

## **LEADER'S REPORT – Lorna Adams ( School year September 2023/2024)**

### **Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education**

Within Glenn & Barr Playgroup, we follow the Curricular Guidance for Pre-school Education. The guidance outlines the range of playful learning opportunities which should be experienced by children within pre-school education. The aim is to provide a broad range of indoor and outdoor learning experiences which capture the attention of each child. Children's best interest are at the heart of planning to ensure opportunity for each child to experience success and achieve as high a standard as possible. Play experiences are evaluated and adaptations are made to practice, resulting in the continual development and further enrichment of learning.

The areas of learning within the Pre-School Curricular Guidance are:

Language Development.

Early Mathematical Experiences.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development.

The Arts.

The World Around Us.

Physical Development & Movement.

Written observations are made on each child in the six areas of learning each month. These are confidential and are available to view upon request by Parents/ Carers, Social Services, Independent Early Years Advisor and the Education Authority (ETI). The observations help to plan for each new activity at an appropriate level for each child's individual needs in all areas of development. Parents/ Carers can at any time enquire about their child's progress.

As a staff team we plan on a yearly, monthly and weekly basis taking each child's individual's needs into account. We monitor this throughout the school year and provide three reports, the settling in report at Halloween, Mid Term Report in February and end of year Transition report, a copy of which is sent to the Primary School to which the child transfers in September.

All children irrespective of ability/ disability are ensured to attain their fullest potential in a supportive, friendly, caring child centred atmosphere.

Links with all other professionals i.e. Speech Therapist, Health Visitor etc. supporting the Playgroup are both positive and proactive.

### **Staffing**

Playgroup Leader - Mrs Lorna Adams - Pearson BTEC Level 7 Award in Strategic Management and Leadership, City & Guilds Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Children's Care, Learning and Development (Management)

Deputy Leader – Mrs Leanne Mc Sherry- City & Guilds Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Children's Care, Learning and Development (Management)

Playgroup Assistant – Mrs Aishlene Mc Dermott - City & Guilds Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Children's Care, Learning and Development (Management)

There are vetted relief staff to cover staff in emergencies and we hope to build up a bank of relief for next year going forward.

Staff are actively encouraged to obtain additional relevant qualifications, courses and experiences.

All permanent staff are fully trained in Paediatric First Aid and Child Protection. Staff also undertake additional training such as Food Safety and Hygiene, Designated Child Protection Officer Training, Fire Safety and Risk Assessment, Special Needs etc. and these are kept up to date.

A regular staff appraisal and future development plan is implemented and evaluated on a regular basis.

### **Ethos**

The ethos of our Playgroup is one that allows all children to reach their full potential in a supportive, friendly, caring child centred atmosphere. The management committee and staff are committed to creating a safe, stimulating and enjoyable environment for all children. We are a registered sessional provider and we comply fully with Health and Social Services on Safeguarding procedures, including child protection and in accordance with the legislative framework of The Children (NI) order 1995, taking into consideration the 5 main principles of the order, the first being 'welfare of the child is paramount'

### **Aims of Glenn & Barr Playgroup**

- Enable each child to develop at his / her own rate according to his / her stage of development.

### **Objectives of Glenn & Barr Playgroup**

- To build upon the learning that the children have already experienced at home.
- To allow each child to learn through play activities, which are well planned and provide challenge and extension to meet each child's needs.
- To ensure that equality of opportunity is provided for all children and those with special needs.
- To recognise, value and respect all children and their families, which include all races and cultures.
- To value parents as children's first educators and ensure that they will always feel welcome by the staff in a caring and supportive way.
- To promote partnership with parents so we can regard each other as partners in the child's education through shared information.
- To promote good practice in all aspects of the playgroup setting.

- To ensure a team of highly trained and professional staff who have knowledge of each individual child's physical, social, emotional, language and intellectual skills and understand how to promote their development.
- To help and encourage all children to develop a positive self-esteem and confidence through play.

### **The role of parents/ carers**

The Playgroup's committee comprises of parents who have a say on the running of the group and are active in promoting the best for their children and the playgroup. The parents/carers views are very much valued to help the daily running of the Playgroup. We strongly believe that parents/carers are an integral part of the playgroup and that close collaboration with them will establish good relationships between their child and staff. Throughout the year, the committee are responsible for reviewing both policy and practice, for the employment of staff, fundraising and dealing with issues that may arise. However the day to day running of the setting is left in the hands of the professionals.

Parental views are encouraged and treated with maximum importance.

We also have a suggestion/comments box in the hall to get feedback from parents/carers to write their views or ideas down.

### **Polices & Procedures**

We comply with requirements of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Northern Ireland Children's Strategy.

The policies and procedures which govern our practice have been carefully developed in accordance with both legislation (Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995) and best practice as determined by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) via the The Minimum Standards. These are continually reviewed in line with current Childcare, Health and Safety and Best Work Practice guidelines.

Each Parent/Carer receives a copy and acknowledges receipt of our Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Privacy Notice Policy, Pastoral Care Policy.

All polices are on display in the hallway in a file and parents/ carers can have access to these at any time.

There is a Child Protection flowchart & Complaints Policy flowchart on display in the hallway with all relevant contacts, phone numbers and procedures.

### **Inspections**

As part of our Registration, we are inspected annually by Southern Health & Social Care Trust Early Years Team in line with the Minimum Standards.

During the inspection time, parents/carers will be notified of playgroup's inspection and they may be randomly selected to complete questionnaires for the inspection. This is to ensure that the playgroup meets the minimum standards of care and is a requirement for all playgroups, for further

information parents/carers should consult “The Minimum Standards for Day Care and Childminding for children under 12”

Our annual Social Services took place on 29/11/2023 and the area inspected was Quality of the Physical Environment 7 Monitoring and Evaluation. The Playgroup received a very positive inspection report with only 1 minor recommendation “ that all relief staff receive Child Protection Training”

Annual Inspections check:

- The suitability of the premises, ensuring that it is safe to be used as a facility to provide care to children
- The suitability of the persons providing care, ensuring that there is no known reason why they are not able to work with children
- That the standard of care offered is in keeping with that which is required by any registered facility
- The suitability of equipment
- All record keeping systems. Early Years Inspectors have access to all pertaining records held on children and staff.

The Playgroup is also regulated and inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate and ETI Inspections take place approximately every 5 years.

To conclude, I would like to thank the Management Committee who have provided invaluable support over the past year

### **Planning for 2024/2025**

1. Management Committee to continue to support the staff
2. Staff to develop self-evaluation further at all levels and also develop a more robust based system of evidence gathering and consultation in order to improve further the pre school education provision.
3. Ensure financial stability for the Playgroup. The fundraising committee to be set up with existing members to assist with new fundraising ideas for this new academic year 2024/2024
4. To build on relationships with parents and their involvement in the children’s learning and development by keeping parents informed during the school year regarding their child’s progress.
5. Staff to prepare for Social Service Inspection (December 24) and a possible ETI Inspection
6. The AGM to take place in May 2025 instead of October 2024
7. To build up a bank of relief staff that can be called upon to provide cover in emergency situations, e.g. if a staff member is sick and in keeping in line with HSC Minimum Standards ratio of 3 adults to 24 children.
8. To appoint a new assistant for maternity leave cover – September 24- June 25

