



E.L.C.

ELC Handbook

2025-2026



Blackwood Primary ELC Vision Statement



At Blackwood Primary Early Learning & Childcare we strive to establish a caring, nurturing and stimulating environment which encourages creativity and curiosity and recognises each child as an individual, enabling them to attain and achieve.

ELC Values – F.R.E.D

Our values are central to all aspects of life in our setting. We work together as a team with staff, children, parents and carers to embed these values across all aspects of life in the ELC and the wider community.

Friendship	To build positive relationships with other children and adults within the nursery and school.
Respect	To work together to value everyone in our nursery and the school and become responsible citizens.
Equality	To understand that everyone is equal and should receive the same opportunities and support as required.
Determination	To believe in yourself to be the best that you can even if things are difficult.

Aims of our ELC

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, supportive and nurturing learning environment which builds resilience and where every child is valued and respected as an individual.
- Create an enabling environment, both indoors and outdoors, which encourages creativity, curiosity and inquiry through the use of real-life and natural resources.
- Deliver a curriculum which offers high quality, open ended and challenging experiences where adults sensitively intervene to support and facilitate children's learning.
- Embed the development of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing naturally within children's play experiences.
- Build positive partnerships with our parents/carers, other professionals and the wider community to support children in their learning and development.

Our Staff Team

Head Teacher	Ms Christine McMillan
Depute Head Teacher <i>(ASN responsibility for ELC)</i>	Mrs Jenny Bowman
Team Leaders	Ms Freda Marshall (<i>Mon & Tue</i>) Mrs Rebecca Lennox (<i>Wed-Fri</i>)
Early Years Workers	Miss Emily Biggart Mrs Leighann Bryce <i>Mon, Tue and Wed. (pm)</i> Mrs Joanne Curley <i>Mon & Tues.</i> Miss Lorna Forbes Mrs Jennifer Inglis Miss Kay Jones <i>Mon, Tues & alternate Wed.</i> Ms Freda Marshall <i>Wed, Thu & Fri</i> Miss Lynzi Morrison <i>Maternity leave.</i> Mrs Heather Stewart <i>Wed. (am), Thur. & Fri.</i> Mrs Arlene Thomson <i>Thur., Fri. & alternate Wed.</i> Mrs Nicola Carlin <i>Maternity cover.</i>
Support Worker	Mrs Lindsay McGauley <i>9:30am-1:30pm (Mon-Fri)</i>

Admissions

If your child will have their 3rd birthday in the period between 1 March and 28 Feb in the coming year you should complete an application by the end of February. If your child is already three and needs an ELC place you should apply as soon as possible.

You can apply for a funded place in any of the Council's Primary school ELC classes and centres or with funded providers and childminders who are in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to provide funded placements.

To apply for a free childcare place, you should contact your first choice ELC to arrange to complete an application with them.

The closing date for applications is the **last day in February** each year. If you miss the closing date, your application will be held for the 'late application' process which starts in June each year. Late applications may not get their chosen establishment as there may be no spaces remaining, however, South Lanarkshire Council will consider the information provided in your application and allocate where spaces are available.

Please note the last date that South Lanarkshire Council will accept an application for an Early Learning and Childcare place for the current year will be **30 November each year**. Applications received after this date, will be held until admissions for the following year. You will be required to provide your child's full birth certificate and two proofs of address (no more than 6 months old) to the ELC when enrolling at the start of your child's placement.

All applications for the annual admissions for the start of a new session which are received by the last day in February will be considered at meetings in March and April and parents will be issued letters confirming placements as soon as possible afterwards. South Lanarkshire Council will send an update via the Council's website and Facebook pages to advise when the letters will be sent.

The Head Teacher will keep a register of all applicants and the information contained in the applications will be considered by the admissions panel to assist in the allocation of places. The admissions panel will meet annually to allocate places in line with South Lanarkshire's Admissions Policy. Please note that the length of time a child's name has been on the register will not affect the child's priority for admission. Parent/carers can ask to see their application form at any time. If circumstances change which affect your application, you should inform the Head Teacher in writing.

Children who are not aged three before the first intake in August, are entitled to start the ELC immediately following their 3rd birthday (1st Monday after their 3rd birthday). Children who turn three after 31st March will not be able to start until the first intake of the next academic year in August.

