

# Lybster ELC Handbook

2023 - 2024



**Tel : 01593 721 224**

**[e-mail lybster.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:lybster.primary@highland.gov.uk)**

**[www.lybsterprimary.wordpress.com](http://www.lybsterprimary.wordpress.com)**

**Head Teacher** - Mrs D. Walsh

**Early Years Practitioners** - Miss J McDonough, Mrs A Walker

**Support worker** -Mrs T Fryer

**ELC Support Teacher** – Miss C Bonner

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to Lybster ELC at the beginning of what we all hope will be a long and happy relationship with you and your child.

The relationship between home and school is vital for your child and we hope you will always feel happy to come and talk to staff about any queries or concerns. We welcome your views at all times and it is through working together that your child will gain most from his/her time at Lybster ELC.

This booklet is aimed at giving you information about day-to-day life in the setting – and if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask. If you have any specific matters, which need discussion at length we will arrange a convenient appointment.

If you are unable to come in regularly to see what is going on, we hope to have regular up to date information on the school website. [www.lybsterprimary.wordpress.com](http://www.lybsterprimary.wordpress.com)

Our setting was modernised in 2015 to make provision for a kitchen area and toilets. New furniture was also provided, along with an interactive ‘Smartboard’.

As ever, our main focus of work will continue to be ensuring that your child has the right start at the beginning of their schooling. If they are safe, secure and happy, then learning will follow.

We look forward to working together with you and your child.

Yours sincerely,

*Mrs D Walsh*  
Head Teacher

# Lybster ELC

The aims of Lybster ELC are to:

- Provide a safe and stimulating environment in which children can feel happy and secure, and develop in confidence and self-esteem.
- Promote the welfare of children and encourage their emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of kindness, fairness respect and positive attitudes to self and others.
- Provide a broad range of learning opportunities, which stimulate interest and imagination, develop skills and confidence.
- Encourage children to explore, appreciate and respect their community and environment.
- Work closely with parents and carers to support each child's learning journey.
- Develop strong links with Lybster School staff and pupils
- Embrace the National, Local Authority and Care Commission Guidelines and support professional development of staff.

*All the above aims are delivered through the **Curriculum for Excellence**, which will enable all our children to become:*

- **Successful Learners**
- **Confident Individuals**
- **Effective Contributors**
- **Responsible citizens**

## About Lybster ELC

Lybster ELC was completely modernised in the summer of 2015. The room was extended by incorporating part of the GP room and this has allowed for the provision of a kitchen area, store cupboard and toilets within the setting. Much of the furniture was also replaced at this time and a new 'Smartboard' installed. The main playroom can cater for up to 24 children and is usually set out with different areas, which allow them to engage in a variety of learning experiences e.g.

- quiet reading corner
- numeracy activities/games
- literacy activities/games
- construction
- group activity
- painting area
- wet/messy play area
- role play / home corner that can be adapted to the children's interests



The children have access to the school gym on a daily basis if required, and also like to explore the main school building.

The setting has its own outdoor play area - part tarred/part grass along with a shed for storage of outdoor toys and equipment. The children also like to visit the school garden, poly tunnel and trim trail – and have access to the wider school grounds – and beyond.

## Enrolment

This usually takes place in early February for entry in August, January or April of the next school session and is now done online. Parents will be notified of the dates in the local press, notices in the school, the local Post Office or shop.

You will need to bring your child's birth certificate and provide home and emergency contacts along with other general information about your child's health, dietary needs, interests etc.

You will also be asked to give permission for Nursery staff to take photographs of your child in order to personalise their work and for display purposes.

## Nursery Enrolment

Children can stay for the whole session - **9am until 3pm;**

- for mornings only - **9am – until 12noon;**
- for mornings and lunch - **9am - 1pm.**

Provision can also be shared with another registered setting if necessary.

## **Key worker**

Whilst most duties in the Nursery are shared, each child will have a member of staff identified as their 'key worker'. They will have a particular focus for that child's learning and should be the first point of contact for any discussion.

## **Induction and transition**

You are more than welcome to come and have a look around the setting to see the environment in which your child will play and learn - and the kind of activities they will be involved in.

Once your child has been enrolled, you will be invited to an induction session along with others joining at the same time. This will give you and your child a chance to become familiar with the setting, the staff and the other children.

