

# Monitoring and Evaluating Policy

## Rationale

For over 50 years, Ballymena Nursery School has provided high standards of care, teaching and learning. In order to maintain and respond to an ever changing and competitive world of education and care, it is important that Ballymena Nursery School's development is guided by a manageable cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring alone does not lead to school improvement. It is through an evaluation of the information gathered, the identification of needs and the application of strategies to address those needs that school improvement can be undertaken.

Accountability is one element of the professional practice of the principal, the teachers and all staff with relationships based on trust and co-operation, the main function of the cycle is to promote progression and the raising of standards.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Teaching and Learning policy.

## Aims

The aims of our policy on monitoring and evaluating are to ensure:

- a safe and stimulating learning environment;
- the best possible standards of teaching and learning appropriate to individual children;
- that school policies are observed and followed;
- necessary changes are made in a measured, transparent and practical manner.

## Principles of Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to ensure consistency and fairness our policy and practices in relation to monitoring and evaluating must adhere to the following principles:

- the quality of learning and the standards of achievement are the responsibility of each and every member of staff;
- the quality of teaching is the responsibility of the individual teacher and of the principal;
- members of staff will be consulted about monitoring and evaluating activities that relate to their practice;
- formal and informal monitoring and evaluating should be embedded into every day practice;
- procedures should be supportive and developmental;
- the roles of our SENCO and ICT coordinator are to have an overview of the quality of learning and the standards achieved in their SEN and curriculum area;
- strengths and weaknesses that are identified through the monitoring and evaluation process should be celebrated and addressed

## Areas of Focus

Monitoring will focus on seven areas:

1. The school ethos;
2. The management and leadership of the school;

3. The behaviour and wellbeing of the children;
4. The learning environment;
5. The effective implementation of our teaching and learning strategies;
6. Achievements and progression;
7. Assessment and record keeping.

### **Criteria for Evaluating Each Area of Focus:**

#### 1. Ethos

- There is general evidence of progress towards the school aims.
- Most children are observed or reported to be safe, happy and productive (with any exceptions being temporary and dealt with to the satisfaction of all parties).
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#### 2. Management and Leadership

- There is specific evidence of progress within our school development plan.
- Members of staff contribute to the ongoing development of the school.
- Members of staff provide feedback that is mostly positive in relation to the school leadership.

#### 3. Behaviour

- Relationships are based on respect, patience and co-operation.
- The children display an interest in their learning.
- The children stay on task for periods of time appropriate to their age.
- The children are able to work both co-operatively and independently.
- The children walk in the nursery indoors and use an indoor voice
- The children are polite and well behaved on nursery visits or when visitors come into nursery
- There is evidence of self/ emotional regulation
- The children are familiar with Jenny Mosley's Golden rules

#### 4. The Learning Environment

- Displays are fresh and imaginative and reflect the children's work.
- Displays are varied and include some descriptive text, children's comments, photographic evidence of work in progress and artwork. Displays must be "Owned by the Children" and for the children to celebrate their thinking and learning. The displays should be cross curricular and cover several areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- Displays include 3-dimensional objects.
- Displays include stimuli and reference material or teaching points.
- The classrooms are structured with designated areas/ tidy and organized with free access to materials. The children are taught and encouraged to have an established tidy up routine and to take responsibility for returning materials and resources to the appropriate area.
- The grounds and premises are clean and used as a natural resource for learning.

## 5. Teaching and Learning

- The requirements of the Northern Ireland Pre School Curriculum are reflected in planning.
- There is evidence of the effective implementation of our teaching and learning guidelines.
- Planning is realistic and effective, showing:
  - potential learning outcomes;
  - teaching strategies and classroom management;
  - resources;
  - cross-curricular links;
  - success criteria.
- Planning reflects differentiation and high expectations.
- The teaching strategies that are used are appropriate to individual children and to the learning objectives.
- Children and staff use ICT regularly and appropriately.
- The children's interests inform the teaching and learning.
- Children are given opportunities to develop independence in their learning.

## 6. Celebration of Work

- The celebration of each child's work can be verbal, non-verbal, formal or informal. For example, smiles of recognition, high fives, stickers, special prompt notes, or photographs.
- Children's work reflects the teachers' high expectations.

## 7. Assessment and Record Keeping

- The observation of children's work through written records or photographic evidence through Tapestry are recorded.
- Formal assessment indicates the progress of individual children and informs planning by identifying areas that require support.
- Assessment and record keeping inform the teaching of children with special educational needs.
- Reports are written for parental consultation and for the transition from nursery.

## **Monitoring and Curriculum Planning**

**Long term planning** is monitored by the Principal to ensure the delivery of the Northern Ireland Pre School Curriculum; progression within and balance across areas; and appropriate cross-curricular links.

**Medium term planning** is monitored by the principal, SEN and ICT co-ordinators to ensure specific learning objectives; source and research appropriate materials; and use cross-curricular links; demonstrate and provide appropriate child centered activities; invest time visiting other settings with a view to share/ suggest alternative/ current teaching strategies or pilot assessment tools.

**Short term planning** is monitored to ensure consistency; provide a broad balance of activities/ teacher led and child centred; differentiation; appropriate age and stage of development; constructive feedback from parents or comments by children; teacher assessment; links and consistency with medium term planning.

All staff contribute to the work of teams that have been established to monitor, evaluate and develop aspects of school life, including the curriculum.

### **Forms of Monitoring**

The range includes:

- the children's awareness and successful use of visual time lines and daily schedules;
- the parent's general awareness and regular feedback on the life and activities of the school;
- regular parental questionnaires;
- the formal observation of teaching by the Principal and colleagues through the annual cycle of Performance Review and Staff Development Process (PRSD); or the regular sharing of good practice and the dissemination of current training:

Or by using a Critical friend strategy;

- the EtI formal inspection process.

The aim of formal PRSD classroom observation is to provide encouragement and support to teachers within a structured and recognized programme which is designed to raise teaching standards. Using a common format for recording and feedback, the emphasis is on the positive aspects of a teacher's practice, with some suggestions for consideration.

The aim of informal classroom observations or the verbal or written feedback from a Critical friend is to encourage colleagues, share experience, enhance learning and embed continuity and good practice.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.