

Hello Families,

As the golden colours of autumn arrive, our Centre is full of energy, curiosity, and new beginnings. This month's newsletter is packed with updates that I hope you'll find both useful and exciting.

We begin by sharing our refreshed Vision and Values, shaped together with children, families, and staff. These "Special Nursery Words" will guide how we celebrate kindness and growth every day in the Family Centre.

You'll also find practical guidance around packed lunches, helping us all to work together to keep our children healthy and nourished.

Perhaps most excitingly, we are delighted to officially launch our Forest Kindergarten Sessions! Over the next pages, you can read more about our journey at The Woods so far, what these longer outdoor sessions will look like, and answers to common questions.

Finally, please take a note of our Dates for your Diary so you don't miss any upcoming events or closures.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support and trust. It is such a privilege to share these early years with your children – learning, playing, and growing together.

Warm Regards,





Vision and Values

Our Vision was reviewed during session 2024/25 through consultation with children, families and staff with our new, refreshed vision statement being launched before the Summer Holidays:

Our Vision

At Hazeldene, we provide a happy, homely setting where every child is seen, heard and valued. We celebrate childhood as a unique stage and nurture each child's development through strong relationships, a sense of belonging, and meaningful experiences within a supportive community.

We kickstarted our new academic session with staff reflecting on our updated vision and considering what child-friendly values encapsulate this new vision for our Family Centre. You may have noticed the Family Consultation Display Board in the foyer during the month of September, where we asked you about your thoughts on our new, intended Values.

Our Values

We are delighted to launch the new Hazeldene Family Centre values of:



As the concept of 'values' is too abstract for three and four year olds to comprehend, staff will begin using these words with the children as "Special Nursery Words" and celebrating when the children exhibit these values during their time in the Family Centre.

Packed Lunches at Hazeldene

As part of our commitment to promoting healthy eating habits, we encourage those families that choose to provide packed lunches for their children to ensure that they align with the Care Inspectorate's 'Setting the Table' guidance. This ensures that our little ones receive the best possible nourishment to support their growth and development.

What to Include in Packed Lunches:

- 1. Fruits and Vegetables: Aim for at least one portion of fresh fruit or vegetable. Consider easy options like apple slices, carrot sticks, or cherry tomatoes.
- 2. Whole Grains: Choose whole grain bread, wraps, or crackers. These provide essential fiber and energy for active play.
- 3. *Protein*: Include a source of protein, such as lean meats, cheese, hummus, or beans. These help keep children full and support their development.
- 4. *Dairy or Alternatives*: A small serving of milk, natural yogurt, or a dairy alternative contributes to their calcium intake for strong bones.
- 5. Limit Sugary Snacks: Try to minimize items high in sugar. Instead, opt for healthier snacks like unsweetened yogurt or whole grain rice cakes.

Helpful Tips:

- Involve your child in the packing process! Let them choose from healthy options to encourage them to try new foods.
- Consider portion sizes appropriate for your child's age to prevent waste and promote independence in eating.
- Keep it colourful and varied to make lunchtime exciting!

Thank you for your support in fostering healthy habits. Together, we can ensure our children are well-nourished and ready to learn and play!





Forest Kindergarten Sessions





Thank you to those of you who were able to come along to our Forest Kindergarten Parent Information Session at the end of September. Three years into our Woods journey, we are really excited to be able to officially launch our Forest Kindergarten Sessions at Hazeldene.

The following pages outline what was discussed on the evening of the Information Session so consistent communication has been sent across our Family Centre Community.

Our Journey at The Woods

Over the past two years, the children have been on a wonderful journey of learning and adventure in The Woods.

In their first year, the children explored important life skills such as learning about road safety through the 'Crossing the Road' song. They took turns with the leader stick, discovered how to manage risky play safely, and learned about the Golden Rule of 'If You Can't See Us, We Can't See You'.

As the children moved into their second year, their experiences grew. They helped to **establish camps**, enjoyed **sharing snacks together** in the woods, and stayed for **longer visits**. Many children began attending the woods every day, giving them even more chances to explore, play, and learn in nature. These longer sessions have supported deeper, high-quality outdoor learning.

Year Three is looking to be bigger and even better as we **launch our day-long** Forest Kindergarten Sessions this October.

Forest Kindergarten Sessions Frequently Asked Questions

When are you going to The Woods?

• We are proposing to take your child to The Woods on their **allocated Woods Day** (see timetable on following pages) **from 9:30am to 2:45pm**. Woods Days are Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. We will not go to The Woods on Wednesdays as that's when our Weekly Staff Meeting is. We are planning to start Woods Days on Tuesday 30th September.

Are you really going to go in every weather?

