

Nursery Curriculum Rationale

Our Nursery Curriculum Rationale was updated in 2026 following consultation with children, parents, staff and partners, alongside a review of our Vision, Values and Aims. This rationale reflects our shared aspirations for children and provides a clear framework for how learning is planned, delivered and experienced within our nursery. Our Vision, Values and Aims are the foundation of our curriculum and underpin all aspects of nursery life.

Vision

Touch Primary School and Nursery, A Community with Learning at its Heart: Built on Connection and Relationships

We believe that strong, positive relationships are central to children's wellbeing and learning. Through warm, nurturing interactions and a strong sense of belonging, children are supported to feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

Values

We are:

- Safe
- Honest
- Aspiring
- Respectful
- Kind

These values are actively modelled by adults and supported through everyday interactions, language and expectations. They shape our ethos and help children develop empathy, resilience and respect for themselves, others and their environment. We use our Value Bears and Our Values Song to support children's engagement with these values.

Aims

In our nursery, children are supported so that:

- We are safe and happy
- We are helped to keep learning and try new things
- We try our best and are encouraged to be independent
- Everyone gets a fair chance
- We learn about our emotions and get help to make good choices

These aims reflect our commitment to nurturing confident, curious learners who feel valued, supported and included.

Purpose of Our Curriculum

The purpose of our curriculum is to support children to develop as:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens

- Effective Contributors

Through play, exploration, relationships and meaningful experiences, children are supported to develop the knowledge, skills, attributes and capabilities they need now and in the future.

Our Curriculum Framework

Our nursery curriculum is organised through the four contexts for learning within Curriculum for Excellence:

1. Ethos and Life of the Nursery

Our positive ethos, nurturing relationships and inclusive environment form the heart of learning. We actively promote children's independence and rights, ensuring all children are respected as capable, confident individuals. Daily routines, learning environments and interactions are carefully designed to encourage children to make choices, solve problems, manage their own needs and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their learning. Children are supported to develop independence through self-help skills, choice of resources, leading play, contributing ideas and reflecting on their learning.

Children's Rights, as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), are embedded in everyday practice. Children are supported to have a voice in decisions that affect them, to express their views, feelings and preferences, and to feel listened to and valued. Adults model respectful interactions, support children to understand fairness, inclusion and empathy, and create a safe, nurturing environment where every child feels secure, respected and able to thrive. Through this rights-based, child-centred approach, we support children to develop confidence, agency and a strong sense of belonging within our nursery community.

2. Curriculum Areas

Children experience learning across the curriculum through high-quality play-based experiences, including:

- Literacy and English
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education
- Technologies, Sciences and Social Studies (through real-life contexts, interests and experiences)

Learning across all curriculum areas is planned and delivered in line with the principles of curriculum design. Experiences are designed to ensure breadth and progression across Early Level (and for some children at pre-early level or first level), while allowing depth of learning through sustained, meaningful play. Learning opportunities provide challenge through enjoyment, motivating children to explore, investigate and persevere. Planning is flexible and responsive, promoting personalisation and choice by building on children's interests, strengths and ideas. Strong connections are made across curriculum areas to promote coherence, and

learning is rooted in real-life, play-based and local contexts to ensure relevance and meaningful engagement for all children.

3. Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL)

Interdisciplinary learning emerges naturally from children's interests, questions, real-life events and the local community. This supports meaningful connections across learning and enables children to apply skills and knowledge in relevant contexts.

4. Wider Achievements

We recognise and celebrate children's achievements both within and beyond the nursery, valuing all successes and progress as important contributors to confidence, motivation and pride in learning.

We support wider achievement by working closely with parents to help them recognise and share their children's achievements at home and in nursery. Opportunities are provided to extend children's interests and learning through our lending library, a range of play-at-home bags, and participation in activities within the local community. These experiences help strengthen home-nursery partnerships and support continuity in children's learning and development.

Principles of Curriculum Design

Our nursery curriculum is designed in line with the seven principles of curriculum design within Curriculum for Excellence. These principles ensure learning is developmentally appropriate, meaningful and responsive to children's needs, interests and context.

- **Breadth**
Children experience a wide range of learning opportunities across all curriculum areas through play, exploration and real-life experiences, ensuring they develop a broad base of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- **Depth**
Learning is planned to allow children time to explore ideas in depth, revisit experiences and develop secure understanding. Sustained shared thinking and opportunities to question, investigate and reflect support deeper learning.
- **Progression**
Children's learning builds over time. Through careful observation, assessment and responsive planning, adults support progression in skills, understanding and confidence, ensuring next steps are appropriate to each child's stage of development.
- **Challenge and Enjoyment**
Learning experiences are engaging, motivating and play-based, encouraging children to take appropriate risks, persevere and feel proud of their achievements. Challenge is carefully matched to children's needs and interests to promote confidence and resilience.
- **Personalisation and Choice**
Children have increasing opportunities to make choices, lead their learning and influence what and how they learn. Planning is flexible and responsive, building on children's interests, strengths and ideas.
- **Coherence**
Learning experiences are carefully connected to help children make sense of

their learning. Links are made across curriculum areas and learning contexts, supporting children to see relevance and continuity in their experiences.

