**Ballymena Nursery School – Sharing from the Start policy**

Principles:

1. Statement: Ballymena Nursery School is committed to Sharing from the Start through cross community work, inclusion and diversity. This is in line with the Northern Ireland Preschool Curriculum.
2. Rationale: Ballymena Nursery School wish to create greater links with other preschool settings from differing backgrounds through Sharing from the Start, using play activities and visitors which contributes to the delivery of the preschool curriculum.

Aims:

Ballymena Nursery will have the opportunity to develop relationships in the shared sessions through curriculum activities, becoming aware of children with differing abilities, faiths, languages and cultures. The Sharing from the Start programme will also be fostered into the Nursery’s development plan to help develop greater links with the community. Children, parents, teachers and assistants, volunteers, students and members of the Board of Governors will have positive experiences by working together through this Sharing From the Start initiative (SFS).

The programme will bring people and children together from divided communities to help increase tolerance, respect, promote increased community cohesion and enhance cross-community cooperation.

The programme will help to enhance children’s skills and attitudes to contribute to a cohesive society.

Intended outcomes for children:

* Children from different community backgrounds have direct sustained curriculum based shared sessions.
* Preschool partnerships identify specific educational outcomes through shared development and action plans that meet their needs.
* Positive change in attitudes and behaviours of children to inclusion and exclusion.
* Focus on similarities rather than differences.

Intended outcomes for parents/ carers/ Board of Governors

and our whole community in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council:

* Parents and carers participate in shared workshops and activities.
* Improved relationships with other parents/ carers across the community division.
* Greater awareness and involvement with Board of Governors, students, volunteers.
* Increased engagement with shared curricular activity in the home learning environment.
* Strengthened links with local agencies such as PSNI, Ethnic Forum, Local councillors, Town Mayor, Education Authority and other interested parties.