

Cairns Early Childhood Centre

Parent and Carer Newsletter

January 2025



A very warm welcome to our new families! It has been lovely getting to know your children and you over the last few weeks. We hope everyone had a relaxing festive break!

What happened in January?

As well as welcoming our new children and families, we welcomed some new staff to the ECC. Lauren B and Courtney M joined the Jungle Room as Practitioners. They have really demonstrated their enthusiasm and eagerness to get to know all of the children and families, as well as their new colleagues.

We've welcomed Coral R, who joins us on supply as an Early Learning and Childcare Support Assistant (ELC SA), and Amy W, who joins us as a Teacher from our Early Years Teacher Access Programme (TAP) Team. Coral will be with us whilst we recruit 2 further ELC SA, and Amy will be with us until the Easter break, when her input will be reviewed. Amy and Coral will not have keyworker responsibility however you will mostly likely see them around the Jungle Room.

Lastly, we said goodbye to Lesley C and Megan H, who finished up with us this month. We wish you all the best for the future!

We held a Stay and Play to make bird feeders in recognition of National Bird Day on 5th January. It was great to see so many parents/carers join us on some of the coldest days to make bird feeders for our garden. Most of the children have taken a keen interest in the birds who visit our garden, sharing their understanding of it being too cold for the birds to get their own food so it would be kind to help them. You can easily make your own bird feeders using lard and bird seed. Simply roll the lard and bird seed together, and sit it in a tree for the birds to get. It really helps them keep warm and full over the winter months.

We had a fantastic turnout for our parent/carers coffee morning, where we raised a final total of £71 for Crosshouse Children's Fund. Laura contacted the charity to let them know, and they have offered to visit the ECC and provide one of their "Ted-ucation" talks. We will let you know when they plan to visit. Thank you to all the staff for the delicious home-baking! Some requests are already in for more baking to be provided at future events!

We celebrated lots of different events such as Scottish week and Chinese New Year, and our mini-classroom visits to Hillhead began. We also had to stay home because of a storm!

January hasn't gone without a few challenges, and we would simply like to say thank you to our families in the Jungle Room for their patience, understanding and kindness through this time, and for the support from colleagues across the authority.

What's coming up in February?

This month we will be acknowledging Children's Mental Health week from 3rd February to 9th February. In the ECC, we use the Colour Monster as a fun and relatable way for children to learn about feelings and emotions. We have seen such a positive impact in our children when this approach has been used consistently from the Farm Room right through to the Jungle Room; they can confidently describe their feelings and why they feel that way; an important part of promoting our mental health.

For Children's Mental Health week we would welcome children to wear the different colours of the Colour Monster, if they wish to, as follows:

Monday 3rd – Fear (**black/grey**)

Tuesday 4th – Sad (**blue**)

Wednesday 5th – Angry (**red**)

Thursday 6th – Calm (**green**)

Friday 7th – Happy (**yellow**)

Valentine's Day 14th – Love (**pink**)

We will also post a home link for you to take part in, should you wish, over the weekend and into the holiday Monday and in-service day Tuesday.

A drop-in session will take place on **Wednesday 5th February** with our Community Practitioner, Linda, who will talk about ways you can support infant mental health, and along with Laura, talk about different ways you can also support your own mental health. This will take place between **9:30am and 10:30am**.

On February 17th we will acknowledge random acts of kindness day. This is an opportunity to do something kind for your child, a family member, a friend or even for yourself. In a world where we can be anything, let's first choose to be kind.

Registration for Early Learning and Childcare hours for 3 and 4 year olds usually opens at the end of the month. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for the link to register any new children who will turn 3 between 1st March 2025 and 28th February 2026.

Please note, the ECC will be closed on Monday 10th February for a local holiday. We also have a staff in-service day on Tuesday 11th February, so children should not return to the ECC until Wednesday 12th February. We hope you have a restful break.

Depute Manager and Senior ELCP update

We are delighted to share we have appointed a temporary Depute Manager in Leigh Houston. Leigh is currently the Senior Lead ELCP at Loanhead ECC, where she has been responsible for leading the ECC since 2021, and should be joining us on the February in-service day. Leigh is covering Laura's Depute Manager post whilst Laura continues to cover the Head of Centre post on a temporary basis until recruitment is completed on a permanent basis. We will also

be welcoming Martin McMullen as permanent Senior ELCP at the beginning of February. Martin has worked across the authority as a Practitioner, Senior and, most recently as the temporary Senior Lead in Gargieston ECC. Martin will be taking over as Senior for our Farm and Ocean playrooms whilst Leigh will be working across the ECC, deputising for Laura when required, and with a key responsibility for Additional Support Needs. We look forward to welcoming them both to Team Cairns and we are sure you will find them both to be excellent additions to the Centre.

Parent/Carer questionnaire

We have shared a parent/carers questionnaire on your child's Learning Journal. Please take the time to respond to this. It was posted on 27th December 2024.

Taking the time to respond to our questionnaires helps us know what we're doing well and what we could do better, so we really do value and appreciate you taking the time to answer these.

Additional year of ELC

If you are considering an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare for your child(ren), please let Laura know as soon as possible, and before the end of February. The Scottish Government have extended the option for an additional year of ELC to include any child who has their 5th birthday after the start of the school term in August and before 1st January. Previously it was only children who have their 5th birthday in January or February who were entitled to an additional year of ELC.

If you have any questions regarding an additional year of ELC, please see Laura to discuss further.

