



Carstairs Junction
Early Learning &
Childcare

Handbook

2025-26

It is our pleasure to welcome you and your child to Carstairs Junction Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). This handbook has been written to provide you with information about our ELC and how we aim to deliver the highest possible quality of education and care. We look forward to building a strong, positive partnership with you and your family to ensure the best opportunities for your child. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything you wish to discuss.

Vision Statement

At Carstairs Junction Primary School and ELC we provide a welcoming, safe and caring environment for our children, families and wider school community.

We strive to provide rich learning experiences which promote confidence and self-belief. Every child is encouraged and supported to reach their full potential.

Values

Our values are central to all aspects of life in our school and ELC.

Happy	Our positive and supportive relationships in our school community develop motivated and engaged learners.
Nurturing	Our school ethos reflects the 6 principles of nurture.
Respectful	We work together to value everyone in our community and become responsible citizens.
Inclusive	We strive to deliver quality inclusion day to day to meet the rights and needs of our learners.

Aims

We aim to ensure all school and nursery pupils are nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible

Equal Opportunities Policy

Children participate equally in the full range of experiences, and we recognise the rights of both men and women to work with, or care for, children. Our toys and books have been selected to show positive images of people of all cultures and to avoid stereotyping. Multicultural activities are integrated into many curricular areas and several religious and cultural festivals are celebrated. All children are encouraged to learn about, and respect, other cultures and traditions. We have position statements for race, disability and gender equality.

Non- Denominational Policy

We are a non-denominational establishment. We respect and welcome children and families of all religions, faiths and beliefs.

About Our ELC

Our ELC class was established within Carstairs Junction Primary School in August 1998 to cater for children between the ages of three and five.

Accommodation

In August 2013, Carstairs Junction Primary and ELC moved to a new building as part of the South Lanarkshire Council School Modernisation Process. This included our purpose built ELC playroom and outdoor area. We make regular use of wider areas in the school including the Library, Sunshine Corner, Sensory Room, Gym Hall, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and outdoor classroom.



Capacity

Our ELC has capacity for 30 children to attend at any given time. We offer a service to children aged 3-5.

Hours of Opening

Monday – Friday	Full Day Session	9.00-3.00 (with option to 4.00pm)
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Additional paid times are available on request from 8:30 till 9:00 and 3.00pm – 4.00pm. Please speak to a member of staff if this is something you would like to enquire about.

Meet our Staff Team

Some of the people you might meet in our ELC include...



Mrs Jill Armour
Head Teacher



Mrs Kimberley Paterson
Depute Head Teacher



Mrs Hannah Wilson-
Seaton
Principal Teacher



Miss Sunita Nayyer
Acting Principal Teacher
(covering Mrs Seaton's
maternity)



Miss Wendy
Thompson
Early Years Team
Leader



Mrs Jill McQuigg
Early Years Worker/ Team
Leader (Wed)



Mrs Caroline Joyce
Early Years Worker



Miss Kayleigh Barr
Early Years Worker



Miss Charlotte Murphy
Early Years Worker



Miss Abby Ford
Early Years Support
Worker



Mrs Ali Stevenson
Early Years Specialist
Support Teacher



Mrs Elaine Morrison
Youth Family
Community Link Worker

Registrations of Applicants

The Head Teacher will keep a register of all applicants, and the information contained in the applications will be considered by the admissions panel to assist in the allocation of places. The admissions panel will meet annually to allocate places in line with South Lanarkshire's Admissions Policy. Please note that the length of time a child's name has been on the register will not affect the child's priority for admission. Parents and carers can ask to see their application form at any time. If circumstances change which affect your application, you should inform the Head Teacher in writing.

Children who are not age three before the first intake to ELC in August, are entitled to start ELC on the first Monday following their 3rd birthday. Children who turn age three after 31st March will not be able to start ELC until the first intake of the next academic year in August.

