

Early Years Edinburgh Newsletter



June 2019

Our progress towards the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare by 2020

By August 2019 we will have introduced 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare across the following provision:

- 47 LA settings
- 60 Private/Voluntary Partner Providers
- 14 Childminders
- 5 Forest Kindergartens

This will provide approximately 3,900 children and families with early access to the increased funded hours.

From August 2019 eleven local authority settings currently open all year round will extend their opening times to enable families to access the service between 8.00am and 6.00pm.

Workforce

We have completed the recruitment of 60 Modern Apprentice and Trainee Early Years practitioner posts. Staff working in these posts will be able to gain a Social Service – Children and Young People SCQF level 7 – SVQ3 qualification. We have also recruited 30 Early years assistants to work across our early years settings and they will be trained towards SVQ2 level.

Next Steps towards 2020

We have developed an approach to phasing in the expansion within each locality, which takes account of local authority, partner provider, childminder and forest kindergarten provision. Here's what we plan to do next

Local Authority Settings

On 8 May we met with the headteachers and business managers of settings that will be moving from term time to all year round provision to share our staffing proposals and the delivery models that will be available for parents.

We will bring these settings together again at the start of the new term to discuss the next steps towards August 2020.

New builds

Planning has now been approved for 5 new build local authority early years settings. Work on the following nursery classes will begin in August 2019 Nether Currie, Granton, St Mark's, Craigentiny and St John Vianney's.

Partner Provider Settings

All our partner providers were invited to deliver 1140 funded hour places from August 2019. We have been delighted by the response to this invite and 74 partners will now be delivering up to twenty 1140 places from August.

Childminders

We are well on track to exceed our target to have 20 childminders in partnership with the local authority from August 2019. We are currently in the process of allocating places and developing a training programme for our new partners.

Consultation and Communication with Parents

In September 2017 we consulted with parents to gather their views on delivering 1140 hours across the city. We will issue a new survey in September 2019 and a link to this will be sent out to all early years settings.

Following the consultation we will revise our 1140 Guide for Parents publication to provide details of the different delivery models across the city and where these will be available. The delivery models will include the following:

- Full year
- Term Time
- Forest Kindergarten
- Childminder

Early Learning Improvement Partnerships (ELIPs)

Practitioners and leaders from three clusters are working together to explore ways to meaningfully collaborate across partners and local authority settings. The group is exploring ways to integrate their improvement plans with leadership across the team in order to improve outcomes for all of our children.

The professional dialogue between settings has been fantastic and those involved have said that the work is already beginning to have a positive impact within their settings.

We hope to share some of this work with you in more detail at our Leading the Strategy meetings next session.

Equity And Excellence Leads

Our Senior Early Years Intervention Officers (SEYIO) have now been in post since September, they are playing a key role in how the expansion of ELC is contributing to closing the poverty-related attainment gap. We held our first South East Improvement Collaborative – Additional Graduates conference was on Friday 31 May where we were able to share the work that has been carried out across Edinburgh. We shared this across the SEIC and with the Scottish Government who also attended. The feedback was very positive from our colleagues and the Scottish Government representatives. They have advised us that they are rebranding the role as: Equity and Excellence Leads. This in response to feedback from Local Authorities that the term 'additional graduate' can create confusion about the nature of the role, as well as an unhelpful impression that these are temporary posts. As you know we have named our posts as SEYIOs, we will consider changing the name to align with the national role as we move forward.

Hanen CLPL to support Language Development

The Early Years team are excited to be offering more Hanen training throughout the next session. The 'Hanen Program for Early Education Educators' promotes every child's language development, using natural every day activities, routines and play.

It enables and supports early years professionals to become attuned to children's interests so they can follow their lead and foster language development. There will be a 'Learning Language and Loving It', course starting in September and running fortnightly till November, all running on Thursday afternoons. There will also be opportunities in the CPD directory for the six hour 'Teacher Talk' training which will take place over two Friday afternoons.

Dates and further information will be available soon.

Dawn O'Donnell
Peripatetic Teacher



Learning Together at Liberton Nursery

'Parents, carers and families are by far the most important influences in a child's life' and at Liberton Nursery School we work together with parents to support and develop all aspects of their child's learning.

Our aim is to build strong, positive relationships with parents, families and the community. We actively involve parents in a variety of different ways which, in turn, provides a learning community in which children can achieve success. Parents and children are welcomed into the nursery community during four 'Transition into Nursery' sessions and home visits. Children and their families familiarise themselves with the nursery during these sessions and get to know the staff. Leaving your child in a new setting can be daunting but parents have commented that 'the children benefited a great amount as they got a feel for their new environment and felt as settled as I did'.

