

Standards and Quality Report



2025/2026

At Cart Mill we are **Happy**, **Safe** and **Loved**

Our vision, values and aims

Cart Mill Family Centre aims to be the best place for children to learn and develop.

We deliver an exciting, child-centred curriculum that places each learner at the heart of their own journey. By striving for excellence in everything we do, we support children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.

We seek to: -

- Provide safe, secure, healthy and stimulating learning environments.
- Promote each child's self-esteem and encourage positive attitudes towards themselves and others.
- Ensure each child receives an appropriately child centred, broad and balanced curriculum.
- Foster genuine partnerships with parents and carers.
- Enable each child to reach their full potential by carefully listening and responding to them.
- Implement effectively national and local policies.
- Ensure all resources are easily available to children and are natural whenever possible.
- Use the outdoor spaces to extend and enrich children's learning.
- Work in partnership with the wider community.
- Celebrate all forms of achievement.
- Ensure our Family Centre provides an ethos of trust, where childhood is viewed as a free, innocent, special time of life, where children are encouraged to be inquisitive, explore and have fun.

Cart Mill Family Centre Charter

We pledge to-

- Respect and engage with 'Getting it Right for our Children and Families' (GIRFEC)
- Update staff training and knowledge, provide feedback and share our actions
- Track and reflect, embrace working with our families
- Be part of our community, promote equity and diversity
- Remove barriers and seek solutions, plan for curricular areas through learning experiences

Our Refreshed Values (November 2025)

- Happy
- Safe
- Loved

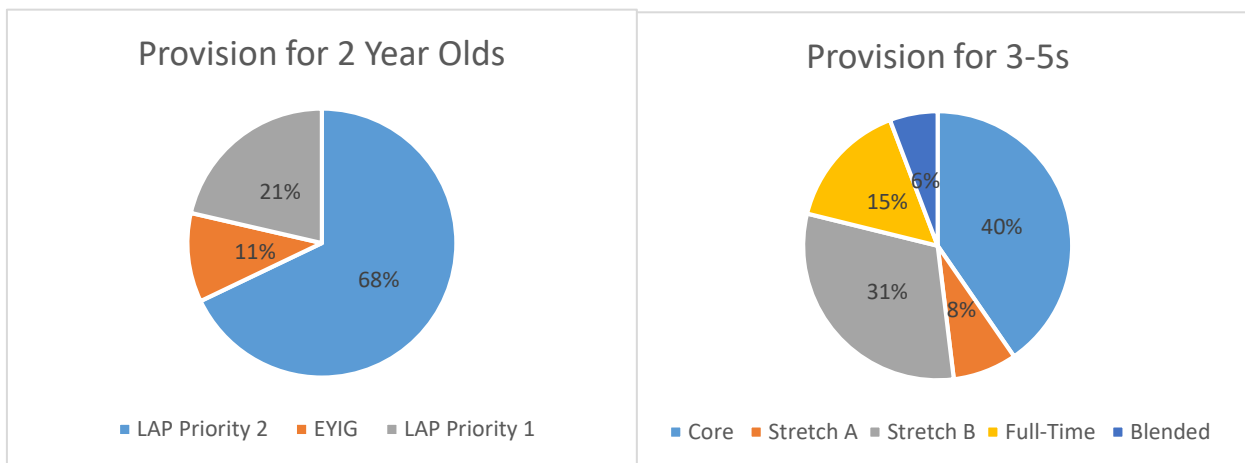


Context of Family Centre

Cart Mill Family Centre is a purpose built Early Learning and Childcare setting for children aged 2-5 years. Cart Mill serves a diverse social and economic area across Clarkston, Busby, Waterfoot, Newton Mearns and Eaglesham.

Approximately 30% of the children attending Cart Mill are from a minority ethnic background. 76% of our children live in SIMD 7-10, 19% live in SIMD 4-6, with 5% living in SIMD 1-3. Approximately 11% of children attending Cart Mill have an additional support need. The centre has capacity this session for up to fifteen 2 year olds and forty 3-5 year olds at any one time and is open from 8am to 6pm, including during school holidays. Our roll this session was 64 across the week.

We offer a flexible service to allow parents and carers to access 1140 hours early learning and childcare provision that best meets their needs and the needs of their family.



There are strong links with our Williamwood cluster primaries, family centres and secondary school, Cart Mill Head Teacher is Chairperson of the Cluster Management Group. There are further links with neighbouring funded providers and ELC establishments through the Early Years Neighbourhood Group, providing opportunities to share best practice and work collaboratively across our community.

Cart Mill benefits from rich learning environments, indoors and outdoors, which successfully promote children's curiosity, creativity and enquiry. The effective combination of high quality continuous provision and meaningful provocations supports children's progress in learning. Our team includes: Head Teacher, Depute Head of Centre, Teacher, Senior Child Development Officer, 12.35 Child Development Officers, 4 Early Years Play Workers, Senior Business Support Assistant (BSA), 0.4 BSA, Cook and a Janitor/Cleaner.

Improvement Plan Priorities

Leadership

- Develop shared understanding of 'A Quality Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors' to enhance children's experiences.

Children Play and Learn

- Create spaces and experiences to increase opportunity for Literacy and STEM during continuous provision.

Children Thrive and Develop in Quality Spaces

- Children experience safe, secure and inspiring environment outdoors

Children are Supported to Achieve

- All staff meet the needs and entitlements of all children and families, with particular focus on equity, equality, inclusion and diversity.

