

Early Learning and Childcare in Highland

keep up-to-date ~ share best practice

Thank you to everyone working in and supporting ELC across Highland for your ongoing work with children and families as everyone continues to gain confidence with, adapt and refine Covid-safe ways of working.

Throughout this unique Autumn term it's important that you look after yourself as well as others. The teamelcwellbeinghub.org is dedicated to all of the amazing individuals who deliver Early Learning and Childcare. It provides a range of resources to support your wellbeing or connect with other practitioners, including online **Wellbeing Events** on the **evenings of 11/11 and 1/12 and morning of 20/11**.

We hope that when the festive season comes you will also be able to enjoy safe opportunities to connect and celebrate with the people who are special to you.

Outdoor Play and Learning

The Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) are hosting a national conversation to support settings develop outdoor play and learning provision. The conversation is a 1 hour introduction to share the possible support you can access. Sign up if providing high quality outdoor experiences is a priority and you are interested in finding out about how quality improvement could accelerate improved quality and access to outdoor play and learning within your setting. To register to join the conversation, on 17th of November at 11am, email: cypic@gov.scot



Also a reminder that the HC [outdoor learning in early years bitesize sessions](#) are available to watch on the Highland Digital School hub.



Care Inspectorate Quick Wins

Do you need to develop or improve aspects or procedures around any of the following:

- Medication
- Safe Recruitment
- Scottish Social Services Council Registration Notifications
- Quality Assurance Calendars

If so take a look at these bitesize [Quick Win](#) sessions created by the Care Inspectorate they offer advice and guidance.

Staff Updates

We wish Kirsty Henry farewell and all the very best in her new role and extend our congratulations to Hayley Brown on her successful appointment in the role of interim Senior Manager Early Years. Hayley will be familiar to many, particularly those based in the South, as she has held the posts of FRC, Early Years Commissioner and Project Manager Early Years Expansion. We would like to wish her all the very best in her new role at this very busy time of ELC expansion and Covid - 19.



Words Up training has been so worthwhile

Do you want to explore the Words Up: Early key messages and how these can be applied in your practice?

Words Up Wednesdays are returning online.

Join the SLT team and other practitioners every **Wednesday from 4 to 4.45pm** where you can listen, ask Qs from your own setting or join in the conversation.

- 18th Nov** Pause and Wait
- 25th Nov** Play and Talk Together
- 2nd Dec** Quiet Time To Talk, Face to Face
- 9th Dec** Be Careful With Questions
- 16th Dec** Copy and Add

Or catch up with the recorded sessions later on [Highland Digital Schools Hub](#) in the Words Up section.

Also coming soon... attention & listening, Words Up Primary key messages, stories, Words Up monitoring tool, songs and rhyme, and more...



Learning for Sustainability in Early Years settings

[Learning for Sustainability in Early Years Settings.](#)

The free 'Learning for Sustainability in Early Years Settings' online course on Monday 16th November 4-5pm is run by the Scottish Development Education Centres.

This interactive online session will introduce you to Global Citizenship and Learning for Sustainability in Early Years settings.



Singing and World Nursery Rhyme Week

A quick reminder regarding the updated guidance around singing in ELC. Whilst we can't hold group singing sessions with the children they may still sing themselves while playing and it might be appropriate to sing to an individual to comfort them occasionally.

Knowing what an important role singing songs and rhymes can have on children's language and literacy skills why not promote World Nursery Rhyme Week and encourage parents to engage in this worthwhile experience with their children at home, in the car or when out and about.

It runs from November 16th – 20th. As always activities that can be shared with families which encourage singing are on the [Bumps to Bairns website](#). Feel free to share any of your successful ideas with your link EYESO and we can show case them on the ELC Blog.



Developing Outdoor Play and Learning in Aviemore ELC



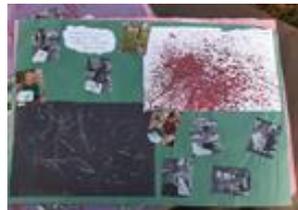
Since returning to their setting in August the staff and children at Aviemore ELC have further developed outdoor learning.

Groups of children and their key workers spend the morning outside.

Each group has a base that is set up and the children are able to explore and play freely with staff ready to support learning.



They explore the surrounding woodland area, use real tools, build dens, make up their own stories and games as well as challenge themselves physically.



There is real breadth of learning and the staff have noticed that children are more deeply engaged in their play. Being outdoors has also had a positive impact on their confidence and relationships.



Practical issues such as hand washing and toileting have also been developed so that children can spend the duration of the morning outside.

Family Engagement During Covid 19

The tile above has been added to the [Family Engagement](#) section of the blog and contains lots of ideas and suggestions collated from settings around Highland to help support your engagement with families during Covid 19.

Family Learning and Engagement In St Joseph's Primary ELC

Like many settings, the St Joseph's team continue to adapt and develop their Covid-safe approaches to engaging families. They are using google class, in line with the rest of the school, to provide continuity of approach for parents.

The team initially provided parents with outdoor, distanced IT support on how to install and use google class.



SEYP Ailsa Sugden shares their approach - *"We post our fortnightly child led plans for families so they know what we will be learning." We also regularly post photos and video tours of the learning opportunities. We have had positive feedback from parents about these and Rhyme of the Week, stories and Powerpoints we share with them."*

Parents feedback is that the ELC approach creates an important link between the nursery and home learning as well as partnerships between staff and parents.

Some parents are sharing their child's experiences at home or out and about, linked to their current learning. *"Parents upload photographs or videos of their children and this is very easy to access on a range of devices."* Children are talking about learning at home and *"the children often explore google classroom with their keyworker. They can make links between what they learn at home and what they learn at nursery."*

There are other communication methods in place too. Practitioners cover handover times on a rota to help enable all parents to have a little regular informal physically distanced chat with their child's keyworker. Practitioners phone parents to discuss anything confidential.

The parents say -

"we have never seen the nursery so the videos help us to know what our children are talking about when they come home"

"it is a really good way for me to see my child in the nursery whilst I am working away"

"the videos show me how happy my child is at nursery"



Movement



Coordination



Routines



Play/Imagination



Social/Emotional



Food & Health



Understanding



Expression



Going to P1

Are you looking for practical advice and strategies to help a child in your setting?

The [What would you like to help with?](#) page on the Bumps To Bairns site has lots of suggestions for ways to help children develop and learn across the 9 areas of development pictured.

If you are not quite sure where a child might need more help, then you can use a **Developmental Overview** to help work this out.

All of the resources on the site have been compiled or identified by specialist professionals based in the Highlands.

Please note that if in any doubt, you should seek advice from your relevant local network of professionals.

Just Ask

The [Just Ask](#) enquiry line is for parents, carers, children, young people, and those who work with them. The phone line is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 4pm.

The phone number is -
0300 303 1365



Staff usually available are:

- Autism Practitioner
- Community Learning Disability Nurses
- Dietitians
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Educational Psychologists
- School Nurses
- Pre-school Home Visiting Teachers
- Primary Mental Health Workers

Support From The

Psychological Service Home Visiting Teachers

As well as being available to support children on their current caseload, the Home Visiting Teachers are also available for consultation on support for children around play, learning, behaviour, emotions, general development, transition to and settling into early years settings. You can access their support through 'Just Ask' or by contacting your local PSHVT by email.

You can also access the following resources online -

[Play Ideas](#) explores ideas for differentiated play for children who need a 'smaller steps' approach.

[EASEYS for ASN](#) highlight good practice and practical support strategies for parents/carers and staff supporting children in Early Years. This includes a summary of all 12 EASEYS advice sheets currently available and links to them.