Parents, like children, have different learning styles and a variety of different skills and interests. Some of our parents are involved in our very effective Parents' Association, fundraising, developing and discussing policy and self-evaluation and welcoming new parents, while others enjoy 'Breakfast Bletchers', where parents can meet for a chat and a cup of tea. The Parents' Association organises a range of events which are well supported by nursery families. These events promote inclusion and celebrate the diversity of the nursery community. These photographs show parents preparing a healthy 'tea' for all the families who danced enthusiastically at the nursery ceilidh in March.

As part of our Literacy Action Plan nursery staff have delivered PEEP to families in the community and we have supported home-school literacy with our very popular 'Bedtime Story Events'. Families shared stories together and enjoyed storytelling sessions. A fundraising event on 'World Book Day' involved parents and children searching for story characters in the garden and money raised purchased more dual language and culturally diverse books for the nursery.

Parents are invited regularly to 'Stay and Play', sharing in their child's learning and achievements, and chatting informally with keyworkers. Parents have shared experiences at nursery with their child, seeing first hand their child's social, educational and fun opportunities'. Parents have supported their child's learning alongside nursery staff during 'Nature Play' in the woods and have celebrated their cycling skills which staff have encouraged with the 'Play Together on Pedals' programme. Children and parents have worked together with staff throughout this session 'Cooking Together' to create healthy, inexpensive meals for their whole family. We value learning together as a family at Liberton Nursery School, recognising that this improves attainment and outcomes for children.

Parents often share their own expertise with the children at nursery and by sharing their skills and knowledge they enrich the curriculum and enhance learning.

Parents' views, ideas and involvement are actively sought and valued at Liberton Nursery School. Nursery staff appreciate parents' input and feedback on all aspects of our service and gather this through informal conversations, questionnaires, 'SurveyMonkeys' and parent consultations.

Their partnership is crucial in their own child's education and in that of the wider school community.

**Lynn Cluness, HT
Liberton Nursery School**



Nature Play Day

Recently more than 100 hundred practitioners from across early years took part in our annual Nature Play Day, on a Saturday in Cramond. The passion for outdoor learning and learning in the outdoors was palpable and everyone left with ideas and strategies to build their knowledge, skills and confidence. Juliet Robertson from Creative Star is booked to be the Keynote Speaker at next years event, date TBC.

Literacy Innovation at Greengables

Greengables Nursery School and Family Centre has been selected as a finalist in the Scottish Education Awards for its innovative work in literacy.

Greengables was nominated in the 'Raising Achievement in Literacy' category which recognises early learning and childcare settings and primary and secondary schools that have developed a vibrant and progressive culture and climate of continuous innovation in relation to literacy. The school has been selected as one of only three finalists in this category.

Literacy is the heart of the curriculum at Greengables where the focus is on developing pre-literacy skills to give a firm foundation for future learning and close the attainment gap whilst supporting and challenging all learners.

Close relationships with children and parents and an understanding of the importance of children's literacy

experiences at home, including those for whom English is an additional language, is key.

A belief in the importance of play and a clear understanding of the holistic nature of child development has led to the creation of rich language and literacy environments and staff respond to children's communication in specific ways so that children's emergent language and literacy development is enhanced.

Important approaches include Interactive Storytelling, with a focus on traditional tales and the use of puppets or children to act out the stories and Play Stories where children's own stories are written down and then acted out by the group.

Self-evaluation, research-based approaches, partnership working, practitioner research and continuing lifelong professional learning is embedded.

For further information, contact:

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Childminders as Partners 'A Braw Place to Be'

We now have, almost twenty, Edinburgh childminders in partnership with the council.

We have always worked together to support children and families but this is a more formal structure. However, each childminder remains self-employed but works with us to pilot delivery of 'flexible models' of early learning childcare across Edinburgh.

Many childminders work directly in partnership with local settings to deliver a 'blended model' of care, where that setting is already delivering 1140 hours. The child spends 600 hours in the setting and the remaining 540 hours is delivered in their home. They also deliver the current entitlement of 600 hours, with some families involved in the pilot, choosing to have the full 1140 hours with them.

Most of the childminders have many years of experience and some have already completed their Level 7 (SVQ 3) qualifications. Working together in partnership with them is a privilege. Learning from the childminding community and being invited into their homes to witness the many unique and individualised opportunities they deliver for children every day. Simple but 'real' experiences like a walk to the local shops, a trip to the park and real cutlery and crockery at meal times at an adult-sized table.

Childminders are unable to access our daytime CLPL and we have had a couple of evening network events to focus on team building and self-evaluation. We recently enjoyed a morning of 'Stay and Play', in our early years base at WHEC, with eight childminders and twenty children aged 9 months to 5 years.

Next Steps – We need more childminders to come into Partnership to help deliver the 1140 hours. We will also be working with childminders, settings and parents to develop a SLWG in order to look at how we might create a 'blended' version of the 'Child's Plan'.

