



Cairns Early Childhood Centre

Family Newsletter



August 2026

Hello and welcome back to our children and families; we hope you had a lovely summer break whatever you got up to, and a warm welcome to any of our new children and families who have joined us this month. We are delighted you have chosen Cairns ECC for your child to attend; we are sure they will flourish in the care of our dedicated staff team, and we hope you and your child will make many happy memories during your time with us.

We would like to congratulate Abbie, Lauren T and Maegan on their weddings during the summer break! They were all beautiful brides.

We have welcomed new staff to the ECC as follows:

Peripatetic Early Learning and Childcare Support Assistants:

Aimee McClelland (Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesdays)

Chloe Law (alternate Wednesdays, Thursday and Friday)

Early Learning and Childcare Practitioners:

Jenna Law (full-time, term-time permanent – currently on secondment to the Early Years Support Team)

Wendy Wilkie (full-time, term-time peripatetic)

Early Years Support Team:

We are delighted to welcome Angela, Christine and Laura, who join us as part of a new team specialising in supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing. They will be working with the staff team over the next term to identify ways in which we can further support our children's wellbeing.

We also welcome our new janitor, Alistair. You will find him between Cairns and Hillhead PS.

Lastly, Lauren B, Linzi and Heather continue in their posts at Cairns on a peripatetic / temp basis. We do have permanent vacancies which we are actively recruiting for.

What's been happening this month?

We are working hard to embed our playroom routines to help children feel safe and secure in their ECC environment.

One of the new parts of our routine is washing our hands on arrival to our playroom. You are welcome to come into the playroom and help your child wash their hands. This is to make sure we aren't bringing in any germs or possible allergens from outside of the ECC.

We spend our mornings engaging in lots of different activities and children can freely choose where they would like to play and learn within their own playroom. Our outdoor areas are open as soon as possible for the children; often, outdoors is open as they are arriving to the ECC. Snack

is also available early in the session. We provide a breakfast style snack in the morning and fruit for afternoon snack. We have lunch at approx. 11:40am and we return to playing and learning after lunch. We support children to wash hands throughout their session including before and after eating, using the toilet or personal care, and playing outdoors. Towards the end of the session, children gather with their keyworker. We will shortly be introducing toothbrushing again as Lorraine from Childsmile has already been in to set up our toothbrush buses.

Lunch menus are displayed in the cloakroom and shared on our Glow Blog and Facebook. Please do ask at the playroom door if you would like to check how much your child had to eat.

We have been introducing the Makaton signs of the month: hello, goodbye, milk, water, help and friends. We've also been singing our nursery rhyme of the month: Humpty Dumpty.

Improvement Plan 2026 – 2027

You will find our Improvement Plan for 2026 - 2027 in the main reception area. A full copy is available as well as an overview of our plans; you'll find this in the frame on the table underneath the staff board. It is also available on our ECC blog.

We consulted with children, families, staff and partner agencies to create our Improvement Plan. Families told us they were keen to see more Stay and Play sessions, and we have created a Family Engagement questionnaire which is available on your child's Learning Journal and on the Safer Schools App. Please take the time to share your thoughts. The children were keen for new toys, a swimming pool(!), and they were able to tell us the adults and the fire alarm helps keep them safe.

We will be offering visits to the woods again as part of our Forest Kindergarten. These sessions will initially be for children in the Waterfall and Safari whilst we develop the space to be used. Martin and Gemma will be leading on these sessions, and they will start after the October break.

As a Centre, we are taking part in three projects: one focusing on supporting children with additional support needs, one focusing on children's social and emotional wellbeing and a third focusing on speech, language and communication. All these projects have a shared goal: to ensure all children can achieve their full potential!

PANTS

In the ECC, we use the NSPCC Let's Talk PANTS with Pantosaurus to help children understand that they have the right to say no, and to privacy and dignity. You can find out more about Pantosaurus on the NSPCC website, which is linked here: [Let's talk PANTS with Pantosaurus! | NSPCC](#)

The Colour Monster

Over the last few years, we have continued to promote the use of the Colour Monster across all our playrooms to help children learn to recognise and communicate how they are feeling. You will notice staff have the Colour Monster visuals on their lanyards to support children of all ages and stages to share how they are feeling. Staff will label the feeling, using words, Makaton and often using the facial expression. When we see a child displaying a feeling, we will label this too: "I can see you are happy because you are smiling!" The Colour Monster is children's book which you can purchase online or in selected shops. The different Colour Monsters are: Happy Yellow, Angry Red, Sad Blue, Calm Green, Fear/Scared Black, Loving Pink and All Mixed Up – when we

don't really know how we are feeling. If you would like your own set of visuals for home, please ask a member of staff.