Attendance

All children are entitled to 1140 hours of funding which in Blackwood ELC is Monday to Friday, 9am-3pm, term time. If your child is not going to be attending for their full 5 day entitlement, please let a member of staff know. In the event that your child is absent we ask that you contact the school office (by phone or email) by 9.30 am. If you have not contacted the school by this time, a member of the support staff will phone you to ask about the absence in line with South Lanarkshire Council's attendance policy and our Duty of Care.

Address	Blackwood Primary School & ELC Carlisle Road Blackwood Lanark ML11 9AT
Telephone	01555 892438
Website	www.blackwood-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk
Email	gw14blackwoodoffice@glow.sch.uk

Arrival and Collection of Children

It is expected that a responsible adult over the age of sixteen will bring a child to and from the ELC. Parents/Carers are asked to provide a list of adults who are allowed to collect their child along with a password. In the interests of your child's safety you should make a point of telling the staff if he or she is to be collected by someone not known to the staff. This avoids difficult situations when a child cannot be allowed to leave with an adult who is unknown to staff.

Emergency Contacts

Parents/carers are asked to provide contact details for use in case of an emergency. These emergency contacts must be local (where possible) and must be contactable by telephone. You are also asked to keep the ELC up-to-date with any changes in this information.

Emergency Closure Arrangements

The ELC will be open during the times already outlined, but on some occasions circumstances arise which may mean that the ELC has to close. Establishments may be affected, for example, by severe weather or power failures. If this happens, we will do all we can to let you know about the details of closure and re-opening. We may keep in touch by telephone, text message, the school website (www.blackwood-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk), in the press and local radio and on the South Lanarkshire Council Website (www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk).

Parking

Please note that parking for parents/carers is situated at the Community Car Park at the rear of the school. Parking for Blue Badge holders is available in the school car park. Please speak to staff regarding this.

No Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted within the school building or grounds.

Pets

Animals including dogs are not permitted in the school grounds.

Mobile Phones

As many mobile phones feature a camera, the use of mobile phones is not permitted within the ELC in order to protect children's privacy.

Suitable Clothing

Children often have the best fun when they are doing messy work. We will always try to make sure they wear aprons but accidents may happen so please dress your child in suitable clothes.

Please also make sure that your child has suitable outdoor clothing as outdoor play is a regular part of the ELC day. A change of footwear is required every day. These should be rubber soled gym shoes/trainers for indoors and trainers/welly boots for outdoors.

Although we do not have a compulsory uniform, we do have Blackwood ELC polo-shirts and sweatshirts which can be purchased through our website shop.

It is essential that you put your child's name on all clothing (including jackets) and shoes that are likely to be taken off in the playroom or left on their coat peg.

Insurance

Parent/carers should ensure that valuable items are not left in the ELC, as the authority has no insurance to cover the loss of such personal items. Claims submitted are likely to be met only where the authority can be shown to have been negligent.

Health and Wellbeing

Care Plans

In order to support us to meet the needs of the children in our ELC, all children will have their own personal care plan. Your child's keyworker will create this with you and it will be reviewed at least every six months to ensure the information is up-to-date and relevant. The information recorded will include your child's family, emergency contacts, their eating habits and toileting needs, who is able to drop off and collect them and any medical information.

GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is a national policy and programme which is implemented in Lanarkshire. It promotes key values in working with children and their families across all agencies to help all children and young people to grow, develop and reach their full potential under the eight well-being indicators; safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Part of the GIRFEC agenda is that all children from birth to the age of 18 are allocated a 'named person'. Your child's Health Visitor will be their named person from the age of 10-14 days until your child attends primary school. Once your child enters primary education the named person is usually the Head Teacher.

Child Protection

As part of the Care and Welfare Policy of SLC we are committed to making sure that children in our setting are cared for and that an environment exists where children feel safe and valued and where all decisions are made in the best interests of the child concerned. Child Protection guidelines are in place to ensure the safety of our children and we have a Child Protection Co-ordinator to whom all concerns should be referred.

**Child Protection Co-ordinator:
Ms Christine McMillan (Head Teacher)**

Health Promotion

We are a Health Promoting setting. Since our registration in the Health Promoting Nursery Scheme in June 2005 we have achieved our Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Health and Wellbeing is a core area within Curriculum for Excellence.

Throughout the year we promote a healthy lifestyle with various talks, displays and activities for children, parents/carers and staff. We promote oral hygiene by running a tooth brushing programme which involves the children brushing their teeth on a daily basis. This is an 'opt out' programme, so if you do not wish your child to participate please inform us in writing.