Methods of Gathering Evidence

A range of evidence was gathered to evaluate the key work of the centre, including:

- Monitoring of learning and teaching, attainment and achievement throughout the year
- Tracking progress using Early Years Tracking Database
- Review of children's Wellbeing Plans, gathering colleague, parent & children's views
- Minutes from GIRFEC Meetings
- Staff monitoring and feedback records
- Regular discussion with staff on progress in meeting improvement priorities
- PRD and Quality conversation meetings and monitoring
- Consulting with children using mind-maps, floorbooks and room planners
- Pastoral meetings
- Daily conversations and check-ins with children and staff
- Using Challenge Questions in 'Quality Improvement Framework' and 'Realising the Ambition'
- Annual overview calendars for families and staff
- Evaluating current strengths and areas for improvement with parents and carers through online surveys, emails and feedback.
- Wellbeing calls to parents and carers
- Analysis of Developmental Milestones and Baseline data
- Feedback from PANECAL Validation team
- Collaborative Learning Network activities and professional dialogue at school, cluster and authority events
- Monitoring and assessing the quality of planning and observations through professional dialogue meetings, reviewing children's learning journals and floorbooks
- Staff audits on key aspects of the learning and teaching environments
- Staff keep CLPL records current and up-to-date.
- Data from Early Years Intervention Group
- Analysis of Leuven Scale data
- Minutes of Joint Support Team minutes.
- Observation of practice with learners, through peer evaluations and by SLT through learning visits, learning walks and informal check ins
- Feedback from partnerships with educational psychologist, social worker, speech and language therapist, Family First, EYOS, business support manager and local schools
- Gold Family Centre feedback from parents, carers, staff and validation team.

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

Evaluation: Very Good

NIF Priority

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.

School Priority

- Develop Shared Understanding of 'A Quality Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors' to enhance children's experiences.

NIF Driver(s)

- School and ELC Leadership
- Teacher and practitioner professionalism
- School and ELC Improvement

Local Improvement Plan

Expected Outcome/ Impact

- Empowerment and leadership
- Pedagogy and Learning
- Social Justice and Wellbeing

Progress, Impact and Outcomes

Developing a shared understanding of 'A Quality Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors' has had a direct and positive impact on the quality of children's experiences across the centre. All staff attended the Early Years Williamwood Cluster CLPL session on Quality Improvement Framework methodology and self-evaluation in August 2025. Following the session, staff were asked to rate their knowledge of the new framework. The average score for Cart Mill staff was 2.4 out of 5, indicating that staff were aware of new Framework but were at the very beginning in terms of using it. They indicated that they were not confident in knowing where to locate it, how to use it in practice and the key information within the document.

'Document looks very useful and I think it will just take time to become familiar with it. We are beginning to look at how we can introduce it into our practice.' Staff comment

"I would like to improve self-assessment skills, including assessing the learning environments" Staff comment.

As a result of continuous development, staff are now more familiar with the content and structure of the new shared Quality Improvement Framework and have made steady progress in using it to improve outcomes for children. The work has strengthened professional consistency, improved learning environments, and enhanced outcomes for children. Having a clearer understanding of what high-quality provision looks like by sharing 'Very Good' illustrations has resulted in richer play opportunities, more responsive interactions and environments that better support curiosity, independence, and wellbeing. Shared professional dialogue while using Challenge Questions from Quality Improvement Framework has strengthened teamwork, ensuring that all staff contribute to a unified vision for high-quality early learning. Staff use the framework to reflect more critically on practice, identify strengths and plan targeted improvements. The team is now using the colour-coded Quality Improvement Framework folders and in-trays to

Please note below any questions you have or areas of CPD that would be beneficial in using the new Quality Improvement Framework.

opportunities to have discussions colleagues in other establishments
familiar QI theme self assessment days like today discussions with colleagues
example Team evaluations Time document useful
Moving forward self - evaluation indicator for transition helpful
assessment skills inservice days beginning stage
strategies and implementation

streamline evidence collation, resulting in improved organisation, shared responsibility and greater consistency across the staff team. Our children benefit from more intentional, well-planned experiences that promote engagement, independence and deeper learning. A clearer articulation of quality has supported more meaningful communication with families about children's learning, our environments, progress and the purpose of our play-based pedagogy.

When reviewing progress in May 2026, the average staff confidence score at Cart Mill increased to 3 out of 5. This indicates that staff are developing a sound understanding of the Quality Improvement Framework and have begun to apply it within their practice.

During 2026–2027, we will continue to embed the Quality Improvement Framework for ELC Settings across our practice, ensuring consistent application and further strengthening staff confidence and capability.

We continue to develop staff capacity at all levels and *all* staff embrace opportunities for professional and personal development, with many staff taking on leadership roles. This is reflected during Quality Conversations for local government staff and Professional Review and Development for our teacher. *All* staff members contributed individual "All About Me" profiles to our website, providing families and visitors with a valuable insight into the diverse expertise, qualifications, skills and personalities within our team. Of our full staff team, 73% take on leadership roles such as Health and Wellbeing, Bookbug sessions, Froebel, Breastfeeding Friendly, Bucket Time, ICT coordinator, PANEAL, STEM, Childsmile and Gold Family Centred Approaches. 100% of staff agree that their professional learning enables them to reflect and improve practice. Training this session included Solihull approach, Think Equal, Bookbug (Transitions), Hanen training, Breastfeeding Friendly (*all staff*), supporting children with additional support needs (ASN), Paediatric First Aid (*all staff*), Play on Pedals, Drawing Club and Rights Respecting Silver Award.

"I think the CLPL we have had in the past on attachment and trauma helps us to be more understanding of the needs of some of the children we have in our centre at the moment. Having this knowledge helps me to support families and meet the needs of their children in a more solution focussed way. I think we all pull together really well to support each other." Staff comment

The Depute Head of Centre's achievement of the ERC Leadership for Managers accreditation this session has strengthened leadership capacity across the setting and contributed directly to improved outcomes for children and families. This accreditation has enhanced strategic leadership skills and deepened understanding of effective team development. The Depute's enhanced leadership practice has contributed to a more reflective, empowered staff team and has supported the consistent delivery of high-quality learning experiences. This has had a positive impact on children's wellbeing, engagement, and progress ensuring that the centre continues to move forward with a strong, shared vision for excellence.

This session, our progress toward achieving the UNCRC Rights Respecting Schools Silver Award has led to a deeper and more meaningful integration of respect, dignity, equality, and fairness within the daily life and culture of the centre. Children, families and





staff worked collaboratively to undertake a comprehensive review and refresh of our centre values, ensuring they genuinely reflect the priorities and aspirations of our community. Children and their families worked together using counters to choose the three values that mattered most to them: Happy, Safe, and Loved, from the full set of values shared during our family consultations.