## **Equal opportunities**

Lybster ELC aims to ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, gender, home language, additional needs, rurality or ability. We will endeavour to ensure that all children feel secure, included and valued.

## **Attendance**

Full time attendance is not compulsory, but it is important for children in their pre-school year to attend on a regular basis in order to obtain the maximum benefit. If they are not to attend full time then it is preferable to have set days on which they do attend.

Parents and children will have access to the cloakroom area 10 minutes before the start of the session to allow time to change into indoor shoes etc.

**Please ensure your child is properly supervised during this time both for their own safety and for the wellbeing of others.**

### **Staff begin work at 9 am and finish at 3pm.**

Therefore, it is important that you are as punctual as possible, both in delivering and collecting your child so that routines can be adhered to.

All children must be brought to the nursery room and collected by a responsible adult known to the child and staff. This person must be over 16 years of age. Please inform staff if someone new to them is picking your child up and introduce them to this person in advance.

In an emergency, telephone the school office first to advise of any change in arrangements or to get advice. We are not authorised to release children into the care of people who are unknown to staff or to other school pupils even though they may be brothers or sisters.

Please inform the school if your child is going to be absent from nursery e.g. due to holidays or illness. You can either inform nursery staff in advance or contact the school office before 9.10 am.

Email **[Lybster.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:Lybster.primary@highland.gov.uk)** or telephone **01593 721 224**

Unexplained absences will be noted by the school and will be followed up in line with Highland Council Policy.



## Clothing

There is no set uniform for wearing in the ELC setting. Some parents choose to dress their child in school uniform; polo shirts with the embroidered logo are available from Highland Workwear, Wick.

Whichever you choose, it is advisable that your child wears clothes that they can change themselves and go to the toilet with independently i.e. with no difficult fastenings, laces, belts etc. Overalls are provided for messier activities but accidents do happen – so it is important to have a **change of clothing in a bag** with their name on it.

Children will need **indoor shoes** for changing into on arrival and if possible, **a pair of wellies** for outdoor activities.

Please make sure that all your child's **shoes and clothes are clearly labelled**.

We have outdoor suits and hi-viz vests for when we are out and about playing or going to look at things of interest. A suitable outdoor coat or jacket is necessary for other visits.

## Caring and Sharing Information

Lybster ELC operates an 'open door' policy and staff are always available to discuss any concerns you may have.

ClassDojo and school letters will keep you informed about forthcoming events – along with a wealth of other information.

On an informal basis, you will see your child in the setting every day as you drop off and collect them, you may also see displays of the children's work etc. You will have the opportunity to exchange information with staff e.g. if your child has had an unsettled night and hasn't slept well. In turn, staff will be able to say how the session went for your child.

All children have a 'learning folder' which parents have open access to at all times and you will receive a written report in June summarising your child's progress for the year.

Key information is also passed to the P.1 teacher prior to transition to help plan your child's next learning steps.

## Toileting

Whilst we encourage independence, staff will help the children when going to the toilet if needed. Staff are also responsible for changing children where necessary. As far as possible, please keep fastenings on clothes very simple and to the minimum. If children have zips, buttons etc. on clothing, please practise with them so that they can tie these independently. Please inform staff if your child is still in nappies or not fully toilet trained.

## Snack

Snack time is an opportunity to encourage the children to be independent and learn social skills e.g. table manners, turn taking, sharing, the use of cutlery. It is also a time for them to help with and learn about food hygiene and preparation – and the importance of healthy eating.

Children's medical and dietary requirements, along with those of religious groups are respected and met. Parents are asked to keep staff informed of any changes relating to this.

## Lunch

This is provided free of charge in the school canteen with menus on a 3 weekly cycle. Should you wish to provide a packed lunch for your child it is advisable to place this in an insulated bag with a chill pack as we do not have refrigerated storage facilities.



**Please note that the school and ELC setting is a NUT AWARE ZONE**

## **Toys**

A large variety of toys are provided within the setting. We ask that children do not bring toys with them because they may get lost or broken and we cannot take responsibility for this. On certain occasions however, the staff may ask that children bring in items of current interest for 'show and tell.'

## **Health**

If your child is ill, please do not bring them into the setting as infections coughs, colds, sickness and diarrhoea can spread quickly through the group.

