

Annan School

Aims, Ethos and Pedagogy

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Reviewed by: Debby Hunter

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AIMS OF THE SCHOOL AND OUR FROEBELIAN PEDAGOGY

We are committed to a Froebelian ethos. Our principles and approach are guided by the ideas of Friedrich Froebel, a 19th century German educationalist whose work underpins much of the educational practice seen in schools today.

Our Aims

We aim to create an inspiring and nurturing environment in which children can develop as curious independent learners who are ambitious, love learning and make exceptional progress. We place children at the heart of the school and value each individual for who they are. We believe education is holistic and we aim to incorporate Froebel's three forms of learning "Knowledge, Beauty, Life" representing the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development.

Pedagogy

Through our Froebelian pedagogy we teach through real life experiences encouraging active and creative thinking and children's learning is meaningful and has purpose.

We value creativity, risk and challenge, community, wellbeing and help children to treat others and the world around them with mutual respect.

We create a unique environment in which children thrive and are guided to develop the skills they need to be active, confident and discover their passions.

We place great importance on active learning and self-activity. Active learning engages and challenges children's thinking using real-life or imaginary situations.

"To learn a thing in life and through doing is much more strengthening than to learn it merely through the verbal communication of ideas" Froebel.

A Froebelian approach to learning builds on children's previous experiences and starts 'where the learner is' with opportunity for individualisation and challenge. It allows for different learning styles and encourages children's independence supported by teachers who structure the environment and intervene sensitively to embed and extend children's learning.

Children are responsible for making choices, are respected as central to and active in the learning process in which they are engaged and involved in self-evaluating and make connections in their learning.

By following an ethos of 'Freedom with Guidance' we aim to help children to become enthusiastic, self motivated and creative learners with a life-long love of learning and the perseverance to pursue their own interests and talents, taking on new challenges with self-belief and autonomy.

Relationships with children are warm, respectful, interactive and intellectually engaging, seeing educators as co-learners. The school values and develops a culture of mutual respect between its community of adults and children.

Activities and experiences have sense, purpose and meaning to the child, and involve joy, wonder, concentration, unity and satisfaction and children make connections in their learning.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our school

- To value, nurture and educate each child to be knowledgeable, compassionate, responsible, creative and respectful
- To help realise the social, intellectual, physical and emotional development potential of each child
- To foster each child's intellectual, emotional, social and physical well-being
- To foster each child's concept of self, self-esteem and confidence to enable him or her to become an autonomous, creative and original thinker
- To help children to develop as positive citizens who will become a full and worthwhile member of their local national and international communities and see themselves as guardians of the Earth.

In support of our aims the objectives are

- To create a warm and caring atmosphere in which children, staff and parents all feel happy and secure
- To support children's learning through exploration and active learning valuing symbolic play in the early years and developing high level problem solving in later years
- To provide a curriculum which gives opportunities for wonder, exploration, excitement and collaborative purposeful learning.
- To provide an attractive and stimulating environment in which learning can take place indoors and outdoors
- To recognise and respect each child as a unique and creative individual with his or her own special needs and to develop in each child an awareness of and a respect for the needs of others
- To develop a partnership with parents and carers to share in the education and well-being of each child
- To use a model of respectful communication to help children learn emotional maturity, co-operation, empathy and respect

Organisation of Learning

Our learning is organised in a holistic way using a thematic approach designed to support children's natural curiosity and stimulate their creativity.

Children work on projects in a cross-curricular way using foundations subjects such as history geography and science for a thematic focus. They demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through a wide range of media eg art, drama, music and movement.

Termly topics are organised into 4 distinct phases:

- **Inspire** – at the start of a topic the children are inspired and their curiosity sparked with quality first hand experiences. These experiences might involve school trips or visiting experts coming into school.
- **Discover** – the class teachers and the children start to explore the topic theme in more detail, answering questions and following lines of inquiry that arose from stage 1.
- **Create** – Once the children have become experts within the scope of the topic, they turn their attention to creative ways to demonstrate the knowledge they now have and the skills they have gained
- **Communicate** – When the creative stage is completed the children share what they have made with a wider audience. This stage of the topic puts the children in the role of experts and assists them in growing their confidence. This final stage is also important in giving purpose and direction to the learning experiences earlier in the topic.

Observation and collaborative learning

The use of skilled and informed observation of children supports effective development, learning and teaching. Children's contributions are highly valued and children have a say in the documentation of their learning promoting their sense of responsibility and independence.

Children are involved in self-evaluating and make connections in their learning.

Enquiry, problem solving, reasoning, creative thinking are strong features of classroom activity.

Children often work collaboratively (peer-peer learning is highly valued).

Learning processes are made 'visible' to children with the process of learning being valued not just the end-product.

Parents/carers and educators work together in partnership with an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children can have security and confidence.

Children and adults work with each other drawing resources from the school, locality and wider community.

(see also Curriculum Policy)

Respectful Communication

By use of a model of respectful communication we aim to help children develop their personal wellbeing, emotional maturity, co-operation, empathy, respect.

At Annan School children feel listened to and respected. They can make suggestions and know they will be taken seriously. We encourage children to be responsible for their own behaviour, to understand the effects and consequences of their choices and to feel valued, respected and treated fairly.

A primary aim is to promote good relationships so that everyone can work together in an environment where they feel happy, safe and secure enabling everyone to learn. Our high expectations of good behaviour lead children towards positive self-esteem and self-discipline.

We maintain mutual respect through listening to children and encouraging children to talk about their feelings both to adults and to each other. In this way most issues are dealt with before they escalate, and children are guided to freedom with responsibility.

We help children to develop self-motivation and self-discipline by learning to communicate their needs and feelings appropriately. Children are intrinsically motivated and enthusiastic to learn and build a happy community in which to work.

(see also Behaviour Policy)

An introduction to Froebelian education

Our pedagogy underpins the school's ethos. It is regularly discussed both in theory and in practice throughout the school and across the teaching staff. Parents are given information about the approach and the school has produced a guide for parents, prospective parents and visitors to the school entitled

An introduction to Froebelian education.

(see An introduction to Froebelian education)