

Ballantrae Primary School

Early Learning and Child Care



Welcome to our Early Learning Centre

Head Teacher
ELC Principal Teacher
Class Teacher
EYP
EYP
EYP
EYP

Mrs Emma Robertson
Mrs Joanne Anley (Mon)
Mrs Michaela Brough
Ms Bonnie Clark
Mrs Anna Kosak
Mrs Amy MacKintosh (Mon-Wed)
Miss Gillian Baillie (Thurs & Fri)

Session 2026 - 2027

Dear Parent

On behalf of everyone at Ballantrae Primary School, welcome to our Early Learning and Childcare Centre. I hope you will find this handbook interesting and helpful. It is intended as a short introduction to our Early Learning and Childcare setting for parents of children attending during session 2026 – 2027.

Throughout this booklet we have tried to give you an impression of life in our early learning and childcare class and the ways we will cater for the individual needs of each child. If the answers to your queries are not here, please do not hesitate to contact me.

“Early Learning and Childcare will help young children gain vital language and learning skills, improve their social development and help them do better at school when the time comes. It will also support parents to work, train or study.”
Scottish Government

Parental involvement and working in partnership with parents is an important feature in our school life and we actively encourage close parent/staff links in a number of ways. You will find the early learning and childcare staff extremely approachable and only too willing to address any of your concerns.

Most children will progress from our early learning and childcare to our primary school and therefore we will have a long relationship. I look forward to getting to know your family and hope that you will soon feel a welcomed and valued member of our school community.

Yours sincerely



Emma Robertson
Head Teacher

Early Learning and Childcare Centre Information

Name:	Ballantrae Early Learning and Childcare Centre
Address:	The Vennel Ballantrae South Ayrshire KA26 0NH
Telephone:	01465 716803
Email address:	Ballantrae.Mail@south-ayrshire.gov.uk
Denominational Status	Non-denominational and co-educational
Accommodation and Capacity	The current roll is 18. The capacity agreed by Care Inspectorate is a maximum of 21 children in each session. However, this remains flexible according to the individual needs of our children.
Session times	The early learning and childcare session takes from 9am – 3pm
Access to Early learning and childcare room -	Parents should use the entrance to the early learning and childcare room at the front of the school. There is an area for our children to hang up their coats, cycling helmets and wellies.

When is Ballantrae ELC closed for holidays?

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL Educational Services				
School Holiday Arrangements – 2026/2027				
Term	Break	Dates of Attendance		Cumulative Working Days
First	Mid Term	Teachers (Inservice)	Tues	18 Aug 2026
		Teachers (Inservice)	Wed	19 Aug 2026
		Pupils return	Thurs	20 Aug 2026
		local holiday	Fri	*18 Sept 2026
		local holiday	Mon	*21 Sept 2026
		Close	Fri	9 Oct 2026
		Teachers (Inservice)	Mon	19 Oct 2026
		Re-open (Pupils)	Tues	20 Oct 2026
		Close	Tues	22 Dec 2026
				84
Second	Mid Term	Re-open	Tues	5 Jan 2027
		Close	Thurs	11 Feb 2027
		local holiday	Fri	12 Feb 2027
		local holiday	Mon	15 Feb 2027
		Teachers (Inservice)	Tues	16 Feb 2027
		Re-open (Pupils)	Wed	17 Feb 2027
		Close	Thurs	25 Mar 2027
Third		Re-open	Mon	12 Apr 2027
		May Day	Mon	3 May 2027
		Close	Wed	5 May 2027
		Teachers (Inservice)	Thurs	6 May 2027
		Re-open (Pupils)	Fri	7 May 2027
		local holiday	Fri	28 May 2027
		holiday	Mon	31 May 2027
		Close	Wed	30 June 2027
				195
	Session 2027/28	local holiday Teachers (Inservice) Teachers (Inservice)	Wed Thurs Fri	18 Aug 2027 19 Aug 2027 20 Aug 2027
NB	Good Friday: 26 March 2027			
* Please note that the September weekend is provisional subject to confirmation of the date of the Ayr Gold Cup				
Pupil's attendance will be 190 days after deducting 5 in-service days.				

WHAT IS BALLANTRAE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CLASS?

Our ELCC Class is:

A place where your child can:

make friends
learn to give and take

Where she/he can:

run
jump
climb
sing
make a mess

A place where your child can develop the ability to use language effectively by:

observing
creating



experimenting
questioning
talking

through play....

