

Ballymacrickett Nursery Unit Prospectus



2021-2022

Ballymacrickett Primary School and Nursery Unit

OUR VISION

“Happy Together, Learning Forever”

Ballymacrickett Primary School and Nursery Unit promotes learning for life and high achievement by working with children to:

- practise the Catholic faith in their daily lives;
- have high self esteem – respecting themselves, others, our local community and the world around us;
- recognise their talents and acquire the knowledge and skills to be their individual best;
- become happy, enthusiastic, highly motivated life-long learners;
- be able to work independently and collaboratively;
- gain the necessary skills to equip them for our ever changing world.

We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- a Catholic ethos of support and encouragement, where diversity is embraced and success is celebrated;
- a broad and challenging curriculum, ensuring inclusion and equality of opportunity;
- a learning partnership between school, home, parish and the wider community;
- a safe, healthy, stimulating learning environment;
- innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning.

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- continually striving for improvement by working together towards common goals.

NURSERY DAY

Ballymacrickett Nursery runs one full-time session a day. We take 26 children, who are supervised by 2 permanent members of staff.

The day begins at 9.00am and ends at 1.30pm.

During the course of the morning the children will be given the opportunity to take part in various areas of play including:

- Imaginative play
- Art and craft activities
- Physical play both indoors and outdoors
- Sand and water play
- Constructive play
- Table top toys
- Stories, songs and rhymes
- Floor play

Each day a snack will be available for the children.

MORNING / AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

The school operates a morning club each day from 8am until 9am. During this session the children may purchase breakfast if required, a member of staff then escorts the children to the Nursery at 9am. An after school club is also available from 1.30pm until 3pm.

There is a small charge for parents that wish to avail of these facilities.

ADMISSIONS

In selecting children for admission to the nursery, we will apply the criteria as outlined on the EA website www.eani.org.uk/admissions.



SETTLING IN PROCEDURE

Parents of children who have been accepted to attend Ballymacrickett Nursery will be invited to the Nursery on a specified date (May or June time) for a talk with the Nursery staff. This was unfortunately not the case due to restrictions in 2020, but it is our hope that this will be able to happen for our 2021 admissions. At this meeting more specific information will be given about the nursery, its routines, ordering of the uniforms etc. The children will also be invited to visit the nursery with their parents or another adult and stay for a short time. It gives the children the opportunity to see the nursery, have a look at what sort of activities they will be able to do and meet the staff.

HOME VISITS

Home visits by the nursery teacher are optional during the end of August.

The home visit is an ideal way for the child to meet their teacher in the comfort of their own home environment and has proved to be a very rewarding experience for the teacher, child and parents. The child sees the teacher as someone who is welcomed into their own home as a friend of his/her parents. It gives the child more confidence in starting nursery knowing that they have met their teacher on a one to one basis. It also provides you with an opportunity to ask any questions or express any concerns or worries that you may have about the coming year for your child.

STARTING NURSERY

In September the children will begin nursery in small groups, and the children will stay in these groups for the first couple of weeks. This allows the staff the opportunity to work with children in smaller groups and it gives the children time to get used to a new situation. By the beginning of October it is hoped that all 26 children will be together and staying for lunch. As each child is beginning nursery with different experiences/backgrounds we regard the settling in process as very flexible and a process that can be adapted to suit the differing needs of the children. More information regarding starting dates and times will be given out in June.

SCHOOL FUND

At Ballymacrickett Nursery we ask for a voluntary contribution of £30.00 per term. This covers the cost of a daily snack which is provided for the children.

We follow a healthy eating policy at the Nursery, snack varies each day and there is usually a choice of fresh fruit.

The snack could be:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Oranges etc.

A choice of milk or water is provided each day as a drink.

The school fund is also used to cover the cost of school trips, cookery ingredients, parties, visitors to the nursery etc. Any excess money is used to buy additional equipment and toys for the Nursery.

SNACK ROUTINE

Snack is available from approximately 9.00am until 10.30am each morning. This year, we serve snack to the children, but it is normal practice to ensure that the children's play is not interrupted so the children help themselves to snack when they are ready for it, and we hope to return to this practice in time. They are encouraged to be independent during this time by choosing their own fruit, pouring their own drinks etc.



SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are optional in Ballymacrickett Nursery but they are seen as a valuable part of the curriculum.

During this time the children are learning important social skills such as table manners, use of cutlery and the importance of eating a well balanced diet.

Meals are currently £2.50 per day and free school meals are available for those children who qualify.

THE NURSERY UNIFORM

The Nursery has its own uniform which is different from the primary school one. The nursery children wear a 'Ballymacrickett Nursery' sweatshirt, which is available in a choice of colours, a 'Ballymacrickett Nursery' polo shirt that is available in either red or navy and navy jogging bottoms or leggings.



This uniform is available to order from the Nursery and is both comfortable and practical for the children to wear.

As the children will be taking part in a wide range of both indoor and outdoor activities, we recommend that the children wear sensible footwear to the Nursery. A good pair of trainers or shoes with Velcro fasteners are ideal.

PASTORAL CARE

At Ballymacrickett Nursery pastoral care permeates all aspects of nursery life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our nursery community – children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well being of each child.