If your child is to be absent for any length of time due to illness, please contact the school and advise on the nature and length of any possible absence. This will allow staff to check current guidance and alert other parents if necessary.

Please note : If your child has had sickness or diarrhoea they must not return until 48 hours has elapsed since the last attack - in line with NHS guidelines.

Please inform us if your child has any health problems, particularly allergies, or if they regularly need any prescribed medication e.g. asthma inhalers so that protocols can be put in place.

If your child becomes ill, or has an accident which requires medical attention while attending at the setting, we will contact you by telephone. If there is no reply, we will ring your emergency contact number which must be given at enrolment. A parent or carer listed as an emergency contact must always be available during nursery hours.

Head lice can be a recurring problem both in the School and ELC. This can only be controlled through regular checking and the use of prescribed treatments which are readily available at your local G.P.'s surgery.

## **The Curriculum**

Curriculum for Excellence was introduced throughout Scotland to help raise standards of teaching and learning for all 3-18 year olds. It aims to bring life to learning and learning to life – helping to prepare children with the skills and knowledge they need to cope in an ever-changing world.

The 'Early level' is designed to meet the needs of most children from the age of 3 until the end of Primary 1 - which allows for continuity and progression from the ELC into primary school. As a parent however, it is important to remember that children will progress at different rates at different times according to a number of factors e.g. age, ability, general development, level of support given at home.

### **The areas of the curriculum are**

- |                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| *Languages          | Sciences                    |
| *Mathematics        | Social subjects             |
| *Health & Wellbeing | Technologies                |
| Expressive Arts     | Religious & Moral education |



\*A greater emphasis is placed on these areas throughout all stages of learning.



In early years, the emphasis is on learning new knowledge and skills through meaningful play. Planning is done weekly in line with the interests of the children and staff use the curricular outcomes to ensure learning opportunities are appropriate and progressive.

### **Assessment and reporting**

As the staff observe and get to know your child, they become aware of their interests, their strengths and the next steps required in their learning.

Progress is recorded in your child's 'Learning Profile' and this may include photographs, samples of your child's work, comments from your child or observations noted by staff.

Your child will have 'Learning Conversations' with staff throughout the year that will be recorded on a 'Sharing My Learning' sheet. These sheets will be filed in your child's folder. The targets for these may be suggested by you, your child, or staff. Examples of targets may include - learning how to tie their jacket, learning how to use scissors or hold their pencil correctly, being able to throw and catch a ball.

Parents are welcome to look at these folders at any time throughout the year, have an informal chat with staff about progress or arrange a specific appointment if necessary. A formal written report will be issued in June.



### **How you can help**

There are lots of things you can do to help your child's development, reinforcing what is being done in the setting: for example ...

- Read to your child and look at the pictures together. Discuss the story afterwards. Discover their favourite part or ask how the characters felt.
- Recite rhymes together. These can be nursery rhymes or action songs or something they have learnt in nursery. Maybe they can teach you!
- Talk to your child about everyday things - colours, shapes, what is going on around them. Engage them in conversation and encourage them to ask questions and develop their interpersonal skills and their ability to be independent.
- Play board games and do jigsaws.
- Go for a walk and discuss what you see.
- Draw or paint pictures together and talk about them.
- Talk about signs in the environment and discover what they mean.
- Count items at home e.g. how many forks, how many steps etc.
- Point out numbers in the environment.
- Help them to be independent in putting on their clothes, shoes, jackets etc.

Ensure you give lots of praise and encouragement no matter how small the achievement is – it is important to them and will help develop their confidence.

If you have any queries about any of the activities your child is doing, or would like any more advice or ideas for follow on activities, please ask the staff.

### **Stay and Play; Share a story, activity or skill**

We are aware of and appreciate the tremendous resource we have in our parents, and other family members, both in early years and in the main school.

All parents/carers are welcome to ‘Stay and Play’ with their own child or a small group of children – or why not come in and read them a story – perhaps share your child’s favourite story with the others.

If you have a special area of knowledge, skill or expertise which would benefit the children, please don’t be shy. If you enjoy baking, play a musical instrument or are keen on gardening etc. we would love to know.

