



# Welcome to Heathhall School



## Early Learning and Childcare Centre

## Basic Information

Heathhall

Early Learning and Childcare Centre

Herries Avenue, Heathhall

DUMFRIES, DG1 3QZ

Tel. 01387 702590

Email: [gw10officeheathhall@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw10officeheathhall@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs K McLean  
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs A Sloan  
Nursery Manager: Mrs C Townsend-Sawley  
Early Years Practitioners: Mrs F Scott  
Mrs M Dickson  
Mrs G Gray  
Miss F Shek  
Mrs S Leslie  
Mrs K Gray  
Mrs F Mukadam

Early Years Assistants: Mrs N Oats  
Miss T Downing  
Miss R McHarrie

Secretarial Staff: Mrs F Thompson  
Mrs S Gowan

Janitor: Mr P Biggs

Head of Education

Dr Gillian Brydson

Woodbank, 30 Edinburgh Road

DUMFRIES, DG1 1NW

Telephone 01387 261234

Care Inspectorate

[www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or 0845 600 9527



## Welcome

The staff and children of Heathhall School extend a warm welcome to all parents, friends and visitors to our school.

We want our school to be a happy, caring and stimulating place for everyone and welcome your assistance and co-operation in achieving this.

This handbook is provided to familiarize you with some of the educational, organizational and social aspects of our school and to foster the good relationship, which already exists between home and school.

I do hope you find our handbook informative and useful but should any of your questions not be answered here, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to meeting and working with you to ensure that your child's education is both happy and rewarding.

**Karen McLean**

Headteacher



## Where Are We?

Our Early Years Setting opened in August 2010 as part of the new Heathhall Primary School. This has provided us with an up to date environment for all our children.

The ELC setting has 4 play spaces; three are inside and one outside. There is also a kitchen for preparing snack and an office for adults to have meetings.

The outside area has a soft and hard play surface. The ELC setting has access to the wider school playground when required.

The ELC setting also uses other areas of the school especially the library, general purpose room and the main hall area.

The ELC centre children have access to all the resources which are available to the school which includes outdoor play equipment, gym wall bars etc.

## Our Vision Statement

At Heathhall we strive to create a happy, safe and nurturing community where everyone is respected, treated fairly and enjoys learning.

We actively promote honesty, kindness and a sense of pride in all individuals, allowing everyone to achieve their very best.

# Our Learning Journey

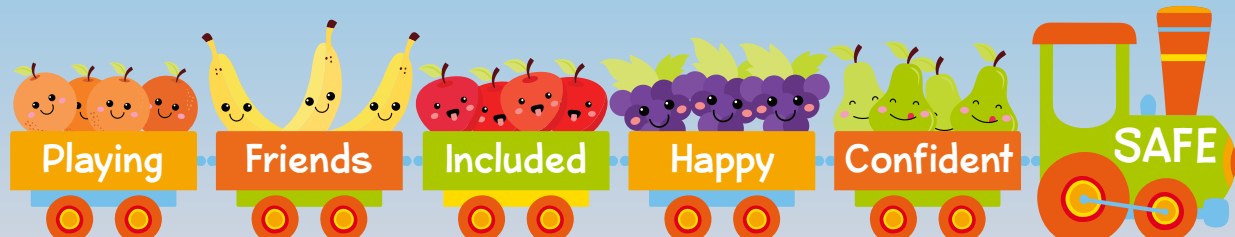
Communication

Family

Caring

Team

Fun



## Our Vision

At Heathhall Early Learning and Childcare Centre we provide a safe, happy environment in which children learn and develop through playing and having fun with their friends.

## Starting Heathhall Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Centre

3 year olds are entitled to funding from the beginning of the term following their third birthday

Children whose 4th birthday falls between 1 March and 28 February will be entitled to funding from the August between these two dates.



Enrolment dates and times are advertised in the local press but generally these take place in February. Prior to your child starting at Heathhall you will be sent a note of the sessions being offered and an invitation to a welcome afternoon.

Attendance at Heathhall ELC centre is not compulsory but we feel that children derive the greatest benefit from their Early Years Education when they attend regularly. If for any reason your child is unable to attend it would be helpful to let staff know.

Phone the school office and a message will be passed on. If your child is ill please contact the school office. It is protocol that if there is a non attendance and there has been no communication then we will make contact with you.

Because of their individual characteristics, children will approach the start of their ELC year in different ways. Some may be quite confident, others less sure and some may be rather anxious.

