

**Darvel Early Childhood Centre
Campbell Street East
Darvel
KA17 0BP**

Telephone No:	01560 320785
Email:	Lisa.Rattray@eastayrshire.org.uk
Centre Blog:	https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/eastayrshiredarveleccmain2017/
Twitter:	@DarvelECC
Centre App:	School App for Parents – Darvel Early Childhood Centre
Denominational Status (if any):	Non-denominational
Centre Roll:	88 full time places
Further information:	www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/schoolhandbooks

Section 1

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am delighted to welcome both you and your child to Darvel Early Childhood Centre. During your time here I hope you will feel very welcome and will enjoy your experiences as a partner in your child's learning journey.

Partnerships are extremely important to us where communication, respect and trust are fostered. We strive to create a happy, fun environment, where children will develop and learn at their own pace. Staff are skilled in observation and assessment, which allows them to build on prior learning and best support the needs of your child.

I hope you will find the information in this handbook helpful, however if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate in contacting myself, or a member of the team at any time and we shall be happy to assist.

Kind regards,

Lisa Rattray

Head of Centre







Our Vision

Working together to support children to believe in themselves, build friendships and be the best they can be.

Our Values

Confidence, Kindness, Independence, Happiness, Respectfulness and Resilience

Our Aims

-  To create a safe, happy and nurturing environment in which everyone feels valued.
-  To promote independence, self-esteem and confidence.
-  To provide learning experiences that promotes challenge, curiosity and enjoyment.
-  To facilitate opportunities both indoors and outdoors that promote a positive attitude to learning.
-  To work together with parents, partners and our local community to enhance learning.
-  To involve the children in the life of the centre and develop a real sense of ownership.

Our vision, values and aims reflect the key principles of Health and Social Care Standards, Curriculum for Excellence, Pre-Birth to 3, Realising the Ambition and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare.

Our dedicated and experienced staff team aim to provide the highest quality of early learning and childcare for all children and their families. It is important to us that your child finds learning fun and receives lots of praise and encouragement as they encounter new challenges in their development.

Darvel Early Childhood Centre moved to a new purpose built premise in August 2012 and offers excellent accommodation and facilities for children, staff and parents. The centre is open during term time and can accommodate 88 children aged 3-5 years.

Hours of Opening

8.45am-2.45pm

There will be a soft start at the beginning of the day from 8:45am – 9:00am and a soft finish from 2.35pm – 2.45pm. This allows a flexible service to accommodate siblings who may attend local schools.

The building comprises of two playrooms and an excellent outdoor space. Our new, purpose designed outdoor area opened in January 2020 and provides a very exciting outdoor space for children to explore. The children have daily opportunities to access our outdoor space and is an integral part of the children's learning experiences. Children regularly participate in outdoor learning sessions at Lanfine Estate, woodland area in our community.

Darvel Early Childhood Centre plays an important role within our local community. We strive to maintain close links with key agencies within the local community; and seek to develop these links wherever possible.

- ✚ We actively encourage parental and community involvement.
- ✚ We promote parental involvement through various group work programmes facilitated by our Early Learning and Childcare Practitioners, Early Learning and Community Practitioner and other partners.
- ✚ We provide work experience for secondary school pupils, NC/HNC/HND Education and Childcare Students and BA Childhood Studies Students.
- ✚ We have close links with Community Police, the Fire Service and Health Visitors.
- ✚ We work closely with receiving Primary Schools throughout the year.
- ✚ We make regular visits to places in the local community throughout the year, for example, the library, post office, shops, local green space and park.
- ✚ We involve community children's entertainers throughout the year during special events.

Section 2

Transitions

Enrolment

Darvel Early Childhood Centre will send confirmation of your child's place at the centre in May/June and inform you whether they have been allocated a place. At this point, you will be invited to visit to enrol your child.

In order for us to complete enrolment forms, it would be helpful if you bring the following information with you:-

- Details of two emergency contacts (name, address and telephone number)
- Doctor's name and telephone number.
- The name of the person who will usually be responsible for taking your child to and from the Early Childhood Centre.

In addition to this factual information, we would like to know about interests your child may have and we will ask you to complete a Personal Plan which allows us to best meet the needs of your child.

