



Curriculum Policy

1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children receive a coherent curriculum offering opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to thrive, flourish and achieve in today's world. Our curriculum is responsive and supports progression in each child's learning and development. This policy aligns with Education Scotland and Care Inspectorates guidelines and documentation regarding children's learning and development.

1.1

Within our setting we recognise the importance and value of high-quality early education and childcare (ELC). We are committed to providing a stimulating and challenging environment which will develop and broaden children's learning experiences, leaving them confident, eager, highly motivated and disposed to learn more. We aim to be responsive to each child's individual needs, including any additional support needs, and to build on the child's prior learning and natural curiosity.

1.2

In the design and delivery of the curriculum we will adhere to national guidance. As appropriate to the child's age and stage of development, our curriculum will be guided by:

- [*Realising the Ambition: Being Me – National Practice Guidance on Early Years in Scotland* \(Scottish Government 2020\)](#)
- [*Curriculum for Excellence: Early Level* \(Scottish Government\)](#)
- [*Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors*](#)
- [*This framework will replace the current Frameworks “How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare” and “A Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Child-minding and School Aged Children” from September 2025*](#)

Throughout this guidance the term '*parents*' is used to include all main caregivers.

1.3

The [UNCRC](#) sets out a clear constitution of children's rights within all aspects of their life.

We will be guided by the UNCRC to ensure that:

- Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
- Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs, and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

2. National Guidance

2.1

We will be guided by [Realising the Ambition: Being Me](#), which builds on the original guidance Building the Ambition and Pre-Birth to Three, that our babies and children deserve the very best experiences throughout their learning journey; before birth and beyond. The guidance covers the period from birth through early childhood into primary education.

Pre-birth to Three (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) reflected on four key principles of the **Rights of the child**, **Relationships**, **Responsive care**, and **Respect**. All four principles are as relevant and current today.

We will be guided by the guidance to:

- make links between practice, theory, and policy guidance to reinforce aspects of high-quality provision and the critical role practitioner's play.
- build confidence and capability of those who work with children and families from pre-birth to starting school and beyond
- support improvement and quality by encouraging discussion, self-reflection and questioning about relevant practice.
- provide advice on achieving the highest quality of ELC provision that will enable young children to experience and to play their own part in Scotland being the best place in the world to grow up.

Realising the ambition: Being Me is the national practice guidance for early years in Scotland. It aspires to support practitioners in delivering what babies and young children need to give children the best start in life and for sector practice that reflects the principles of nurture, and the importance of relationships.

2.2

For older children, we will also be guided by [*Curriculum for Excellence: Early level*](#) which builds on the solid foundations developed in the critical years pre-birth to three.

We embrace the values inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament (wisdom, justice, compassion, and integrity) which underpin Curriculum for Excellence.

Our purpose is clear and understood by staff, children, families and partners. We take full account of the four contexts of learning in our curriculum design and nurture each child's capacity to become a:

- Successful learner
- Confident individual
- Responsible citizen
- Effective contributor

Our curriculum will provide experiences and opportunities to foster these capacities.

Our curriculum is highly responsive to the uniqueness of each child, their family and the context of their community and our planning will ensure there is:

- Challenge and enjoyment.
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and Choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Experiences and outcomes will support progress in learning. Across the eight curriculum areas; Expressive arts, Health and wellbeing, Languages, Mathematics, Religious and moral education, Sciences, Social studies, and Technologies.

Children's voices in their learning journey will be evident in the use of overarching principles of the CFE to include Play and the [*SHANARRI*](#) Wellbeing Wheel Framework for Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) which contributes to all the outcomes in this framework.

2.3

Within our setting Getting it Right for Every Child is the basis of everything we do. It is in our remit to ensure that we are getting it right for every child in every way we possibly can.

We aim and strive to ensure that all of our children regardless of any additional support they may require have the best possible start in life and are ready to succeed.

This is done by having an approach which:

- is about **empowering children, young people and parents**. It promotes children's rights and opportunities, and values diversity and family life.
- is **child focused**. It ensures the child or young person – and their parents – are at the centre of discussions, promoting informed choice about the help and support available to them.
- is about the **wellbeing** of a child or young person. It considers how Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included they are so that no aspect of their wellbeing is overlooked.
- offers **tailored support**. It means meeting the needs of each individual child or young person by taking account of their unique circumstances and by helping them to reach their potential.
- offers **early support**. It aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.
- builds on the **strengths of the child, their family and community**. It means everyone working in partnership and supporting those who know the child or young person well to identify the right help at the right time.
- promotes the **same values** across all working relationships. It promotes respect, openness and trust between children, young people, their parents and the people supporting them.
- requires **joined-up working**. It is about children, young people, parents, and the services they need working together in a coordinated way where that is necessary to serve specific needs and improve children's wellbeing.
- is available for **all children and young people** because it is impossible to predict if or when a child, young person or parent might want extra support. We will work closely with colleagues, parents and other professionals to ensure a plan is put in place which best meets and highlights the child's learning and development needs/priorities and outcomes/next steps.