• Yes, that's the plan. In some circumstances - like high wind speeds or national weather warnings - Justin, the Head Teacher, will make the decision as to whether it is safe for children to attend The Woods.

Does my child have to go?

 No, absolutely not. If, as a family, you decide that you would rather your child not take part in the Forest Kindergarten experience then please complete the 'Opt Out' Slip below to notify Robert Aitken, Acting Senior Child Development Officer.

Will my child go hungry/thirsty?

• No. As part of your 1140 hour entitlement, we are duty bound to provide a lunch with a hot and cold element. East Renfrewshire Council have committed to providing a hot lunch on your child's Woods Day. We will also provide a morning and afternoon snack as per their indoors experience. The snack will consist of fruit, water and a simple carbohydrate (e.g. crackers, rice cakes). A water station will be available throughout the session. However, if you feel more comfortable providing your own packed lunch on your child's Woods Day then this is also possible, as long as it complies with the national 'Setting The Table' guidance.

What do we need to bring?

• Warm Clothes! On your child's Woods Day we would appreciate it they arrived at the Family Centre on this day **suitably dressed**. We will continue to provide waterproof trousers and jackets but **wellingtons**, **thermal layers**, **hats & gloves** and a **change of clothes** (*for little accidents*) will be essential to ensure children are warm enough whatever the weather.

Forest Kindergarten Sessions Frequently Asked Questions

My child only attends in the morning or afternoon - what about them?

• They can still take part and we have factored this into our allocation of Woods Days. To ensure that we maximise the duration of time at The Woods we would kindly ask that **Morning Children** are **collected from** Base Camp at 12:45 in the Woods and that **Afternoon Children** are **dropped off** at Base Camp at 1:00. Robert is currently working on a video to signpost families to the location of Base Camp and this will be sent to you prior to the commencement of the sessions.

Can my child have more than one Woods Day a week?

• As we embark on this journey together we would politely ask that children only attend The Woods on their allocated Woods Day. As we grow and learn together there may be scope for additional days but this will ultimately come down to children's attendance; staffing and maintaining adult:child ratios set by the Care Inspectorate.

What if my child needs the toilet while at The Woods?

• This is not a problem – we have dedicated toilet tents available. These provide children with privacy and dignity while they use the toilet. We also follow strict infection control and hygiene measures to make sure the facilities are safe, clean, and comfortable for every child.

Opt Out Slip

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Forest Kindergarten Experience at Hazeldene Fai	v
I would like to opt out of my child the Forest Kindergarten Experience at Hazeldene	
Signed:	
Date:	

Forest Kindergarten Sessions Frequently Asked Questions

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
William	Zoha		Georgia (AM)	Musa
Maxwell B	Phoebe		Lara (AM)	Quinn
Nico	Joseph		Noah (AM)	Maryam
Gerard	Sienna		Bonnie (AM)	Euan
Blair B	Imogen		Jack (AM)	Ayra
Max	Olivia		Callie	Harrison
Sarene	Luke		Blaire	Oceane
Qailah	Cameron		Zara McK	Theodore
Sofia-A	Rayyan		Callum	Aditya
Riaan	Charlie Co		Harper	Lewis
Zara A	Angus		Aayah	Freddy
Oliver	Janvika		Charlotte	Lulu
Leo	Matilda		Maxwell D	Charlie Ch
Joe			Marcus	Erin
Rosie			Eva	
			Blair D (PM)	
			Safa (PM)	
			Ismail (PM)	

Dates for your Diary School Term-Time Holidays Core Children not to attend

Event	Date
Teachers return	Monday 12 August
In-service	Monday 12 August
In-service	Tuesday 13 August
Pupils return	Wednesday 14 August
Last day of school	Thursday 26 September
September weekend	Friday 27 September
September weekend	Monday 30 September
Re-open	Tuesday 1 October
Last day of school	Thursday 10 October
In-service	Friday 11 October
Re-open	Monday 21 October
Last day of school	Friday 20 December

Dates for your Diary

48-week model Family Centre Closures

Hazeldene Family Centre Holiday Dates 2025-26 (48 Week Model)

In-Service	Monday 11 th August 2025
In-Service	Tuesday 12 th August 2025
September Weekend	Friday 26 th September 2025
September Weekend	Monday 29 th September 2025
In-Service	Friday 10 th October 2025
Last Day of Nursery - Christmas	Wednesday 24 th December 2025
	(Early closure)
Children Return	Monday 5 th January 2026
In-Service	Friday 13 th February 2026
Good Friday	Friday 3 rd April 2026
Easter Monday	Monday 6 th April 2026
May Day	Monday 4 th May 2026
In-Service	Thursday 7 th May 2026
May Weekend	Friday 22 nd May 2026
May Weekend	Monday 25 th May 2026
Glasgow Fair	Monday 20 th July 2026