***Our Children First:*** We want Falkirk to have an excellent reputation for delivering the best possible outcomes for young children and families.

**What do we want for each child in Falkirk to be:** *Joyful.* *Flourishing. Successful.*

* They will flourish and grow due to the high expectations and aspirations we set with and for them.
* They will have their unique skills, competences and dispositions valued and developed.
* They will be regarded as already highly competent, capable, creative thinkers and learners.
* They will be well-known by all adults who support them and be respected and valued as the individual that they are.
* They will learn with and from skilled educators who value play as the most effective way to support and evidence their children’s holistic learning and development.

**Our staff are our greatest asset in delivering our vision for children.**

**What do we want our staff to be:** *Passionate. Learned.**Reflective.*

* They are skilled and learned about how children learn and develop. They will continue to learn and develop throughout their career and we will provide them regular, worthwhile opportunities to do so.
* They will exhibit the highest degree of professionalism.
* They will guide children in their development and learning by motivating, inspiring and nurturing them in every interaction.
* They will listen and respond to the needs, views and preferences of each child and this will inform the decisions and choices that they make.
* They will be the strongest advocate for children’s rights and will hold others to account.

**What do we want our leaders to be:** *Inspiring.**Ambitious. Rigorous.*

* They will know what is needed to improve their service and relentlessly pursue excellence by setting exacting standards.
* They will lead collaborative efforts to learn from others and support the learning of others.
* They will know and describe the difference their setting makes to the lives and learning of children and families.
* They will know and remove barriers that prevent children reaching their full potential and will work with families and partners to achieve this.
* They will provide sector-leading strategic leadership and direction.

In doing all of this, we want children to make the best possible start to their learning in Falkirk. To succeed. To flourish. To thrive. We want to know that this has been achieved *because of* what we do in our ELC settings.

**Values**

Everybody Teach. Everybody Learn.

Image of the child

Continuous Learning

Listening

Personalisation

*‘Our Children First’*

*Joyful. Flourishing. Successful*

Our values describe how we deliver our vision. These are the behaviours, attitudes and beliefs that underpin and overarch what we are trying to achieve in Falkirk.

**Image of the child**: Our vision for children needs to value their innate capabilities and skills. In each setting the image of the child needs to be agreed, lived by and made visible to the whole community. Such an image helps to hold one another to account in all we do and helps guide practice in a way that respects Early Learning and Childcare as a unique stage in a child’s life and education.

**Personalisation**: Every Falkirk child, regardless of background, circumstance, age, ethnicity, gender, is of equal worth and importance in our settings. Each child matters. She and he do matter. Nothing else matters nearly as much. We must make visible to them how much they matter, as individuals, as part of a their family and as part of their early years’ community.

**Listening**: We must regard listening as a pedagogy through which children’s ideas, opinions and thoughts are made visible. The genuine art of listening to children to capture what they are communicating is fundamental and one that cannot be compromised in the pursuit of our vision. Children are listening too. This is a crucial part of how they learn. To be sure of living this value, be thoughtful about: what have children listened to and heard today?

**Continuous Learning**: Best practice in our early years’ settings requires an approach to learning, both informal and formal, that recognises its immediate impact. To support this approach, focused observation strategies need to be in place as well as environments that are set up reflecting the developmental stages and interests of the children they serve. Key to continuous learning is giving the children’s learning visibility across multiple platforms.

**Everybody Teach. Everybody Learn**: We learn from each other children and adults. In collaboration a dynamic learning relationship develops which allows a mutual respect to occur in relation to what they each has to offer. The learning offerings that educators/practitioners bring will, in Falkirk, be enhanced through challenging professional dialogues within the settings and beyond. This ensures that the outcome of these conversations support an overall improvement agenda. Students in Falkirk and new entrants to our ELC workforce will have the support of experienced professionals as well as access to such professional development opportunities. The combination of this will, in time, help them to integrate to the thinking and practice within Falkirk. The desire to learn from each other extends beyond staff in the settings and is reflected in the professional collaboration that takes place within our local Regional Improvement Collaborative, in Scotland and other international contexts. Through such collaborations at all levels our learning and successes will be shared and will over time significantly improve the life chances of all children. We can only teach if we are constantly on a learning journey, adults and children alike.