Attendance

If your child is absent, we ask that you contact the School Office (by phone or email) by 9.30am. We would appreciate your support in advising our staff team of your child's intended pattern of attendance and where appropriate, any changes to their routine.

Contact Information

Address	Carstairs Junction Primary School Coronation Street Carstairs Junction Lanark ML11 7AB
Telephone	01555 870301
Fax	01555 871024
Website	http://www.carstairsjunction-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk/
Email	gw14carstairsjoffice@glow.sch.uk

Arrival and Pickup

A member of our team will be at the door of our ELC entrance to greet you at the start and end of each session. Parents and carers are welcome to come into the cloakroom and playroom, if they wish, to help support this transition. Parents and carers are asked to provide a list of adults who have permission to collect their child. In the interest of your child's safety, you should ensure staff are aware if he/she is to be collected by someone not known to our team. This helps us to avoid any potentially difficult situations when a child may not be allowed to leave with an adult who is a stranger to us. Please remember that by law no one under the age of 16 can pick up a child from ELC. For arrival or pickup out with the regular times will require you to ring the bell to speak to a member of staff.

Emergency Contacts

Parents and carers are asked to provide contact details for use in case of an emergency. These emergency contacts should be local (where possible) and must be contactable by telephone. Please ensure to keep us up to date with any changes in this information.

Emergency Closure

On rare occasions, circumstances arise which may mean that the ELC must close e.g. severe weather or power failures. If this happens, we will do all we can to let you know about the details of closure and re-opening. We will notify families via Twitter in the first instance. Learning Journals will also be used to notify families. Updates will also be shared via the South Lanarkshire Council Website (www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk).

Parking

South Lanarkshire Council advise parents to park and stride or walk your child safely to ELC. Car park facilities in the grounds are very limited. This area is closed to parents between 8:45-9:15 and 2:45-3:15 to allow the safe arrival and departure of children travelling to and from school in official transport.

No Smoking Policy

We operate a no smoking policy in the grounds of Carstairs Junction Primary School and Early Learning & Childcare setting in line with South Lanarkshire Council policy.

Mobile Phones

As many mobile phones feature a camera, we politely request that mobile phones are not used within our ELC to protect the privacy of all children.

Suitable Clothing

Children often have the best fun when they are doing messy work. We will always try to make sure they wear aprons, but accidents may happen, so we suggest 'best' clothes are not worn. Due to the active and outdoor nature of our setting, comfortable clothing such as leggings and joggers may be preferable to dresses and skirts.

Please ensure that your child has suitable outdoor clothing as outdoor play is a regular part of the ELC day. We have waterproof suits and wellie boots that are provided for all learners as required. At Nursery, we try to think of the weather as a benefit rather than a barrier.

The cloakroom can become a busy place. Therefore, it is essential that you put your child's name on all clothing (including jackets and sweatshirts) and shoes. Every child has their own peg for coats and bags and a box for their outdoor shoes.

A change of footwear is required. These should be rubbering soled gym shoes/trainers (no crocs) and can be left in your child's box in the cloakroom. We find Velcro fastenings rather than laces are best for little hands.

Although our ELC does not have a compulsory uniform, we do have Carstairs Junction ELC polo-shirts and sweatshirts which can be purchased from ALJ Work & Leisurewear in Lanark: <https://www.aljonline.co.uk/Carstairs-junction-Primary>

Maroon coloured sweatshirts and cardigans and white polo shirts can also be purchased from most big supermarkets.

We have a grab rail in our main foyer where parents/carers are encouraged to help themselves to some of our pre-loved ELC clothing items.

Sun Protection

Although sunny days in Scotland can sometimes seem few and far between, please ensure your child comes to the ELC wearing sun cream and a sun hat for those hot days. This will ensure your child is suitably protected whilst playing in the outdoor area. Permission will be requested for ELC staff to top up sun cream where required throughout the day through a consent form you will be asked to complete when your child starts. It is important to let us know of any allergies.

