

Welcome to
Castle Douglas Early Learning and Childcare Setting



December 2025

Welcome

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Castle Douglas Nursery, a place where your child can learn and develop in a safe and nurturing environment.

At Castle Douglas Nursery, we are committed to making sure our children receive excellent standards of care. Child led learning is at the heart of everything we do and we want to support your child to explore their learning and interests in a way that they truly connect with. We are very lucky to have a fantastic team here at Castle Douglas with a range of experience who provide high quality learning through play led activities.

Modern education is a partnership between pupils, nursery staff and parents and we invite you to join us in making your child's memories at Castle Douglas happy ones, where every dream no matter how big or small is achievable.

We look forward to working in partnership with you.

Miss Davies
Head Teacher

For more links and detailed information about how we support parents and work with our schools please see our **[Authority Handbook](#)**. This includes information for families about financial and wellbeing support, additional support for learning, transport clothing and parental involvement and engagement in your children's learning.

Vision, Values and Aims

Our vision at Castle Douglas Nursery is to embrace childhood as a magical time where play is at the heart of everything we do. Our nursery is designed to feel like a home away from home for children and their families. Parents will be actively included in their child's nursery journey, and we want to ensure that you feel confident that your child is receiving the very best care and learning experiences possible.

At Castle Douglas Nursery we aim to:

- Provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where your child's individual learning needs are acknowledged, embraced and met.
- Provide an environment where children can grow in confidence and give them the support to become independent with feelings of high self-worth.
- To equally value children facing additional challenges and ensure that the environment, provision and support meet the child's individual needs
- To encourage each child to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and have respect for others in their learning environment.
- Heighten your child's awareness of race, religion, culture and additional needs of individuals.
- Provide a stimulating and challenging range of activities that will engage children and develop their curiosity, enquiry and creativity.
- Develop a positive attitude to learning where your child is fully engaged, that will support them through life.

- Value and incorporate all aspects of children's lives, building a strong partnership with the local community and future schools to create positive transitions.

We value your child's happiness and wellbeing, and their ability to show kindness and compassion to others. We want our children to recognise the importance of integrity and making the right choices at nursery. We will support our children to value and challenge themselves and for them as individuals to aim high and reach for the stars. Through effective teamwork, open lines of communication and in partnership with our parents, we will work towards the realisation of our visions, aims and values at Castle Douglas Nursery.

Working together with Parents, Carers and Families

Working in partnership with parents and carers is central to everything we do. Consultation with you about your child's early experiences helps us plan for effective learning based around your child's interests. We want to create a positive partnership with you where we can work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for your child.

Our staff team are always happy to discuss with parents any aspect of their child's progress or indeed any general nursery issues. Often this may simply take place at the door at drop off or pick up. If you feel there is a matter which needs to be discussed privately, please make an appointment with the nursery manager or your child's key worker. You will also have the opportunity to meet with your child's key worker to update your child's Personal Plan.

Information at a Glance

School Address

Castle Douglas Nursery,
Jenny's Loaning, Castle Douglas, DG7 1JA

School Email address:

gw08officecastle@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Parent Council Email address:

cdprimarypc@gmail.com

Parent Council Chairperson Theresa Ironmonger

Head Teacher Miss Davies

Registered Capacity 56

Start and finish times

8.30am Start 3.30pm Finish

Keeping in touch

The nursery uses an online platform, Learning Journals, where your child's keyworker will share your child's progress and experiences with you.

Learning Journals will also show a general nursery profile, where all staff will keep you up to date with general nursery learning and information.

The Nursery Manager will keep in close contact with you also and any suggestions or matters of concern can be discussed with any member of staff at any time.