- **Relevance**
Learning is meaningful and rooted in real-life contexts, including children's own experiences, the local environment and the wider community. This helps children understand the purpose of their learning and supports engagement and motivation.

Our Context

Our nursery is located in a mainly urban area within the historic city of Dunfermline. Local housing includes a mix of private housing, private rented accommodation and local authority housing, including short-term 'scatter flats'. Approximately 50% of our children live in SIMD 1 and 2.

The local environment includes:

- Roads, car parks and a railway line
- A burn that can be fast-flowing and deep
- Local playparks and green spaces, including the community garden
- A community centre, church, mosque and conference centre
- Local shops and businesses

Health gaps – we are aware of gaps in health care equity for our children, in particular the high incidence of dental decay.

Education and learning gaps – ELIPS baselines show speech and communications gaps on entry to nursery. We are also aware that there is an inequity of opportunity for families with some children having had limited experiences prior to nursery.

Our nursery is part of Touch Primary School. As such we are able to share resources and spaces which enhances children's opportunities. We have a shared vision and values with aligned aims and policies.

This context plays a significant role in shaping our curriculum. For example:

What's unique?	How this influences our curriculum
Physical Environment and Amenities	
A busy road and car park close by	Learning about road safety is important – this needs to be part of our learning in HWB
There is a railway line at the end of the street	Learning about rail safety is important – this needs to be part of our learning in HWB
There is a burn close by	Learning about water safety is important – this needs to be part of our learning in HWB
We have churches and a mosque nearby	This should be reflected in our RME learning
There is a local community garden	This provides relevant and practical experiences in Science - growing

There are nearby parks	This provides another venue for children to experience big motor movement and learn about the natural world
There are some local businesses in walking distance: shops, hairdresser, car garage	This provides practical and relevant experiences in social subjects; understanding and feeling part of the wider community
There are sport clubs nearby: dance studio, judo dojo	This provides connections to support learning in Health (PE) as well as community links and opportunities for wider achievement
We are connected to the school building: gym hall, library, lunches	This provides opportunities for transition and learning across the whole school community
There is a doctor surgery, dentist and supermarket a little further away	This provides practical and relevant experiences in social subjects; understanding and feeling part of the wider community
There is a variety of types of home in our local area	This provides practical and relevant experiences in social subjects and feeling part of the wider community
There are some green spaces but these can have hidden dangers – steep slopes to the burn	This influences learning about keeping safe in Health
People	
Our enrolment forms show a number of our pupils are Christian, Muslim or no religion	This should be reflected in our RME learning
We have a diverse catchment area	This helps our understanding of our local community and the wider world
Our families come from different life experiences and backgrounds	Different experiences strengthens opportunities for wider achievement
Some children speak other languages and have English as an additional language	Different experiences strengthens opportunities for wider achievement. Literacy needs to be a strong focus for us.
We have a strong Parent Council with nursery representation	Parents have a strong voice in improving our nursery – ethos and life of the school
We have an experienced staff team who have worked together for a number of years	We support staff with ringfenced time to plan and prepare, and meet together. We model respectful relationships to our children and families.
Our nursery team like each other and value each other's opinion	We support staff with ringfenced time to plan and prepare, and meet together. We model respectful relationships to our children and families.

Our nursery team recognise their own and team talents, using these to good effect	Different experiences strengthens opportunities for wider achievement.
Children's Needs	
Some children have had less opportunities than others to experience things outside of their home	The need for encouraging curiosity and providing a range of provocations which take children beyond their immediate interests (the 'you don't know what you don't know' principle – we often refer to this as 'planting the seed')
Some children live within an extended family	Different family types should be represented within learning experiences, so that children feel included and seen
Some children go to other child care arrangements as well as nursery	Transitions and good communication across settings so that the child has a 'total' experience
Our observations show literacy and communication as areas of priority	Emphasis on Literacy
Healthcare gaps – dental decay	Strong daily messages for children and support for parents on healthy choices Links with Childsmile.
Our Nursery	
We have 3 rooms but we are one nursery	We need to plan for learning and provide opportunities for children to feel included within their room and the nursery as a whole
Our nursery was recently refurbished	We support our children to care for their environment and to have a voice in what their nursery looks like
We like to ensure our environment is aesthetically pleasing	We support our children to care for their environment and to have a voice in what their nursery looks like
All our rooms have access to the outdoor area	Access to outdoor space throughout the day
We have a large outdoor area, with lots of things to do	We need to plan for outdoor experiences, taking account of pupil voice. We need to support children for caring for a space beyond their nursery room
We put children first. We are child centred.	We listen to children and their families. We take account of this when planning for learning, changes and developments.