We continue to use the language of safe and unsafe choices to support children to understand what we can and can't do in the ECC, as well as using our Golden Tickets and Star of the Week certificates in the Waterfall and Safari playrooms. We have our Cairns Children's Charter with the values of Caring, Achieving, Inclusive, Respectful, Nurturing and Safe. This allows us to talk to the children about how we can all show these values in the things we do each day.

Nurture Policy and Respectful Relationships Policy

In the ECC, we have our own Nurture Policy and our EAC Respectful Relationship Policy. These policies are for our children, families, partner agencies and our staff team to ensure we are all aware of and clear on how we will support our children through a nurturing approach. If you have any questions about these policies, please ask a member of staff. They will shortly be available to read in our Centre Handbook folder and our Glow Blog.

Who can I speak to about...

Your main point of contact will be your child's keyworker followed by the Senior for the playroom. You can speak with your child's keyworker at drop-off or pick-up, or we can arrange an appointment time if this is preferred. Any updates to Personal Plans, Learning Journals etc. will be dealt with by your child's keyworker. Keyworkers are in the process of organising meetings with you to update or complete your child's Personal Plan – these are important meetings as it ensures we have all the information required to support your child.

If your child is not going to be in the ECC, in the first instance, please let the office know. They will then pass on the information to the relevant person. For any changes to contact details, please see the office and they will arrange to update this for you.

If your child requires medication, has an allergy, or if your child has an additional support need and you need to pass on information pertaining to any appointments and/or referrals, please speak with Leigh, Depute Manager, in the first instance. If your child does require medication, we would appreciate, where possible, a phone call beforehand so we can be prepared with medication forms. These can take around 10 minutes to complete. In Leigh's absence, please speak with a Senior or Laura, Head of Centre.

For any queries on your child's allocation/placement, any Centre-related questions, or any comments, queries or concerns, please speak with Laura.

We are a busy ECC and we want to make sure you can share information with staff easily. Every staff member in our Centre works incredibly hard to do the very best for your child and for you as a family. We hope you feel warmly welcomed, respected and valued in our Centre and we ask for the same consideration to be given to our staff team.

We will not tolerate any form of violence and/or aggression towards our staff.

Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)

In June 2025, we achieved our Bronze RRS award and we are now actively working towards our Silver award. The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child came into law in Scotland in July 2024 and this journey is an important one, as it demonstrates our commitment to uphold and protect our children's rights.

We will be working on our action plan and will share updates on our progress via Learning Journals, displays, newsletters and social media updates. We will be looking for parents/carers to become actively involved in this journey so if this is something you'd be interested in, please speak with Laura.

Newsletter Information

We issue a monthly newsletter to our families, usually towards the end of each month. Within this newsletter, we will provide you with important news as well as key date information and ways in which you can get involved in the ECC. We will provide updates on our Improvement Plan and collate your feedback throughout the year on different areas of the ECC.

The newsletter will be uploaded on to your child's Learning Journal, and some paper copies will be made available to take home if you wish.

If there is anything you feel you would like to see in our newsletter, please let Laura or a member of the Leadership Team know.

We will update the Facebook page weekly with an overview of what the children have been learning in the ECC. We also have a Glow blog which you can view by searching for Cairns ECC Glow blog, scanning the QR code in our cloakroom areas, or, if reading online, by clicking the link: [Cairns Early Childhood Centre | East Ayrshire site \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](https://glowscotland.org.uk)

We also post important updates on our Safer Schools App. You can get login details for the App from the office.

Please let us know if you would like to have our newsletter or any other correspondence in a different language.

Learning Journals

We use Learning Journals to share our children's successes and achievements in relation to their learning and development. Each child will have their own Learning Journal which parents and carers can access by downloading the Learning Journal app.

If your child is new to the ECC, we will set up their Learning Journal account, and you will be sent an email with login details to the email you provided when completing the consent form at enrolment. Please note, this email comes directly from Learning Journals so you may need to check your junk mail folder.

The Farm and The Ocean will have a weekly photo update and a monthly observation, discussing your child's learning and development. The monthly observation will be posted on the last Friday of the month. The first post will be at the end of September.

