

Auchterhouse Nursery Class



Handbook 2008/2009



"This document is available in alternative formats"

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been produced to give parents some information about the nursery class their child will be attending. We hope that you will find it useful. If however, you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to ask, as the staff are very willing to help.

**This document is available in alternative formats
(Please contact Head Teacher)**

FACTUAL INFORMATION

The nursery opened in August 2002. It is among the many new classes, which have been opened as part of Angus Council's expansion policy for Nursery Education.

**Auchterhouse Nursery Class
Auchterhouse P.S.
Auchterhouse
Dundee
DD3 0QS
Tel/Fax: 01382 320373
E-mail: auchterhouse@auchterhouse.angus.sch.uk**

STAFF

**Head Teacher: Mr. Peter Ferguson
Senior Early Years Practitioner: Miss Angela Anderson
Early Years Practitioner: Ms Jillian Dolan
Present Roll:16**

ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN

Parents are invited to enrol pre-school / ante pre-school children in the nursery class whose catchment area contains their home address. Any parent wishing to request a place in a nursery school or class other than the one serving their normal place of residence is free to do so, and that request will be granted if this is possible under the prioritisation process described below.

If there are more children seeking places in the nursery than there are places available priority will be accorded as follows:

Category 1 Children in their pre-school year living within the delineated area of the nursery

Category 2 Children in their ante-pre-school year living within the delineated area of the nursery

Category 3 Children living outwith the delineated area of the nursery

All children in their pre-school year (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old) are eligible for a place at the beginning of the school session in August.

Children in their ante-pre-school year (3 years old) are eligible for a place at various times throughout the year. The dates for these sessions are:

01.03.05 - 31.08.05	August start
01.09.05 - 19.10.05	October start *
20.10.05 - 31.12.05	January start
01.01.06 - 28.02.06	April start

- In the session 2008/2009, children who attain the age of 3 years on or prior to the last day of the schools' October holiday period should be considered as being eligible for a place in a pre-school class, subject to the clear proviso that no additional staffing allowance will be given to the school. Where the appointment of

additional staff would be required the place will not be made available until the following January when funding for that place is paid to the Council by the Scottish Government.

- Notes
- (i) In the extremely unlikely event that it is necessary to prioritise within Category 1, the sole criterion of **age** will be used, with priority given to older children.
 - (ii) If it is necessary to prioritise within Category 2, the sole criterion of **age** will be used with priority given to older children.
 - (iii) If it is necessary to prioritise within Category 3, priority will be conferred firstly on Angus residents; priority will then be given to children in their pre-school year and thereafter according to place of residence, with priority given to children whose home address is closest to the nursery.

Each pre-school class will hold a register of names of children who have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place, and places will be offered to children on that register throughout the year as and when they become available [places will be offered in terms of the priorities listed above and not simply by the length of time the child's name has been on the waiting list]. Children who are enrolled for a place in one Council nursery will not normally be eligible to remain on the register of names for any other nursery.

Normally all applicants for nursery places in their pre-school year will have their applications acknowledged initially, with final confirmation of places being provided to parents on a pre-determined date in mid/late May.

A small number of nursery places are held each year for pupils with special educational needs and those designated under The Children [Scotland] Act 1995.

VISITS FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

Once your child has been allocated a place at the nursery you will be invited along to meet the staff and children, to find out more about the nursery curriculum and to share information about your child. This will be during an 'Open Week' during May / June.

ATTENDANCE

On accepting a nursery place for your child you are agreeing that they will attend for 5 x 2½ hour sessions per week. Children who attend in this regular pattern settle well into the nursery routine, have the opportunity to build firm relationships with adults and peers and experience continuity of learning. During the induction period however, adaptations are made to meet the needs of the individual child.

PUPIL ABSENCES: REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the issue of child protection and safety due to reported occasions where children have been seriously or fatally injured because of the inappropriate or criminal behaviour of adults.

Whilst it should be noted that there has been no such instance occurring within Angus it is important that staff and parents do not become complacent and continue to work together to develop and improve upon existing arrangements for monitoring the care and welfare of all children and young people.