To support your child with their transition from home to Heathhall ELC centre in the current COVID-19 situation, we will be sending you videos and pictures/information to share with your child to help them with their transition.

Information shared with us via their information packs will help us to get to know about your child's likes and dislikes and how your child will cope with their transition to ELC. After reading this booklet and information packs, please feel free to email the school with any further questions you may have.

## ELC Spaces

The ELC centre is very busy and at times we may not have enough spaces for all the children who enrol.

If this is the case then Council nursery places are allocated using a set of priorities. These are available on the Council website or you can get a copy from Heathhall ELC centre when you register.

## Parent Permission Forms

In your child's welcome pack there will be several forms for you to complete. These can be filled in prior to coming to Nursery.

**Please fill and return these forms as soon as you can – they are very important.**





**Mrs McLean**  
Head Teacher



**Mrs Sloan**  
Depute Head Teacher



**Mrs Townsend-Sawley**  
Nursery Manager



**Mrs Fiona Scott**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Mrs M Dickson**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Mrs S Leslie**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Miss F Shek**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Mrs G Gray**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Mrs K Gray**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Mrs F Mukadam**  
Early Years Practitioner



**Miss T Downing**  
Early Years Support Assistant



**Miss R McHarrie**  
Early Years Support Assistant



**Mrs N Oats**  
Early Years Support Assistant

## Policies

There are many policies which are pertinent to the whole school

- Behaviour Management
- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Health & Safety
- School Development Plan
- Standards & Quality Report

## Sessions

Heathhall is a 1140 hours childcare provision (which equates to 30 hours per week, term time only). We open at 8.30am and close at 3.30pm, Monday to Friday. Sessions are available at 30 minute increments (such as 8.30am to 1pm, or 9am to 3pm). Parents can pick their child's start and finish times to fit with their child care needs.

## Coming and Going Arrangements

Due to the current COVID-19 situation, these are to be confirmed.

Please let staff know if someone different is collecting your child, as we are unable to let the children leave with an unauthorised adult. Once you inform a member of staff you will be asked to record this information to ensure that we are clear about any change in arrangements.



## What Does It Cost For Your Child To Attend Heathhall ELC Centre?

Your child's five sessions are funded by the Scottish Office and there is no further charge levied by the nursery.

## Lunch and Snack

Lunches and snack are free to all nursery children. If your child stays in nursery over the lunch time, a free school lunch is provided. These are chosen from a 3 weekly lunch menu. Please don't worry if your child has any dietary requirements as these can all be accommodated. There are always extra portions available of all choices if your child does not like what they originally chose from the menu.



## Staffing

You can be confident that all persons working with your child will have undergone rigorous security screening and will therefore be deemed to be fit to work with children.

The ELC team consists of a nursery manager, early years practitioners and early years support assistants. These members of staff have a range of experience working with young children. As we are committed to enhancing the training of childcare personnel we may from time to time have students working in the setting. These trainees will be working under the supervision of our staff. We shall always let you know when a student placement is coming up.

Other adults working in the setting may include the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. Additional support for learning staff, supply staff, specialists and parent helpers may also be present during the session. Only adult helpers who have been through a PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) check will be able to supervise children without a member of staff being present e.g. taking a child to collect a resource from another area of the school.

## Child Protection

How can you be sure that your child is safe when they are in our care? All staff will have undergone rigorous security screening and any volunteers we use will have been through Protecting Vulnerable Groups checking procedures. We insist that parents and guardians keep us informed of changes to their children's normal dropping off/collecting routine. Unless you have made prior arrangements with us we shall not hand your child over to someone who is unknown to us.

### Child Protection Policy for schools and Early Learning and Childcare Centres

All staff in the school have received training in child protection awareness and they are all clear at the protocol which is to be observed.

A copy of the school child protection policy is available for anyone to read.

If you wish to discuss this policy further please don't hesitate to contact the Headteacher

Designated member of staff    Mrs Karen McLean, Headteacher

Deputy member of staff        Alison Sloan, Deputy Headteacher



## Risk Assessments

We take a positive approach to risk assessment in order to achieve the best outcomes for all children. Risk assessments are carried out by both staff and children. Staff encourage children to use risk assessment to support and enhance their experiences.

At the beginning of each school year you will be asked to let us know what you want us to do regarding physical care and we also seek your permission to take photographs of your child.

We keep manual records of your child's details. These are kept in a locked filing cabinet which can only be accessed by ELC staff, the Headteacher and school secretary. The information kept includes your child's name, date of birth, names of parents and/or guardians, emergency contacts, relevant medical information. We also keep a note of liaison with yourselves or specialists agencies. If you wish to view your child's file please speak to the Headteacher.