These are just some examples of ways in which the children’s experiences can be enriched – and we would be delighted to have you as one of our special visitors. Please arrange a suitable time with a member of staff.

### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

- **We are gentle**
- **We are kind and helpful**
- **We are honest**
- **We listen to others**
- **We look after things**



To ensure we have a school in which both children and staff are happy we have to have an accepted standard and code of behaviour – and this is the joint responsibility of parents and school staff. We believe that encouragement and praise for good behaviour is the best way to achieve this and accordingly we use a positive approach to discipline.

If a child’s behaviour is giving cause for concern, parents will be notified as a consistent approach across home and school is important in achieving a successful outcome.

The children are encouraged to understand some of the ‘Ready, Respectful, Safe’ rules appropriate to their age and stage.

When unacceptable behaviour occurs:-

- Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what was wrong and how they can work towards better behaviour.
- Where appropriate this might be achieved by a period of ‘time out’ with an adult.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, the unacceptability of the behaviour will be made clear to the child by means of explanation rather than personal blame i.e. that it is the behaviour that is unwelcome and not the child.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole staff, in partnership with the parents.
- Staff may consider whether certain behaviours have arisen through a child having additional support needs in which case they would seek additional take advice.

- Occasionally if unacceptable behaviour has occurred, staff may have to take action for the child's own safety, or that of others. This would be communicated to the Head teacher and parents as soon as possible.



### **Transition to School**

Children may spend 2 years in Nursery before transferring into school as a Primary 1 pupil. In Lybster School, the P.1/2 classroom and toilets are just around the corner from the Nursery so most children are already familiar with this.

Prior to starting school, the Primary 1 class teacher and pupil support assistant (PSA) visit the setting to get to know the children. The children then make weekly visits to the classroom to familiarise them with their new surroundings. They participate in a structured programme called 'Resilient Kids' which deals with the feelings and emotions associated with transition from Nursery to P.1. The children also take part in the 'Safe, Strong & Free' programme which teaches them strategies to enable them to deal with a range of situations they may encounter.

Children in their pre-school year (accompanied by nursery staff) join the rest of the school at break times and will have the opportunity to sample a school lunch during the summer term (if they are not already staying to lunch).

On other suitable occasions the children participate in whole school activities e.g. assemblies, school sports, music festival rehearsals, special events etc.



## **Working together with other agencies**

All pre-school education centres work closely with NHS Highland and other agencies so that the resources and information we have will bring the most benefit to families. The aim is to ensure we have the right services for your child at the right time.

Early Education services and NHS Highland collaborate to plan services and offer interventions, such as Child Smile Oral Health Programme, Pre-school Vision Screening Programme. To assist the administration of these programmes, we confirm your child's name, date of birth and address to NHS Highland.

We have a Link Health Visitor, who should visit the centre once a term. Their main role is to offer advice on children's health and development. They will also liaise with your own Family Health Visitor if necessary.

If your child would benefit from help from other agencies, you will be asked for permission so that relevant information can be shared. This enables staff to get a rounded picture of your child and means you won't keep being asked for the same information by different people. Others who can provide support include Speech & Language therapist, Community Paediatrician, Pupil Support Teacher, Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or Social Work.

## **Child Protection**

The school follows the national strategy known as 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC). This puts the children's need first and provides co-ordinated support where required. All staff have regular training and are aware of their role in supporting children. Your Health Visitor as 'named person' has overall responsibility until your child starts school when this role transfers to the Head Teacher.

From time to time incidents or disclosures can occur which cause concern and could indicate that a pupil is suffering from some form of abuse. In line with the Highland Council Child Protection Guidelines if your child's immediate safety or welfare is at risk, information may legally be shared without your consent. Education Service staff must report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation.

More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the Child Protection Development Officer, Ms Pene Rowe, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NN – Telephone (01463) 703421 – Fax (01463) 713237.

## **Fire**

Fire drills are held once a term to allow everyone to familiarise themselves with the sound of the alarm and where to assemble after a safe evacuation of the building.

## **Early Closure/Adverse weather**

Should we need to close the Nursery earlier than normal, you will be contacted by telephone if prior warning has not been given. Please ensure that your details are always up to date and that any changes are notified to Nursery staff or the school office.