And Have Fun!

All of which is vital for their future development.

Early Learning and Child Care

The Scottish Government is committed to encouraging high quality, flexible early learning and childcare which is accessible and affordable for all families.

Free early learning and childcare is available for all three and four-year-olds and for around a quarter of two-year-olds in Scotland.

Scotland's free early learning and childcare helps to give children a great start to their education. It encourages them to learn through play with other children and promotes the development of language and social skills in a safe and fun environment. It also helps them to prepare for school.

It's good for parents too, giving them the flexibility they need to organise family life. It also allows parents to get back to work, study or training by supporting their childcare needs.

For most people early learning and childcare will mean a place at an early learning and childcare centre but it can also mean childminders, playgroups or other types of childcare providers.



Values and Aims of our ELCC Class

Values:

Responsible Respected Safe Happy Honest
Hardworking

We aim to:

- Provide a quality service for your child;
- Provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment in which children feel happy and secure;
- Develop each child's individual skills through interesting and appropriate activities;
- Create opportunities for children to extend their communication skills;
- Promote good manners, consideration for others and self discipline;
- Foster a genuine partnership with parents;
- Ensure that equal opportunities are given to all children in their development.

South Ayrshire Council Values

Respectful Positive Supportive

What age must my child be?

Two-year-old children are eligible for free early learning and childcare if their parent or carer receives:

Qualifying benefit for funded 2 year old placement	
Income Support	Universal Credit (where net earned income is £885 or less per month)
Income-based Job Seekers Allowance	State Pension Credit
Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance	Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
Child Tax Credit (where household income is £18,725 or less)	Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
Child Tax Credit & Working Tax Credit (where household income is £8,717 or less)	

In addition, children aged two and over who are (or have been at any point since turning two) looked after by a local council, the subject of a kinship care or guardianship order are eligible. Children of care experienced parents are also eligible for a 2 year old place.

We also offer places to 3 and 4 year old children with registration taking place each year in February. All places are allocated according to South Ayrshire Council's Pre-5 Admissions Policy at: [Register for Early Learning and Childcare - South Ayrshire Council \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/register-for-early-learning-and-childcare)

Please note that three year old children will now be given entry during the week after their third birthday, except for those who turn three from March – June, who will begin in August. A letter of confirmation of allocation of a place will be sent to parents sometime in the summer term by South Ayrshire Council.

There is now the option for any 2-4-year-old child's parents to buy further sessions if available. See South Ayrshire Council website for further details.

Parents and children will be invited along to the ELC just before they start early learning and childcare to visit the playroom and meet the staff.

When should my child come to Ballantrae's Early Learning and Childcare Class?

Ballantrae ELCC Class runs for five mornings and five afternoons per week during school terms.

Sessions are 9am – 3pm

Children are invited to begin ELC from the day all school children begin school for the session, or just after their third birthday or when allocated a place as a two-year-old by South Ayrshire Council. Initially each child will be encouraged to stay on his/her own for a short spell reassured that his/her parent is nearby.

Please note that many children will attend for the full number of sessions (5 per week) from Day 1 but some children may take longer to settle and choose to attend only a few sessions a week.

You should bring your child into the ELC at:

9.00am and you should collect him/her at **3.00 pm.**

Your child must be brought and collected by a responsible adult. In the interests of your child's safety, it is essential that you make a point of telling staff if someone else will be collecting your child. This avoids difficult situations arising when a child cannot be allowed to leave with an adult who is a 'stranger' to staff. Parents and carers must complete the signing in sheet each morning.

Regular attendance of the ELC is encouraged. However, please let us know or telephone the school (**01465 716803**) if your child is going to be absent.

Parents and children will enter and leave the ELC room by way of the ELCC entrance.

Security

All entrances to the ELC are security controlled for the safety of children and staff. At the end of each session children are gathered on the carpeted area. A member of staff will open their ELC door to let parents know it is time to enter. Children will only be allowed to leave the carpeted area when a member of staff has called their name. This ensures that no child leaves the ELC without his/her parent. Parents are asked to ensure our ELC doors stay closed at all times and that only adults operate ELC main doors.

Fire Procedure

Notices are displayed throughout the building including the ELC. There will be four fire drills throughout the school year. The first of these drills will be 'announced'. That means that it will be explained to the children what will happen and what they are expected to do. The rest are 'unannounced' with the children and staff actively encouraged to evacuate the building as quickly and calmly as possible. Returns for these fire drills are completed and forwarded to the Council Offices every June. In the event of an emergency, children would be taken to Ballantrae Community Centre from where you should collect your child.