When your child starts at our Early Childhood Centre, he/she will not stay for a full session until fully settled in. In some cases the child's entry may be staggered, and gradually built up to 5 full sessions.

Induction

Prior to your child starting at the Early Childhood Centre they will be invited to visit for a short time, we call this stay and play. This will be an opportunity to meet their key worker and other staff and become familiar with the environment.

When children come for their first session you are welcome to stay to help settle your child and support them to become familiar with their new surroundings. Settling procedures after this time will be individual to the child's needs and if appropriate they may have reduced sessions to allow more time to settle in gradually.

A smooth transition from home to the Early Childhood Centre is essential in ensuring your child feels safe, secure and confident within this new learning environment. Through our enrolment and induction procedures we hope that parents/carers feel well informed and families feel welcome and relaxed in building new relationships with our staff team. During the initial settling in period, Key Workers will observe your child as they play and will use this information to have a short, informal discussion with you after 3-4 weeks to let you know how your child is settling.

Should your child transfer to our establishment from another centre, or move onto another centre, it is best practice for establishments to share assessment information gathered to ensure smooth transition and continued progress.

Transition to Primary

We work closely with staff in receiving Primary Schools, to ensure a seamless transition to Primary 1 for children. There are 3 primary schools within the local area, which the majority of our children attend. These are Darvel, Newmilns and St Sophia's Primary Schools.

We enjoy a close working relationship with Darvel Primary, made possible by our joint campus. We have a number of planned experiences throughout the year and through excellent partnership working, we are able to use the school on a frequent basis to familiarise children with a new learning and teaching environment.

In accordance with East Ayrshire Council's policies and procedures we assist in a range of ways to ensure an effective transition from our Early Childhood Centre to Primary School for children who have been identified as requiring Additional Support for Learning. Transition and support planning takes place at an early stage, involving parents/carers, key staff from the Early Childhood Centre, Primary School and professionals who may provide support to your child.

Associated Primary Schools

Darvel Primary School, Campbell Street East, Darvel

Tel 01560 320257

Head Teacher: Mrs Kirsty Doncaster

Newmilns Primary School, 200 Loudoun Road, Newmilns

Tel 01560 320915

Head Teacher: Mrs Jillian McCracken

St. Sophia's Primary School, Nelville Drive, Galston

Tel 01563 820521

Head Teacher Mrs Elizabeth Heron

Staff Information

Head of Centre	Mrs Lisa Rattray
Senior Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner	Mrs Paula Cadwell
Early Learning and Childcare Practitioners	Mrs Susan Barbour Mrs Jenna Costello Mrs Michelle Hamilton Mrs Louise Rannochoan Mrs Jan Moir Mrs Sandra McCafferty Mrs Caroline Wallace (Mon-Wed) Mrs Claire McAllister (Wed-Fri) Mrs Deborah Fitzgerald (Mon-Wed)
Early Learning and Childcare Support Assistants	Miss Lindsay Byers
Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (Community)	Mrs Alison McLeod Mrs Karen Connor
Clerical Assistant	Mrs Annette Milton (Mon-Wed) Mrs Julie Ireland (Wed-Fri)

Making contact/parental complaints

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of provision made by the establishment, you should contact the establishment in the first instance. Our aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible at the first point of contact. If you remain dissatisfied you can raise a formal complaint with East Ayrshire Council, details on this can be found on East Ayrshire Council's website.

You have the right to contact Care Inspectorate with any complaint that you have about the centre. The Care Inspectorate is responsible for regulating the service we provide.

Online: www.careinspectorate.com Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com

Phone 0845 600 9527

Additional Support for Learning

Darvel Early Childhood Centre provides an inclusive learning environment for all children. Every child has the right to be included and supported. With the prior consent of parents/carers, staff may discuss the support needs of individual children with a range of professionals in order to ensure that individual support/learning plans are appropriate to the specific needs of the child. In line with legislation, parents/carers/children and young people will be fully consulted at all stages.

Advice and support may be sought from other appropriate staff within the establishment and/or through consultation with a range of professionals, for example, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Health Visitor, Community Paediatrician, Visual Impairment Team and Audiologist.

