

# Ardersier Primary School ELC



ELC Handbook  
2024 – 2025

November 2023

Welcome to Ardersier Primary School - a school that takes great pride in its reputation within our local community and strives for excellence and achievement for all.

Ardersier Primary is a single-story building with two blocks of classrooms linked by a hall/dining area. There is also a purpose-built Early Learning Centre which opened in October 2000 and was refurbished in 2021. Links are made with other Early Learning Centres and Partner Centres to ensure children have a smooth transition to Primary 1. Any prospective parents and pupils are most welcome to visit in order to look round the school and discuss our methods and educational aims.

We encourage our children to show leadership, develop creativity and raise their ambitions to achieve what they really want in life.

I'm sure that your child will enjoy all that Ardersier Primary ELC has to offer. Your views and comments on our provision are much appreciated, and welcomed.

Please feel free to contact the school on 01667 462344 or at Ardersier Primary School, Cameron Drive, Ardersier, Inverness IV2 7SW.

Ms Karen MacMaster

[karen.macmaster@highland.gov.uk](mailto:karen.macmaster@highland.gov.uk) Head

Teacher

# **Welcome to Ardersier Nursery Early Learning and Childcare**

A warm welcome to families/carers old and new to our setting. We hope that our handbook provides all the information needed prior to your child starting with us, however if you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact us.

## **Contact Details**

Ardersier ELC Ardersier Primary School  
Cameron Drive Ardersier IV2 7SW  
01667 462344

**Head Teacher:** Karen MacMaster

**Principal Teacher:** Sarah Moore

**Senior Early Years Practitioner:** Mairi Buxton **Early Years Practitioners:** Jan Tennant **Support Worker:**  
Louise Murray

**Additional Support Needs Teacher:** Lisa Folly

## **Visiting Professionals:**

**Early Years Education Support Officer:** Clare Blair

**Health Visitor:** Fiona MacDonald

**Psychological Services Home Visiting Teacher:** Kaella MacMillan

**Speech and Language Therapist:** Elizabeth Nicolson

**Practice Lead (Social Work):** Rikki Selkirk

## ELC Aims and Ethos

At Ardersier Primary School and ELC, we work together as a community to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where children are motivated to learn through their play, are valued as individuals and are encouraged to reach their full potential through our Curriculum for Excellence.

*"Children learn and develop at different rates personal to themselves. They are continually trying to make sense of the world around them. Children learn best when they are active, busy learners. It could be said that they are learning all of the time from all of their experiences."*

*(Realising the Ambition)*



Our ELC aims to provide all children with the opportunity to access early learning and childcare in a nurturing, happy and safe environment. Children learn most effectively through play, activity and experiences. We recognise that every child comes to our setting with different experiences, so it is important for staff to get to know each child as an individual, learning about and building on their strengths. This enables the children to become:

### **Successful Learners**

Through active learning and collaborative working we can reach our full potential.

### **Confident Individuals**

Being active and healthy makes us feel good about ourselves. We are encouraged to take responsibility for our own learning.

### **Effective Contributors**

We have a sense of identity and are actively involved in the life of our school and local community.

### **Responsible Citizens**

We are caring, tolerant, respectful and considerate of the feelings of others.



## **Vision, Values and Aims**

At Ardersier Primary School and ELC we work together as a community to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where children are motivated to learn, are valued as individuals and encouraged to reach their full potential through our curriculum for excellence.

We have recently updated our vision, values and aims with the whole school community.

### **Our School Motto is:**

*#TeamArdersier*

### **Our Aim is**

for the children of Ardersier Primary to feel Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included as a member of the school and wider community.

### **Our School values are**

Caring, Supportive and Confident

### **Our School Vision**

In Ardersier Primary we persevere to be hard working, resilient and brave. We are loving, confident and value everyone with respect, helping us to be happy, honest and enthusiastic. #TeamArdersier

## Working in Partnership

Your role as a parent/carer is crucial and your continued involvement will enable your child to get the best out of their ELC experience during this important stage of their development. We operate an open-door policy, so parents/carers are welcome at any time and there are daily opportunities to chat to members of staff as you drop off and collect your child. 'Stay, Play and Learn' sessions allow you to join in the fun too. These sessions will allow you to experience the types of play, activities and learning opportunities your child has during a session. Plans for learning are shared to inform you of some of the experiences that are planned for with the children. We value parental feedback and shared learning from home. We often seek parental support too, for trips and visits around our local community to allow the children further opportunities to learn about where they live.

*When you come into our setting it might appear that your child is 'just playing'. However, during this play, your child will be learning. Play is the natural way your child learns. Our ELC staff work hard to make sure that they are developing the right balance between child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-directed experiences. Allowing individual children to explore and discover at their own pace and in their own time. (Realising the Ambition)*

Shortly after starting our setting a key worker will be allocated to your child. While all members of staff are involved in the ELC life of all children, key workers have primary responsibility for recording your child's learning and progress. Observations of progress and achievements will be recorded in your child's learning journey. This is a working document throughout your child's time in ELC into Primary 1. Learning journeys are available for the children to add to themselves and with their key workers, they are also available for parents/carers to see within the setting. There will also be opportunities to take them home to share. We encourage parents/carers to share learning and achievements from home. Key workers are your point of communication if you have any concerns about your child and will provide support to you and your child when needed. There are formal opportunities to meet with your child's key worker during the year to discuss your child's progress.

