



Admission and settling in policy

It is the policy of this nursery to settle children in gradually, both in terms of number and time, so that each child becomes happily independent.

Fifty two children are admitted to this nursery in the first academic term.

The criteria that we use to select the children for this nursery are in line with the regulations issued by the Department of Education and the Education Authority of NI - this is available on the EANI website www.eani.org.uk. The school also keeps an up-to-date Admissions section on the school website, www.ravenscroftnursery.co.uk, where information relating to Open Enrolment and Admissions to the school is published.

Once all the places have been allocated a meeting is held for parents where the ethos of the nursery is explained, along with practical information regarding a child's time in nursery. At this meeting parents will meet the principal of the nursery school as well as the nursery staff.

Prior to starting, each child, along with their parent, will be invited to an open day in the nursery. This gives each child time in the nursery to meet the staff, see the nursery and meet a very small group of other children. This has proven to be very beneficial when settling children in.

Each child will also be offered a home visit. Detailed forms will be completed with the parent and hopefully the staff will find out as much about the child's home circumstances in order to gain a good understanding of the child. This may help with the settling in process.

When the child and parent come to nursery on the first day visit of one hour, a warm welcome will be given. They will both be shown around the nursery.

The child's first day in nursery, following the Open Day in August/September, is only for one hour and the parent will be encouraged to stay for as long as is required for the child to settle in happily. The teacher will help both parent and child to manage the initial separation possibly by:

- communicating with parent and child as they work together;
- involving the parent or child in some activity as a step towards separation;
- suggesting when it might be appropriate for the parent to leave and return

- always informing the parent of how the child has been.

Most children settle in well; but there are sometimes one or two who find this difficult. In such cases special help and understanding from the staff are required. Such a child may need their parent to stay until they have settled with flexible attendance, and their day extended very gradually. They may also need an adult with them during the initial sessions. Where a child's settling in process requires adjustment or support, this will always be discussed and agreed with parents. Sometimes a child may experience difficulties or distress with settling; it may be better to wait for a few weeks and try again later in the first term. It is sometimes easier to settle a child experiencing such issues into a fully settled class - they will benefit from the more predictable environment and increased adult attention which is available when the class is well gelled and settled. Again, where this might be helpful for a child, both school/teacher and parent will work out a plan together which works towards settling in and increasing daily attendance.

At all times the staff must be understanding of the children's differing needs and temperaments and not only have one standard set of expectations for all the children settling in.

Staff must also be seen as approachable, caring, sensitive, trustworthy individuals that parents feel happy to leave their children with.

During the settling in period we aim to get to know the children well and help them quickly get used to the rules and routines of nursery e.g. putting on and taking off aprons, finding name labels for paintings etc.

This will work best when there are only a small number of children present. In this small group setting, the children will have time to bond with their new caregivers and grow in confidence that their needs will be met in their new environment. Therefore, during the month of September all children will have visited or commenced school within the first two weeks of the term, and in small and staggered groups.

On the first day, all children will have a one hour visit. The following day, group 1 & 2 will begin, each attending in a small group of 8/9 children. Groups 1 & 2 are generally made up with children who have extensive playgroup experience- children who have previously attended playgroup are more likely to pick up our daily routines quickly and easily. As this is the case, we settle groups 1 & 2 in relatively quickly and join them as a larger group within the first fortnight in September. Groups 3 & 4 will typically comprise of children who have not attended playgroup or children with daycare experience. Groups 3 & 4 begin with one hour daily in small, separate groups and we allow these two groups a slower pace at settling in and building up to a full school day. They will benefit from a longer period of time, in a smaller group, during which they can adapt to the rules and routines of the school day. Attendance time gradually builds up as we add new routines to the settling in period. Almost all children begin dinners by the end of September. A sample settling in time table is laid out below.

Parents are kindly asked to accompany their child throughout their first day visit, and then to make themselves available to remain in school for the three days which follow

the initial August/September visit. The process is also followed for children who start later in the school year.

The morning room (8:30 am) drop off begins when settling in is complete for most of the children. Your child must be fully settled before using this service, as only one staff member is available for this between 8:30-8:55 am.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 29/08				Open Day Visit for all groups	G1- 9-10 G2- 10.15- 11.15
Week 2 05/09	G1 9-10 G2 10.15- 11.15	G1 & G2 9- 11 G3 11.15- 12.15 G4 12.30- 1.30	G1 & G2 9- 11 G3 11.15- 12.15 G4 12.30- 1.30	G1 & G2 9- 11 G3 11.15- 12.15 G4 12.30- 1.30	G1 & G2 9- 11 G3 11.15- 12.15 G4 12.30- 1.30
Week 3 12/09	G1 & G2 9- 11 G3 11.15- 12.15 G4 12.30- 1.30	G1 & G2 9- 11.15 G3 & G4 11.30-1pm	G1 & G2 9- 11.15 G3 & G4 11.30-1pm	G1 & G2 9- 11.15 G3 & G4 11.30-1pm	G1 & G2 9- 11.15 G3 & G4 11.30-1pm
Week 4 19/09	G1 & G2 9- 11.15 G3 & G4 11.30-1pm	G1 & G2 9- 12 G3 & G4 11- 1.45pm	G1 & G2 9- 12 G3 & G4 11- 1.45pm	G1 & G2 9- 12 G3 & G4 11- 1.45pm	G1 & G2 9- 12 G3 & G4 11- 1.45pm
Week 5 26/09	All groups 9- 12pm				
Week 6 03/10	All groups 9-1pm Dinners start				