As a school we adhere to the code of practice set out by the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Social Services Council. Our ELC setting will be inspected regularly by representatives of both these organisations and also Her Majesty's Inspectorate (for education).



## What To Wear?

We suggest comfortable, practical, easily washed outfits. We suggest that your child wears clothes that you do not mind getting stained if an accident were to happen. An optional uniform consisting of a royal blue sweatshirt/cardi and a sky blue shirt is available. We do supply aprons for messy activities but it is impossible to ensure that the children's clothes never get dirty. If paint does get on to your child's clothes we suggest that you avoid the use of detergents and biological powders but wash the area with warm water and soap. Please supply your child with a pair of nursery shoes for them to wear during their session (a pair of Velcro trainers would be best). These will be kept in the shoe box below your child's coat peg. When they arrive, your child will change from their home shoes into their nursery shoes. They will not change their nursery shoes until home time. This allows your child free flow to play inside and outside during the session without having to stop and change their shoes. This is in line with the Health and Social Care Standards (Scottish Government, 2017) 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors'.

Wellies can be brought for very wet weather. To avoid confusion, please clearly mark your child's shoes and clothing with their name. In the event of clothing getting wet, messy etc. we keep a fresh supply. Every child at Heathhall ELC centre is provided with a bag which hangs on your child's peg and is to remain in the setting at all times. We ask that you place a full change of clothing in this bag.

## Where Will Your Child Be Working?

Thought has been given to making the ELC setting welcoming, friendly, bright and attractive. We feel that the children are motivated by a lively, stimulating environment. We also want them to feel 'at home'. The toilet area is directly off the playroom floor so children can enjoy the independence of 'paying a visit' without having to be escorted by an adult (though support is there if required.)



However there are several other areas of the school with which your child will become familiar. The children use the gym hall and enjoy visits to the school library. They may take a message across to the school office or simply enjoy a walk around the main school building. In their last term they will experience lunch in the dinner hall and throughout the year they will work in the playground or garden area.

## The Early Years Curriculum

Our Early Years Curriculum and the way in which it is presented is determined by the advice set out in A Curriculum for Excellence Document, Building the Ambition - Education Scotland document, the National Care Standards and our local regional guidelines.

In our ELC setting we aim to address the learning and developmental needs of children in their early years. We build upon the valuable learning experiences children will have had at home, in playgroup, in other ELC settings, with families and with friends. Every child is special. We value them as individuals and we aim to ensure that there are equal opportunities for every child to partake of the full scope of their education.

## 'Play Is The Work That We Do'

Our Early Years staff work with the children to plan programmes and provide resources which allow your child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually through play activities.

To keep in easy contact between parents/carers and nursery, we used a free app call Class Dojo. You will be sent an invite to join the app before your child starts nursery. It is a simple way for nursery to share information to all parents/carers (photos of what the children have been learning) or to send private messages between nursery and an individual parent/ carer.

Through play your child will learn to communicate with children and adults. He/she will be encouraged to think, to reason, to explore and to experiment. He/she will learn to share, to make friends and to pursue an interest.

As the year progresses and children become more confident they will be encouraged to take on more responsibility thus enhancing the development of independence.

A Curriculum for Excellence provides outcomes for children from the ages of 3 to 18.

It is split into "stages"

**Early Stage** - ELC setting & P1

**First Stage** - P2 - P4

**Second Stage** - P5- P7

**3rd/4th/5th Stage** are tackled during secondary school.

The principles of the curriculum are to help/ guide our children to become:

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

Parents will be given further information throughout the year by way of newsletters, Come and Play sessions and open nights. During a Come and Play session you will be invited in during your child's session time to spend time with your child in the ELC setting.

You can also access information by visiting the Heathhall School Facebook page or the School website - [www.heathhallschool.uk.org](http://www.heathhallschool.uk.org)

We appreciate any work you can undertake to reinforce the skills and knowledge which the children are learning. During the course of each session your child:-

1. Will have an opportunity to choose from a range of free and planned activities which will help to develop specific skills and knowledge.
2. Will participate in small group and large group activities.
3. Will develop the social and practical skills associated with our group lunch and snack time.

## Healthy Eating/Health Promotion

If staying over lunch time, your child will enjoy a nutritionally balanced free school meal. A healthy snack is also available at times throughout the day. Appropriate responses are modeled so children learn to say yes please/no thank you/I really like/I don't like/please can you pass me etc. We encourage children to try fruit and vegetables on a regular basis. We buy low salt/sugar and foods without hydrogenated oil whenever possible. Access to water is provided at all times. The children are active on a daily basis whether in the gym hall or garden. Information is available on nutrition.