The revised values were formally launched in November 2025 accompanied by a dedicated display board which effectively illustrates and

promotes these values in practice.

Staff consistently reference UNCRC rights within Learning Blog posts, and key policies have been updated to explicitly align with relevant rights. Information is shared regularly through Cart Mill Chat, strengthening transparency and reinforcing our rights-based approach.

Children have taken an active role in promoting rights within the wider community through initiatives such as donating books to the Children's Book Project, participating in intergenerational visits to Bonnyton House, Eco Project with Carolside PS and engaging in Community Litter Picks with ERC and St Joseph's PS. These experiences have enabled children to see themselves as contributors to positive change. The impact of embedding UNCRC rights and values is evident in children's growing self-worth, confidence and moral awareness, supporting them to act responsibly, show empathy, and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging within their community.

How good is the quality of play and learning we offer?

Evaluation: Very Good

NIF Priority

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.
- Improvement of Skills
- Improvement in achievements particularly in literacy and numeracy.

School Priority

- Create spaces and experiences to increase opportunity for Literacy and STEM during continuous provision.

NIF Driver(s)

- School and ELC improvement
- Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Local Improvement Plan

Expected Outcome/ Impact

- Social Justice and Wellbeing
- Pedagogy and Learning
- Empowerment and leadership
- Attainment, Achievement and Progress

Progress, Impact and Outcomes

This session we have demonstrated a strong and shared commitment to continuous improvement through the PANECAL framework. PANECAL self-evaluation processes informed a clear, responsive action plan, resulting in measurable improvements in practice across the setting.

Purposeful, interactive displays stimulate curiosity and encourage children to ask questions, share ideas and extend vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Resources are well organised, accessible and consistently labelled with words and symbols, supporting independence, environmental print awareness and child-led learning.

Quiet, low-distraction spaces provide opportunities for focused listening, storytelling and small-group language work. Visual supports, including Boardmaker symbols, are embedded throughout the environment to reinforce routines, enhance understanding and promote independence.



High-quality adult-child interactions are consistently evident. Children engage positively with books in warm, responsive shared reading experiences. Songs, rhymes and puppets are used effectively to enhance

engagement, with The Pond (two-year-old room) highlighted during PANECAL Validation for particularly strong attunement and interaction quality.

We maintain strong communication with families and adapt displays to reflect children's developmental needs. During January 2026 we organised 'Emotions Week' as planning from August to December and ELC Tracking conversations highlighted the need for children to focus on developing emotional resilience, helping children recognise, label and understand their feelings.

Emotional

- I can recognise basic emotions such as happy, sad and angry through facial expressions
- I can describe how I am feeling
- I display more complex emotions such as shyness, shame, joy, embarrassment, guilt and pride
- I generally manage my emotions in a socially acceptable way
- I can form positive and appropriate relationships with familiar staff
- I spontaneously show pleasure at the achievements of others

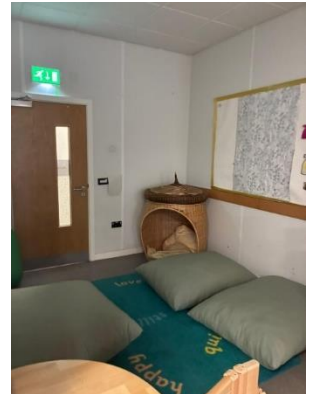
20	77%
18	69%
16	62%
16	62%
24	92%
14	54%

'Emotions Week' had a positive impact on children's emotional literacy and overall wellbeing. Through targeted experiences, stories and discussions, children developed a deeper understanding of a wide range of emotions and learned strategies to recognise, name and manage their feelings. Staff reported increased confidence in supporting children's emotional regulation and families shared that children were using the language of emotions more readily at home and when entering or leaving nursery by using the emotion counters in the welcome area.

Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to professional learning, engaging in CLPL including child development modules, HANEN training, trauma-informed practice and approaches to supporting dysregulated behaviour. Collaborative work with Psychological Services, Speech and Language Therapy, Early Years Intervention Service (EYOS), Request for Assistance and Health Visiting teams strengthens inclusive practice and ensures children receive timely, targeted support.

In March 2026, Cart Mill achieved PANECAL accreditation, reflecting sustained commitment to high-quality practice and continuous improvement in supporting children’s communication development.

Our sensory space offers a calm, quiet space where children can take a break or learn to regulate their emotions. This is especially important for children with ASD, emotional or an additional support need, currently 11% of children, but helpful for all children. EYOS have provided child-focused support through observation, assessment and targeted strategies to help children develop communication, interaction, and attention skills. This session, the EYOS staff have attended transition JST meetings and provided family support guidance to build confidence in supporting children's needs. EYOS staff have coached and trained staff to strengthen inclusive practice and early intervention skills.



During this session, our teacher focused on leading the team to adapt the learning environment using the Early Years Literacy Rich Learning Environment Toolkit. The main aim was to provide meaningful and engaging writing experiences that meet the needs of *all* children, informed by observations and tracking data. We used the Leuven Scale to measure levels of wellbeing and engagement across playrooms. This session, keyworkers gathered Leuven Scale data together and had termly room team professional dialogue with the Head Teacher to discuss immediate support for children with lower levels

In January 2026, N5 tracking data for fine motor skills highlighted key areas for development. 31% of children could draw a person with a head, trunk, legs, arms and features. Additionally, 81% could write a few letters spontaneously, while 27% were able to use scissors to cut shapes neatly.

In response, our teacher implemented a targeted approach by creating a dedicated fine motor area and led the team to ensure that there were fine-motor opportunities across playrooms and outdoors.



This intervention supported the development of essential skills such as hand-eye coordination, pincer grip, finger strength and the manipulation of small objects. The activities were carefully designed to encourage concentration, independence and confidence, while also supporting early writing development. To further engage learners, particularly reluctant writers, our teacher introduced a range of sensory experiences. These included mark-making activities using sand, paint and other tactile materials. This approach allowed children to explore early writing in a meaningful and enjoyable way, without the pressure of more formal writing.

