

Cart Mill Family Centre

Improvement Plan

2026-2027



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

Three Year Improvement Priorities		
Centre Improvement Priorities for 2026-29		
Year 1 2026-2027	Year 2 2027-2028	Year 3 2028-2029
Leadership Phased implementation Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC) Quality Improvement Framework embedded in QA and practice Embed our refreshed Values Refresh Curriculum Rationale	Phased implementation CIC Approaches to self-evaluation involve all staff, children and stakeholders	Adopt refreshed curriculum Practitioner Inquiry approach embedded using Quality Improvement Framework
Children Thrive and Develop in Quality Spaces Continue to build on developing the environment outdoors (interaction, spaces and experiences)	Children influence and affect change	
Children Play and Learn Review and develop planning, experiences and interaction. STEM	Further develop innovative and creative resources and experiences, including digital technologies Journey towards RRS Silver Award	Journey towards RRS Silver Award
Children are Supported to Achieve Embed approaches that promote emotional literacy, communication and high-quality interactions. Introduce 'Up, Up and Away' Pilot 'Think Equal'	Continue to develop and embed innovative approaches to inclusive practice and personalised support Children's progress Connections with families	Embed approaches to inclusion and equality, ensuring effective targeted and universal supports, leading to improved outcomes for children and families Gold Family Centre reaccreditation PANECAL reaccreditation

Strategic Priority:		Develop staff capacity and confidence to effectively lead and enact curriculum improvement			
NIF Priority:	Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing. Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.			NIF Driver:	School and ELC leadership Curriculum and assessment School and ELC improvement Performance information
QIs:		Leadership QI: Leadership of Continuous Improvement		Local Improvement Plan:	Empowerment and leadership Pedagogy and Learning Social Justice and Wellbeing Attainment, Achievement and Progress
Outcome (short term)		Measures of success / Monitoring and evaluating progress		Improvement Activities	
<i>What will improve?/ what change will happen?</i> <i>What? For whom? By how much? By when?</i>		<i>The data that allows you to determine whether or not the change has taken place - What data? How often will data be gathered and by whom? Is a baseline required? Who will collate/analyse the evidence?</i>		<i>Key action/activities that will effect change.</i> <i>Who will do it and what resource is required?</i> <i>Ensure costings of PEF activities</i>	
By June 2027, at least 90% of staff will have an increased awareness of the Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC). By June 2027, at least 90% of staff will contribute to and demonstrate a clear understanding of the refreshed curriculum rationale. Almost all staff (90%) confidently use Curriculum Rationale to inform planning, pedagogy and children's learning experiences.		Baseline and follow-up staff questionnaires (Oct/May) demonstrate increased understanding of CIC. Staff meeting evaluations show increased confidence in discussing curriculum improvement. Evidence collated and reviewed by SLT/lead staff. Staff surveys (Aug/April) demonstrate increased understanding and confidence in articulating the curriculum rationale. Learning walks and observations (Nov/March) show consistent, coherent learning experiences aligned with the rationale		Curriculum Improvement Cycle sessions at Early Years Conference at Hampden (Oct 2026) (all practitioners) Revisit CIC regularly as a standing item at staff meetings and in-service days (Feb & May) (HT) Co-design CLPL with Educational Psychology/H&WB Officer to reduce anxiety around change/build resilience (SLT) Provide draft examples from curricular areas and Know-Do-Understand Model (HT) Encourage staff to reflect on current practice through a CIC lens during learning walks and peer observations (SLT) Share good practice across the setting/cluster (HT, Cluster EY Teacher Group)	
				Impact (longer term)	
				<i>The rationale for change. Why it matters?</i> <i>A change in professional knowledge/confidence, practice and/or learners' experiences/outcomes</i>	
				Planning and practice become more coherent, intentional and responsive to children's needs. Children experience more engaging, well-planned and responsive learning leading to improved outcomes. A shared, clearly understood curriculum rationale underpins all practice. Staff confidently articulate and apply the rationale, leading to consistency in pedagogy. Learning experiences are coherent, meaningful and aligned to children's needs and centre values.	