With that specific aim in mind, the Education Authority has asked all schools to implement a series of standard procedures to monitor pupil attendance and absence from school and to invite the co-operation of parents in making these changes work. All parents are asked to assist the staff in the schools which their children attend in the manner described below:

Attendance

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend pre-school regularly and arrive on time. They are also responsible for ensuring the safety of their children on their journeys to and from school.

Regular and punctual attendance is linked closely to achievement and school staff wish to work with parents to ensure that children can reach their full potential. The school is required by law to maintain an accurate record of the attendance and absence of each child and parents are requested to assist in this process by keeping the school informed if their child is to be absent for any reason.

It is important to note that if a child does not arrive at school and there is no reasonable explanation provided for his/her absence then members of staff will be required to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of the individual child. In order to avoid causing unnecessary concern for staff and parents the importance of good communication between home and school cannot be over-emphasised.

Parents are asked to assist school staff in the manner detailed below:

- if your child is unable to attend school through illness please telephone the school between 9.00 - 9.45 am or 1.00 - 1.45 pm on the first day of his/her absence.
- if you would find it more convenient to send in a note via your child's brother or sister or a friend that would also be acceptable.
- if your child becomes unwell at lunchtime and is unable to return to school in the afternoon please telephone the school before the beginning of the afternoon session to inform a member of staff.
- when you contact the school it would be helpful if an indication could be given as to the child's expected length of absence from school.

- on your child's return to school a note should be provided explaining the reason for absence and confirming the periods of absence from the school. The note should be signed and dated.

PLANNED ABSENCE

- parents are encouraged not to arrange family holidays during term time but it is realised that, in exceptional circumstances, this is unavoidable. In such cases, parents are asked to provide the Head Teacher with information of the dates when the child is to be absent from the school in good time.
- except in cases of emergency, planned appointments for children to attend the dentist or doctor should be made where at all possible outwith the pre-school session.

CONTACT DETAILS

- parents are asked to ensure that telephone contact numbers - home, work and emergency contact(s) are kept up-to-date and are numbers at which a response can be obtained in all normal circumstances.

SESSION INFORMATION

MORNING SESSION	9.00 a.m. - 11.30 p.m.
AFTERNOON SESSION	1.00 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.

Staff appreciate the time prior to each session to prepare. If you arrive early you are welcome to wait in the hall area until the session begins.

Children must be brought to and collected from the class by an adult (a person aged 16 and over).

To ensure that your child has settled please help them hang up their coat, collect their name card and inform a member of staff of their arrival.

Please tell the staff if a change from routine means that someone new/different will collect your child. Written authorisation of any change in these arrangements will be required.

If it is necessary to visit the nursery outwith normal times e.g. for dental or doctor appointments, please ensure you report to the **main school office** initially.

PRE-SCHOOL AIMS

The general aims of the nursery are to: -

- Provide a safe and stimulating environment in which the children can feel happy and secure.
- Encourage the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of children.
- Promote the welfare of children.
- Encourage positive attitudes to self and others, and develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Create opportunities to play.
- Encourage children to explore, appreciate and respect their environment.
- Provide opportunities to stimulate interest and imagination.
- Extend children's abilities to communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of ways.

THE PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Learning through play is at the centre of the nursery curriculum, recognising that children learn better from **first hand experiences**. Children will be given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities geared towards the **all round** learning and development of the individual child.

Encouraging independence and responsibility is the key aim of our nursery. To achieve this, the children are encouraged to make a broad range of learning opportunities carefully planned to meet their interest and needs. Open ended resources provide opportunities for children to explore, experiment, problem solve, be creative and make decisions about their learning.

The children's early learning and development is assessed by the staff through regular observations in five key learning areas: -

- **Emotional, Personal & Social Development**
- **Communication & Language**
- **Knowledge & Understanding of the World**
- **Expressive & Aesthetic Development**
- **Physical Development & Movement**

Parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress with staff at any time but more formal meetings will take place at parent contact evenings throughout the school year.

SNACK AND TOY FUND

A weekly amount of £1.50 per child will be collected by a member of staff from parents for the provision of a daily snack and a small contribution to pre-school resources. In line with the Scottish Government guidance, this amount charged will be for the purpose specified and not used as a means of raising funds for wider purposes.

Children participate in the preparation of a daily healthy snack. Parents can request a special diet for their children if there are medical, cultural or religious reasons for doing so.