By creating a relaxed, playful environment, children were more willing to participate and experiment with different movements, patterns and forms.

As a result of this targeted support, significant progress was evident by May 2026. The updated N5 tracking data showed that 91% of children could now draw a person with the expected features. Furthermore, 100% could write a few letters spontaneously, 87% could use scissors to cut shapes neatly and 96% were able to experiment with writing their name.

Overall, this demonstrates the positive impact of a well-planned, responsive learning environment that is informed by data and tailored to children's developmental needs. The targeted use of data to inform planning led to significant improvements in children's fine motor and early writing skills, as shown in the marked increase across all tracked areas. Children developed greater confidence, independence and engagement, particularly reluctant writers who benefited from sensory, play-based approaches.

The Williamwood Cluster Nursery Teacher Group continued to work collaboratively to strengthen consistency in literacy progression. Nursery teachers analysed tracking data, compared baseline assessments and engaged in professional dialogue to ensure a shared understanding of standards. Staff identified literacy tracking statements that found were challenging to evidence.



In response, during the February 2026 in-service day, our nursery teacher delivered a focused input on developing children's awareness of alliteration and syllables. The session provided practical examples, adaptable resources and opportunities for professional discussion, supporting colleagues to apply strategies confidently within their own settings.

Cluster-wide moderation has improved the consistency of professional judgements and deepened staff understanding of literacy progression. Shared approaches have strengthened practitioner confidence and contributed to more coherent, high-quality literacy experiences across the Williamwood Cluster, leading to improved outcomes for children.

The head teacher and teacher have attended cluster ELC Tracking meetings with P1 teachers, nursery teachers and head teachers in associated primary schools, nursery classes and family centres to moderate and ensure progression across early level during transition periods. This has resulted in relationships being built across different settings and trust in the professional judgments made.

We continue to analyse baseline scores from P1 assessments of our former children, now at school. The data from August 2025 P1 baseline shows that children who attended Cart Mill are scoring 105 in Numeracy (ERC average 98) and Literacy 104 (ERC average 99). Overall, data suggests a positive and resilient pattern of attainment, with Cart Mill demonstrating the capacity to recover quickly from minor dips and sustain performance above the wider authority.

Our Literacy data has remained consistently strong over time, generally exceeding the local authority average. While there was a slight dip in 2024/25, outcomes have improved significantly in 2025/26, with performance now notably above East Renfrewshire. The most recent improvement suggests that targeted approaches within our pedagogy are having a positive impact on learners' progress.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
School	101	101	102	99	104
Cluster					
East Renfrewshire	100	100	99	99	99

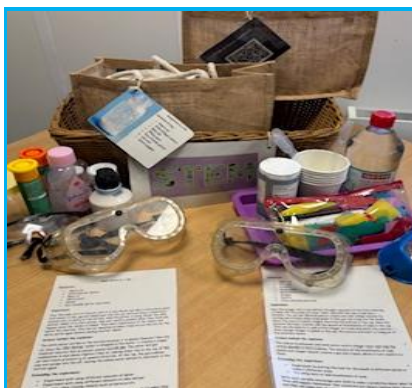
Our Numeracy data improved consistently over time, rising from below the local authority average to significantly above it, demonstrating strong and sustained progress over time.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
School	98	100	101	102	105
Cluster					
East Renfrewshire	100	99	99	99	98

Achievement of Developmental Milestones has been variable over time, with a notable dip followed by a very strong recovery to well above local authority levels, indicating impact of targeted support and improvement plan targets over the past few years.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
School	89.13%		82.61%	68.75%	96.67%
Cluster					
East Renfrewshire	80.92%	82.87%	79.98%	76.30%	83.78%

The Head Teacher and Depute Head of Centre attended Power BI training and look forward to sharing this learning with the team in the next session. There is significant scope to strengthen the gathering, analysis and use of quantitative data to more effectively measure attainment and achievement. Developing this approach will help ensure that all children are appropriately challenged and supported to fulfil their potential.



This session we introduced 'STEM Learning at Home' bags with simple, safe material for children to handle, step-by-step instructions and easy to understand explanations about the activity. The goal was to spark children's natural curiosity, build confidence and make STEM play.

'I loved everything' Child's comment

'That was so much fun.' Child's comment

'That was a really fun activity. It was really well thought out, packaged and easy to follow. I think the activity grabbed his attention and he did a great job following the instructions.' Parent comment
'I loved being involved in my child's play and learning.' Parent comment

We recognise that we did not make the expected progress towards achieving the STEM Nation Award, as other priorities took precedence over this area. On reflection, this has highlighted the need for clearer focus, time and planning; however, we are now in a strong position to begin more purposeful and sustained work towards this as a priority for 2026-2027.

We continue to audit and review all aspects of our planning to ensure consistency of approach and a balance of experiences across the curriculum. Informal playroom monitoring and self-evaluation has identified the need to address some inconsistency in the quality of planned experiences across the centre, at certain times of the day. Moving forward, we will continue to develop our pedagogical approaches to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of the planning and observation cycle. This will strengthen the current processes and improve planned experiences and observations.

How good are we at ensuring children are supported to achieve?

Evaluation: Very Good

How good are we at ensuring children thrive and develop in quality spaces?

