



## Multi-Age Kindergarten

### What does that mean?

Sometimes, we don't have enough children to make up a full group of 22 children to run three year old activity groups. So, as way of saving the program, we combine the activity group with the four year old funded kindergarten program. The children who would be attending the activity group come for four hours a day in small groups of five.

### How will it work?

The children from the activity group will be split into three groups and each group will attend for four hours each day.

All of our teachers know that children learn best in small groups, so children will spend their group time with children who are developing at a similar rate or learning about similar things. We don't force children to join in with group learning and so if they're not ready to sit and listen, they will spend time playing.

Every child is different and a good teacher can 'differentiate' the learning. This means that the teacher will plan for each individual child in a style that is tailored to their development and interests. This already happens at all of our four year old classes and at primary and secondary school – within a group of children, no matter what their age they will all be learning at their own level and pace.

### What are the benefits?

- The kindergarten can maintain education for all children in the two years before they start school
- The younger children learn from the older children –Vygotsky, a theorist taught us that one way that children learn is via a “more knowledgeable other”
- Older children spending time with younger children will help them to develop empathy, resilience and understanding
- Children and teachers usually have the opportunity to work together for more than one year, which enhances continuity of learning and the forming of positive relationships with teachers and children, and between children
- Children enter a class where there are older children, so settling in is much easier. Older children are usually delighted to help younger ones, and this helps them to feel very worthwhile and important. Confidence grows
- Children mix freely and are encouraged to work and play together. They learn the joys of cooperation, which leads to a strong sense of community.