Ardersier Primary Parent Partnership are our very supportive parent council who hold regular meetings with the Head Teacher. ELC parent/carers are welcome to attend meetings and the dates for these will be given once they are arranged.

### **Partnerships with Other Agencies**

In line with current guidance, ELC staff work closely with other agencies to support your child and families where needed. You would be asked that relevant information be shared in order to access such services if it would be of benefit to your child's progress. These include:

Health Visitors

Speech and Language Therapists Psychological Services Home Visiting Teachers Oral Health Officers

Social Work Services

If it is believed your child's immediate safety is at risk, we can share information without consent, enabling

us to deal quickly with any potential situation, e.g., child protection issues or medical emergencies.

## **Enrolment in ELC**

At Ardersier ELC eligible children are funded for 30 hours per week of term time care, from the term following their third birthday. Children can start ELC from the Monday after their third birthday, however this will be charged at an hourly rate until they become eligible.

Following enrolment, you will receive an Hours Request form so that you can apply for your preferred ELC hours for the year 2024-2025. At the present time our setting is open from 9.00am until 3.00pm during term time only and can offer quality ELC to a maximum of 30 children at any one time, in our recently refurbished ELC building.

If at any time you need to amend your childcare hours, please request an amendment form from a member of staff. Any amendments require a minimum of 48 hours' notice and while we will do our best to accommodate changes it cannot be guaranteed.

### **Lunches**

If your child is attending ELC for a session of 4 hours duration or more, they are entitled to a free school lunch. If your child has any dietary requirements, please ask a member of staff for a Dietary Request form.



## **School Terms: Session 2024-25 (pupils)**

School term dates, including holidays and Inset days can be found here

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/26437/highland\\_school\\_calendar\\_2024\\_to\\_2025](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/26437/highland_school_calendar_2024_to_2025)

### **Absences**

Regular attendance at Ardersier ELC ensures your child benefits from all the experiences provided. In the event of your child being unwell before their session starts it is better for them to stay at home, this is where they will want to be when they are under the weather. A copy of the Infection Control Policy is available for you to read in the policy folder. This guidance states that if a child has sickness and/or diarrhea, they should be kept away from the setting for at least 48 hours from the last bout. We ask that parents/carers adhere to this policy to prevent spread of infection which can lead to outbreaks or health complications for other children.

If your child is going to be absent, please inform staff by contacting the ELC or School office.

Child Protection guidance states that in the event of unexplained absence a member of staff will try to contact you. If no contact is established after three days' absence a member of school staff may visit your home. If the child is not found and no satisfactory explanation is given, the police will be informed.

### **Illness or Emergency Closure**

At the time of enrolment, you will have been asked to provide details of two emergency contacts one of which must be someone other than the main parent/carer. It is essential that these details are kept up to date, therefore please inform staff of any changes. If your child becomes unwell during the session or there is a need to close the School and ELC, we will use this information to arrange for your child to be collected.

## **Adverse Weather**

Information for parents/carers regarding school closures will be available from Highland Council Information Line:

Dial Highland Council's access number – 0800 564 2272

Enter the School's PIN number- 011400

Or Access [www.schoolclosures.highlandschools.org.uk](http://www.schoolclosures.highlandschools.org.uk)

Closures are also reported on Moray Firth Radio.

## **Medication**

If your child takes regular medication, please speak to the head teacher so that a care plan can be established.

If your child has an inhaler for Asthma, or needs medication for a short period of time, please speak to their Key Worker, or any member of staff, who will provide the necessary guidance and paperwork.

## Preparing for ELC

All children should have a pair of indoor shoes that are comfortable and easy for them to change in to, to encourage independence and confidence. As children have access to the outdoor area throughout the day then a pair of wellies or "messy" outdoor shoes are recommended. The children are able to play outdoors during all weathers and frequently have access to water outside which makes for lots of mud! Lots of layers and waterproofs are ideal for colder days and the setting has a supply of these for children to utilise, if required. If we are lucky enough to have warmer weather, please ensure sun cream is applied before coming to the setting. For children who do longer hours it is recommended that sun cream, labelled with your child's name, is handed in to the setting and staff will reapply it after lunch.

Playing in ELC is very messy! Comfortable, old clothes at the end of their days are perfect for wearing to the setting! This means that children are not worried about ruining their new/favourite things. You may wish to provide spare clothes for children to change in to, please ensure all items are clearly labelled.



## **Routines**

The ELC day will have a pattern of routines for the children most of the time, however they are by no means fixed! The children will become familiar with daily events such as self-registration, circle time, snack time, washing hands, toothbrushing and story time, to name a few! Staff use a visual timetable to support these routines and give warnings of when things are going to happen. This helps the children to feel confident within the setting as they become able to predict what is going to happen next.