Parental Involvement information:

www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

www.parentclub.scot/

Parentzone Scotland:

education.gov.scot/parentzone

School term dates can be found at:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates

Care Inspectorate full contact details

www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/contact-us

General enquiries 0345 600 9527

Staff



Mrs Gowans
Nursery Manager



Mrs Donnelly
Nursery Nurse



Miss Renwick
Nursery Nurse



Miss Denholm
Nursery Nurse



Mrs Martin
Nursery Nurse



Miss Potts
Nursery Nurse



Mrs Mckerlie
Nursery Nurse



Mrs Garside
Nursery Nurse



Mrs Anderson
Early Years Support
Assistant



Ms Scott
Early Years
Support Assistant



Mrs Amos
Learning Assistant



Mrs Brannock
Learning Assistant



Ashely Gilchrist
EYSA

Registration with the Care Inspectorate

Early Learning and Childcare (nursery) settings are registered with Care Inspectorate, the regulatory body for Early Learning and Childcare Services. We are inspected regularly to ensure that we are meeting the appropriate standards and to support us to improve. This helps us to continue to deliver high quality services to you and your child. Our certificate of registration and our most recent inspection report is displayed on our noticeboard.

All Providers must meet **The National Standard** for Early Learning and Childcare. All staff are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and hold a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership.

ELC Registration Procedure

All three and four year olds and eligible two year old children can receive up to 1140 hours a year of Early Learning and Childcare. That works out at 30 hours per week during school term time.

Nursery registration takes place in January or February each year.

Parents of children due to start nursery will receive a letter and registration form in the term prior to registration. You will be asked to complete the form and return this to your preferred provider with a copy of your child's birth certificate and proof of address. Children moving into their second year of ELC will be provided with an ELC2 registration form from staff to complete and return. If you wish to change your provider you should collect a form from the nursery and take this to your new provider.

As part of Funded ELC offer your child will be also be entitled to one free meal and a snack each day. If you are using more than one provider on any day, you must let the providers know where your child is taking their one free meal/snack and milk.

The Council Webpage provides further information for families:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15236/Funded-early-learning-and-childcare-for-3-and-4-year-olds

Key Worker/Person

Before your child starts nursery, they will be allocated a key worker. This is the person who will be the key contact for you. You and your child will get an opportunity to meet and chat with their keyworker during your initial visit. They will hold a meeting with you to create a Personal Plan for your child either before your child starts nursery or in the first few weeks to ensure that the nursery will be able to meet your child's needs. If you have any concerns or worries regarding your child, please speak to their keyworker. Your key worker is responsible for sharing any information about your child with you throughout their time in nursery. During the session your child will be supported by all members of staff.

Links with other agencies

Early learning and childcare settings work closely with other agencies including Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Health Visitors, Educational Visitors and Educational Psychologists, when appropriate. If you have any concerns or queries, we can help you to make contact with these agencies. Please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff and we will be happy to help.

Getting It Right for Every Child and Child Protection

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is an approach from Scottish Government that sets out how Early Learning and Childcare settings, schools and other services should work with children and their families. GIRFEC is all about ensuring that children get the help they need when they need it – the right help at the right time.

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. We believe all children should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included.. Further information can be found at: www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk and the [Dumfries and Galloway Childrens Services Directory](#). Also on your ELC Noticeboard

ELC Child Protection Coordinator is
Miss Susan Davies

Induction and Transition - Settling In

At Castle Douglas Nursery we recognise the importance of smooth transitions for all of our children into nursery to enable them to feel happy and content. Parents and carers are a child's first educators and we will work closely with you and other professionals to promote continuity for all children during their transition into nursery. We will carefully plan activities, provide appropriate resources and arrange visits to the setting which will be tailored to suit your child's individual needs. These positive transitions will enable our children to develop confidence and acquire skills to manage change during their time with us and beyond.

Learning, developing and growing

We are all unique!

Each child brings their own character and personality into our nursery and we want to ensure that every individual child's learning experience is unique. We recognise that our children have their own set of abilities, gifts and potential which means they are all amazing in their own way!

We work to provide an environment that is warm, stable and caring so that your child can feel emotionally and socially secure. A place where you child is valued and accepted as themselves at all times, where they are free to explore, experiment, discover and learn. Our nursery is a rich environment which allows each child to reflect and learn at their own pace in a way that they truly connect with.

At Castle Douglas Nursery we aim to develop your child's learning moment-by-moment, we will always be aware of individual children's needs and interests through observation. We will always be thinking about what your child's play tells us about their thinking and we are always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning.

