library, school trips and so on. We have a Parent’s room which we hope parents will feel free to use, especially during the ‘settling in’ period of Nursery life. We believe that your child will only achieve their best work if they feel happy and secure in Nursery. If parents value the work their child does in Nursery then the child will feel more confident in what they are doing. You will see a ‘Parent’s Board’ in the entrance hall which will help to keep you informed of all that is going on in Nursery. You will also receive regular Newsletters from the Nursery and we try to run lots of interesting workshops for parents. All you have to do is join in!
A happy child is a safe child. All parents who help in the classroom, on trips and so on will be asked to fill in a vetting form. Please don’t feel offended by this as everyone who works with children today must go through this procedure. It ensures the safety of your child and the other children in the nursery!

If you have a concern about your own or another child’s safety, please talk to Ms Pogue or Ms Foster immediately. Members of staff will act promptly and details of all information given to the school will be recorded fully in writing. Ms Pogue, in consultation with Ms Foster will decide whether, in the best interests of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that a child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parents may be the possible abuser, parents will be informed immediately. Ms Pogue may need to seek clarification or advice and consult with the Belfast Education and Library Board’s designated officer before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.

Where there are still concerns about possible abuse, the Principal will inform the Social Services and the designated officer for Child Protection in Belfast Education and Library Board.

All complaints will be dealt with as a matter of urgency and Ms Pogue (Ms Foster in her absence) will report back to the parents on the progress and outcome of their complaint as and when possible.

If the person making the complaint is unsatisfied with the outcome of the action taken by the school, the complaint should then be referred onward to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.
Administering Medication

If a child has to be given medicine during the nursery day the following procedure is necessary;

- Parent has given prior written permission to administer any medicine
- Medicines are stored in their original containers, clearly labelled and inaccessible to children
- Medicines are not normally administered unless they have been prescribed for that child by a doctor
- Written records are kept of all medicines administered to children, and parent signs the record to acknowledge entry (records kept in emergency file with other emergency documents relating to that child)
- If the administration of prescription medicines requires technical/medical knowledge then the individual training is provided for staff from a qualified health professional. Training is specific to the individual child concerned.

If you consider your child to be unable to attend school due to illness, please telephone to let us know as early as possible as some illnesses are "notifiable" and it is useful to be aware of what is wrong with your child.

Sick child policy, sickness and diarrhoea

If your child has suffered from sickness and/or diarrhoea PLEASE keep them at home for at least 24 hours before they return to school.

If a child becomes ill whilst at school it might be necessary to send them home. Please make sure that the emergency contact numbers that you give us are correct and up to date.
Preparing Your Child for School.

Before your child starts he/she should have learned to be independent of you. He/she needs to experience what it's like not to have you around. He/she is going to have to come to terms with this so the more experience he/she has of being separated the better they will adjust to school.

We have suggested some ways you can help to prepare your child for school. Encourage your child to:

- Mix with adults outside the family.
- Mix with other children his/her own age.
- Go to play in friends' homes as well as entertaining them in his/her home.
- To learn that other adults can be relied upon as well as you.
- Look after his/her toys.
- Be able and willing to tidy up by his/herself. Be patient, it's a slow process and requires lots of practice on his/her part and patience on yours.
- Use the toilet properly.
- Wash and dry their hands.
- Use a knife and fork.
- Take off and put on their coat.
The children will be involved in physical play every day; therefore clothes should be comfortable and non-restrictive. Coats should be brought for outdoor play. Footwear should take account of the fact that children will be climbing. For this reason we ask that children do not wear clogs or backless shoes in the nursery. Please remember that your child enjoys feeling 'big' and independent. Belts and braces can be difficult for small hands when a child is managing at the toilet. For the safety of all the children we would ask that your child wear no jewellery other than stud earrings.

A school coat and sweatshirt printed with the Arellian Nursery logo is available for purchase. We also recommend the purchase of a High Vis vest for school trips priced at £3.50 and available from the school office Please ask staff for details.
Your child will be invited to come to the school one morning both in June and August to meet the staff and play for a short time.

They will also be meeting a small number of their classmates. This takes some of the strangeness away when your child starts School properly in September. When you bring your child to this Open Day, please work with him/her and feel free to explore the classroom. Have a go with the paint, dough and so on yourself so you know what your child will be doing at school!