Insurance

Sometimes children like to bring something special or new to ELC for their friends to see. However, unless requested by staff (e.g. as part of a particular focus), we politely request that you do not allow your child to bring items from home to help ensure their personal toys do not get lost or broken. Parent/carers should ensure that valuable items are not left at ELC, particularly as the authority has no insurance to cover the loss of such personal items.

Health and Wellbeing

Getting It Right for Every Child- GIRFEC

GIRFEC is the national approach used in Scotland to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports working in partnership with the services that can help.

The programme calls for all workers in health centres and hospitals, nurseries and schools, leisure and family centres, social work services and housing offices in the community to work together towards a change in culture, systems and practice that will help all children and young people to grow, develop and reach their full potential under the eight well-being indicators; safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Most children get all the support and help they need from their parent(s), wider family and local community, in partnership with services like health and education. Where extra support is needed, the GIRFEC approach aims to make that support easy to access and seamless, with the child at the centre. It is for all children and young people because it is impossible to predict if or when they may need extra support.

Part of the GIRFEC agenda is that all children from birth to the age of 18 are allocated a named person. Your child's Health Visitor will be their named person from the age of 10-14 days until your child attends Primary School. When your child enters primary education, the named person is usually the Head Teacher.

More information can be found at: www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright

Child Protection and Safeguarding

As part of the Care and Welfare Policy of South Lanarkshire Council, we are committed to making sure that children in our ELC are cared for and that an environment exists where children feel safe and valued and where all decisions are made in the best interest of the child concerned. Child Protection guidelines are in place to ensure the safety of our children we have a Child Protection Coordinator to whom all concerns should be referred.

Our Child Protection Coordinator is **Mrs Jill Armour** (Head Teacher).

Support for All - Additional Support Needs (ASN)

There may be times when your child requires support in their school life, including in ELC and this may be long or short term. We have a system of staged intervention which is monitored by our ASN Coordinator and depending on the nature of support required, we may call upon specialist support from a range of partner services not limited to but including:

- Educational Psychologist: Ms Kristen Allen can offer our children and parents/carers support with regards children's all-round development
- Early Years Specialist Support Teacher: Mrs Ali Stevenson works as part of the Clydesdale Extended Community Team and can give specialist advice to our Staff as well as work with children and their families on specific learning targets.
- Public Health Nurse: They can offer support and advice to the ELC, parents and carers.

Parent and carers are asked to sign an Information Sharing Protocol to acknowledge that they have been informed that their child's information will be shared.

Health Promotion

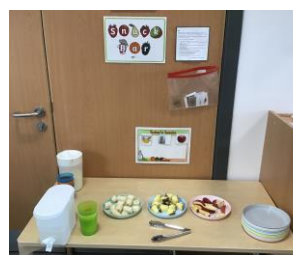
Health and Wellbeing is a core area within Curriculum for Excellence, and we are a health promoting ELC. Throughout the year we promote a healthy lifestyle with various talks, displays and activities for children, parents/carers and staff.

Working in partnership with the Child Smile initiative, we promote oral hygiene as part of our health education by running a tooth brushing programme which involves the children brushing their teeth in nursery daily. This is an 'opt out' programme so if you do not wish your child to participate, please inform us in writing.

We have a Travel Plan to encourage children to adopt an active commute to improve their health and look after the environment. As part of this plan, we would encourage nursery parent/carers to walk with their children to ELC where this is possible.

Snacks and the Promotion of Healthy Eating

A healthy and free flow snack of fruit is provided by our facilities team to encourage children to make healthy eating choices. A choice of milk or water is available, daily. Fruit varies depending on the season. Please inform our team if your child has any special dietary needs. Water is available throughout the session. Children enjoy lunch in our dining hall from 11.40am. A copy of the lunch menu can be found on the school website. We are a Nut free school.



Physical Activity

In addition to weekly visits to the gym hall and MUGA, we actively encourage fitness and exercise in the playroom and outdoors. Part of your child's physical activities may include walks within the local community. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a permission form for local walks at the beginning of each academic year.

