



'A messy child is a happy child'

Centre Prospectus



Welcome

Parents/carers

As a staff team we are very conscious of the trust that you place in us when you consider enrolling your child at Castle Gardens preschool.

At Castle Gardens Preschool children are always at the heart of everything we do. We take pride in being allowed to share in your child's first steps into the educational journey.

In our preschool we aim to support the development and ability of each child as an individual as every child is precious.

So that we can do the absolute best for every child in our care we strongly believe in a close partnership with parents. It is our aim to develop your child fully within our wonderful setting both indoors and outdoors, also with our excellent staff team.

This prospectus will hopefully give you a small glimpse into life at Castle Gardens Preschool. It outlines what we stand for and what we can offer your child as they begin their school career.

It is the passion of all the staff that every child who enters our setting will leave that little bit more creative, imaginative, explorative, and passionate about learning through play.

As a staff team we look forward to welcoming you into our Castle Gardens Family.

Necole, Adele, Susan, Zoe, Kerry, Carla and Samantha



Introduction

We are a preschool in Castle Gardens Primary school in Newtownards Co. Down. The Preschool was established over 20 years ago and has had a few different locations until finding our permanent home within Castle Gardens Primary school several years ago.

In 2020 - 2021 the preschool had some major changes we changed the name from Chuckles Preschool centre to **Castle Gardens Preschool** and it now has a new staff team.

At Castle Gardens we are funded by the EA and governed by Social Services and ETI. All reports from both agencies can be viewed online. We are also registered with CAPS (Curriculum and Programme Support) and we have our own independent Early Years Specialist, Mrs Janice Mawhinney, who provides us with advice, training and support, at any time, if required. In addition, we have a Registered Social Worker, Ms Madeline Maxwell, from our local HSS trust who visits the centre.

At Castle Gardens Preschool we offer one preschool class (fully funded by EA) and over the next few years we are hoping to develop a separate PrePre class.

We operate out of two bright and very spacious classrooms which are both accessible throughout the day. The outdoor facilities we avail of include a large Playground, a private closed in courtyard right outside our doors, we are also able to use the school's nature area and their grassy/woodland areas.

Begin within a primary school allows us the use of other wonderful resources, including the PE hall which we are able to use once a week throughout the year this also allows us to arrange physical development classes such as fitness Freddy, Yoga classes and many more. There is also the school library which we visit once a week for a story telling session.

All of these wonderful resources allow us to provide every child with a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences every day. We have 5 fully qualified members of staff and one volunteer who are all extremely passionate about childhood care and education.

As a preschool we are hoping to complete our forest school NI training this year and how future hopes is to become an Eco preschool this means keeping our area clean and hopefully move to paper free.



Our Mission Statement

Our mission statement 'to provide a safe, happy, and stimulating educational environment in which children are valued as unique individuals, supported by caring, experienced and qualified practitioners'.

Our Aims and Objectives

- To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment which enhances child development and education.
- Act as positive role models
- Through the preschool curriculum NI guidance plan effectively for the needs of each individual child
- To promote the way in which children learn through play and first-hand experiences.
- Encourage children's confidence and self-esteem and prepare them for the next step in their school career.
- To see each child as an individual and to value the qualities they bring to the preschool
- To build positive relationships with parents/carers and to work in partnership with them to get the best for their child.
- To ensure continual improvement by continually reflecting on our practice as a setting and as a staff team.
- Ensure that we continually implementing our policies and procedures reviewing them regularly to ensure they are up to date.



Preschool Classes

We can offer 26 funded preschool places available to all children in their immediate year before primary school. These places are applied for from January of the year they would be due to start. To apply you visit the DE website admissions. We would normally have an open day in December unfortunately this will not happen this year so we will be holding a virtual tour which will be shown on our Facebook page.

The Preschool class will operate Monday to Friday 9am to 12noon with the children attending five days a week. You will have the option to sign up for lunch club which is on until 1pm.

All staff work in line with the NI Preschool Curricular Guidance. We encourage strong links with our parents and highly value their input and involvement in preschool life. At Castle Gardens we operate an open-door policy and welcome any prospective parents have and encourage them come and see us at any time that suits them.

In our preschool the children will learn through play in a carefully structured programme, suitable to their age and stage of development. It is our aim to provide a happy and secure environment which each child will experience success and have fun while learning many new concepts.