Emergency Closure Arrangements

Should the ELC experience difficulties with severe weather, power failures, fuel supplies etc. it may be necessary to close the building. We will keep you closely informed via EduSpot Groupcall, telephone, notices, press or radio releases.

What will my child learn?

Play allows children to learn in a broad variety of ways – it allows them to listen and observe, to talk, to explore, investigate and experiment, and to learn about the world, which surrounds them. **Play is important** because it makes a powerful contribution to a young child's development and learning.

Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 targets 8 areas as recommended by Scottish Executive.

- **Expressive Arts**
Painting/drawing/dough/collage/music/drama
- **Health and Wellbeing**
Running/jumping/cutting/construction/fastening.
Home corner/group games/taking turns/form positive Relationships/respect needs and feelings of others.
- **Literacy and English**
Story telling/games/home corner activities/sand/water/ dough/library books and shared reading.
- **Social Studies**
Playing outdoors, local walks, ACE days
- **Numeracy and Maths**
number and maths ideas
- **Science,**
science activities, out and about
- **Technologies**
computer, interactive whiteboard, interactive toys
- **Religious and Moral**
Christmas and Easter activities, Chinese New Year, Divali

Throughout **ALL** activities, your child is learning the importance of talking to, sharing with and listening to others.

Children with Additional Support Needs.

At all times we try to ensure that each child progresses as an individual. Those children with additional support needs are given extra help and attention and the staff will provide a more structured programme. Advice may be sought with parental agreement from professionals such as: - psychologists, speech therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, and teachers for the visually and hearing impaired. We are an **inclusive** Early Learning and Childcare Centre and all children will be included regardless of their needs.

Parental Involvement

We encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's early education. If you wish to spend a morning within the ELC helping with daily activities, opportunities are made available to do so.

If you have any special knowledge or interest in a subject e.g. art and craft, nature, or are involved in something, which might interest your children, e.g. a fire person etc, please inform the ELC staff.

Information about ELC activities is always available on the noticeboard and via the termly newsletter. Alternatively, information is shared on our school blog:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sa/ballantraeprimaryschoolandeyc>

What should my child wear?

Children learn and enjoy themselves by having fun and taking part in a variety of activities including messy ones! We provide aprons to protect clothing or you can provide your child with an old adults' shirt or t-shirt, but would encourage you to dress your child in play clothes (e.g. tracksuits, sweatshirts, tee shirts) in order to:

- be comfortable
- prevent spoiling 'good clothes'
- encourage independent dressing and undressing.

Indoor, Soft Shoes

You are asked to provide indoor, soft shoes (e.g. slip-on plimsolls) for your child to change into when he/she takes part in gym. These should be named and left in ELC overnight and at weekends. Your child will learn to put on and take off shoes for use in the ELC playroom.

Outdoor shoes and clothing

Outdoor play is actively encouraged on a daily basis. We have a selection of outdoor clothing for your child to wear when playing outside. You do not need to supply this. Leave named clothing on your child's peg and outdoor footwear in the storage unit below the pegs. A change of old clothes should be kept in ELC in your child's bag on his/her peg.

Snack

Your child will not need a play piece since a healthy continental style ,breakfast/snack is provided each day. Fruit is also provided on a daily basis. **Please let us know if your child has any food allergies.** At snack time children practise washing their hands, preparing and tidying up after their snack and learn to become more independent.

Ballantrae ELCC takes part in Ayrshire and Arran Primary Care Dental Hygiene Programme. Each day, after snack, the children are encouraged to brush their teeth.



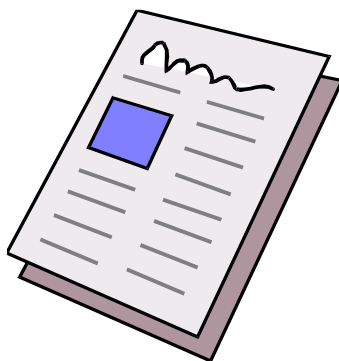
How will I know what is going on?

The school has an 'live' calendar, the link will be shared with parents when their child is fully enrolled.

A termly newsletter is issued by the school, to inform parents about what has been happening in school. All ELCC parents should receive one too. An additional ELCC newsletter is also given to parents to inform them of any particular Early Learning activities.