Evaluation: Very Good

NIF Priority

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.
- Improvement in children and people's health and wellbeing

School Priority:

- All staff meet the needs and entitlements of all children and families, with particular focus on equity, equality, inclusion and diversity.
- Children experience safe, secure and inspiring environment outdoors

NIF Driver(s)

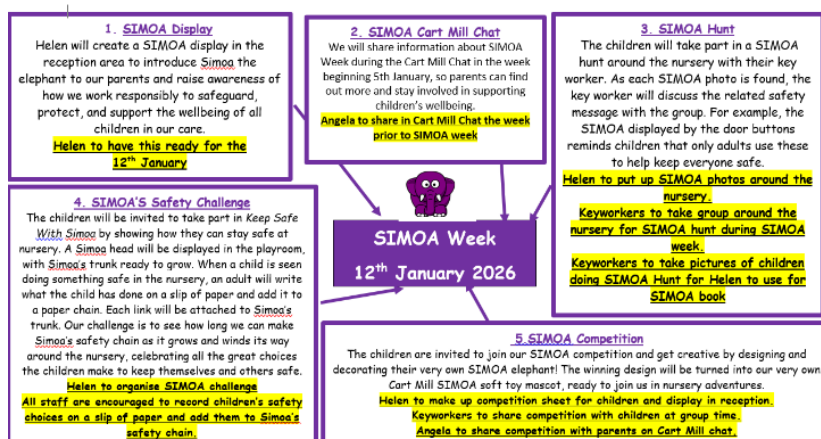
- Parent/carers engagement and family learning
- School and ELC Improvement

Local Improvement Plan Expected Outcome/ Impact

- Social Justice and Wellbeing
- Empowerment and leadership
- Attainment, Achievement and Progress

Progress, Impact and Outcomes

The use of SIMOA (Safe, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) framework, alongside ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation using Quality Improvement Framework has enabled staff to effectively identify potential risks within both indoor and outdoor environments. This has resulted in more proactive planning and responsive adaptations, ensuring that all spaces are safe, well-organised and developmentally appropriate for children.



To further embed this approach, a dedicated 'SIMOA week' was organised in January 2026. A welcoming SIMOA display was created at the nursery entrance to introduce 'SIMOA the Elephant' to families and raise awareness of how we work responsibly to safeguard, protect and support children's wellbeing. Throughout 'SIMOA week', children actively engaged in a range of meaningful experiences to promote safety awareness. This included participating in a 'SIMOA Hunt' across the nursery, where staff used visual prompts to share key safety messages in an age-appropriate way. Children were encouraged to demonstrate how they "Keep Safe with SIMOA" by identifying safe behaviours and routines within their environment.

To extend learning beyond the setting, children and families were invited to take part in a SIMOA creative competition, designing and decorating their own SIMOA Elephant. The winning design was selected in partnership with our Williamwood Campus Police Officer and brought to life as Cart Mill's very own SIMOA soft toy mascot.

These experiences have supported children to develop a stronger understanding of safety, responsibility and risk awareness, while also strengthening partnership working with families and the wider community. Our children frequently refer to 'SIMOA Safe' when talking about risk.



This session we strengthened our approach to Accident and Incident reporting by refreshing procedures in line with Care Inspectorate guidance. The updated guidance ensures that all events are recorded with greater consistency, clarity and accuracy, contributing to a more rigorous and reliable quality-assurance process. Enhanced documentation enables the leadership team to analyse trends, identify recurring themes and implement preventative measures. Staff confidence has grown as a result of clearer expectations and streamlined processes, supporting a culture of accountability and reflective practice. This improved approach ensures that we maintain a safe, responsive environment where children's wellbeing is prioritised and that parents and carers remain very well-informed about any events involving their child.

We reviewed and refreshed children's Personal Plans and strengthened our approaches to monitoring these to ensure they are consistently child-centred and responsive to individual needs and interests. Through this process, we engaged more effectively with families in sharing and reviewing plans, which supported the development of more meaningful targets and clearer next steps. This work highlighted the positive impact of involving both children and families in the planning process in promoting improved outcomes. To ensure greater consistency and accountability, we introduced a more robust monitoring cycle, with keyworkers receiving 6–8 weekly feedback. This supports ongoing review and updating of Personal Plans, ensuring targets remain relevant and responsive to each child's stage of development. We will continue to build on this to ensure practice is consistently high quality across the setting.

Children were meaningfully involved in the design and development of both the 3-5 and The Pond gardens, ensuring the environment reflects their interests, needs and emerging ideas. Staff used a range of approaches, including floorbooks and group discussions, to gather children's views. This enabled staff to identify gaps in provision while supporting children to contribute their own creative ideas for the outdoor space.

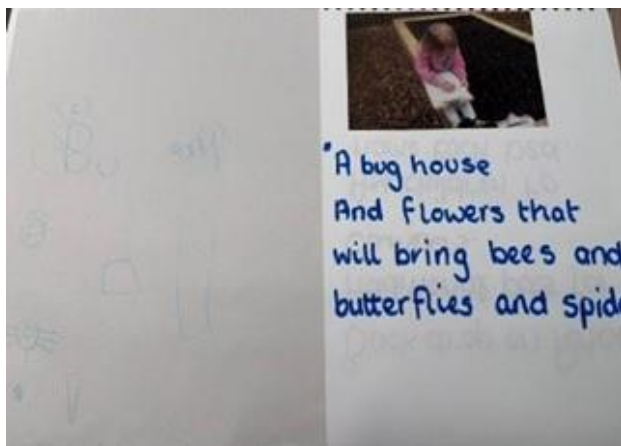
Prior to redevelopment 50% of the outdoor space was used due to uneven surfacing and drainage problems.

A local journalist, School Garden Champion and representative of The Children's Society as an ambassador at RHS Chelsea Flower Show visited our garden to give advice and support.





This collaborative approach resulted in a more responsive and relevant environment. The inclusion of areas such as growing spaces, sand pits, imaginative play areas and quiet areas directly reflect children's interests and play preferences. As a result, children demonstrate a strong sense of ownership and pride in their natural environment. There has been a noticeable increase in engagement in growing and planting experiences, with children showing greater curiosity, responsibility and sustained interest, as they recognise that their voices have been listened to and valued.