Excursions and Consent Forms

When outings or excursions are planned, our ELC staff will advise you in advance. You will be asked to complete a consent form. Please note that children cannot take part in outings unless completed consent forms have been submitted by their parent/carer.

Medical Information

Medication

If your child has any medical conditions which will impact their health at ELC or if they need medication during their time at ELC, please discuss his/her requirements with our Team Leader. For a member of staff to be authorised to administer prescribed medications, official SLC forms should be completed in advance. We will ask you to review the form regularly.

It is important to let us know if your child has any allergies.

Please note that for children who have had sickness and/or diarrhoea, there is a 48-hour exclusion after the last episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea. This is to ensure that the infection is not passed on to other children or staff, thus risking re-infection to your own child. This guidance is given from NHS Lanarkshire.

More information can be found at:

https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

Please remember to inform us of any changes to your child's health throughout the year.

If Your Child Becomes Ill

If your child becomes ill while at ELC you will be contacted by telephone. If you are unavailable, or do not have a telephone, the child's emergency contact will be informed. Please keep us up to date with any changes to this information.

Toileting, Minor Accidents and Upsets

Do not hesitate to let us know about any worries you may have in relation to your child's toileting. We know this can be a sensitive area for some families. We have a small supply of spare clothes for these times so kindly ask that if your child needs to borrow any ELC clothes at any time, that you wash and return them.

Minor cuts and grazes etc. will be washed and a dressing (plaster) may be applied. Ice packs may be applied to bumps. Any accidents are reported on the accident recording form and signed by staff and parents. We will always notify you of any first aid administered.

In the unlikely event of an extreme emergency, a member of staff would accompany your child to the hospital whilst you are being contacted. For this reason, it is important to keep details up to date with telephone numbers. Our ELC team will communicate any accidents with the adult collecting your child at the end of the session unless we feel it is important to contact you sooner.

Visits to the Establishment by Medical Staff

From time to time, various health professions will visit us e.g. Child Smile who provide fluoride varnish treatment for children, or the orthoptist who conducts the pre-school Visual Screening programme. We will always inform you of this in advance. As with toothbrushing, visual screening is an 'opt out' programme. Please inform us in writing if you do not wish your child to participate.

Our ELC Curriculum

We involve children in every aspect of their learning, planning, assessment and evaluation. Core skills in learning will be shared monthly via our newsletters. By reading information around the ELC and talking to your child about what they have been learning, you too can help them in this process.

Learning and teaching in the early years occurs through play. Our ELC offers children opportunities to play alone, in groups or as a class. Playing with other children develops language and social skills, while encouraging children to share resources and communicate their ideas.

The Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes in the following curricular areas:

- Expressive Arts
- Health & Wellbeing
- Languages
- Mathematics
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

Curriculum for Excellence encourages children to become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

More information about Curriculum for Excellence can be found at:

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence>

The opportunities and experiences planned within ELC are responsive to the individual needs and interests of the children. They encourage children to investigate and explore; to persevere when they encounter difficulties; recognise and celebrate their achievements; develop their own ideas; make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

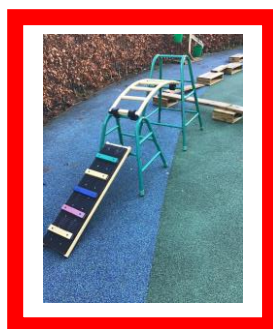
We have many resources which provide stimulate challenging learning opportunities both indoors and out. We will regularly invite you to come and join us at various times to share in the learning or learn alongside us. Please take up these opportunities if you are able and do let us know of any ideas for activities that you would like to be part of.

Information about what your child is learning can be found in our displays, Parent/Carer Information Board, newsletters and Online Learning Journals.