Please feel free to discuss your child's progress and any concerns you may have, either at the beginning or the end of the session, with staff.

Your child is required by the Care Inspectorate to have a Personal Plan which has to be set up within 28 days of your child starting nursery. Thereafter, Personal Plans should be reviewed at least every 6 months. Ballantrae Personal Plan Policy is to regularly update Personal Plans on a termly basis and you will be invited to a 'Stay and Play' session with your child, at which time you and ELC staff, will have the opportunity to share your child's progress in a mutual discussion. Your child will also be involved in his/her Care Plan.



My Learning Journey

Your child's progress will be observed routinely during their play session and information collected will form part of his or her profile on Learning Journals. Learning Journals information will also include your child's Care Plan. Early Years staff will track your child's progress through CfE and Milestones achieved, sharing observations and stories with you at home. This information will continue into P1, and beyond, and help your child transition smoothly from ELCC to primary school.

The approach is based on the following 6 principles:-

1. Ensures a shared understanding child development and learning in the Early Years.
2. Is dependant on the professional judgement of Early Years staff in collaboration with parents and families.
3. Starts before your child starts Early Years via home visits and transition days.
4. Includes children, who are invited to express their views at all times.
5. Uses current curriculum guidelines – Building the Ambition, 0-3 guidelines and Curriculum for Excellence.
6. Reflects good practice in children's development.

Next Steps

Most children who attend Ballantrae ELC Class will progress to Primary 1 at Ballantrae Primary School. Staff from school and ELC will work together, throughout your child's time in nursery, to ensure a smooth transition from Early Years to Primary. Staff also liaise closely with other ELC establishments and Primary schools to provide a smooth transition for children and continuity for parents. A profile and summative report, which details your child's learning, will be passed on to the receiving establishment.

Outings and Parent Consent Forms

When outings are planned you will be asked to complete a consent form giving your permission for your child to take part.

Please note that children can only take part in outings when necessary consent forms have been received by the Office Staff.



Transport

Transport is not normally provided for children attending Early Learning and Childcare establishments.

Medical Information

If your child has any medical problems, it is important that staff are informed and made aware of any difficulties and that parents complete the necessary paperwork. For more serious medical conditions, a Health Care Plan will require to be put in place. This will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Medication

If your child requires medication during his/her time at Early learning and childcare— please inform the staff. It is essential for you to keep us up to date with relevant medical information. Parents must complete a medicine administration form, which is available from the school office. All medicines supplied by parents are required to be presented in the original packaging with administration details clearly stated on it and within use by dates.



If your child is unwell

The ELC staff would appreciate a telephone call if your child is not able to attend ELC on a particular day, just in case they have planned certain activities.

If your child becomes ill while at ELC we will try to contact you or the emergency contact, which you give us on your child's admission to ELC, as soon as possible.

If your child has an infectious disease such as chickenpox, please inform the ELC staff as this will help contain outbreaks.

We have been advised by the school nurse, that any child with sickness or diarrhoea should stay off ELC for 48 hours after the last episode.



Accidents

These will be dealt with within the ELCC. We will always inform you about any minor accidents/incidents when you collect your child, these will be recorded in our first aid book. If your child is seriously injured, we will make every effort to contact you immediately. All accidents/incidents are recorded with a note of action taken.

Visits by Medical Staff

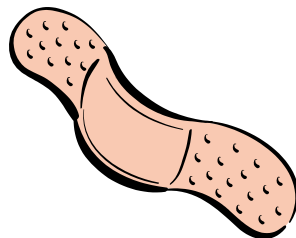
All children in their ELCC year will be seen by the orthoptist. Parents are invited to be present during the visit.



The Dental Health Co-ordinator also visits the ELCC on a regular basis.

First Aid

All children who require First Aid will be referred to the paediatric First Aider; Ms Clark, Mrs Kosak, Ms Baillie or Mrs Mackintosh.