2.4

The Self-Evaluation process of our curriculum will be guided by the [Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors](#).

The Quality Improvement Framework is designed to provide a holistic approach to assessing care, play and education.

One of the Quality Indicators within the framework is [Curriculum](#) which

Our Curriculum is ambitious, holistic and built upon trusting, nurturing relationships. It promotes and upholds the rights of the child as stated in the UNCRC.

Our creative and responsive approach to our curriculum design ensures that the learning is current, dynamic and supports children in receiving a broad and balanced curriculum.

2.5

The Scottish Government has placed a particular emphasis on raising attainment and acquiring skills for work and employability in later life and, as such, we will look to these as we consider progression and relevance within our planning. ([Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy, December 2014](#)).

Curriculum content will be driven by the experiences and outcomes for early level, described in Curriculum for Excellence, within the broad curriculum areas of:

- Health and wellbeing
- Languages
- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Expressive arts
- Religious and moral education
- Sciences
- Technologies

The principles and practice guidance within each of these curricular areas will support our understanding of subject importance, structure, progression, assessment, and its relevance within the wider curriculum. We will use this guidance to inform our role in delivering the curriculum.

2.6

All children have a right to a broad general education; [therefore, children's needs and interests will drive our curriculum](#), we will ensure that they have access to a wide range of experiences across all curricular areas. The Scottish Government has identified health and wellbeing, literacy, and numeracy as key areas of learning and development for all and we will ensure that opportunities to foster learning and skills in these areas permeate our

curriculum and all aspects of the setting's life. Seasonal activities and the celebration of festivals will form a backdrop to our planning as appropriate, rather than the key focus of learning, which will be dictated by children's needs and interests in conjunction with the guidance above. We will also be guided by '[Realising the Ambition: Being Me](#)' with regard to what the young child needs, taking cognisance of its advice on experiences, adult input and environment.

3. Approaches to Learning

3.1

All children learn in different ways, and we will employ a variety of approaches to learning and teaching. **Children's needs and interests will drive our curriculum.** We will ensure active and experiential learning with a strong emphasis on learning through play. We take a holistic view of learning and will ensure coherence of curricular areas and experiences, focussing on their relevance for the child. This will involve planned, meaningful interdisciplinary learning experiences for children. Co-operative learning and peer education strategies that allow for collaboration among children will be used to support and consolidate children's learning. We will constantly revisit experiences and outcomes to consolidate and embed learning. We will introduce cross-cutting themes as appropriate, ensuring rich, meaningful, and challenging learning experiences for children.

3.2

We will use the **Benchmarks** that have been developed within Curriculum for Excellence to make clear what learners need to know to be able to progress through the levels and provide clarity on the national standards expected within each curriculum area at each level, the benchmarks will support practitioners to understand standards and identify children's and young people's next steps in learning to provide consistency in teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgements. The Benchmarks set out clear lines of progression in literacy, English, numeracy, and mathematics, and across all other curriculum areas from Early to Fourth Levels.

Evidence of progress and achievement will come from a variety of sources including:

- Observing day-to-day learning within the playroom/environment
- Observation and feedback from learning activities that takes place in other.
- Learning conversations; and
- Planned periodic holistic assessment.

Skills development is integrated into the Benchmarks to support greater shared understanding. Benchmarks draw together and streamline a wide range of previous assessment guidance (including significant aspects of learning, progression frameworks and annotated exemplars) into one key resource to support teachers' and other

practitioners' professional judgement of children's and young people's progress across all curriculum areas.

3.3

Outdoor Learning provides rich opportunities for children to learn in exciting, absorbing, imaginative and meaningful ways. We will seek to make good use of these opportunities in and around the setting and further afield. Outdoor learning is an approach to learning that is integral to the curriculum. It takes place in a range of contexts such as the grounds of the setting, the local area and day trips. Its purposes include health and wellbeing; we will encourage investigation and exploration, physical activity, and personal and social development. The Scottish Government's [‘Out to Play’](#) document provides guidance and advice to ELC settings and practitioners on how to access outdoor spaces to create safe, nurturing and inspiring outdoor learning experiences. See also [‘My World Outdoors’](#).

We will support learning outdoors to engage children and young people in many different ways. Our practitioners will support, facilitate and encourage children to explore and build independence, using multi-sensory and experiential approaches to provide learning experiences whilst encouraging and supporting all children to actively explore and learn about the wider world.

The [Outdoor Learning: Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland](#), resource introduces practitioners who are not familiar with outdoor learning to exploring ways of taking children outside. It provides a route into continuing professional development and suggestions for embedding outdoor learning as a whole-school approach. It serves to illustrate the potential of outdoor learning as an effective approach to learning and teaching within the context of Curriculum for Excellence

Practitioners may find using the [snippets](#) helpful when:

- considering the benefits of outdoor learning
- planning programmes of support for specific groups or individual children
- undertaking continuing professional development activities linking to outdoor learning

4. Learning Environment

The setting will provide a safe, stimulating indoor and outdoor environment, where children feel secure and confident to explore, to experiment, interact and take up new challenges in their learning and development. The learning environment will be stimulating and rich in opportunities that foster inquiry, communication, and language development. We will be responsive to children's needs, interests, and preferred approaches to learning.