If there is extreme weather forecast, parents should contact the Schools Information line - **0800 5642272** and enter the Lybster School code **042 540** where they will hear a recorded message informing of any closures – or use any of the following services:-

- The Council's **website:** <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures> will be updated with information for individual schools.
- The Council's **Facebook** page at <https://www.facebook.com/highlandcouncil> will show updated posts on the latest news of school closures and weather related problems.
- The Council's **Twitter** page at <https://twitter.com/HighlandCouncil> will list Tweets of the latest news of school closures and weather related problems.

## **LYBSTER ELC - COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at our setting and welcome comments or suggestions, which could help us to improve our service.

However, we are aware that difficulties can occur from time to time and if you feel you have reason to complain, please follow the procedure outlined below.

Please use the open door policy and speak to your child's 'key worker', either at the beginning or end of a session. If you prefer, an appointment can be made to speak to the relevant member of staff in private. It will then, in consultation with the parents/carers, be decided, if the matter needs to be taken further, in which case, the Principal Teacher or Head Teacher will be informed and a meeting arranged.

From here, if necessary, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Area Manager who will decide what the next steps should be. Parents will be kept fully informed at each stage and will be invited to attend any meetings being held.

Should you feel unable to speak to a member of staff, please make an appointment to speak directly with the Head Teacher, within 24 hours of the incident if possible.

Parents/carers are also able to contact the Care Inspectorate directly if they so wish. The local address and telephone number for our centre is:

Care Inspectorate  
 First Floor, Castle House  
 Fairways Business Park  
 Inverness  
 IV2 6AA  
 Telephone: 01463 227630

The Care Inspectorate publication "Unhappy about a Care Service?" is also available. You will find a copy of this displayed on our Nursery Notice Board.

## **Parent Council**

All parents of children attending Nursery are part of the 'Parent Forum.' A committee selected from this forms the 'Parent Council.'

Meetings are held in the school and the minutes are available to all parents. Their aim is to further enhance the education of all the children – and help build a stronger relationship between the school, the parents and the community. The Parent Council raises funds through a number of events held over the course of the year which goes to benefit all the children whether in school or nursery.

### **Current office bearers are**

Chairperson	Miss A Coghill
Vice Chairperson	Vacant
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Mrs S Henderson

## **Key Information for Parents of ELC children**

- (1) The first day of the new term is **15<sup>th</sup> August 23**
- (2) Session time is from 9am – 3pm.
- (3) The children will be welcomed by the ELC staff at 9am each morning.
- (4) Please note that children must be supervised in the playground by an adult up until that time.
- (5) Children to be signed in by ELC staff and a parent / guardian to sign the child out when they are collected.
- (6) The children should bring
  - Indoor shoes and jacket
  - A bag for carrying shoes, paintings, etc. which will be hung on his/her own named peg in the ELC
  - Easy clothing e.g. Pull up trousers without buttons/belts, slip-on or Velcro type shoes –no laces please.
  - Wellington Boots and a change of clothes
- (7) Please keep us informed about any changes of telephone numbers, emergency contacts, or person who brings/collects your child if you are unavailable.
- (8) Class Dojo will keep you up to date with all the day-to-day happenings. Please ensure you take the time to view information updates etc. on a regular basis.
- (9) School Contact Number **01593 721 224**

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR 2023 – 2024**

### **AUTUMN**

- Autumn term starts - 15 August 2023
- Autumn term ends – 6 October 2023

### **WINTER**

- Winter term starts - 23 October 2023
- Winter term ends – 22 December 2023

### **SPRING**

- Spring term starts - 08 January 2024
- Mid term break – 19-20 February 2024
- Spring term ends – 28 March 2024

### **SUMMER**

- Summer term begins – 15 April 2024
- Summer term ends – 27 June 2024

### **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

- May Day – 06 May 2024

### **IN-SERVICE DAYS**

- 14 August 2023
- 11 September 2023
- 12 September 2023
- 21 February 2024
- 02 May 2024

The school calendar can also be access via the Highland Council Website:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

*Mrs D Walsh, Head Teacher.*

We hope the information in this book has been useful to you. Please let us know of any omissions so that we can improve things for next year.

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school. The Head teacher or ELC staff will be happy to help you.

#### **DISCLAIMER**

Whilst the information in this handbook is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, December 2022- changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information.