The Educational Psychologist visits the establishment regularly to work with staff to ensure we provide the most effective support possible to children who are experiencing barriers to learning. Their role is often in giving advice to the establishment and in the sharing of expertise with staff. Some children may have needs that are more complex and may require additional support, therefore a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting will take place with parents and all relevant professionals to discuss and agree appropriate supports. This will be recorded in the Child's Plan. Parents are fully involved within this process and are supported through a multi-agency team to ensure the child's individual needs are considered and the best level of support is available.

Section 3

Security/Attendance

We are very aware of security at Darvel Early Childhood Centre. The front door will remain locked at all times and any visitor must ring the buzzer for entry to the building. Please ensure that the Early Childhood Centre door is firmly closed behind you when you leave the building.

All staff working in our Early Childhood Centre wear name badges for identification.

Any visitor unknown to staff members must show evidence of identity before entering the building. Visitors will also be expected to enter their details into the visitor's book which is placed near the door.

It is expected that a responsible adult (over 16 years) will bring your child to and from the Early Childhood Centre. Parents and carers bringing and collecting children will be recorded on our sign in/out sheets. In the interest of your child's safety, you should make a point of telling the Head of Centre or Key Worker if he or she is to be collected by someone not known to the Head of Centre or staff members. This is essential as children will not be allowed to leave with someone unknown to staff.

If your child is not able to attend, in the interests of safety, could you please notify staff as soon as possible (preferably by 9.00am on date of absence).

On arrival at the Early Childhood Centre each day, children are greeted by a member of staff at the door, encouraged to hang their belongings on their peg and wash their hands. Coat pegs are available within the playroom.

Parents and carers are asked to use car park facilities across the road from Darvel Early Childhood Centre. The Early Childhood Centre car park is for staff and disabled use only and to provide access for emergency services. Please do not park over road safety markings/zigzags.

School Holidays and In-Service Days

east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/S/School-Holidays-2023-24.pdf

Dress Code

Polo shirts and sweatshirts with the school logo are available to purchase from Balmoral Mill Shop in Galston or Myclothing.com, although it is not compulsory. The children will be involved in active, hands on play and we would recommend clothing that children can freely move about in and manage when using the toilet. Clothes might get a bit muddy and messy, so no 'good' clothes.

Waterproofs and wellies will be required; we have a small number in the ECC for children to borrow if your child does not have their own.

Please ensure your child's name is on ALL items of clothing/footwear and that you provide a bag with a change of clothes.

Medical Matters

Childsmile

The NHS provide tooth brushing resources for our children to brush teeth daily. Parents that do not wish their child to brush would contact the centre to opt out of tooth brushing.

Medication/Allergies

If your child is required to take any medication or has any allergies, please inform management or your child's keyworker. You will then be asked to complete a medical consent form and this will be reviewed every term.

If your child is unwell

If your child is at all feeling unwell before your session is due to start, please do not bring them and call the ECC to let us know describing their symptoms. It is paramount that we try our utmost to keep everyone safe and well.

Can we also remind you of the importance of notifying us of any changes to your contact details.

Minor Accidents

A trained first aider in our centre will treat any minor accidents. We will always phone you if your child bumps their head, we will continue to monitor throughout the session and notify of any changes.

Sunscreen/Sunhats

If the weather is sunny we would ask that sunscreen is applied to your child at home before they come to the ECC and that you provide a sunhat. All parents/carers will have the option to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen on the enrolment form.

Data Protection

All children's personal data is kept in a secure place at all times and only leaves the centre when the child moves to another centre or onto primary school where it is hand delivered (where possible) and signed for or posted by recorded delivery if the child moves out of the area.

