

Policy For Development of 'The World Around Us.'

Principles

Children are naturally interested, enthusiastic and curious about the world around them. As a result of this natural curiosity and by providing a wide range of activities and experiences through play, coupled with appropriate adult interaction and discussion, children in Ballycastle Nursery Unit will develop a wide range of skills and concepts related to the world around them.

Statement Of Intent

Here in Ballycastle Integrated we recognise the importance of ensuring that children become familiar initially with their Nursery environment. It is our belief that as a result of establishing positive, confident relationships within this environment and knowing their physical environment, they will then be comfortable and have the confidence to acquire more knowledge of the wider world around them. The staff also appreciates the role that scientific and technological developments are having on all young children's life experiences and we aim to maximise on these and incorporate this into our planning where appropriate.

Procedures

The following will be planned for in order to develop understanding of The World Around Us

Living Things and Their Environment

- Human life
- Animal life
- Plant life
- With particular emphasis on life cycles, growth and habitat

Materials And Their Properties

- State of materials eg hard, soft, solid, liquid etc
- Texture eg fluffy, smooth, rough etc.
- Categorising materials eg things that float/don't float etc
- Identify and recognise materials eg wood, plastic, glass etc
- Use of materials eg bricks for houses, wool for jumpers etc
- How can the state of materials be changed? Eg heating water, chocolate, spaghetti etc cooling water

Forces and Energy

- Sound -
how can we make sound
How can we change sound
- Light -
Effects of mirrors,
reflections, shadows
- Making things move -
pushing and pulling
Air
Gravity

Space and Atmosphere

- Day and Night
- Seasons
- Weather

Technology

- Use of materials
- Use and effect of tools
- Plan, design and make models
- Use and become familiar with computers, CD players, Listening centres, digital cameras etc

The above experiences will be planned through books, photographs, interest tables, wood, sand, dough, clay and construction toys etc. In addition from TACT the Wildlife Association, visits to the farm/seaside/Secret Garden will reinforce knowledge and understanding about animals and their habitats. Planting and growing activities eg growing cress, daffodils, sunflowers and hyacinths will be planned for.

Activities and Experiences

There are some of the everyday activities which will assist with the above aspects of development in The World Around Us. These include:

- Water Play indoors and outdoors
- Wet/dry sand
- Cooking activities including making fresh dough
- Planting and growing activities
- Trips/visits and visitors
- Nature walks around the school and in Secret Garden
- Music, songs and rhyme sessions
- Snack time (making toast, fruits etc)
- Construction equipment (small and large)
- Creative activities
- Junk art
- ICT Equipment- Interactive Whiteboard/IPad's
- Outdoor physical play
- Jigsaws and puzzles (multi cultural and diverse)
- Sequencing cards (life cycles)
- Posters/pictures - natural environment/animals/body parts/the street/road safety
- Nature displays
- Animal lotto games
- Puppets
- Music tapes/CDs
- Musical instruments
- Role play

Adults will:

- Help children to become familiar with the names and roles of all adults within the nursery i.e. teachers, assistants, principal, caretaker, secretary, dinner lady etc
- Seize upon unplanned spontaneous learning opportunities such as oil being delivered, grass being cut, maintenance taking place, extreme weather conditions etc....
- Invite visitors into the setting to discuss roles and occupations
- Plan for road safety discussions through use of the calendar, road safety officer visit and lollipop person visiting
- Set up role play areas to promote learning in relation to services within the community
- Provide stories, poems, songs, rhymes, posters, puzzles and other visual images to lead discussions relating to life in other parts of the country and in other parts of the world
- Use discussion time to learn about different types of homes and different types of transport
- Provide a selection of construction toys to make models, extend ideas and concepts.
- Use small scale imaginative equipment as a means to develop children's understanding of the World Around Them.
- Celebrate birthdays, special events and festivals eg Christmas, Chinese New Year etc.
- Observe, identify, discuss and explore weather patterns and conditions
- Encourage children to show care for living things in the nursery environment
- Encourage children to talk about their own experiences within their home and community in order to fully develop an understanding and appreciation of services and roles within the community e.g. trip to the post office, library, bank, bakery etc.