Partnerships with Parents

Parental consultation has highlighted that families value a nursery curriculum which supports:

- Building self-confidence and independence
- Developing positive relationships and social skills
- Learning about and caring for the natural world
- Developing meta-skills such as resilience, problem-solving and communication
- Supporting health and wellbeing
- Building strong foundations in literacy and numeracy
- Understanding the local environment and community
- Opportunities for physical activity and outdoor learning

Our curriculum reflects these priorities through a child-centred, play-based approach, strong partnerships with families, and meaningful learning experiences that support children's holistic development.

Through our curriculum, we are committed to ensuring every child is supported, challenged and inspired to thrive—today and in the future.

Cost of the Nursery Day

Our nursery is committed to reducing the Cost of the Nursery Day and ensuring that no child is disadvantaged due to financial circumstances. We actively work to reduce financial barriers to participation, particularly for children and families experiencing poverty.

We consider the cost of:

- Uniform – there is no set uniform for nursery children, parents are actively encouraged to send their children to nursery in clothes which are easy to get on and off and which are easy and practical to play in
- Learning resources – ensuring all children have equal access to high-quality materials and experiences
- Trips and visitors – carefully planned to be inclusive and accessible
- Eating and snack time – supporting healthy choices without financial pressure
- Events and wider experiences – ensuring opportunities are open to all children
- Home learning – providing low-cost or no-cost activities and resources

Families are supported through sensitive advice and appropriate signposting to services that support income maximisation. We work in partnership with families to promote dignity, reduce stigma and ensure children can fully participate in nursery life.

Pupil Support including Effective Transitions

Supporting children's wellbeing and development is central to our nursery curriculum. We take a holistic approach to support, recognising that children thrive when they feel safe, valued and understood.

We use ELIPs observations to help identify where additional supports may be necessary. We work in partnership with other agencies such as SALT, OT, Heath

Visiting Service, Child Smile, Social Work and Educational Psychologist to identify and provide supports for children and their families.

We carefully plan positive and supportive transitions into nursery, between rooms, and onwards to Primary 1, as well as horizontal transitions across the day. This includes close collaboration with families, partner agencies and schools, sharing relevant information and supporting children emotionally to ensure continuity and confidence.

Universal, Additional and Targeted Supports

Support is provided through a graduated approach:

- Universal support for all children through high-quality, nurturing practice and inclusive environments
- Additional support where children may need extra help with learning, wellbeing or communication
- Targeted support for children with identified needs, developed in partnership with parents, professionals and agencies, including Child's Plans where appropriate

Support strategies are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet children's changing needs.

Relationships and Restorative Practices

Positive, respectful relationships are at the heart of our nursery. We promote a restorative, relational approach that supports children to build strong social and emotional skills.

Adults model kindness, fairness and empathy, supporting children to:

- Understand emotions and behaviours
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Repair relationships in a supported and age-appropriate way

This approach supports emotional wellbeing, builds resilience and helps children learn how to make positive choices.

Children's Rights

Children's Rights, as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), are embedded across nursery life. Children are supported to:

- Feel safe, respected and included
- Express their views, feelings and ideas
- Be listened to and taken seriously in ways appropriate to their age and stage

Children have opportunities to influence routines, play, learning experiences and decisions that affect them. This rights-based approach supports children's confidence, sense of agency and understanding of fairness and respect.

Inclusion and Equity

Our nursery is committed to equity, inclusion and equal opportunities for all children. We recognise and value diversity and actively work to remove barriers to learning and participation.

Planning and practice reflect:

- Children's individual needs, strengths and interests
- Cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds
- The impact of poverty, trauma or additional support needs

Through inclusive practice, flexible planning and strong partnerships, we aim to ensure that every child experiences success, feels a strong sense of belonging and is supported to achieve their full potential.

Playroom Environment

Our learning environments are carefully designed to support children's wellbeing, engagement and learning.

We use the CIRCLE framework (Up, Up and Away) to ensure environments are:

- Inclusive and accessible
- Well-organised and predictable
- Supportive of communication, attention and emotional regulation

Play spaces are organised into clear play zones that promote:

- Independence and choice
- Creativity and enquiry
- Collaboration and sustained play

Resources are open-ended and readily available to encourage exploration, problem-solving and curiosity. Indoor and outdoor environments are viewed as equally important and are used flexibly to extend learning.