We strive to create an atmosphere where God's love is experienced by all members of the school community through their relationships with each other, where Christ is the example to all and where each child is helped to develop to his/her full potential.

The atmosphere in the nursery is based upon good relationships between staff, pupils and parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other's roles and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the needs and well being of each child and with the approaches and programmes we implement in order to aid his/her full development.

We recognise and value the important role that parents play in their child's education. Every effort is made to ensure that parents feel welcome, that they are made aware of the Nursery's aims, objectives and policies and of their child's individual needs, progress and achievements. We expect you as our parents to co-operate fully with us in achieving these goals.



CHILD PROTECTION

The staff of Ballymacrickett, teaching and non-teaching, accepts responsibility for the welfare of all children in their care. In accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy administered in the school, staff will be vigilant and where child abuse is suspected or where a disclosure regarding abuse is made, steps will be taken to inform the relevant investigative agencies in the interests of the child.

THE PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

By the time your child enters nursery, they will already have had a wide range of experiences and have developed in a number of ways. In Ballymacrickett Nursery we aim to build upon and develop these experiences and so we plan a curriculum which provides your child with a rich variety of play activities and other experiences in a stimulating and challenging environment.

The nursery curriculum is divided into a number of different areas:

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This area of learning is of the utmost importance for young children in all aspects of their lives. Within the warm, secure environment of the Nursery we encourage the children to gain confidence in what they do and develop their self-esteem. Through activities, conversations and example, they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings of anger and frustration and to have respect for the feelings of others. We encourage the children to become more independent, to accept responsibility for themselves and for the equipment that they use.



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language development is an integral part of the curriculum. In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening. On a daily basis the children are given the opportunity to listen to, respond to and join in with stories, songs and rhymes. The library corner gives the children the opportunity to look at books individually or with their friends and to be able to learn how to handle them appropriately and to develop a love of books and to become aware of their uses as a source of pleasure and information. The children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning and they are given the opportunity to experiment with writing in their play i.e. making shopping lists, writing menus, filling out forms, making cards etc. Each week your child will borrow five books from the school which they will keep for one week.



EARLY MATHEMATICAL EXPERIENCES

During their time at Nursery the children will experience a range of activities that will develop their skills in sorting, matching, counting, ordering and sequencing which form the basis for early mathematics. On a daily basis they will hear and be encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary, identifying objects by shape, size, colour, position, number etc. Rhymes, songs, stories and incidental occurrences during the day are all used to help the children develop mathematical concepts. They will be given the opportunity to explore and investigate the properties of materials, solve problems that arise in play and talk about their experiences and findings with others.



THE ARTS

Creative play is about making new things, taking risks and experimenting, coming up with new ideas, solving problems and coping with uncertainty. Children are given the opportunities to work with a wide range of materials, both natural and man-made which helps them to experiment with colour, shape and texture. The children are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings through painting, drawing, making models and moulding or shaping with clay or dough. They see their work displayed and valued by children and adults. Children join in with and respond to music and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play and dressing up, both individually and in group situations.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MOVEMENT

A range of equipment both indoors and outdoors is used to develop the children's self-confidence, self-awareness and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. Fine motor skills are developed as children learn to use and handle small objects and tools (such as scissors, pens, brushes etc.) with increasing control and precision. The children's gross motor skills will be enhanced as they climb, balance, jump, ride, throw and catch etc. The children enjoy physical play and it is also an ideal time to develop social skills as they co-operate with each other and show consideration for each other.



THE WORLD AROUND US

Children have a natural curiosity and enthusiasm about the world around them and often ask questions about their environment and the people they meet. At the Nursery the children are given the opportunity to investigate and explore a wide range of topics, such as: people who help us, different types of shops, ourselves, the local area, seasons, weather etc. Through discussion, use of their senses and making things, the children acquire more knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Children are given plenty of opportunities to learn about and experiment with sand, water, clay, magnets etc., they will begin to develop skills and concepts in observation, experimentation and free exploration of their surroundings. The nursery curriculum seeks to extend these skills and concepts through careful interaction and discussion with adults.

Books, pictures, posters and photographs are also used to let the children learn about themselves, their environment and how things work. Topics such as mini-beasts, animals, transport and dinosaurs take account of a child's natural curiosity and with help and guidance they are encouraged to care for and respect all living things.



PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Children with special educational needs will be integrated and encouraged into the Nursery. Where necessary the assistance of other professionals will be enlisted to help identify the children's needs and if required individual learning programmes can be devised and where possible extra resources provided.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Ballymacrickett Nursery we strive to provide and maintain equality of opportunity for all children and parents/carers within the group. All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment will offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Resources are chosen to ensure that they challenge stereotyping and that they positively and accurately reflect a cultural and racial diversity.



CONCLUSION

We hope you have found this prospectus useful in helping you to understand and appreciate what learning experiences and opportunities are available to your child should they gain a place at Ballymacrickett Nursery.

We look forward to meeting you and your children, and we hope that their experience of nursery will be a happy one and one that will lay a solid foundation for all future learning.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us at;

Ballymacrickett Nursery
41 Scroggy Road
Glenavy
Crumlin
BT29 4NE

Telephone 02894 422708

Mrs Kathryn Bonner – Nursery Teacher
Mrs Teresa Eastwood – Nursery Assistant