We will work together to minimise risks within our learning environments, both indoors and outdoors. Staff will take prompt action to ensure the safety and security of children, visitors and the staff team. All staff are aware of and involved in the implementation and sharing of appropriate risk assessments.

5. Role of the Adult

Staff will provide nurturing and caring support for children's learning. They will observe

and monitor children's learning and use this knowledge to plan for progression,

intervening skilfully to support shared thinking and foster new learning. They will also use

this information to help identify children with additional support needs and to develop

individual programmes of learning and support as required.

We support and encourage all types of family learning where parents will be encouraged

and supported to participate in their child's learning within the setting and in the home. We

value parents' knowledge of their child's prior learning and their role as prime educator.

We also work collaboratively with a wide range of partners/agencies whose main focus is

on the ongoing developmental needs of our children.

6. Planning for Progress

6.1

We will identify and build on the child's prior learning. We will set out clear goals for children's learning and development, which will be flexible enough to respond to the breadth of starting points indicated by the children themselves, or their parents. Through observing, talking to, and listening to children, staff will monitor and record individual children's progress. The information gained will be used to ensure that children's needs are being met and that they are being offered activities and experiences which are relevant and meaningful to them.

Staff are responsible for the planning of appropriate balance of child and adult-led experiences that respond meaningfully to the changing needs and interests of all children, and which encourage the development of curiosity, inquiry and creativity across all areas of the curriculum.

6.2

Individual profiles/records of development will be kept for each child, which children are fully involved in and can talk about what they are learning. Parents are consulted and will be encouraged to contribute to, along with the staff in planning and supporting the child's learning. The information contained in the file will be shared with parents informally during day-to-day activities, and formally at individual parents' meetings with a member of staff. Through working together with parents and colleagues within and beyond our setting we have a shared understanding of children's progress and achievements as they grow and learn. These records are the property of the child and will be given to the child when they leave. Information will not be disclosed to any other person without the consent of parents.

7. Transitions

7.1

Transition times for the child (home to setting, within the setting, across settings and onward to primary school) can be times of great uncertainty and anxiety for them. We will handle these sensitively and positively and will be responsive to the individual child. We will ensure good lines of communication with child, parent and all colleagues involved to plan carefully for each transition, aiming to make it an exciting and positive experience that leaves the child feeling confident and secure. This may involve a variety of activities such as a series of visits in preparation for the transition or ensuring familiar activities and routines across settings. The [early level](#) of CFE for most children spans the period of time from age three until the end of Primary 1. It supports a smooth transition in learning between ELC and primary school.

The child's readiness to move on will be our prime concern rather than their chronological age. See also ['Realising the Ambition: Being Me'](#), in particular the 5 c's that contribute to a healthy transition.

Our record keeping for all safeguarding matters, including planning is maintained to the highest standards and stored safely and securely ensuring all sensitive information is only accessible to relevant members of staff.

7.2 We will work together with our children and their families to support positive transitions, [The Scottish Children and Families Transitions Position Statement](#) recognises the value of working together with children and their families, positive relationships, positive continuity, learning, play and wellbeing. The Position Statement is informed by a shared understanding of the importance of transitions and the need to address the impact of transitions in children's lives.

Transition programmes will effectively build on prior learning to support curriculum continuity and progression to meet the needs of all children. In order to ensure a continuum of learning we will share information about the child's learning and development with relevant colleagues through meetings and transition records as appropriate. Transitions records will provide colleagues with meaningful and relevant information on the child's progress to date within this level. Parental permission for this will always be sought. Our overall approach to assessment will support effective transitions into, across and from our setting which enhance the learning process.

An Enhanced Transition Programme may be implemented for children who may require additional support when transitioning from one setting to another. A robust transition process will be in place to ensure accurate sharing of information specific to that child and any additional support which may be needed. This may include, additional visits, more information sharing, inter-agency meetings with any professionals working closely with that child.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of Sophie Startin (manager) to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. This will be achieved through both formal and informal observation of staff practice; staff review of curriculum plans and management review of all planning documentation and children's progress records. The quality indicators outlined in: Self-evaluation in the early years (HMIE) will inform our monitoring practice.

See also:

Responsive Care Policy

Staff Development Policy

Participation Policy

Monitoring and Assessment Policy

Quality Assurance Policy

Use of IT Policy

Outings Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Additional Support for Learning Policy

Tracking Children's Progress Policy

Transitions Policy

Links to national policy and guidance:

Please refer to the EYS Early Years External guidance glossary which can be found within MyEYS for the most up to date links.

The purpose of this Early Years External Guidance Glossary is to offer a comprehensive collection of links and documents from external organisations. These resources form the foundation of the policies and procedures used within your ELC setting.