		Parent/carer and child voice reflect understanding and visibility of the centre’s curriculum approach (by June 27)		Facilitate staff CLPL sessions to explore current curriculum rationale and identify areas for refresh (HT, DHC, teacher) Gather views from children, families and staff to inform the refreshed rationale (HT, DHC) Co-create a clear curriculum rationale statement (HT, teacher) (by June 2027) Share the refreshed rationale with families and wider community (HT)		Children benefit from a well-designed, responsive curriculum, leading to improved engagement, wellbeing and outcomes. A strong culture of reflective practice and continuous curriculum improvement	
Strategic Priority:		Ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences and spaces for all children					
NIF Priority:	Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing. Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.			NIF Driver:	School and ELC leadership Teacher and staff professionalism Parent/carer engagement and family learning Curriculum and assessment School and ELC improvement Performance information		
QIs:			Children, play & Learn QI Learning, Teaching and Assessment.	Local Improvement Plan:	Pedagogy and Learning Social Justice and Wellbeing Attainment, Achievement and Progress		
Outcome (short term)		Measures of success / Monitoring and evaluating progress		Improvement Activities		Impact (longer term)	
What will improve?/ what change will happen? What? For whom? By how much? By when?		The data that allows you to determine whether or not the change has taken place - What data? How often will data be gathered and by whom? Is a baseline required? Who will collate/analyse the evidence?		Key action/activities that will effect change. Who will do it and what resource is required? Ensure costings of PEF activities		The rationale for change. Why it matters? A change in professional knowledge/confidence, practice and/or learners’ experiences/outcomes	
By May 2027, at least 90% of staff will have an increased understanding of STEM pedagogy and how to embed STEM across the curriculum (baseline Aug 2026). By June 2027, almost all staff (90%) will plan and deliver high-quality		Staff surveys (Oct/May) show increased confidence in delivering STEM experiences. Planning documentation evidences regular, intentional STEM opportunities.		Provide CLPL on early years STEM pedagogy and inquiry-based learning (Revisit Alice Sharp Curiosity Approach) Develop and enhance STEM-rich environments, including: Open-ended resources Outdoor learning opportunities Loose parts and natural materials		Children develop strong foundations in curiosity, creativity and problem-solving. STEM becomes a natural, embedded part of play and learning.	

STEM experiences across indoor and outdoor learning environments. By June 2027, almost all children (90%) will demonstrate increased: Curiosity, problem-solving and creativity Engagement in STEM-based play and inquiry Confidence in exploring, questioning and investigating Progress will support the centre in working towards STEM Nation Award accreditation. By June 2027, almost all children will show increased engagement, wellbeing and involvement during play and learning experiences (measured through Leuven scales and observations).		Audit current practice and environments to identify strengths and gaps in STEM provision (SLT) Learning walks and observations (Oct/April) show high-quality STEM interactions and questioning, increased opportunities for exploration and investigation Children’s Learning Journals and floor books show engagement in STEM learning. Children’s voice demonstrates enjoyment and interest in STEM experiences. Children can talk about what they are learning. Termly audit of Floorbooks and Learning Journals. Floorbook and Learning Journals reflect an increase in STEM experiences. Leuven Scale evidence collated and evaluated by SLT termly.		Embed through planning experiences, everyday interactions and questioning Introduce STEM-focused provocations and enquiry-based experiences. Use professional dialogue, peer observations and staff enquiry to improve practice (SLT) Engage families through home learning ideas and sharing STEM experiences (STEM lead/HT)) Gather and document evidence towards STEM Nation Award (STEM lead/HT) Carry out learning walks with a focus on interactions and experiences (SLT) Use children’s voice and observations to evaluate the quality of experiences (QA Floorbooks & Learning Journals) Link expectations of high-quality interactions to the Quality Improvement Framework (QIF)		Staff demonstrate confidence in delivering high-quality, inquiry-based STEM experiences. Achieve recognition through STEM Nation Award, evidencing high-quality practice. Improved outcomes for children in thinking skills, engagement and learning dispositions. Learning experiences are more engaging, challenging and responsive, leading to improved outcomes.		
Strategic Priority:		Embed approaches that promote emotional literacy, communication and high-quality interactions						
NIF Priority:		Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing. Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.			NIF Driver:		School and ELC leadership Teacher and staff professionalism Parent/carers engagement and family learning Curriculum and assessment School and ELC improvement	
QIs:		Children are Supported to Achieve			Local Improvement Plan:		Empowerment and leadership Pedagogy and Learning Social Justice and Wellbeing Attainment, Achievement and Progress	