## **Snack**

The setting promotes healthy eating and provides a small snack along with fruit, milk and water. Snacks are provided in both the morning and the afternoon for the children. This is an important social event! The children learn valuable skills in independence, healthy eating and cultural awareness. They encourage each other to try new foods and help to prepare them. The children are given opportunities to help with snack jobs, we always have "snack helpers", and it is a valuable opportunity for staff to observe skills and learning. Children are never forced to eat things they don't like; however, you will be amazed at what they will try if their friends are trying it! Snacks are provided free of charge. If your child has any dietary requirements, please speak to a member of staff who will give you a Dietary Request form.



## **Promoting Positive Relationships**

At Ardersier ELC we believe children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. All behaviour can be seen as a communication of need. Children in ELC are still developing the skills, knowledge or practiced expertise to meet their needs in appropriate ways. Many 'issues' with behaviour can be prevented through providing a rich environment of positive relationships and suitable stimulation and opportunities. Children's perceptions and experiences of an environment may be very different to those of the adults. They have a right to a voice and influence on their environment – this may well be expressed through "behaviour". If you would like to see our 'Promoting Positive Relationships Policy', please speak to a member of the team.



### **Early Level Curriculum for Excellence**

Curriculum for Excellence incorporates children from 3-18 years and ensures that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, skills and knowledge they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.

The Early Level covers the time that children enter ELC aged 3 through to Primary 1 and often into Primary 2. Staff work with the children on aspects of the curriculum in a way that is developmentally appropriate. The children's learning is planned and assessed in eight curricular areas. In ELC, we learn through play and learning is led by the children's interests, strengths and needs.

*"The experiences and spaces for play we facilitate for the children should reflect the children's ideas, aspirations, curiosities and next steps in their learning. It is through play that children learn about themselves and make sense of the world around them."  
(Realising the Ambition)*

There are three core areas of the curriculum:

- **Health and Wellbeing**

This covers the children's Social and Emotional and Physical wellbeing as well as Food and Health and Safety awareness. Children will be given opportunities to:

- Develop independence, confidence and a sense of security
- Play and cooperate with others
- Express their feelings
- Make choices and develop interests
- Practice movement skills
- Assess risk
- Learn what keeps them healthy
- Learn how to look after their bodies



- **Literacy and English**

We provide a literacy rich environment to enable the children to develop their skills in Listening and Talking, Writing and Reading. There are daily opportunities for stories, talking to adults and other children and mark making. Children will be given opportunities to:

- Explore a wide range of mark making materials
- Listen to the sounds of spoken language
- Develop conversation skills
- Ask questions to extend their knowledge and understanding
- Practice their speech and vocabulary
- Record their experiences in a variety of ways

- **Numeracy and Mathematics**

Numeracy is developed through everyday experiences and practice. Children learn to extend these skills through play in all areas of the Nursery. Children will be given opportunities to:

- Investigate objects, shape and colour
- Sort and match items
- Play and have fun with numbers in meaningful contexts
- Develop mathematical language
- Apply their knowledge in simple tasks and problem solving

Despite the formal nature of the above information, please be assured that our ELC curriculum is based upon play. We believe play is the most appropriate approach to developing children's learning.

*Through play, the child can learn to answer their own questions, learn new skills and learn to work collaboratively with other children or adults. (Realising the Ambition.)*



- **Other Curricular Areas**

Technologies, Sciences, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education and Expressive Arts are the other curricular areas covered. Children are provided with a broad range of experiences within these areas to support their learning.

More information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found on the Education Scotland Website: <https://education.gov.scot/>





### **Child Protection**

From time-to-time incidents can occur within the setting which cause concern and could indicate that a child is suffering some form of abuse. Highland Child Protection Committee's Inter-Agency Protection Guidelines dictates that Care and Learning staff must report such incidents to Social Work which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation. All agencies, including Care and Learning staff, involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of the child their priority. In these cases, staff do not need your permission to share information with appropriate agencies.

### **Concerns and Complaints**

If at any point during your child's time in ELC you have a concern or wish to make a complaint, please speak to a member of staff as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to make an appointment with the Head Teacher to discuss the matter. A copy of the complaints policy is available for you to read in the policy folder.

### **The Care Inspectorate**

The Care Inspectorate is a national body with statutory powers responsible for the regulation of care services in Scotland, including Care and Learning settings. Ardersier ELC is regularly inspected against the National Care standards and graded on the service it provides. A copy of the latest inspection report is available on the notice board or online at <http://www.careinspectorate.com/>

The Care Inspectorate has a complaints system in place which service users and staff can use should they have concerns about aspects of the service. Details of this service are available on the Nursery notice board. You can contact the regional Care Inspectorate office at:

The Care Inspectorate Complaints  
Compass House 11Riverside Drive Dundee  
DD14NV  
Tel: 0345 600 9527

### **Quality Improvement**

At Ardersier ELC we are committed to providing the best possible environment for your child to thrive. We constantly review our practice and policies and are inspected as part of the School by Education Scotland. Details of these reports are available on the Education Scotland website [here](#).