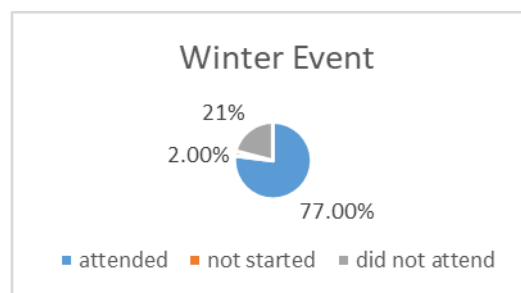
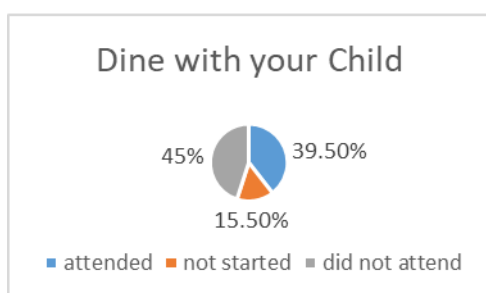


The recent garden renovation has had a significantly positive impact on children's health, wellbeing, learning and development. The improved outdoor environment now offers safe, stimulating and well-organised spaces that effectively support free-flow play, exploration and curiosity. As a result, 100% of the garden areas are used, children are spending longer periods outdoors and are becoming more engaged, motivated and confident in leading their own play. Clearly defined, developmentally appropriate areas support a broad range of experiences, including physical play, creativity and opportunities for rest and relaxation. This has enhanced children's ability to make independent choices and engage in more sustained, purposeful play. Children are also demonstrating an increased awareness of safety and responsibility, closely aligned with our SIMOA approach. They are more confident in assessing risk, making decisions and managing their play safely within the environment. The introduction of calm, natural elements has further strengthened children's emotional wellbeing, providing effective spaces for regulation and quieter play. This has had a particularly positive impact on children who require additional support, enabling them to feel secure and supported within the environment.

Overall, the garden renovation and the meaningful involvement of children in its design have led to a higher quality, inclusive and nurturing outdoor environment. This has enhanced children's learning experiences, strengthened their wellbeing and contributed to improved outcomes across all areas of development.

We were proud to achieve reaccreditation of the Gold Family Centred Approaches Award, recognising our continued commitment to nurturing strong, meaningful partnerships with families. This reaccreditation reflects the high-quality relational practice embedded across the centre and the consistent efforts of staff to ensure families feel valued, respected and actively involved in their child's learning. The process highlighted our strengths in communication, collaboration and inclusive practice, demonstrating that families are central to decision-making and the life of the centre. Achieving the Gold standard again affirms the positive impact of our approaches and reinforces our dedication to maintaining a warm, welcoming and supportive environment where every family feels a strong sense of belonging.

At Cart Mill we understand that families, and the relationships you build with them matter. Following a family centred approach ensures that our practice is aligned between home and Cart Mill. Good connections with families reduce the possibility of mixed messages and supports strong relationships between staff, parents, carers and children. Having these robust relationships allows us to identify any additional support that families might need. Staff gain confidence to speak to families and a trust is formed. This partnership working gives all involved an opportunity to make informed decisions together for the wellbeing and engagement of our children. With these strong and open relationships we have seen positive attendance figures for a variety of events.



Parents and carers also commented on the benefits that strong relationships have with staff not only for their child but for them. From the Family Centred Approaches questionnaire, that over 80% of our parents responded to, we received the following comments:

“Overall Cart Mill Family Centre is very welcoming not only to myself but also my daughter when she walks in the doors, the staff always have a smile on their face and always stop to chat. The staff always take into consideration what you have concerns about and always make you feel heard and reassure myself about things. My daughter has only been going to Cart Mill for a short period of time now and absolutely loves every day she is there.”

“Wonderful nursery and staff, so lucky our daughter was offered a placement there. Everyone is absolutely wonderful!! Always fantastic activities for the kids, great space and garden, feel welcome and see staff as extended family.”

"From the minute we stepped in to Cart Mill we felt welcomed. The staff always take the time to stop and talk to you and fill you in on what's happening. As a family we love looking through the learning book together when it comes home. It is such a nice way of showing us the learning that takes place."

Staff were also able to express their opinions, with 100% of staff responding to their questionnaire. Comments from staff included:

"We have lots of opportunities to engage with families and always receive really positive feedback from those attending events."

"I believe we continually strive to promote family-focused initiatives within our setting. We have adapted our stay-and-play sessions to maximise parental engagement, ensuring families feel welcomed and involved. I take the lead in our planning and have introduced questionnaires to gather parents' input, ensuring their views are both incorporated into our curriculum and genuinely valued."

"We at Cart Mill have a very good partnership with our parents/carers. Our parents regularly tell us how valued both they and their child feel. We as staff have good bonds with our children and families and continue to thrive in our commitment to providing the best possible care for all our families. Any more training and taking on lead roles is always a bonus. "

The most popular words were gathered from the parental questionnaire and it is clear the staff, environment and the care are key to our families. This allows us to continue to embed family centred approaches at the heart of our family engagement.

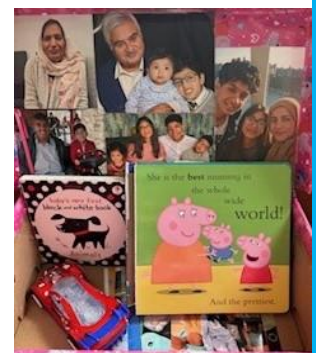


In August 2025, we introduced a transition project to support children moving from home into the nursery environment. This initiative was inspired by an approach outlined in the Froebel Trust pamphlet 'Creating Environments for Children to Play and Learn'.



Families were invited to work alongside their child to create a small shoebox containing familiar and meaningful items in preparation for starting nursery. Children were then able to keep this box within the nursery for as long as they required.

This project has supported staff in developing a deeper understanding of each child and their family context. It has also provided children with a source of comfort, supporting emotional regulation during the transition period, while encouraging opportunities to share personal experiences with peers and build early relationships. Children demonstrated increased confidence and



settled more quickly, using their shoebox as a familiar and reassuring connection to home.

The project also promoted communication and social interaction, as children were encouraged to share the contents of their boxes with their keyworker and peers, supporting early friendships and a sense of belonging within the setting. This approach contributed to a more nurturing, inclusive and supportive transition experience. Due to the success of this pilot project the Head Teacher was invited to share successful approaches to parental engagement at the Head Teacher Seminar November 2025.