Section 4

Curriculum

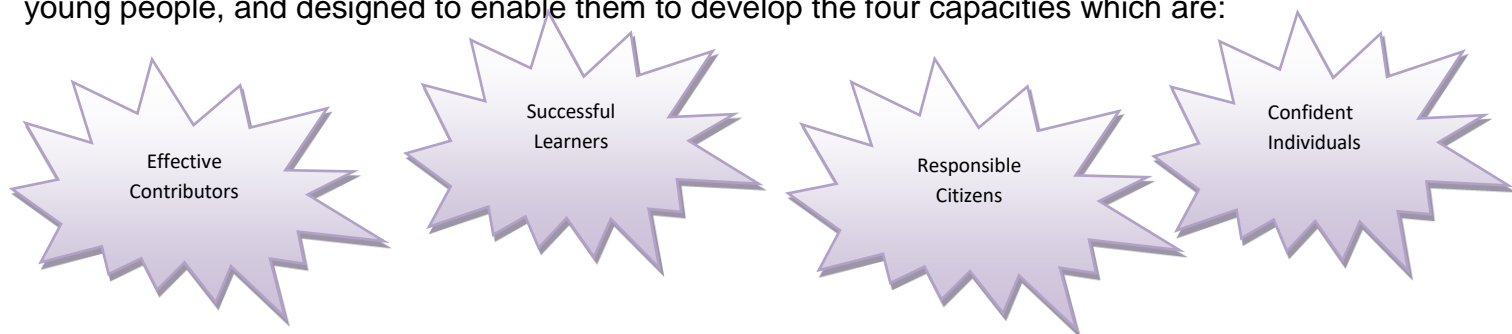
At all times, our service will meet the requirements of the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare and A Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Childcare as set out by the Care Inspectorate and performance indicators within How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC) as set out by Education Scotland. We strive for continuous improvement of our service through a system of rigorous self-evaluation which involves children, parents/ carers and staff. We also involve parents from our Staff and Parents Committee in monitoring and evaluating progress made with our improvement priorities.

You can view our most recent inspection reports online at:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>

<http://www.scswis.com/>

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) aims to transform education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3-18, firmly focusing on the needs of children and young people, and designed to enable them to develop the four capacities which are:



At Darvel Early Childhood Centre, all children are involved in planning for learning through self-evaluation and assessment of their learning. Staff use this information to plan carefully, as a team, to ensure that the learning experiences we provide for your child will stimulate their natural curiosity, to ask questions and find solutions. We currently use thinking and talking floor books where children's interests and prior learning is at the heart of our planning. Children are actively involved in their learning and planning is responsive. We are working towards a more collaborative style of learning where children's views and opinions are duly respected and considered. Displays throughout the playroom also give a flavour of the children's learning and achievements. There are opportunities to view children's personal learning profiles through parent's progress meetings in term one and again in May.

Our Early Childhood Centre is organised with a view to providing children with the highest quality of learning experiences through a wide range of activities and resources. The most important

resource are the staff themselves. Their quality interactions with your child are essential in ensuring that the learning experiences offered are fun and developmentally appropriate.

In addition, your child will have the opportunity to make visits to various places of interest in the local community and beyond.

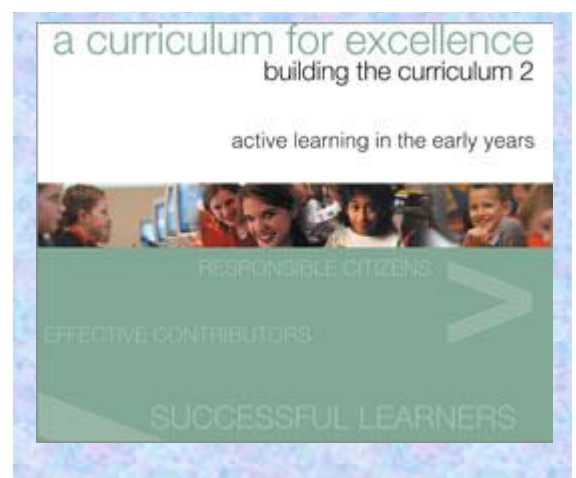
Young children naturally engage in play. Our learning and teaching approaches are child centred, and based on play experiences. Through the medium of play, we seek to take forward children's development and learning: and meet their individual needs and interests. We encourage children to explore, experiment, investigate, observe, listen, talk and think creatively. At Darvel Early Childhood Centre we are committed to providing children with opportunities for energetic physical play throughout the daily session.

What do we mean by Active Learning?