Foundation Apprenticeships in Early Learning and Childcare

This month, the council welcomed almost forty, 5th and 6th year pupils as they began their induction on the Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services: Children and Young People. The pupils are drawn from across Edinburgh High Schools and will complete the apprenticeship whilst still attending school. Their training will be delivered by tutors from our Edinburgh Early Learning and Childcare Academy (EELCA), on two afternoons each week at WHEC and Liberton High Schools. Most plan to work in early learning and childcare, whilst others are considering careers in Health, Education or Social Work.

Each successful Foundation Apprentice will automatically be offered an interview to complete a Modern Apprenticeship with the council, (currently £16,287, pro rata). The apprentices will have the opportunity to complete block and day release work placements in childcare settings across Edinburgh. Please let us know if you are interested in developing the young workforce and mentoring an apprentice in your setting, paula.dennis@edinburgh.gov.uk

Playgroups as Partners

We welcomed two more playgroups into partnership to support delivery of 1140, Compass Playgroup in Balerno and Leith St Andrews.

We support the voluntary sector non-partner playgroups with training and grant funding and do already have a number who work with us in a more formal partnership. Recently, 24 playgroups accessed a maximum of £3,000 each from our £60,000 Playgroup Grant. Funds will be used to purchase a wide variety of resources and equipment to enhance children's learning experiences. Events will be held in January to support playgroups to complete the application process and access grant funding.

Millie's Mark Award Launched in Scotland

Millie's Mark has now received full endorsement from the Scottish Government, with children's minister Maree Todd visiting The Orchard Nursery on Inverleith Row in Edinburgh, one of the first Scottish settings to sign up to the scheme, to mark its launch.

The award, which recognises excellence in paediatric first aid for early years settings, was first set up in England by Millie's trust and the National Day Nurseries Association in 2016.

In order to achieve the award, all staff working with children must be trained in paediatric first aid and remain fully up to date with all related policies and procedures.

Ms Todd said, 'Nurseries that sign up to Millie's Mark will be able to tell parents that they are trained to a high standard in first aid for babies and toddlers, and I'm very pleased that staff are keen to undertake these additional training opportunities where they are available.'

Millie's Trust was set up by Dan and Joanne Thompson following the death of their young daughter who choked on food in a nursery.

The Thompsons said, 'As Millie's parents, we are extremely proud that Millie's Mark is launching in Scotland after seeing the response in England. We are dedicated to seeing that all childcare staff know the importance of paediatric first aid and Millie's Mark allows them to review their own emergency procedures and refresh all the knowledge of anyone taking care of a child.'

'For parents it allows them to see that the people looking after their children have the necessary skills and knowledge to react to an emergency situation and this allows parents to feel more confident in placing their children in these particular settings. We are very much looking forward to seeing the first nurseries awarded in Scotland later this year.'

Purnima Tanuku, chief executive of NDNA, said it would be 'very reassuring' for parents to know settings had Millie's Mark.

A Woman of Letters

Head Teacher of Balgreen and Hope Cottage Nurseries, Jane Whinnett received her, well-deserved, MBE for services for her services to early childhood education. Jane was presented with award by the Duke of Cambridge at Buckingham Palace.

After studying in Edinburgh, Jane completed her PGDE at the University of Christchurch in Canterbury. She taught throughout the primary school before specialising in the early years. While studying for a Diploma in Professional Studies in Early Education at the University of Edinburgh, she met a Froebelian and was inspired to continue her studies at the University of Roehampton. Jane is a founder member of the Edinburgh Froebel Network, a tutor on the Froebel course at The University of Edinburgh Trustee of the Froebel Trust, the chair the Education committee and Jane is currently involved with the development of the MSc Education (Early Childhood Practice and Froebel) pathway. Many of you will have benefitted in the past from Jane's knowledge and teaching of Froebel and beyond, the MSc just might be your next step.



Save the date

Monday 5 November 2019 – full day event, booking soon.

Under 3s Conference at the Faith Mission



Canal View Nursery Rolling Lunches

Canal View nursery in Wester Hailes was one of the first settings to move to a 1140hrs model.

This session the nursery has 64 children all attending full time.

The team have recently redesigned the way they provide lunches for the children and moved from 3 'sittings' to a 'rolling' lunch time where the children choose when they are ready to come for lunch and sit at small round tables with homely place settings and classic music playing. The children are able to serve themselves independently and then choose where to sit with their friends.

The system is much more natural, has removed queuing time and gives the children the same independence, personalisation and choice that they have during snack time and in other parts of their day.

A change from the more formal system of 'sittings' was initially daunting but the team have been really delighted by how smoothly the children have settled into the new system and how comfortable and happy the children seem. Many children who were not eating a great deal during lunch times under the previous system are now eating much better as they are able to select from what is on offer and serve themselves and the change has been really positive for many of our children with additional support needs who struggled with the waiting time and the disruption to their play.

Susannah Jeffries, Acting Depute Head Teacher, Canal View Primary School



Canal View Nursery Rolling Lunches