CLOTHING

We aim to develop children's independence skills. Please help by dressing your child in clothes, which are easy to manage - elasticated trousers, velcro shoes etc. Parents are asked to bring a change of clothes, to remain in the nursery, in case of any unplanned mishaps. Name tags on clothes are also advised to help in their identification.

Aprons are provided for the 'messier' activities in the nursery, but accidents can happen, so please do send your child in **play clothes**.

Outdoor play is an important part of the nursery curriculum. We will go out on cold and rainy days too, so please always leave your child with appropriate outdoor clothing.

NURSERY OUTINGS

Opportunities to visit local places of interest, e.g. the shops, the library, the post office, form part of the nursery curriculum and are considered important for the children's developing knowledge of the local community. Parents are asked to sign a general consent form at the start of term to cover these outings.

PHOTOGRAPHS / VIDEO FOOTAGE

Photographs and video footage are taken as part of the ongoing work of the group. These materials are used to support all areas of learning and provide appropriate information for parents about their child's learning and development. You are again asked to give the necessary consent.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Support from parents is actively encouraged and valued. Parents: this term incorporates all main carers, grandparents etc. are invited to participate in all aspects of the pre-school life, including social events and fund raising and importantly coming along to take part in the day to

day routine of the class. If you feel you have a particular skill, e.g. sewing, baking, woodwork, which you can share when you come, please let us know beforehand so that we can make arrangements for this in our plans. The **parent noticeboard** will keep you informed about the learning opportunities the children have/are engaged in. Regular newsletters give more information about the curriculum, events and dates of interest for your diary. Any suggestions you have about the pre-school or any matters of concern can be discussed at any time with the staff.

If you wish to be a regular parent helper, Disclosure Scotland checks have to be completed. This will be discussed at parent meetings.

BEHAVIOUR AND RULES

We aim to develop in your child a socially acceptable form of behaviour. We do this in a positive manner, by encouraging the children to share, play co-operatively, be polite etc. We also hope to achieve this by our own example.

Our rules are designed to ensure safety and to help develop social awareness and an understanding of what is acceptable behaviour.

We hope to have your full co-operation in achieving this. Behaviour, which gives cause for concern will be discussed with the parent to help ensure a consistent approach at home and in the nursery.

HEALTH CARE

Routine health checks are carried out by the area's Community Health Doctor. Parents will be advised when these tests are to take place.

Similarly, eye-testing and dental checks occur annually, again with prior notification being given to parents.

Emergencies such as accidents and sudden illnesses will be dealt with in the following manner: -

- (i) parents (or emergency contact) will be notified immediately
- (ii) expert medical help will be sought if necessary, preferably with the parent present.

If your child has a specific medical requirement please discuss their individual needs with the staff so that the appropriate arrangement can be made.

If your child is not well, please do not bring them to pre-school **even if he/she wants to come!** We do our best to protect your child from infection by firmly encouraging hygienic habits. Please support us in this. It is particularly important in cases of sickness and diarrhoea that a child should not return to nursery until they have had **one day clear at home.**

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

Many children will, at some time in their school careers, need to take medication. For the vast majority this will be a short-term requirement, with pupils simply finishing a course of medication which has been prescribed for them by their family doctor. Wherever possible parents are requested to ask for GP prescriptions which can be administered outwith the pre-school day, ie in the morning and evening.

However children may have medical conditions such as asthma or diabetes which may require long-term support and, if their conditions are not properly managed by taking regular medication in school, their access to education could be limited. In addition, some children have conditions which may require occasional staff intervention e.g. severe allergic conditions such as anaphylaxis. Children with such conditions are regarded as having health care needs but, notwithstanding these, the vast majority of children with such needs are able to attend school

regularly and, with some support from the school staff, are able to take part in most normal school activities.

In any of these circumstances parents (or young people themselves if they are over the age of 16) should discuss the matter with school staff and agree the arrangements which will be made to provide support for the pupil. A written request form *must be completed in advance* when any medication is to be administered or taken in school.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

Authority Policy

- Children with additional support needs are integrated into mainstream provision and supported in their local school wherever possible
- For pupils with particular needs which cannot be met in their local school there is the option of attending another Angus school where specialist staff are available
- A small percentage of pupils require specialised provision, which is only available outwith Angus. In these cases the Education Department, working with the child's parents, will make arrangements for the child to attend the appropriate establishment
- A multi-agency approach is used to ensure that children with additional support needs and their families receive the best possible support

SCHOOL POLICY

The school's policy is to support pupils with additional support needs alongside their peer group, in the normal playroom setting. Individual Education Plans prepared by early years staff in collaboration with

parents are designed to support children's early learning and development.