The Waterfall and Safari will have a minimum of 4 posts per month, depending on your child's attendance.

Please note, the number of observations will decrease around holiday periods, for example, in December you may only have between 2 and 4 observations for the Waterfall and Safari rooms and a shorter observation for the Ocean and the Farm Rooms.

Any posts will always be set to publish on a Friday afternoon.

We would love to see what you've been doing at home so please upload to the Parent Contribution section as often as you can.

If you require your login details, please speak with the office staff and they can arrange to send these to you.

Important information

- 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
- You can also notify us of absence via the Safer Schools App
- 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 for the same exclusion period and this can impact our service delivery
- We have 3 fully trained First Aiders in our ECC – Laura, Leigh and Gillian, as well as staff who have paediatric first aid and emergency first aid at work training
- If your child requires medication during their session, we will require a prescription label before anything can be administered, 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 8:55am / open at 2:40pm and close at 2:55pm to allow staff to clean and prepare for the next day – we finish at 3:15pm on a Friday
- Our Farm Room is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for sessions from 9am – 11:30am and from 12:30pm – 3pm, whilst our Ocean Room offers a small number of shorter sessions from 8:45am – 11:15am
- We restrict how often we open our playroom doors as, from our experience, this can disrupt the flow of learning and engagement levels. We have set opening times for our playrooms: 12:45pm for anyone who wishes to collect their child after lunch and 2:15pm for anyone who wishes to collect their child before going to another ECC, setting or school – for Hillhead Primary School, please come to the ECC from 2:40pm and then head over to the Primary School as their doors open later than ours do

- We would appreciate if you avoided 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 you can, we ask for all children to bring in a water bottle for use in the playrooms, labelled with their name – we will add their photo and fill with water on arrival
- 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 especially when there are multiple items in the same size, 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 – and as winter approaches, hats, scarves and gloves are helpful
- We always appreciate donations of wipes, tissues and nappies – thank you ☺

Key dates for 2026

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.

August

28th - Makaton International Awareness Day

September

8th – International literacy day – Bookbug sessions to be announced shortly

19th – 27th – Math week Scotland

22nd – 25th – Friendship celebration

29th – Parent/carers drop-in with Laura – 2pm – 2:40pm

30th – Parent/carers coffee morning – 9:15am – 10:30am – Community Practitioner Linda will be attending

October

4th – 10th – World Space Week

7th – Grandparent family learning session in Farm Room – more info to follow shortly

10th - World Mental Health Day

28th – Sponsored Pumpkin trail – more info to follow shortly

31st – Halloween celebrations – more info to follow shortly

November

4th – Children’s nasal flu spray

5th – Bonfire night

8th – Diwali

9th – 13th - World Nursery Rhyme Week

13th – World Kindness Day

13th – Children in Need

15th – 21st – Road Safety Week

WB 16th – Parent/carers progress meetings

23rd – 18th Dec – Farm into Ocean and Ocean into Jungle transitions (January in-take)

26th – Enrolment visits for new children joining the Jungle Room in January – 3:15pm

30th – Celebrating St Andrews Day in the ECC

December

2nd – Farm Room Stay and Play

WB 7th – Ocean and Jungle Room KW meet with parents/carers

9th – Christmas Carol Concert – The Jungle Room

10th – Christmas jumper day – wear a Christmas jumper to the ECC

16th – Ocean Room Stay and Play

18th – Christmas fun day for all rooms

We will share key dates for 2026 in our November newsletter. We will also share on our Facebook page and via your child’s Learning Journal, any celebration days each month.

Holiday dates and ECC closures 2026 - 2027

Cairns ECC is a term-time service which means we are closed during all school holidays, public holidays and local holidays. We also have a further 3 in-service days this academic session where the ECC is closed for children to allow for staff training to take place.

September

Friday 18th and Monday 21st – September weekend

October

Monday 12th – Friday 16th - half term

Monday 19th – In-service Day

December

We close on Friday 18th at 2:55pm and don’t return until Tuesday 5th January 2027

February

Friday 12th and Monday 15th – Local holiday

Tuesday 16th – In-service Day

March

We close on Thursday 25th March at 2:55pm and we don't return to the ECC until Monday 12th April

May

Monday 3rd – May bank holiday

Monday 24th – In-service

June

We close on Tuesday 29th June at 2:55pm and we don't return until Wednesday 18th August 2027