## Visits Out Of School

To extend the children's opportunities for exploration and learning we occasionally make visits into the wider environment of Dumfries and beyond. Because we require a higher level of supervision on these occasions we often invite parents to join us. In order to make the most of the time available we may alter the timings of the ELC sessions when a visit out has been arranged – but we shall let you know in plenty of time.

We also like to make visits to Lochthorn Library. This will prepare them for regular visits as they move onto primary school.

## Your Child's Progress

Early Years staff often give immediate feedback to parents/guardians as they collect children at the end of a session but in order to provide you with more specific information we compile 'Learning folders'. These include photos/comments/examples of your child's progress throughout their stay with us. The folder is available for comments during the year. Parents will also have the opportunity to attend Come and Play sessions as well as Personal Care Plans and reviews throughout the course of the year. In addition to this you are welcome to make an appointment at any time to discuss your child's progress with the ELC centre manager and/or the Headteacher.



Should we have any concerns regarding your child's progress and in particular their readiness for school we shall address these with you at the earliest opportunity.

## Links With Primary 1

Because our ELC centre is set in an integral part of the school the nursery children regularly gain insights into life in the primary. They will become familiar with the Headteacher as she is often in the ELC playroom, they will meet up with the janitor and secretary as they move about the school and they will come to recognise the primary staff and pupils from open classroom doors and the playground. The Depute Headteacher at times supports a variety of sessions in the ELC playroom so children will get to know her in class. They will visit the office, the library, the dinner hall and the gym hall – regular features in whichever school they go on to.

During the last term the staff will begin liason with your chosen primary school. Learning Folders are used as transition information from ELC to P1. We support transition into P1 through booklets, videos and visits to the school and classroom if possible.

## What To Do If You Wish To Make A Complaint

If at any time, you feel you have cause for concern regarding the service we offer, we would like to assure you that this will be dealt with and resolved as quickly as possible. We hope that the close liaison we build up with our families will allow you to raise issues early on with ELC staff.

However, if after such discussion you feel the matter is not resolved please arrange to speak with the Headteacher. Thereafter if you feel that your concerns are still not being dealt with to your satisfaction please make a formal complaint to the Care Inspectorate, website and telephone number are outlined on the first page of this booklet.

## Parent Forum

In 2006 the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act was established.

The act has clear purposes. It aims to help all parents be

- involved with their child's education and learning
- welcomed as active participants in life of the school
- encouraged to express their views on the school education generally and work in partnership with the school

The act also included reformation of parental groups within the school.

Every parent with a child at the school is a member of the Parental Forum

From this Heathhall have a group of parents called Heathhall Parent Council

The Council can also raise money.



## Parent Participation

We need everyone to participate in the learning experiences that we provide for every child within our learning community.

### **You can do this as a parent/carers by:**

- Discussing with your child their experiences at nursery
- Speaking to the staff at the nursery about your child
- By completing any forms/progress slips and returning them on time
- Coming into nursery for open nights/parent's evenings
- Filling in any questionnaires/evaluations which are sent out
- Helping with events such as trips/fund raising activities etc
- Participating in our Heathhall Parent Council
- Putting a suggestion in the Suggestion Box
- Taking part in focus groups which develop throughout the year
- Being a parent/friend helper

### **Staff can participate by:**

- Being a positive contributor to the ethos of the school
- Having regular discussions with other staff
- Providing ideas and evaluations at staff meetings
- Listening to feedback from pupils and parents
- Having ownership of professional discussions on individuals, class and school issues
- Completing questionnaires when required
- Having involvement in development days

### **Pupils can participate by**

- Providing a pupil voice at class discussions/circle time
- Being involved in the planning of experiences
- Talking to adults about their needs and experiences
- Promoting parent/guardian participation.

Staff are available to speak to parents/carers on an informal basis daily. Appointments can be made for more formal discussion with teachers or the Headteacher. The school phone number is 01387 702590 and the school email is [gw10officeheathhall@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw10officeheathhall@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

## Conclusion

We have outlined some of the background and "items of interest". Throughout your child's time in our nursery much more will be happening. Our regular newsletters and Facebook page will keep you up to date and informed. Please make sure you read all newsletters including those from the school as they all have information about what is going on.

**We wish you and your child a happy time at Heathhall Early Learning and Childcare Centre.**