EDUCATION (DISABILITY STRATEGIES AND PUPILS' EDUCATIONAL RECORDS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

A STATEMENT FROM THE AUTHORITY

An Accessibility Strategy has been developed in order to ensure that the Council and schools can address and meet their legal obligations in particular under the Standards in Schools Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 - Schools.

The two key duties placed upon Education Authorities are

- Not to treat disabled people less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at substantial disadvantage

The Disability Strategy addresses three specific aspects:

- Access to the Curriculum
- Access to the Physical Environmental Skills
- Improving Communication and Delivering of School Information

The Act defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places a duty on all public authorities to prepare a Disability Equality Scheme.

This Scheme will be available on the Council's Intranet site as from January 2007 and any specific enquiries relating to the Scheme should be directed towards Mr Paul Meighan, Principal Officer Additional Support Needs, Montrose Road Centre, Forfar, Tel: 01307 473951 or to MeighanP@angus.gov.uk.

CHILD PROTECTION

Given on-going public concern on the subject of child abuse and recent changes in the law, schools are now required to report any concerns regarding Child Protection.

A member of staff in each school has been appointed to be responsible for Child Protection matters and they have been specially trained in this area. Should you wish further advice about Child Protection and your child's safety, please feel free to contact the Head Teacher.

The school has good liaison contact with the School Medical Officer, Social Workers and the Police, any of whom may become involved if abuse is suspected.

We will always ensure that parents are informed and participate in any action, which we may initiate regarding their child.

RACIAL EQUALITY

- Angus Council will not tolerate racial harassment of any kind.
- The Council is committed to combating racial discrimination.

- The policy is linked directly to the Education Department's "Shared Vision" statement:

We are committed to realising the potential of all children, young people, communities and staff by:

- putting people at the heart of all we do
- nurturing an ethos for achievement
- striving for sustainable improvement
- working co-operatively

The council is firmly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all children, young people and staff. The first element of the equal opportunities policy addresses race equality issues and will be followed by updated policies in the areas of disability and gender.

SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL VALUES

The nursery is non-denominational and recognises many festivals such as Christmas, Diwali, Chinese New Year etc. In offering a broad and balanced curriculum we acknowledge celebrations with origins in other cultures to heighten the children's multi-cultural awareness. We also ensure that our Scottish culture will be celebrated.

PARENT COUNCILS

The provision of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 takes effect in August 2007. This legislation means that every school will have its own "Parent Forum" - defined to be all the parents with children enrolled in the school. That Parent Forum will be encouraged to form a Parent Council.

Work is currently underway to provide support to enable each school's Parent Forum to have its own Parent Council established in August 2007.

SCOTTISH PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL

Parent Councils are being established in all Angus Primary and Secondary Schools, and will be in place in each school by October 2007. They replace School Boards which were dis-established on 31 July 2007 as a result of legislation outlined in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.

The basic principle under-pinning the Act is the desire to have children become more 'confident learners' through closer working between each family and the school. It is anticipated that this can be done in three ways. These are: -

1. Learning at Home: direct parental involvement in the child's learning at home and in the community.
2. Home/School Partnership: closer working partnerships between parents and the school - such partnerships being essential to ensure that the child gets maximum benefit from its school experiences.
3. Parental Representation: Parent Councils will be parent led and school supported, with all parents being automatically members of the 'Parent Forum', with the Parent Council formally representing their views.

SCOTTISH PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL

The Scottish Parent Teacher Council is the national organisation for PTAs and PAs in Scotland and runs an independent helpline service for all parents. You can contact them by phone/fax on 0131 226 4378, by email on sptc@sol.co.uk or write to SPTC, 53 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2HT.

INSURANCE

The Authority insures against its legal liability for:-

- a) accidental personal injury and
- b) accidental damage to property not belonging to the school or Council.