Playroom

Within the playroom the children participate in a range of activities designed to meet their individual needs. These include but are not limited to:

- Snack
- Malleable
- Art
- Investigation Area
- Numeracy
- Technologies
- Construction
- Outdoor Area
- Writing Area
- Story corner
- Imaginative Area
- Music



In addition to these areas inside our playroom, your child will have free access to many outdoor learning opportunities including our Mud Kitchen.

The local woodland area in Carstairs Junction is a fantastic resource. We regularly visit this area as part of outdoor learning which we refer to as '*The Funky Forrest*'.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process through observation, discussion and close tracking and monitoring of progression within the eight areas of the curriculum. Assessment, both formal and informal, is vital so that staff know children's ability levels and can match activities to their needs and interests. This helps to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

WOW Wall

We have a WOW wall within the playroom where we like to showcase any achievements your child has made. We encourage you to share anything that you feel is an achievement e.g. learning to ride a bike, moving up a group at swimming, receiving an award in a club/event, helping with the dishes or tidying their room etc. We welcome children to bring in a photograph or these can be uploaded to Learning Journals for us to view from there.

Learning Journals



Learning Journals is a secure, online programme that we use to document and share children's individualised wellbeing, learning and staged intervention targets with parents. Parental consent (via permission forms that will be sent home) must be given before we can create a profile for your child. Learning Journals are accessed through a website or app.

More guidance on how to access and use your child's journal will be shared when your child starts ELC but can also be found in this helpful free online tutorial:

<https://youtu.be/KnJWq1cwGaw>

Key Worker System

Your child will be assigned a 'Key Worker', who will be responsible for ensuring your child is settling into the nursery routine. It is their role to share important information with you about your child and to ensure your child's needs are being met. The keyworker will observe your child and plan for their learning and development along with the wider ELC staff team.

Parents as Partners

Working with You

You are extremely important to us! If you can help in any way in terms of supporting the ELC, please let us know. Parent helpers are greatly appreciated, whether it is supporting a small group or helping with the organisation of resources. PVG forms are available to all parents who wish to make a regular commitment to helping in our ELC.

Staff are always available to meet with you and talk on an informal basis. Formal meetings can be arranged at any time to discuss your child's needs or any concerns you may have. Formal reporting will take place during the year. All records are confidential but are available from Parents/carers on request.

We encourage you to share learning and achievements at home with us by talking about this with staff or uploading via Learning Journals. Any communications from ELC/School will be shared with you at the end of each ELC session.

As parents/carers we want you to be:

- Welcomed and given an opportunity to be involved in the life of the ELC.
- Fully informed about your child's learning.
- Encouraged to make an active contribution to your child's learning.
- Able to support learning at home.
- Encouraged to express your views and involved in forums and discussions on education related issues.

Some useful links to parent/ carer information are available on our website and relevant information for parents/carers can be found on the Parent/Carer Information Board in the cloakroom.

Parent Council

You can also become involved in our supportive Parent Council. We would love you to play an active and supportive role in your child's ELC experience. All parents with children attending Carstairs Junction ELC automatically become part of the Parent Forum and new members are always welcome. Dates of Parent Council meetings will be shared in newsletters and our app/website.

Reporting

During your child's time in ELC, a profile of their achievements and learning is compiled through our Online Journals. Parents/Carers are also invited to discuss their child's progress during the year either at our annual parent/carers consultation meetings or when reviewing and setting your child's individual learning targets. When children are moving on to Primary One, a Nursery transition report is completed in June which parents and your child's school will receive.

Supporting Learning at Home

Information about learning within the ELC is shared in our newsletters and on our noticeboards and displays. If you have any questions about the learning that is taking place, please do not hesitate to discuss these with us. Equally, if you feel you could contribute to a particular focus, please speak to a member of staff.

Throughout the year we organise a variety of events which you can participate in with your child. These can include Open Days, workshops, active story sessions with the library and Book bug. Information Sessions are also organised throughout the year to support parents/carers in different aspects of children's learning and development.