Learning through Play

Play is the natural way in which your child learns. Our nursery is a well-resourced setting which will support your child to develop their curiosity during play. Our amazing team will support your child to actively make choices in their learning and sensitively direct each session to ensure that the children feel inspired and supported. During your child's nursery day they will be able to access self-selected resources which will allow them to develop their curiosity, enquiry and creativity. With this approach to your child's learning we can take what each child offers in



their play. Enjoy it, reinforce it and build on it to help them find a sense of fulfilment and achievement.

Lunch and Snack Time

Snack is available throughout the nursery session. Your child can decide when they want to have snack, once ready they will wash their hands and collect their cup, plate and cutlery. Snack time is a very sociable time where children chat to their peers and ELC Staff. We follow the nutritional guidance **Setting the Table** and the **Eatwell Guide** when devising snack menus.

If your child has any dietary requirements, please let us know. There is a choice of milk or water to drink.

Lunch

With the introduction of 1140 hours, children attending all day have the entitlement to have lunch provided. This is a time where children will have the opportunity to develop and learn new skills. They will be able to choose their lunch, self-serve as well as having the opportunity to further develop their social skills between their friends and staff.

Detailed information on school meals is available at www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

Special Dietary Requirements

Catering provide special dietary requirements for food allergy and intolerances; medically prescribed diets; or diets for religious or cultural reasons specific meals for children of different ethnic origin. Simply ask for a registration form to allow us to inform the catering team who will discuss your child's requirements in full.

It would be beneficial for all children who have an allergen, food intolerance or special diet to register. For more information contact the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

Parents/Carers - Please register your child with the catering team as soon as you are aware of any allergens or intolerances to food.

Please visit www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk for more information



Absence/ Illness

If your child is not feeling well please do not send them until they are well feeling better. Please phone if your child will not be attending Nursery for whatever reason. publichealthscotland.scot/media/25008/2024-04-child-off-school-a4.pdf

Accidents

If your child is involved in a serious accident or becomes unwell we will inform you immediately. Therefore, it is essential that your contact details are up to date.

Medical help will be sought if necessary.

We will always inform you about minor incidents and accidents and provide you with a written copy of the incident and what action we have taken.

Administration of Medicines

Parents /carers are responsible for their child's medication.

If possible, it is helpful for you to ask the prescribing doctor if the medication can be prescribed to allow for administration out with of ELC hours or if you can come in to dispense this to your child.

Medication will only be administered by a member of ELC staff once a completed parent/ carer administration of medicines request form has been received.

For medication such as asthma inhalers it is the responsibility of the parent/carer and the ELC staff to check that the medication is not out-of-date, that there is a sufficient quantity, that it is removed as necessary and that any unused supplies are uplifted for disposal.

All information regarding medication will expire at the end of each year, however all medical information will be reviewed on a termly basis. If the administration of medication is to continue, all relevant information must be supplied on a new request form at the start of the next session. Pupil and Parent/Carer confidentiality will be respected in all matters.

Intimate Care

From time-to-time toileting 'accidents' happen. We will discuss how we will support your child's stage of development and intimate care needs at your child's Personal Plan meeting so that we are taking similar approaches in ELC and at home to help your child.



Infection Control

Good hygiene is crucial in controlling the spread of infection and children are encouraged to use disposable tissues to wipe their noses, wash hands before snack/lunch and after going to the toilet, etc.

We are obliged to inform Care Inspectorate and Public Health when there is an outbreak of infectious diseases.

The exclusion times for childhood infections are on display. Should a difference of opinion between the parent and the Nursery Manager/Head Teacher arise about the child's fitness to attend, advice will be sought from the School Nurse. Generally, parents will be advised by their G.P. when a child should remain at home.

Further information can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications and page 27 of [Education Authority Handbook](#)



Parent/ Carer and Family Engagement

At Castle Douglas Nursery we value the role that parents/carers have already played in the education of their child, we also realise that your continued involvement is essential if your child is to receive the most from their nursery experience. Therefore, we believe that an effective partnership between home and nursery should be developed as fully as possible.