Important information reminder

- Please contact our office on 01563 533177 if your child is going to be absent from the ECC – we will call you if your child is absent from the ECC without prior notice, and please let the office staff know of any days off, holidays etc.
- You can also notify us of absence via the school app – please see the office for information on how to download and set this up
- If your child has an episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea, there is a 48-hour exclusion period from the last episode – please do not send your child in if they have been sick and/or had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours to ensure we avoid spreading any illness – if our staff become ill due to this, they too are required to be off and this can impact our service delivery. If you are in any doubt as to whether your child can come into the ECC with certain infections/illnesses, please call beforehand
- We have 3 fully trained First Aiders in our ECC – Laura, Gillian O and John; we also have a number of Emergency First Aiders. Laura is also a Mental Health First Aider

and ASIST trained

- If your child requires medication during their session, we will require a prescription label before anything can be administered to your child, and we require to complete a consent form with you therefore it may be useful to call ahead to let us know or set time aside when dropping your child off with medication
- Please arrive on time for your child's session and please collect on time at the end of your child's session – we know sometimes things come up and you can be running late so please contact our office if you are delayed however the doors open at 8:40am and close at 9am / open at 2:35pm and close at 3pm to allow staff to clean and prepare for the next day
- Please do not come for your child before their collection time unless this is for an appointment or pre-agreed – we are very busy playing and learning right up until the end of our sessions
- We would appreciate if you would avoid putting any food or drink items in your child's bag – some of our friends in the ECC have allergies which can make them very ill
- If your child prefers to drink water or milk from a specific style cup, please let us know so we can support them with this whilst also offering them the opportunity to try using our cups too
- Please provide your child with a change of clothes (a few sets if they are learning to use the toilet or are recently using the toilet independently) and include a few pairs of socks and underwear
- Please label your child's belongings with their name – we're a big ECC and things can easily get mixed up so this will help items to be returned to their owner
- Please provide wipes, nappies or pull-ups, sun cream and a sunhat, and a puddle suit and wellies for your child if you can – we do have our own which the children can use
- We always appreciate donations of wipes, tissues and nappies, and we rely on donations of clothing items, particularly socks, pants and trousers/leggings – thank you
- Our uniform is not compulsory but can be purchased from a number of school-wear shops in Ayrshire – we do recommend your child wears clothing you don't mind getting messy.

We hope you have a fantastic February!

Key dates for 2025

We understand how useful it can be to have a note of any key dates for special events in the ECC to allow you to be able to attend.

February – Registration for ECC usually opens this month

3rd – 9th – children’s mental health week

7th - NSPCC number day

14th – Valentine’s Day

17th – Random acts of kindness day

28th – Ramadan begins today

March

1st – St David’s Day

4th – Pancake Day

5th – 17th April – Lent begins / ends

6th – World Book Day

7th – 16th – British Science week

17th – St Patrick’s Day

18th – Global Recycling day

21st – World Down Syndrome Day

24th – 27th – Stay and Play sessions (2-3 and 3-5) – more info to follow

Mon – PM – 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Tues – AM – 9:30am – 10:30am

Wed – AM - 9:30am – 10:30am

Thurs – PM - 1:30pm – 2:30pm

30th – Mother’s Day

April

2nd - Easter bonnet parade – more info to follow

21.04.25 – 25.04.25 – Allergy awareness week

22nd – Earth Day

24th – Parent/Carer drop-in 2pm – 2:45pm chat with Head of Centre

30th – Parent/Carer coffee morning – 9:15am – 10:45am (drop-in)

May

5th – 11th – Deaf awareness week / Screen free week

12th – Tempest Photographer in the ECC

15th - Graduation photo

16th - Preschool transition reports issued

19th – 23rd – Parent/Carer Progress meetings – more info to follow

19th – 23rd – Walk to school week

26th – 29th – Outdoor stay and play (2-3 and 3-5) – more info to follow

Mon – PM – 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Tues – AM – 9:30am – 10:30am

Thurs – PM - 1:30pm – 2:30pm

28th – Family Sports Day – 9:30am – 10:45am – more info to follow

June

2nd – 6th – Child safety week

9th – 13th – Healthy eating week

10th & 12th – 3-5 Enrolment visits 3:15pm – 4pm (TBC)

15th – Father's Day

18th – Graduation – more info to follow

20th – End of term parties – 2-5 – more info to follow

25th – Cairns Bairns party – more info to follow

Holiday dates and ECC closures 2025

Cairns ECC is now a term-time service which means we are closed during all school holidays, public holidays and local holidays. We also have a further 2 in-service days this academic session where the ECC is closed for children to allow for staff training to take place.

February

Monday 10th

Tuesday 11th – in-service day

April

We close on Friday 4th April at 3pm for the children and don't return until Tuesday 22nd April

May

Monday 5th

Tuesday 6th – in-service

June

We close on Friday 27th June at 3pm for our children and children do not return until Wednesday 20th August.

Get involved with the ECC

Find us on Facebook & X (twitter)
@CairnsECC

Cairns Bairns
Every Wed 9:15am – 10:45am
Bookbug on first Wednesday of each
month

We always appreciate donations of:
Baby wipes
Tissues
Kitchen roll
Socks, pants and trousers

Bookbug sessions
Last Thursday of the month from 1:45pm
(The Jungle)
Last Monday of the month from 9:30am
(The Ocean)

Contact us:
01563 533177
eaCairns.ECC@eastayrshire.org.uk