Blackwood Primary School & ELC have a Travel Plan to encourage children to walk to the ELC to improve their health and look after the environment. As part of this plan we encourage parent/carers to walk with their children. If, however, you have to bring your car please park at a safe distance from the school and walk your child round. This helps to ensure your child's safety.

Snacks and the Promotion of Healthy Eating

Your child will be offered a snack each morning. Our snack is currently being provided by the South Lanarkshire Catering Service. The snack will consist of either cereal, toast, seasonal fruit or salad items each day such as apples, bananas, melon, strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. Water or milk will be offered as a drink. Your child will also have access to water throughout the day.

If your child has an allergy to any foods please advise one of our Team Leaders and we will ensure an appropriate snack is available.

All children attending our ELC setting are entitled to a free school lunch.

Children are also able to bring their own packed lunch if they would prefer. Please include an ice pack to ensure their food remains chilled.

We are a 'Nut Free' school and ELC so please take care to check the ingredients of the food you provide for your child.

We are often asked about suggestions for what to put in children's packed lunches. Please find a copy of our suggestions leaflet on our website.

Medical Information

Medication

If your child is in need of medication during his/her time in the ELC you should discuss his/her requirements with the Team Leader. You will be asked to complete a medication form for each item of medication. All medication paperwork will be reviewed with you every 28 days.

If your child has any medical conditions which will impact their health when in the ELC then these should be discussed with the ELC Team Leader. It is important to let us know if your child has any allergies.

Please note that for children who have had sickness and/or diarrhoea there is a 48-hour exclusion after the last episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea. This is to ensure that the infection is not passed on to other children, thus risking re-infection to your own child. This guidance is given from NHS Lanarkshire.

http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

If Your Child Becomes Ill

If your child becomes ill while in the ELC you will be contacted by telephone. If you are unavailable, the child's emergency contact will be phoned and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. **Please keep us up-to-date with any changes to this information.**

Toileting, Minor Accidents and Upsets

Parent/carers are asked to complete a consent form to confirm whether they wish their child to be changed if they were to have a toileting accident. Parent/carers will be discretely notified if your child has had a toileting accident. We have a limited supply of spare clothes and so would therefore kindly ask that parent/carers provide a spare change of clothes in their bag each day.

Minor cuts and grazes etc. will be washed and a dressing (plaster) may be applied. Ice packs will be applied to bumps etc.

Visits to the Establishment by Medical Staff

From time to time various members of South Lanarkshire Health Board will visit the Nursery e.g. Child Smile who provide fluoride varnish treatment for children, or the orthoptist who conducts the pre-school Visual Screening programme. The visual Screening is an 'opt out' programme and so if you do not wish your child to participate please inform us in writing.

Our Curriculum

Children's learning and development begins in the home and is influenced by the relationships they have with family, friends and the community in which they live. As children grow they develop their identity and interests and begin to understand the world around them. Each child is a unique individual who is keen to learn. Developing secure attachments and positive relationships is essential to support their learning and development. Our curriculum focusses on their holistic development – physical, emotional, cognitive and social.

Much of our day is spent outdoors exploring the natural environment. Our children have the opportunity to explore different areas within the school grounds. Large wooden sheds and a hobbit hut have been erected to provide further outdoor learning spaces and shelter.

The Power of Play

Children learn best when they learn through play. Play provides the opportunity for children to develop skills, knowledge and relationships and allows them to make sense of the world around them. It provides an opportunity for children to practice their skills and to try new things. During play children explore and experiment and test their ideas.

The Curriculum

Our Curriculum is based on the Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 experiences and outcomes within the following curricular areas:

- Expressive Arts
- Health & Wellbeing
- Languages
- Maths
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

Supporting children to become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

The experiences and outcomes within each area identify the knowledge and skills children will develop as they progress through their education.

Information about what your child is learning can be found in our displays, Parent/Carer Information Board, monthly SWAY newsletters and Online Learning Journals. If you would like any additional information on the curriculum please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff.