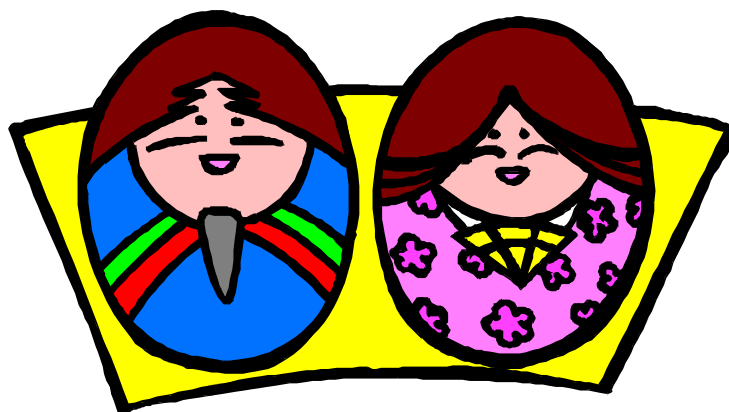


Equality

Ballantrae ELCC is committed to ensuring that no service user will be subject to discrimination.

All children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards others whose gender, language, religion or culture, for example, is different from their own.

Parents from Ethnic Minorities who celebrate particular religious' festivals may wish their children to be absent in order to attend religious events. Such occasions will be supported by the establishment.



Child Protection

School staff provide support to children and young people in their daily work and have a vital role to help protect them from harm. School staff help keep children and young people safe and well by:

- Helping them learn about their personal safety
- Being a trusted adult who children and young people may turn to for help, and who will take them seriously
- Identifying when children and young people may need help
- Understanding the steps that must be taken when there are concerns for children's and young people's safety and well-being.

The school has two **Child Protection Co-ordinators; Mrs Robertson, Head Teacher and Mrs Gregg, Principal Teacher**, who will co-ordinate the school's response to concerns for children and young people's safety and wellbeing.

The Authority has a designated officer for Child Protection who will ensure schools work effectively to keep children safe and well.

If you have any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, including a 'gut feeling', talk about this to the school's Child Protection Co-ordinators or another member of staff.

How can I help as a Parent?

Please:-

- Keep us up to date with any changes to address or telephone number
- Inform school if emergency contact number changes
- Clearly name your child's clothing/footwear
- Inform school if child is being collected by another adult
- Let school know if your child may be upset by something, which has happened at home e.g. death of a pet or illness of a family member
- Encourage your child to talk about his/her experiences in ELCC
- Encourage your child to move carefully within the school, to use toilets properly and to respect other people's belongings
- Support the School Parent Council, which raises funds for the whole school including the ELCC. Details of Fundraising events are included in newsletters
- Volunteer when help is required for outings, parties etc.
- Enjoy your child's time in the Early Learning and Childcare Class!



Please Note

Although the information in this handbook is correct at the time of printing there could be changes affecting any of the matters dealt within it, either before your child's placement begins or during the course of their placement. The head of the establishment will tell you of any changes to the information.

Data Protection Act

Personal information on children, their parents or guardians may be processed for teaching, registration, assessment and other administration duties. The information is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will only be disclosed in accordance with the appropriate code of practice.

Any non-essential or outdated data held for your child will be destroyed in compliance with GDPR guidelines.

National Standards for Early Education and Childcare

The Health and Social Care Standards for childcare cover services for children and young people up to the age of 16 years which are to be regulated under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 ('the Act'). They apply equally to services operating in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and in domestic or non-domestic premises which provide services for over two hours a day and for six days or more each year.

The range of services covered include

- Early learning and childcare classes
- Crèches
- Childminders
- After school clubs and
- Playgroups

Providers will use the standards to find out what is expected of them in offering childcare and early education services. The standards make it clear that everything about the service should lead to you and your child enjoying good quality services. They should guide the provider over who to employ and how they should manage the service.

The standards reflect the rights of children and young people, as set down in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. They also reflect the general principles applying to all the standards developed by the National Care Standards Committee.

The main principles are dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential and equality and diversity.

Complaint Procedure

Ballantrae Primary actively promotes partnerships with parents.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the Council.

If you have any comments or complaints please approach the Head Teacher in the first instance. If the Head Teacher does not resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you should :

Visit one of South Ayrshire Council's Customer Service Centres, or any local office.

- Phone South Ayrshire Council Customer Services Team on 0300 123 0900
- E-mail: listeningtoyou@south-ayrshire.gov.uk
- Write to: Customer Services, South Ayrshire Council, Freepost NAT 7733, Ayr, KA7 1DR

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service.

If you have a concern (early years and childcare only) and wish to complain to the Care Inspectorate directly, please email: concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot

Or write to:

Headquarters

Compass House,
11 Riverside Drive,
Dundee, DD1 4NY
Tel: 0345 6009527

We are always anxious to maintain and improve our service. If you have any suggestions to make about the service, please contact the head of establishment in the first instance.