One parent commented:

'I think the staff are amazing at Cart Mill, so supportive, caring and helpful. They work hard to make the children feel happy and nurtured and we are so grateful for that.'

The introduction of 'Learning at Home Ideas' has strengthened partnerships with parents and reinforced children's learning beyond the nursery setting. As a result, children demonstrate improved confidence, stronger skill retention and greater enthusiasm for learning.

How Can We Explore Some Of Our Current Learning At Home	
Skill Focus	Learning Experiences
Literacy Rhyme Time	Reading Rhyming Books: Once your child is familiar with the story, encourage them to fill in the missing rhyming word while you read, e.g. A mouse took a stroll through the deep dark <u>wood</u> . A fox saw the mouse, and the mouse looked _____. (from the Snuffalo by Julia Donaldson) (resource needed: rhyming stories familiar to your child) Roll & Rhyme: One person chooses a word then while rolling or throwing a ball between you think of as many rhyming words as you can. (resource needed: a ball or something else to roll/throw/catch)
Numeracy Numbers Are Everywhere	Singing Number Songs and Rhymes: Singing songs is a great way to familiarise children with counting such as Ten Green Bottles, 1,2,3,4,5, One Two, Buckle My Shoe etc. Out & About: Invite your child to count when out and about. For example, how many lampposts are on our street? Look for numbers on doors, buses, car registrations, anywhere! Number Games: Playing games such as snakes & ladders and dominoes are a great way to develop your child's counting and number pattern recognition skills.
Art Unconventional Paintbrush	In our art area we are exploring painting with unconventional paintbrushes. Scan the QR code to try some ideas at home:
STEM Discovering Our Senses	In our STEM area we are exploring our 5 senses. Here are some ways to explore your sense of taste together with your child. Blind Taste Test Challenge: This activity will help teach your child about their sense of taste. Put together a variety of foods that are different in texture, sweetness, bitterness, saltiness, etc. Blindfold your child and have them try each food one at a time - no peeking allowed! As they sample each item discuss what kind of flavours they can identify and why some foods may taste different than others.

This session we supported practitioner wellbeing by sharing a range of self-care techniques designed to help staff manage stress and maintain professional resilience. Opportunities such as protected time to reset during in-service days and bespoke check-ins with the Senior Leadership Team have been well received and contribute to a supportive culture.

The majority of staff and the leadership team engaged in a health and wellbeing check-in using the Resilience Toolkit, facilitated by the ERC Health and Wellbeing Officer and organised by our health and wellbeing lead. Participation in these sessions enabled staff to identify personal areas for reflection and provided clear signposting to further support, where needed. This approach has strengthened staff confidence, enhanced wellbeing and reinforced our commitment to nurturing a resilient and reflective workforce.



Summary of N5 (Preschool) Data for Session 2025/26

Numeracy

Most can recognise numerals from zero up to 10, with many working to 20.

All can recall a forward number word sequence to 10 and *most* recite backwards to zero.

Majority of children can use their 1:1 correspondence to count objects up to 20.

Majority of children can recall numbers before and after another number.

Most can count on from a given number.

Most can work out the missing number on a number line within 10, with some working up to 20.

Numeracy		Count of Children	% of Children Reaching Skill	Range		
				1 - 5	6 - 10	10+
<i>Counting & Matching</i>						
I can recognise numerals from zero up to X		23	100%	3	15	5
<i>Counting Words</i>						
I can recall a number sequence forward from zero to X		23	100%		8	15
I can say number sequences to zero backwards from X		18	78%	10	7	2
<i>Counting & Matching</i>						
I can use 1:1 correspondence to count objects up to 20		14	61%	Please note the range values may not match the count values; establishments need to enter a value AND select the statement for completion, within the relevant numeracy statements. In addition, only values 1 - 100 will be observed.		
<i>Position of a Number</i>						
I can recall numbers before another number		12	52%			
I can recall numbers after another number		15	65%			
<i>Counting & Matching</i>						
I can count on from a number		14	61%			
<i>Position of a Number</i>						
I can work out the missing number on a number line up to		19	83%			
<i>Add & Subtract</i>						
I can add two groups together		12	52%			
I can use a range of strategies to subtract mentally within 10		3	13%			

Reading

All can show the front and back of a book, with the *majority of children* pointing to the title, author and showing the left-right directionality of print.

Almost all can recognise some letters, with *most* stating some letter sounds and names.

Almost all can recognise their first name.

Writing

Almost all are writing in word-like clusters and are capable of experimenting with writing their own name.

The majority of children are capable of writing their name using a capital letter and lowercase correctly

Most are aware of the purpose of writing and are doing this to convey meaning, with *most* assigning meaning to their own mark-making/writing.

Talking and Listening

Almost all can generate rhyme from a given word.

Literacy

	Count of Children	% of Children Reaching Skill		Count of Children	% of Children Reaching Skill
<i>Reading Enjoyment & Choice: Print Concepts</i>			<i>Writing Enjoyment & Choice</i>		
I can show the back and front of the book	23	100%	I can write in scribble streams	23	100%
I can point to the title and the author of the book	15	65%	I can write in scribble script	22	96%
<i>ReadingTools: Letter Knowledge</i>			I can write in separate marks maybe letter like	22	96%
I can recognise some letters	22	96%	I can write in word like clusters	21	91%
I can state some letter sounds and names	17	74%	I can experiment with writing my own name	22	96%
<i>ReadingTools: Print Concepts</i>			I can write to convey a meaning	18	78%
I can differentiate between letters words & numbers	12	52%	I can read my own writing by assigning meaning	17	74%
I can point to where we start to read the story	15	65%			
I can show the direction in which we read the words	13	57%			
<i>ReadingTools: Name</i>					
I can recognise my first name	22	96%			
I can write my name using a capital letter and lowercase correctly	14	61%			
<i>Listening & Talking, Enjoyment & Choice: Rhyme</i>					
I can identify rhyming words	19	83%			
I can generate rhyme from a given word	21	91%			
<i>Listening & Talking, Enjoyment & Choice: Alliteration</i>					
I can recognise initial sounds and find other words beginning with the same sound	10	43%			

Summary of N5 (Preschool) Data for Session 2025/26 Developmental Milestones

Communication

Almost all take turns in conversation, listening and making relevant contributions in conversations. *Most* use vocal cues to communicate their meaning as well as showing an understanding of other people's *perspectives* through an awareness of their non-verbal communication.