This means that if an injury is sustained or personal property is damaged/broken/lost **due to negligence or omission** on the part of the school or its staff, claim costs will be met by the Council's public liability policy. There is no automatic right to compensation. It is the responsibility of the person making the claim to prove that the Council has been negligent in their actions leading to the loss.

Parents may wish to consider their own insurance arrangements in terms of appropriate extensions to their household insurance or arranging their own separate covers.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In the event of the school having to close when pupils are in attendance due to an emergency such as adverse weather conditions, heating failure etc. the procedure is as follows:

1. Parents or the emergency contact person will be called and details of the closure passed on. It is therefore imperative that these contact numbers are kept up to date.
2. Pupils should be collected as soon as possible.
3. Where this is not possible pupils will be kept until their normal collection time.
4. On collection parents/carers will if possible be advised of arrangements for the following day.

In the event of an emergency closure outwith school hours an announcement will be made in the morning on Radio Tay, updated on the Tay Connect Information System 08700 500 232, Selection One. During office hours the Council's Access Line 0845-277 7778 (low call rate) will provide update information. Additional information is available on www.angus.gov.uk.

POLICIES

The pre-school operates to a set of welfare and curricular policies, which guide the work of the centre. Those policies are kept in a folder within the pre-school playroom. We would encourage parents to make themselves familiar with these policies. Please speak to staff for further information.

TRANSITION TO PRIMARY

Every Angus Council primary school is assigned a geographical area usually referred to as the school's 'delineated area', or sometimes called the 'catchment area'. Parents of children whose 5th birthday falls after the first day of the school session but on or before the last day in the following February can delay enrolment until the start of the next school session in August if it is thought to be in the best interests of the child.

Places within each school are normally offered to children who live within the delineated area. However, parents also have the right to request a place for their child in another school of their own choosing and this request will be granted wherever possible, provided there are places at the chosen school. A letter will be sent from the Education Department in December advising parents of their child's eligibility to start primary education. This letter will contain the details of your delineated primary school.

Throughout the year opportunities arise for the children to experience the wider school community through visits to the gym, attending

assemblies, using the library and familiarising themselves with school staff.

During the last term, links with the P1 will become more routine and visits to a Primary 1 class will be a more regular occurrence. Children will also experience playground life and learning to play alongside older children and Primary 1 teachers will also visit the nursery class to observe the children at play and informal exchanges of information will take place.

Each parent, however is responsible for enrolling their child at the primary school of their choice.

It is vital for all children to feel confident about moving into new situations. The school at which your child is enrolled will notify you of their arrangements for new entrants.

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

We will seek your views about the provision on a regular basis throughout the session to ensure that we are meeting both your child's needs and your expectations. Suggestions are always welcome about how we might improve. A suggestion box is placed in the cloakroom area for this purpose.

If you should have any concern or complaint the following procedure should be followed:

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY Auchterhouse Primary School NURSERY

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at our Nursery and welcome comments or suggestions, which could help us to improve our service.

However, we are aware that difficulties can occur from time to time and if you feel you have reason to complain, then please follow the procedure outlined below.

Please use the open door policy and speak to the person in charge of the Nursery, either at the beginning or end of a Nursery session. If you prefer, an appointment can be made to speak to the Nursery staff in private. It will then, in consultation with the parents/carers, be decided, if the matter needs to be taken further, in which case, the Head Teacher will be informed and a meeting arranged.

From here, if necessary, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Pre-School Education Development Officer who will decide what the next steps should be. Parents will be kept fully informed at each stage and will be invited to attend any meetings being held.

Should you feel unable to speak to the person in charge of the Nursery, please make an appointment to speak directly with the Head Teacher.

Parents/carers are also able to contact the Care Commission directly with a complaint, if they so wish. The local address and telephone number for our centre is:

**Care Commission
Headquarters
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee DD1 4NY**

The Care Commission publication "How to use the Care Commission Complaints Procedure" is also available. You will find a copy of this displayed on our Nursery Notice Board.

The pre-school class is registered with and regulated by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care, more commonly known as the Care Commission. If you have a concern or complaint about the service provided you can contact them at any time at the details below:

Care Commission
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

0845 603 0890

NB concerns and complaints can be sent anonymously.