



# Early Learning and Childcare in Highland

keep up-to-date ~ share best practice



Welcome back to those of you who have had some time off.

The weather has turned bringing lots of Autumn changes for children to explore, be curious and learn about. November also provides opportunities to celebrate literacy and share this with families:

[World Nursery Rhyme Week](#) - 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> November

[Scottish Book Trust book week Scotland](#) - 18-24<sup>th</sup> November

## Hello



I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself through the ELC newsletter. My name is Kirsty Henry and I am the new Senior Manager for Early Years. I had a whirlwind of a first week, which left me feeling very excited about the future of ELC in Highland! I'm looking forward to working with you all and hope that there will be plenty of opportunities to put some faces to names in the near future 😊

## National Updates

As we continue to move forwards with expansion in ELC all settings need to ensure they are achieving grades of good or above as stated in the National Standard. [A blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland](#) has information to support your understanding the new National Standard.

 To support you further in developing quality practice the CI have produced [A Quality Framework For Support Services](#) which includes illustrations of very good practice for each quality indicator and a new [Self-evaluation guide](#). In addition to this CI will be introducing the use of the new Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI) as part of inspections. This will mean observations of the quality of interactions experienced by a specific child.

If children have shared placements, including those with commissioned childminders, staff should seek parental consent for sharing information to facilitate continuity of care and progress in learning.

## ELC Policies

All Highland Council ELC policies are currently under review and being updated by the EYESO team. They will then be added to the [ELC Highland Blog](#). You may notice some changes to the blog as this is in the process of being given a refresh by the EYESO team. Your patience is appreciated while this is taking place.

## Ongoing Reminders

- All About Me information should be in each child's learning profile.
- Settings working towards continuous profiling and reporting should develop a family engagement calendar.
- 3 and 4 year old Developmental Overviews should be completed over the course of the year.
- Also don't forget all children should have a Personal Care Plan in place as this is a legal requirement.

## Congratulations!

**Carol MacRae**, owner and founder of Ankerville Nursery, Alness and Ankerville House, Tain, recently won the Scottish Nursery Management Today (SNMT) for Nursery Area Manager/Operations Manager of the Year 2019. The judges felt that Carol has a clear vision for what she wants for the children and for her staff, both now and in the future - simply creating 'the best place it possibly can be'.

**UHI ELC** won the SNMT award for staff training and development. Manager Cat Mackenzie said 'At our centre we have many students from many different qualifications coming in to gain experience in childcare and it's good to know that we are leading the way with this. It was apparent to the Judges that the whole staff team all want to learn and develop and consistently challenge themselves and strive for excellence.'

At the Nursery World Awards **Tessa Winters** won nursery practitioner of the year for her work at **Stramash Tornagrain** nursery and then **Stramash** as a whole won a Highly Commended award for **Nursery Group** of the year. Manager, Cameron Sprague from Fort William said 'I would say that Stramash as a whole are very proud for our work to be recognised in such a way, as a team we are committed to the wellbeing of the children and families that cross our gates each day. Like many people in Early Years passion and drive is what gets us up each morning and for that to be celebrated is reaffirming.'

Congratulations to **Cradlehall Playgroup** who recently received 4 Very Goods from Care Inspectorate.

If you have any celebrations/achievements you wish to share either on the Blog in the next newsletter please let your EYESO know.

## Outdoor Leadership Training

The first session of the Outdoor Leadership Training took part at Stramash Tornagrain on the 6th September with all EYPs doing an excellent job of presenting information about their own settings outdoor learning environment and their plans for development. We look forward to sharing how these plans grow and the impact it has on our Highland children.



## Moving On

We say farewell to Jennifer Campbell, Project Manager Early Years, who moves to NHS Highland in November. Many thanks to Jennifer for the last 2 ½ years and all the best for your next chapter!

## The Military Liaison Group (Education)

In Highland we have a duty and are committed to the Armed Forces Covenant to supporting and ensuring equity and equality for our Armed Forces Community.

**How can we help you to ensure this commitment and support is being put into practice?** At enrolment it's helpful to encourage families to identify whether they are serving, reservist, veteran and the service they belong to. SEEMiS (for schools) records should then be updated. If we know we can get the right support to children at the right time. **Getting It Right for Forces Children.**

Further information is available at: [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools\\_-\\_additional\\_support\\_needs/833/armed\\_forces\\_-\\_support\\_for\\_families\\_and\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/833/armed_forces_-_support_for_families_and_schools)

### Sharing Good Practice

There are lots of good examples of settings around Highland who are recycling and upcycling to make creative use

of real and natural items when developing their learning environment -

**Dochgarroch Primary ELC** recently moved room and developed a stimulating, homely and inviting environment making good use of second hand items and loose parts. They celebrated with an opening party for family and friends of the school.



**Country Bumpkins Nursery** has been developing outdoor learning opportunities for their children using the local beach and forest. Here is the inside of the yurt which is used as a base for outdoor learning in their garden.



**Grantown Nursery** has introduced the use of real tools and wood. This provides children with opportunities to design and make following their own ideas and develop their STEM and literacy skills. The children are also learning to manage risks as well as develop their fine motor skills.