The play activities fall into the following main areas:

Imaginative play:	Home area, shop, Garden centre, dressing up, Hairdressers, Post offices these are just a few there is so many more.
Natural Materials:	Water, sand, soil, clay and an array of sensory materials
Physical Play:	Balance beams, ball skills throwing, catching and kicking, bike/trikes and exploring our natural areas.
Construction Materials:	Large and small, Lego, magnetic polydron, wooden blocks, soft building blocks and many more
Sand and Water:	Exploring the properties on both through capacity weight, going through, imagination, fine motor skills and small world.
Tabletop:	Matching and sorting games, jigsaws small world and many more
Library:	Picture books, story books fiction/non fiction books
Tinkering/Sensory area:	Area containing a wide selection of sensory resources and tinkering
Music Area:	Selection of musical instruments, Nursery rhyme

They are then categorized under the SIX AREAS of learning, below are just a few of the learning outcomes we aim to meet within the year.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Offer opportunities to:

- Develop Self-esteem, confidence and independence
- Develop secure relationships and an awareness of the needs of others
- Develop a sense of responsibility
- Develop positive attitudes to learning



Language Development

Opportunities to:

- Develop language skills and self expression
- Extend and enrich vocabulary
- Develop concentration and listening skills
- Develop enjoyment for rhymes, songs, stories and books

Early Mathematical Experiences

Opportunities to:

- Participate in number rhymes
- Understand language associated with size
- Count during play
- Sort and group by size, shape and colour

Physical Development & Movement

Opportunities to:

- Move confidently and with control
- Develop Fine & Gross motor skills
- Develop a sense of health and well-being
- Put on their own coat/apron



The Arts

Opportunities to:

Develop creativity and imagination through play

Enjoy exploring and experimenting with materials, tools colours and junk materials

Promote Children's abilities to represent their ideas and feelings through a range of medias

Listen and respond to music

World Around US

Opportunities to:

Become aware of their world and roles that people play in the community

Explore and observe the natural environment

Enhance a child's natural curiosity about how the world around them works

Promote a sense of caring for the environment



Observations and Reports

In accordance with the Preschool Curriculum NI we observe all children in the six areas of learning, this allows to play appropriately for each individual child's education. As parents you have access to your child's observations on request at any time however we do have 3 reports and consultation times throughout the year where we will discuss with you, your child's development.

In October/November we will have a settling in report/meeting with you this is a very basic report concentrating on how your child has settled into preschool life with us.

Our second report is in February/March where we go into detail on how your child is progressing in all six areas of learning and discuss any possible targets.

In June we then compile your child's Transition report, this report is the one that will be forwarded one to your child's P1 teacher, it will provide your child's P1 teacher with all the vital information to help your child move into P1 seamlessly.



Lunch Club

We do offer a wonderful lunch club facility at Castle Gardens Preschool. Our lunch club starts in October it is a great opportunity for children to gain the experience of staying later in a school setting and bringing a pack lunch from home to eat with their friends.

We operate a healthy eating policy and encourage children to bring in healthy foods to eat. Lunch club costs £3 a day and will run Monday to Thursday.

It is a good opportunity to relax and bond together over lunch. We also use the time to teach table manners and let the children practice with an adults assistance how to open all those fiddly lunch items before they have to go it alone in P1.

Once the children have finished their lunches they can take part in a range of fun activities that are different from what has been on offer throughout the day such as Hasbro games, Lego competitions and so much more.

However, we will only run our lunch club if we have an interest.



General Information

We are based at Castle Gardens Primary School
69 Bowtown Road
Newtownards
BT23 8SH

[Tel :07933360166](tel:07933360166)

Email: castlegardenspreschool@gmail.com

Staff

The leader/Manager	Mrs Necole Tate
The Deputy Leader	Miss Adele Mawhinney
Preschool Assistants	Zoe Birch, Susan Bell, Kerry Maguire

Uniform

Yellow polo shirt with Logo
Navy Sweatshirt with Logo

Preschool Day

9am to 12noon (1pm for lunch club)

Communication

We use an app called Seesaw and a Facebook page allowing us to communicate with parents. Here we will share photos of your child and what they have been up to in preschool (with your permission) and also keep you up to date with important information. We also provide a monthly newsletter to keep you informed of what lies ahead that month in preschool life.

Admission Criteria

Please view our latest admissions criteria online at www.eani.org.uk

A final note.....

No prospectus can convey the real atmosphere or where and how we go above and beyond the curriculum and unfortunately due to covid-19 you can not visit us to witness first-hand the joy filled, positive and stimulating environment we promote daily so please do look out for our Virtual tour.

Please check out our Facebook page for regular updates on what's happening and on our recent achievements. Our Facebook page name is Castle Gardens Preschool.

We very much hope that we can welcome you to Castle Gardens Preschool. With the very best wishes for the future.

Necole, Adele, Susan, Zoe and Kerry.