This means:

- Parents/Carers are always welcome into the nursery.
- Parents/Carers expertise is recognised and used.
- Parents/Carers are given full access to nursery policies and procedures.
- Parents/Carers are given access to information about the nursery curriculum.
- Parents/Carers can contribute to and are fully informed of their child's progress and achievements.
- Opportunities for learning provided at nursery are continued at home (e.g. story sacks)



Helping in the Nursery

Parental help during sessions is very welcome. If you would like to help then please ask a member of staff for our Volunteer Form.

This should be completed and returned at your earliest convenience. If you feel that you have a particular skill which you could share please let us know. Our children lead their learning so we can incorporate it in at a time where it would interest them. When a parent can commit to regular help the Nursery will make a PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) check, please speak to a member of staff who will provide you with more information.

Working Together

The most important way to support us at nursery is by caring for your child and being actively involved in what they are participating in at nursery. You can assist the nursery staff by:

- Informing staff if there is someone new picking up your child.
- Ensuring that your child brings weather appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Naming items of clothing such as sweatshirts and coats. Letting us know if you have a change of address, phone number or carer.
- Letting us know if anything is upsetting or worrying your child.

Stay and Play sessions will be held throughout the year where parents will have the opportunity to come and see what your child has been doing at nursery and play alongside them. During these sessions you will be able to catch up with your child's Key Worker to discuss your child's progress and next steps in their learning.

Partner Involvement

We work with a range of partners to ensure that we are providing a family service to the children in our care. This ranges from NHS; Social Work; Speech & Language; Local businesses and the Lifelong Learning Team. www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

Family Learning

The Lifelong Learning Service offers support to improve life chances for children and families through the delivery of a wide range of family learning programmes. Family Learning offers families the opportunity to learn together during relaxed and 'fun' learning sessions.

For more information please visit Lifelong Learning. This link provides more detail of courses www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/ and programmes on offer.

ELC Policies and Procedures

A copy of our policies and procedure documents are available in nursery for parents to view at a time that is convenient to them.

Complaints/ Concerns

The first step is to speak to the ELC Manager if a situation arises that you are unhappy with. It is hoped that most concerns can be resolved this way. If however this is not the case, there are a number of ways you can direct your enquiries or requests to the relevant service or you can make a complaint online by visiting Make a complaint online (dumgal.gov.uk) Or by calling 030 33 33 3000

Complaints can also be raised with the Care Inspectorate, Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY. Telephone: 0345 600 9527

Emergency Contact and Collection Forms

You have completed an 'Emergency Contact and Collection' form. If there are any changes to who is allowed to drop off and pick up your child, then you must let us know so this can be updated. Your child must be dropped off and collected by an appropriate adult (Under 16yr olds are not allowed to collect children).

Emergency Closure

In the event of the nursery/school having to close in an emergency e.g. adverse weather conditions, heating failure we will contact you as soon as possible in the event that the Nursery needs to close.

For more information on Emergency Closure processes please see - [Link to Authority Handbook](#)

Transition to Primary 1

As your child approaches school age we will work with your child's school to ensure that transition to Primary One is as smooth as possible. Your child's records will be passed on to school. You have the right to request to see any information held about your child.

Deferred entry to Primary 1

Most children start school when they are between 4 years 6 months and 5 years old but it is possible to start children later depending on the circumstances. This is called deferred entry.

You can choose for your child to start primary school later if they turn five from the school start date in August and before the last day of February.

If you are considering deferring entry to school talk to nursery staff or the head teacher at the school about your concerns.

You'll also need to remember to [apply for a school place](#) even if you are still trying to decide whether your child should start school later or not. Any delays in applying can mean you lose a priority place at your child's catchment school.

Children turning five years old between the start of the school year in August and the end of February have an automatic right to defer entry to school and receive another year of funded Early Learning and Childcare. You can read more about [deferred entry here](#).

We hope that you have found the information contained in our handbook useful. All information contained in our ELC handbook is correct and accurate at the time of printing; we reserve the right to make any changes throughout the ELC session.