Online Learning Journals

Online Learning Journals are used to record children's learning and celebrate their achievements. Each child will have their own individual journal which parents/carers can access using a password and pin code. The journals help develop two-way communication between home and ELC, with parents/carers being able to post comments and share learning and achievements from home. The children are also encouraged to share their thoughts about their learning.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process within the ELC. It is usually done through observation, discussion and close monitoring of progression within the eight areas of the curriculum. Assessment, both formal and informal, is vital so that staff know children's ability levels and can match activities to their needs and interests. This allows children to progress according to their abilities and to reach their potential. Each child has their own Online Learning Journal which parents/carers are able to access and contribute to.

Supporting Children

In order to meet the needs of each individual child in our care, we may at times need to work in partnership with other services. These can include our Early Years Specialist Support Teacher, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Audiology and Psychological Services. Parent/carers are asked to sign an Information Sharing Protocol in order to enable us to discuss your child with any of these services.

Partnership with Parent/carers

As parents/carers we want you to be:

- Welcomed and given an opportunity to be involved in the life of the ELC;
- Fully informed about your child's learning;
- Encouraged to make an active contribution to your child's learning;
- Able to support learning at home;
- Encouraged to express your views and be involved in forums and discussions on education related issues.

Some useful information contacts for parent/carers to find out more on education are as follows:

- Parentzone – www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk
- Engage Parent Forum – www.engageforeducation.org
- National Parent Forum for Scotland –
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone
- South Lanarkshire Council – www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Reporting

During your child's time in the ELC a profile of their achievements is compiled. Our ELC uses Online Learning Journals which parent/carers are able to access at home. Parents/Carers are also invited to discuss their child's progress during the year either at our annual parent/carer consultation meetings or when reviewing and setting your child's individual learning targets. When children are moving on to Primary One, a transition report is completed in May/June for each child. Both the parent/carers and the feeder primary school receive a copy.

Website & Newsletter

Our school and ELC website provides a range of information. Newsletters are produced on a termly basis to keep parent/carers up to date with learning and events taking place. If you have any questions about learning experiences please do not hesitate to discuss these with us. Equally, if you feel you could make a contribution to a particular focus please speak to a member of staff.

Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour (PPRUDB)

We understand the importance of establishing and maintaining positive relationships and the impact it can have on behaviours. We recognise and understand that all behaviour is communication and that distressed behaviours are responses to anxiety, confusion, vulnerability and a range of our needs. Our staff are trained in recognising and responding to distressed behaviours. We work with our children, staff, families and external agencies to ensure we are Getting it Right for Every Child.

The Wider Community

Our ELC in the Community

During the year children make visits to places of interest around Blackwood and Kirkmuirhill to see the changing seasons and to explore the local area. Where possible, visitors from the community such as the local librarian, the fire service and the police officers are invited into the nursery to speak to the children and explain their work.

Other Services within the Community

Attached to the school is the Community Wing, providing access to a library and gym. There are a variety of Early Years Activities available in the Community Wing, please speak to a member of staff if you require any more information.

Transfer to Primary One

Children normally transfer to Primary School between the ages of four and a half and five and a half. Registration takes place in January of the year the child starts school. The dates for this registration will be given in the local press and information will be displayed on the Parent's notice board.

Links with Blackwood Primary School

Most children who attend our nursery move on to attend Blackwood Primary School whose catchment area covers Blackwood, Kirkmuirhill and Auchenheath.

The ELC is an integral part of the school and is included in as many aspects of school life as possible. Children use the gym hall and where possible, are included in performances which take place within the school.

Liaison arrangements allow Primary One teachers to visit the ELC regularly and ELC staff to visit Primary One. Before children move to P1 their Keyworker will discuss their progress and learning with the P1 teacher.

Links with Other Primary Schools

For ELC children who will be commencing Primary One at another school in the area we have a range of transition opportunities. Teachers from these schools are invited to the ELC to meet your child and to discuss their progress and learning with their Keyworker.

Other Information

Maintaining a Quality Service

We are always keen to maintain and improve our service. We have a compliments and concerns box in our parents/carers area where we value feedback.

If you have a complaint about our ELC we would appreciate you letting us know. We will deal with your complaint as promptly as possible, but always within 20 working days. You are not obliged to bring your complaint directly to us, you can take it straight to the Care Inspectorate.

Self-evaluation

All stakeholders are involved in the evaluation process in the ELC. *How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare?* and the Care Inspectorate's *Quality Framework for the Daycare of Children* are used by staff as part of our self-evaluation process. A variety of approaches are used to consult with parent/carers including questionnaires, evaluations and Parent Council meetings. Consultation with children is an integral part of our practice.