SCHEMES OF WORK

KINDERGARTEN
(3 - 7 Years)

The New Forest Small School Kindergarten is a unique, child centred space carefully created to nurture the early years of children’s lives. Montessori, Steiner, Humanist and Scandinavian kindergarten educational philosophies are incorporated into the very special learning environment. Time is divided between guided free choice, individual and group lessons.

We believe that learning in this period is best when it is play based and art, drama and music, songs and dance are incorporated to nurture a love of learning. ‘Hands on’ learning with Montessori equipment also lays the foundation for future abstract learning.

Staff focuses more on experiences than ‘second hand’, knowledge and spend much time talking, laughing and looking with the children. The questions ‘why…?’; ‘what…?’; ‘where…?’; and “how…?” are used often to fully engage the children in learning independently. Worksheets are rarely used as we prefer recorded work to be original. Some work is sent home each day and some is kept in individual files as a record of progress. Quizzes may be used as further assessment of progress with the older children, but the children are free from other forms of testing. No child is criticized or made to feel less than any other and children are encouraged to develop at their own pace, neither held back or pushed too soon. Lessons include mixed ages, where older and more capable children help younger and less capable. More work is expected of the older children in lessons in preparation for primary classes. Encouragement is used at all times. Boundaries are made clear, for the good of all and staff are firm but fair. ‘Time out’ on the big chair is used if necessary. Staff get to know the children well and an open dialogue with parents is encouraged at all times.

The school has regard to the National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals. We are aware that children in the state system and other private schools will cover more quantity of work than the children in the upper kindergarten, but we believe that the quality of the foundations of learning laid down during this period is more important.

The school covers the following areas -

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Creative Development
3. Knowledge and Understanding of the World
4. Communication, Language and Literacy
5. Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
6. Physical Development
PSED – PERSONAL, SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal, Social and Emotional Development forms the foundation for learning in the Kindergarten Class. The rising 3 year old children joining the class are encouraged to become independent in eating, drinking, going to the toilet, getting ready to go outside and finding things to play and create with, sowing the seeds of independent learning which will serve them throughout life. They become familiar with the rhythm of the day through gentle reminders and learn there is a time to be active and passive. They are taught the importance of tidying up ready for the next person from an early age. Their social development is encouraged through conversations about kindness, sharing and taking turns. They are taught to express their needs and thoughts/beliefs and listen to those of others, throughout the day and at circle time and news time.

By 4 years of age the children play alone and with each other for longer periods. They are encouraged to deal with social situations and are given ideas about what to say or do. By the time they are 5 years old, a mature level of cooperation is encouraged in the children’s play.

At six years of age, the children are given responsibilities around the running of the class, for example helping younger children at playtime, lunchtime and in lessons and circle time. 7-year-old children are encouraged to take an active part in the weekly school council meeting and eventually chair the meeting.

**Resources**
- Books
- Puzzles,
- Practical life equipment,
- Role-play
- Toys
- Costumes
- Montessori Equipment
CD – CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Creativity is encouraged in the children at all times, in ‘being’ as well as doing. The 3-year-old child is encouraged to use musical instruments and given lessons in using paints and crayons. Simple songs and rhymes with finger and body movements are taught. Collage materials are always available and the children are shown how to use glue. The youngest children are given parts in the school plays.

By 4 years of age the children are using scissors and sticking boxes together to make sculptures. They are encouraged to act out mini dramas with costumes and props.

At 5 the children use modelling tools for craft work with materials such as clay. They learn simple sewing and work with French knitting equipment. By this age the children are engaged in listening to music from around the world and taking part in guided visualisations and dramas to music. They help with choosing sets, costumes and props. They are taught songs with several verses and take part in singing shows.

By 6 years the children are shown how to use smaller brushes and watercolour sets and pastilles. They learn to sew simple toys and cushions. They make up songs to music and use the school keyboard and drum set.

By 7 years different artists and musicians to broaden their knowledge in preparation for primary class introduce the children to work. They are encouraged to draw for long periods and include detail in their works of art. They take part in guided dance lessons, drama and music games. Seven-year-old children are also allowed to create pictures and films on the mac computer.

Resources
Art and craft materials
Instruments
Dressing up box and props
CD / tape player
Keyboard
Drums
Mac computer
A fascination in the world around us is nurtured from an early age in Kindergarten. The rising 3-year-old children are encouraged to share news about their home and family at circle time. They find collage materials on the art table, which reflect the time of year, prompting conversations and a nature basket to inspire their imagination. Outside, the children grow plants from seeds and bulbs and learn about composting and play with sand. Inside there are plenty of water play activities. The school pet hamster allows the children to learn about caring for pets.

By 4 years old the children study the different continents of the world and learn their names with the Montessori globe. They play games, which reinforce this knowledge and celebrate national and international festivals. An understanding and acceptance of people’s different beliefs is nurtured.

By 5 years of age the children are introduced to the Montessori timeline, which studies the development of planet Earth from the Big Bang onwards. The children learn the names of the planets and their timely movements around the Sun, reinforced by the Montessori Birthday celebration.

At 6 the children study animal classification and the parts of plants. They look at history form cave people to the present day.