Emotional

Almost all can recognise basic emotions through facial expressions.

Almost all can describe how they are feeling.

Most generally manage emotions in a socially acceptable way.

All children are forming positive and appropriate relationships with familiar staff.

Expressive Language

Almost all choose texts and say what they like and dislike

Almost all can talk about experiences and events, in a logical sequence.

Almost all use talk in role play.

Fine Motor

All can write a few letters spontaneously

Almost all can draw a person and build elaborate models.

Most can use scissors to cut shapes neatly.

Gross Motor

Almost all children can catch a ball using hands only, climb ladders and trees and demonstrate good balance during play.

Most children can hop forward and skip with alternating feet

Social

Almost all take turns and share resources as well as using appropriate body language when listening to others.

Almost all show concern for others if they are hurt or upset, developing positive relationships with their peers.

As a result, *almost all* play is cooperative and imaginative in nature with *almost all* engaging in dramatic make believe play, independently taking turns.

The speech of *almost all* N5 children is grammatically correct and generally intelligible.

Developmental Milestones

	Count of Children	% of Children Reaching Skill		Count of Children	% of Children Reaching Skill
Attention			Fine Motor		
I can alternate my attention between an adult giving directions to the class/group and my play	17	74%	I can build a tower of ten or more cubes	22	96%
I can concentrate for a reasonable period without need for continued direct support	16	70%	I can build elaborate models when shown	21	91%
I can play/do an activity and listen to adult direction at the same time	16	70%	I can draw a cross, circle & square using pictures or objects for reference	20	87%
I can independently maintain attention for a prolonged period while ignoring competing stimuli	14	61%	I can draw a recognisable person with head, trunk, legs, arms & features	21	91%
I generally complete tasks set within the expected time	22	96%	I can write a few letters spontaneously	23	100%
I can sit reasonably still without talking or distracting others when adults ask for attention	18	78%	I can use scissors to cut shapes neatly	20	87%
Behaviour			Gross Motor		
I can tell what is fair and unfair	18	78%	I can climb ladders and trees	21	91%
I can understand why I have to follow certain rules	21	91%	I can catch a ball with arms and body	23	100%
I can generally adapt my behaviour to different situations	17	74%	I can hop forward (2-3 metres) on right and left foot	18	78%
I can play and learn with other children and share ideas and interests	23	100%	I can catch a small ball using hands only	21	91%
Communication			I can skip forward with alternating feet while maintaining balance	17	74%
I can take turns in conversation	21	91%	I can demonstrate good balance	22	96%
I can listen and make relevant contributions in conversations	21	91%	Receptive Language		
I enjoy jokes and shows a sense of humour in talk and play	20	87%	I can answer complex questions like "what might happen next?"	20	87%
I use vocal cues to communicate meaning	19	83%	I understand instructions with 2 or more parts	20	87%
I can show that I understand what people mean rather	16	70%	I can listen to information and use it to make choices & learn new things	20	87%
I recognise other people's non-verbal communication	18	78%	I can respond to information with relevant questions and actions	20	87%
Emotional			I can give relevant answers to questions	20	87%
I can recognise basic emotions such as happy, sad and angry through facial expressions	22	96%	I demonstrate understanding of a story by asking my own questions	20	87%
I can describe how I am feeling	21	91%	I can demonstrate understanding of a text by asking my own questions	19	83%
I display more complex emotions such as shyness, shame, joy, embarrassment, guilt and pride	20	87%	Social		
I generally manage my emotions in a socially acceptable way	17	74%	I use appropriate body language when listening to others	20	87%
I can form positive and appropriate relationships with familiar staff	23	100%	I show concern if others are upset even if I don't act on it	21	91%
I spontaneously show pleasure at the achievements of others	19	83%	I can take turns and share	22	96%
Expressive Language			I can name my best friend	21	91%
I can choose texts and say what I like and dislike	21	91%	I have positive relationships with my peers	23	100%
I speak in sentences of four or five words	23	100%	I can use non-verbal cues to communicate	20	87%
I can talk about experiences and events	22	96%	I initiate and respond to social interactions with familiar adults or children	19	83%
I can understand time and sequence concepts and use terms such as first, then and last	21	91%	I engage in dramatic make-believe play, independently taking turns	22	96%
I can retell a story in a logical sequence	21	91%	Play is both co-operative and imaginative	22	96%
I can use talk in role play	22	96%	Speech		
I can talk about what I have read and link it to personal experience	17	74%	Speech is grammatically conventional & generally intelligible	22	96%

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

The capacity for improvement within Cart Mill Family Centre is very good. The centre is well placed to achieve sustained improvement and has demonstrated strong progress throughout this session. Continued enhancement of our self-evaluation practices and the development of leadership opportunities have had a positive impact on our ethos, shared values and the collective commitment of staff to provide the highest-quality interactions, spaces and experiences for children and families. Self-evaluation is firmly embedded in our practice and *the majority of* children and parents are meaningfully involved in shaping the life and work of the centre. This is evident through the professionalism and dedication of staff, the way children's voices influence decision-making and the strong, respectful partnerships we maintain with parents and families.

We have a clear and ambitious understanding of how we will continue to improve, guided by our shared vision for Cart Mill Family Centre to be "the best place for children to learn and develop."

This clarity of purpose, combined with the commitment of the whole team, ensures we are well positioned to build on the strong progress achieved this year.

Next steps and areas for development are:

- Further embed 'Quality Improvement Framework for ELC Settings'
- Raise awareness of Curriculum Improvement Cycle
- Working towards STEM Nation Award
- Introduce 'Think Equal' programme
- Introduce 'Up, Up and Away'
- Continue to review and develop pedagogical approaches to ensure high quality planning and experiences for children