	QI: Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality				
Outcome (short term)		Measures of success / Monitoring and evaluating progress		Improvement Activities	Impact (longer term)
<i>What will improve?/ what change will happen?</i> <i>What? For whom? By how much? By when?</i>		<i>The data that allows you to determine whether or not the change has taken place - What data? How often will data be gathered and by whom? Is a baseline required? Who will collate/analyse the evidence?</i>		<i>Key action/activities that will effect change.</i> <i>Who will do it and what resource is required?</i> <i>Ensure costings of PEF activities</i>	<i>The rationale for change. Why it matters?</i> <i>A change in professional knowledge/confidence, practice and/or learners' experiences/outcomes</i>
By March 2027, almost all staff (90%) will be trained in and confidently apply strategies from both 'Think Equal' and 'Up, Up and Away'. By June 2027, almost all staff (90%) will embed these approaches consistently to support high-quality interactions, communication and emotional development (baseline Aug 2026). By June 2027, impact of the targeted group will demonstrate improved: Emotional literacy and empathy, Engagement and wellbeing		Staff SSSC learning logs show participation and increased confidence. Leuven wellbeing and involvement scores show measurable improvements for targeted group ELC tracking of H&Wb and Literacy development shows progress over time. Children's voice and observations demonstrate increased emotional awareness and engagement. Planning documentation reflects intentional use of strategies to support interactions and experiences. Evidence through Quality Improvement Framework (HT) and children's Personal Plans (DHC) Professional dialogue and QIF self-evaluation Parent/carer feedback reflects positive changes in children's wellbeing		Deliver CLPL on 'Think Equal' and 'Up, Up and Away' approaches (Karen Stevenson PT/HT & DHC) (by Oct 26) Implement targeted 'Think Equal' sessions (emotional literacy, relationships, inclusion) (HT, DHC & Teacher) (by Oct 26) Implement Up, Up and Away strategies (communication, language, interaction) (SCDOs) (by Dec 26) Support staff through modelling, coaching and peer observations (SCDOs) Support staff through reflection and professional dialogue (SCDOs) Share strategies with families to support learning at home (HT, DHC & Teacher)	Children experience consistently high-quality, nurturing interactions that support both communication and emotional development. Assessment evidence shows Improved language, confidence, empathy and relationships across the setting. Staff demonstrate strong pedagogical understanding of how interactions support learning and wellbeing. Practice is embedded, consistent and evidence-based, contributing to improved outcomes for all children.

	Learning walks and observations (termly) (SLT) Evidence gathered and analysed by SLT/lead staff termly.		
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Curiosity, Creativity &
Problem Solving

Curriculum Improvement Cycle

Cart Mill Family Centre Improvement Plan 2026/2027

High Quality Learning Experiences

Professional Learning
for all staff

STEM Nation Award

Parental Engagement

Develop staff capacity and
confidence to effectively lead
and enact curriculum
improvement

Ensure consistently high-
quality learning experiences
and spaces for all children

Embed approaches that
promote emotional literacy,
communication and
high-quality
interactions

Refresh Curriculum Rationale

Emotional Development

Technology to
enhance creativity,
thinking and learning

Learning experiences engaging,
challenging and responsive

Children's Voice

'Up, Up and Away' nurturing
interactions

'Think Equal' programme