As you can appreciate it would be impossible to start all the children in September. In each class 26 children must be settled in and such an important process takes time and patience. During the first week in September we try to bring 6 children into each class and 4 each week after that. However, our settling in policy is based on the understanding that every child is unique. One child may settle in two days while others may take two weeks to adjust to the new surroundings of the nursery. The staff will carefully observe and monitor how the children in the class are coping before bringing in the next group of children. This is a very important time in a young child's life that can influence attitudes and motivation towards later learning. Please be patient and settle your child in properly. All children will be started by the Halloween break.
On the first day of nursery your child will come for approximately one hour. The parent or care person settling him/her in will be asked to stay in the classroom for that time, helping the child to adjust to his/her new surroundings. Your child's time in the nursery will be built up gradually. The teacher will do this depending on how much your child is ready.

**Difficulties Settling In.**

Remember most children settle into school quite easily. There are however occasions when despite the efforts of both teacher and parents, some children do not settle happily.

Reasons for this are not usually difficult to discover and can often be traced to something that happened at home which you thought had been dealt with, for instance.

- A recent move of house.
- A new baby arriving on the scene.
- A close relative has to go into hospital.
- A parent who works away from home or who has to go away for long periods.
- The death of a relative.

Any one of these incidents might have upset your child. If, having given him/her time to adjust your child seems unusually upset on starting school, think about the possible reason and discuss with your child's teacher. This will help the staff understand your child's difficulty and to make allowances for him/her.

It would be helpful if you could make the staff aware of any circumstances at home, which may affect your child's behaviour at school.
The nursery provides a snack every morning for the children. This consists of a glass of milk and some fruit/biscuit/toast. The snack is available in each classroom from 9.00 until 10.45 am.

All nursery children have their dinner in school; this costs £2 per day. Please ask a member of staff for a 'free meals' form if you think you might be entitled to free school meals.

Before dinner each day the children are encouraged to go to the toilet and wash their hands. Please prepare your child before starting nursery to be able to manage themselves while going to the toilet.

During dinner your child may be tasting new foods, it is important that you have a positive attitude towards this in the home.

The school asks for a voluntary contribution of £3.50 a week. This money pays for the daily snack, a weekly Friday treat, Christmas presents, Easter eggs and other items throughout the year, such as small items of additional equipment and parties.
Collecting Your Child.

Please inform a member of the nursery staff if someone other than yourself is coming to collect your child. We will not let the children leave the nursery with someone we are unsure of or someone under the age of sixteen. Always try to collect your child on time as children worry if they have to wait.

Extended Schools Services

Arellian Breakfast Club
daily 8.30 – 9.00 am Mon-Fri
Choice of cereals/porridge
Toast
Fruit
Milk/orange juice
£1.00 per day
Children need to be booked in each week with
as numbers are limited to 16 per day.

Arellian After Schools Club
Fun Activities
Outdoor Play
Songs and Stories
Juice/fruit/Biscuits
£2.50 per session.
Please see the Office for booking details.
Over the past ten years we have successfully established an ongoing cross community contact scheme with New Lodge Nursery School. During the school year we enjoy a number of school trips and activity days together - which not only provide valuable learning opportunities and enjoyable experiences but also contact for our children and parents with people from a different cultural background. We already give priority to the basic aims of EMU within our everyday classroom practice.

RESPECT - Through both our attitudes and actions we aim to transmit the importance of respect, for ourselves and for others. No child is allowed to wreck another's hard work or to enter group play without first asking those involved.

INTERPERSONAL PROBLEM SOLVING - As conflicts arise, as they invariably do when groups of children play together, we feel it is important to teach the children ways of working and talking through difficulties in a non-violent manner, encouraging the children to see the situation from different perspectives thus developing conflict resolution skills.

CO-OPERATION - Social skills such as co-operation are acquired by the children as they play together in the controlled nursery environment. With adult direction children are made aware that rights of others must be considered.

THE WIDER PERSPECTIVE - During the school year we invite a number of people from the community in to visit the children and to talk to them about their work. The doctor, dentist and photographer are also regular visitors and the children learn to respect and value their important jobs.
While of course we trust that you will be more than happy with the service provided, a system has been established to deal with complaints:

In the first instance, the complaint should be made to the school Principal. The complaint may be lodged -

- In person.
- By telephone.
- By letter.
- By standard complaint form obtained in the school.

In the second instance, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint may be referred to the Board of Governors of the school. The complaint may be lodged by -

- Letter.
- Standard complaint form.

In the third instance, following stages two and three, if a complainant is still unhappy, the complaint should be made to the Education and Library Board - in person

- By letter.
- By telephone.
- On a standard complaint form.

In the fourth instance, the complaint is directed to the Department of Education.

In the fifth instance, the complaint is directed to the Commissioner for complaints.

This procedure will not apply to complaints relating to

- The breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- Admissions to schools.
- Suspension and expulsion of pupils.
- Abuse of children.
- Services provided in schools by the Board.