By 7 years of age the children begin learning another language. They learn to recognise different trees and leaves and where babies come from. There is no computer in the kindergarten as we consider there are more important things to learn at this stage of life. There are remote controlled cars and a robot, but we have found the children more interested in using these for imaginary games.

**Resources**
- Clothe calendar
- Collage materials
- Nature basket
- Plants and garden equipment
- Sand and water play
- Pets
- Globe and folders of continents
- Cultural toys and games
- Timeline and objects
- History
- Geography and nature books
- Books
- Remote controlled toys
The ability to speak clearly and confidently is encouraged throughout kindergarten from an early age. Rising 3-year-old children are spoken to kindly and age appropriately, with good eye contact. Stories are read to the children every day and songs and nursery rhymes are shared. Morning circle time encourages the youngest children to gain confidence in sharing news, hopes and dreams. They are encouraged to use the book corner and create pictures at the art table with paint, crayons and pencils and in sand, flour and seed trays and on the ground with chalk. From 3 years the children are encouraged to hear the phonic sounds of letters through games such as I Spy and ‘find the object which begins with…’.

By 4 years children learn to associate these sounds with the shapes by feeling sandpaper letters. Phonograms are taught at the same time. The letter land book may also be used with other materials such as the phonic wall hanging to help hear letter names and story tapes to aid concentration. Children are encouraged to learn pen control by using special grip pencils and knobbed puzzles, drawing around stencils. They are given tasks such as looking out for things in the numerous factual books in the class as well as looking at storybooks.

At 5 years the children are encouraged to put sounds together and build words with moveable letters and objects in the class. Games reinforce this activity and children are also encouraged to write their names and other words. Letter formation is helped using dotted sheets, but handwriting is not taught, as we prefer children to develop their own style.

Actual reading of words, in our experience, happens spontaneously between 6-7 years and children progress through simple phonic books to storybooks. Children begin to write sentences and paragraphs before leaving kindergarten and are encouraged to keep diary sheets with words and pictures.

**Resources**
- Art and other materials
- Story and factual books
- Sandpaper letters and phonograms
- Moveable alphabets
- Letter land
- Phonic wall hanging
- Stencils
- Letter sheets
- Letter and word games
- Word sheets
- Phonic reading
- Storybooks and tapes.
Maths skills in the kindergarten are built on solid foundations through lots of hands on play with quantities followed by symbols. The rising 3-year-old children are first taught about numbers through rhymes and songs. They count the numbers of the days of the month at circle time. They are introduced to mathematical concepts such as big and small, near and far, more or less through classroom activities. Colours are taught through games and artwork.

By 4 years of age the children are taught to grade objects according to size. They work with the Montessori maths equipment, learning about quantities and the matching quantities to numbers up to 5 or beyond. They learn the names of basic shapes and produce artwork with insets of these shapes.

By 5 years of age the children match quantities with symbols up to 10, they learn about less and more and do simple addition and subtraction with beads. They learn the names of some 3d shapes and discuss concepts about time and space in relation to planets and the beginning of the earth. Writing numbers is aided through touching the sandpaper letters.

The golden beads are introduced at 6 years of age to give a quantative representation of units, tens hundreds and thousands. Number cards accompany this learning. The Seguin boards reinforce knowledge of numbers up to 100 with beads and symbols. Concepts of time and space are extended through lessons in years, seasons and months and studies of early people.

By 7 years of age children in the kindergarten are introduced to longer addition and subtraction, dividing and times tables. They study time through work with clock faces, learning about days and hours, minutes and seconds. Simple measuring lessons introduce miles, metres and centimetres and ounces and grams.

**Resources**
- Montessori maths materials
- Books
- Games
- Measuring equipment (time, space, weight)
PD – PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Fine and gross motor activities form a large part of the active curriculum. Lessons are given to the rising 3-year-old children in scooping rice into a pot and using tongs to pick up pebbles, etc. The Montessori knobbed cylinders and puzzles offer further fine motor development at this age, as do finger rhymes and songs. Gross motor development is encouraged through dance and song. Outside activities, which develop gross motor skills at 3 years, include running and jumping.

At 4 years activities to develop fine motor skills include using pegs to hang washed dolls clothes. The children use glass jugs and cups and real knives for cutting fruit. Tasks such as threading are shown. Gross motor skills at this age include walking on chalk lines and using a broom and dustpan and brush for sweeping. Children are given lessons in catching and jumping ropes, etc.

By 5 years of age the children are using refined fine motor skills to build marble mazes and Lego constructions. Children are supervised building dens and climbing trees in the nearby woods as well as using large play equipment.

By 6 years of age the children are given tasks such as weaving and knitting to refine their fine motor skills. They engage in advanced construction activities such as marble mazes. In the park they are given instruction in football and cooperative games.

At 7 years the children undertake sewing projects and play games, which require fine motor skills, such as pick up sticks. They take part in mini ‘assault’ courses at the park and are given responsibilities in helping the younger children with fine and gross motor tasks.

Resources

Practical life equipment
Montessori equipment
Puzzles
Beads and cord
Ropes and balls
Pegs
Dustpan, brush and broom
Construction toys
Craft activities
Games