Active learning is being totally involved in the process of learning which engages and challenges children's thinking using real-life and imaginary situations.

It takes full advantage of the opportunities for learning presented by:

- ✚ spontaneous play
- ✚ planned, purposeful play
- ✚ investigating and exploring
- ✚ events and life experiences
- ✚ focused learning and teaching



and supported when necessary through sensitive intervention to support or extend learning.

Whenever possible, children use our outdoor areas to learn and play. We also enjoy walks in the local area. Staff and adult helpers appropriately supervise all visits. Outdoor play and visits encourage children to become aware of risk assessment, personal safety and road safety.

Darvel Early Childhood Centre is registered with the Care Inspectorate as an indoor/outdoor setting. Both settings will provide the children with opportunities to access the full curriculum in the space they choose to play and learn.

As our weather can be unpredictable, children should be appropriately dressed for outdoor play at all times. Children should have sun cream applied and a hat for hot weather and should wear suitable jackets and footwear in wet weather.

Sexual health, relationships, parenthood and drugs awareness

The above topics are an important part of Curriculum for Excellence and in helping children to begin to develop essential life skills. Our staff are appropriately qualified and parents/ carers should feel reassured of their skills in sensitively presenting information within the Early Level of the curriculum, which is developmentally, socially and culturally appropriate to the needs, and capabilities of very young children.

For example,

- We may provide play experiences that help children learn about the tasks and responsibilities involved in looking after a baby.
- We might share a storybook about how positive relationships can help us to make new friends and how this helps us feel good about ourselves.
- At circle time, we might discuss safety of medicines or other items in the home.

We will always let you know when we plan to discuss more sensitive topics, through monthly newsletters or by a separate letter.

Trauma Informed Contact and Care

Trauma Informed Contact and Care is an Education and Police initiative to inform schools and ECC's first thing in the morning if a child or young person has been exposed to a domestic abuse incident the night before. This allows the school/ECC to be aware that the child or young person may not have completed homework, be feeling tired or may show signs of dysregulated behaviour that requires support. Staff follow Getting it right for every child processes to provide appropriate support to the child, young person and their family.

Working with Parents, Carers and our Community

- We provided a wide range of opportunities for parents / carers to become involved in the centre throughout the year such as Family Snack, Christmas Fun Day, Home link activities, Sharing the learning with parents through the Thinking and Talking Floorbooks.
- We have been working with the University of the West of Scotland providing children and families with the opportunity to visit the University to facilitate innovative and creative learning experiences for children and parents.

In Darvel we work in partnership with parents and have developed respectful and responsive relationships through involving parents in a variety of events and activities throughout the year. We have a well established parent's committee that meet every term. We have a representation of 10% of our families. Parents are listened to and continue to support the development of the centre. This year we established our 'you said, we did' approach to share suggestions and comments from the parents. A few parents have commented on this approach and shared that they feel valued, we hope this will encourage more families to feel confident to share with us and work together.

Our key areas for improvement are:

Health and Wellbeing

To improve the health and wellbeing needs of all children through a fully inclusive and nurturing environment.

- Children will have regular opportunities to talk about their feelings, developing a better understanding of their emotions.
- We will strengthen our woodland experiences, providing longer sessions and take part in cooking outdoors.
- Maintain our Silver Rights Respecting School Award.
- Children will be involved in creating their own children's charter, introduced to our value characters and become aware of the ECC values through staff recognising and acknowledging play.
- We will continue to develop our environment, with a particular focus on our indoor spaces, ensuring the provision offers children to experience all areas of the curriculum.

Early Literacy and Communication

To improve early literacy and communication skills of all children, with a particular focus on children at risk of not attaining through targeted intervention.

- Support communication through nurturing lunchtimes.
- Use Makaton daily and work towards becoming a Makaton friendly ECC.
- Improve interactions, listening and talking through Teacher Talk strategies.
- Weekly Bookbug sessions to support early literacy skills.
- Home link ideas to support partnership working.

Pedagogy and Play

Through a clear and shared pedagogy, we will provide high quality play-based learning experiences for all children on a consistent basis, which results in positive outcomes.