Newsletter

You will receive a monthly newsletter which have a '*dates for your diary*' section. We will always endeavour to give suitable advance notice of events that you may wish to attend but we thank you in advance for your understanding that sometimes dates set can be subject to change. Dates are also available on our app.

Website

Our school website is <http://www.carstairsjunction-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk/> Here, you will find lots of useful resources and information including our Standards & Qualities Report and ELC & School Improvement Plan as well as the most recent edition of our newsletter.

BMW: Behaviour- Manners- Working Hard

As part of South Lanarkshire Council's Promoting Positive Behaviour and Understanding Distressed Behaviour Policy and our own Promoting Positive Relationships Policy, we promote positive behaviour at Carstairs Junction ELC where all children are encouraged to make positive choices. Following a restorative approach, we have an ELC Charter which reflects our values and the United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child.

Our ELC in the Wider Community

During the year children make visits to places of interest around Carstairs Junction to see the changing seasons and to explore the local area. Visitors from the community are sometimes invited to speak to the children and explain their work. We have a termly community newsletter written by our Youth Family Community Link Worker, Elaine Morrison.

Transition to Primary One

Most children transfer to Primary School between the ages of four and a half and five and a half. Registration takes place in January of the year the child starts school. The dates for this registration will be shared via our newsletters, on social media and information will be displayed on the ELC notice board. Parents may decide to make an application to defer your child's entry to Primary School by a year. If the application to defer entry to Primary 1 is successful, your child will be allocated another full year of early learning and childcare funding.

Our ELC is an integral part of the school and is included in the wider life of the school wherever possible. Our Pre-School transition programme allows for planned opportunities for Primary One teacher to visit our ELC regularly and for our Pre-Schoolers and ELC staff to visit Primary One between January and June of the year they will start school.

For children starting Carstairs Primary or another local school, arrangements are coordinated to take account of their individual programmes to help ensure an effective transition to their new establishment.

Other Information

Maintaining a Quality Service

Our staff team are committed to maintaining and improving our service. Our 'Parent and Carer' information board is in the ELC cloakroom. There is a Suggestion/Comments Box which we would encourage parents and carers to use. We also have a 'Question of the Month' whereby we consult parents and carers on various aspects of our service.

If you have a complaint about our ELC, we would greatly appreciate you letting us know. We will deal with your complaint as promptly as possible, but always within 20

working days. You are not obliged to bring your complaint to us, you can communicate directly with the Care Inspectorate. Our Complaints Procedure is also displayed in the ELC cloakroom.

Self-evaluation

All stakeholders are consulted in our self-evaluation process.

'How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare?' and the Health and Social Care Standards 2017 are the main tools used by staff as part of our self-evaluation process. We consult with all stakeholders in our self-evaluation process using a variety of approaches including questionnaires, evaluations and ELC Natter/ Parent Council meetings. Consultation with our children is an integral part of our practice.

Data Protection

All personal information regarding our service users is stored in a locked cupboard as per the data protection guidelines. To meet the needs of all the children in our care, it is important to share information with parents, carers and other professionals in order to support a child's development. We may sometimes seek advice from other agencies. Parents/Carers are always notified in the first instance in line with South Lanarkshire Council's Information Sharing Protocol.

Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures are available in our Policy folder in the ELC cloakroom for parents and carers to read at any time.

Useful Contacts

The following contact information may be useful:

Executive Director
Lyndsay McRoberts

Educational Resources
Council Offices
Almada Street
Hamilton
ML3 0AE
Helpline: 01698 454545

Early Learning and Childcare
(Acting) Lead Locality Officer
Tammy Henderson

Education Resources
Council Offices
Almada Street
Hamilton
ML3 0AE

Care Inspectorate

Princes Gate
Castle Street
Hamilton
ML3 6BU
Tel: 01698 897800

Speech and Language Therapy
Department

Lanark Health Centre
Lanark
Tel: 01698 687606

Please note, complaints can be registered at the local Care Inspectorate Office listed above.