- Develop the learning environment, encouraging children to think independently and explore their interests.
- Online learning journals to document their learning journey and share with their family.
- Realising the Ambition – Being Me guidance document will be used to support our learning journey.

Section 5

What have we achieved during the last year?

Curriculum for Excellence

- We introduced a new group work programme to maximise quality of learning experiences delivered to the children. Staff all led an area of the curriculum, planning effective learning experiences within literacy, STEM, health and wellbeing, ECO and children's rights, IT and outdoors.
- We have introduced new tracking of children's learning to document progression of learning and support planning of next steps.
- We developed a safe transition programme of events to support the smooth transition to primary. The children took part in 'Transition Fridays' and shared all experiences via our Glow blog to support our home link and opportunities to discuss further.

Literacy

- We have identified a communication champion within the centre to develop the communication and language skills of all children. The communication champion attends regular training, shares learning with staff and leads targeted intervention groups providing additional support to children. A communication board was purchased to display outdoors as families are unable to enter the building. This is used to share important tips and information with parents.
- Bookbug sessions are incorporated into the curriculum planning. A parent attended training to plan to deliver sessions outdoors to families in the community with children under 3.
- All staff attended virtual Social Story training and identifying stages of social development with our Speech and Language Therapist.

- Documenting learner conversations in children's individual learning books was a focus to track progress in speech and communication.

Numeracy

- All staff attended virtual training to support enabling learning environments. Changes within the environment are supporting numeracy through block play and understanding mathematical concepts through bridging, patterning and creating complex structures. Children have more opportunity to use mathematical language to problem solve and they have been developing a deeper understanding of concepts through the use of concrete objects with the increase in loose parts.

Health and Wellbeing

- We provided regular opportunities for children to promote their health and wellbeing, independence and social skills through circle time, daily snack, welcome time and outdoor play.
- We provided opportunities for children to learn about substance misuse through the use of child friendly resources such as 'Oh Lila' and 'Toby the Nosy Cat'.
- We provided opportunities for all children to access their local Lanfine Estate to explore outdoor learning experiences.

Section 6

Assessment

Staff work carefully alongside your child, in order to observe their individual processes of development and identify their next steps in learning. Staff are skilled in planning a wide range of activities and learning experiences that will be appropriate for your child's stage of development. Records of children's progress are kept, and this information is used to plan next steps in learning. The management team, in conjunction with key workers, tracks and monitors the progress of every child.

Reporting to parents and carers

We schedule a short, informal discussion with parents/carers 3-4 weeks after your child starts at our Early Childhood Centre, to discuss how they are settling in. However, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's Key Worker or Head of Centre prior to this if you have any concerns you wish to raise.

Appointments are made available for you to discuss your child's progress with his/her key worker twice a year, usually in November and May. With your permission, your child's record of progress, known as the Transition Profile, is passed on to the appropriate primary school. This information helps your child make a smooth, well-informed, transition from the Early Childhood Centre to primary school.

Personal Plans/Online Learning Journals/Learning Walls

Evidence of your child's learning and development will be collated. This will include various pieces of work such as drawings, paintings and photographs. Your child's work will be displayed on our learning walls throughout the ECC and sent home for you to keep. This will also include comments from children, parents and staff. Children's personal plans are reviewed every 6 months or sooner if there have been any changes to their safety, health or welfare needs.

Children will have individual online learning journals set up when your child begins at the ECC. The learning journals will document weekly observations and photographs/videos of your child's learning and development within the ECC. This is a partnership approach to nurturing your child's learning between Centre and home and we encourage you to share what your child is learning at home. This helps us work together with your child's learning targets in identifying joint next steps and support in getting it right for your child.

Section 7

Early Childhood Network

Darvel Early Childhood Centre is a member of the Irvine Valley Early Childhood Network.

Education Group

Darvel Early Childhood Centre is a member of the Loudoun Education Group.

Elected Members for the Irvine Valley

Kevin McGregor (Labour and Co-operative Party Councillor)

01563 576540

kevin.mcgregor@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Sally Cogley (Rubbish Party Councillor)

01563 576038

sally.cogley@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Beverley Clark (SNP Councillor)

01563 576055

beverley.clark@east-ayrshire.gov.uk