Hillbank Early Childhood Centre

North West Kilmarnock Area Centre

Western Road

Kilmarnock

KA3 1NG

August 2021 August 2022

Telephone No:	01563 521064
Email:	isabelle.campbell@eastayrshire.org.uk
Centre Blog:	
Twitter:	
Centre App:	
Denominational Status (if any):	
Centre Roll:	52 full-time equivalent places Age 2 years to 5 Years

SECTION 1

Welcome to Hillbank Early Childhood Centre where the staff members look forward to working with you in partnership with East Ayrshire Council. I hope you find the information in our handbook both interesting and helpful.

In Hillbank Early Childhood Centre we have an excellent facility and highly skilled and motivated staff who are committed to providing the highest standard of care and learning which is seamless. We encourage and support the children to develop new skills and build on their individual strengths and interests. Children are encouraged to celebrate their personal achievements, promoting confidence and laying the foundations for lifelong learning. We are a Rights Respecting School having achieved the level of “Gold-Rights Respecting”, the first stand-alone Early Childhood Centre in Scotland to do so.

Partnerships are extremely important to us where communication, respect and trust are fostered. We are encouraging the ethos of Rights Respecting Schools with the word “Respect” featuring daily in our centre. Visitors and service users comment on the welcoming and friendly ethos of the Centre which was highlighted as an area of good practice in our Care Inspectorate report.

If you require further information regarding any of the enclosed details or have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at any time and I shall be happy to assist.
I welcome any input or comments to enable me to improve the service.

Yours sincerely,
Isabelle P Campbell.
Head of Centre

HOURS OF OPENING **8.00am – 6.000 pm**

DAILY SESSIONS

Hillbank ECC delivers 1140 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. The Block Model we are delivering is 4 hours 45 minutes, 8.00am -12.45pm or 1.15pm - 6.00pm. **Model 2** can be taken as 5 blocks per week over 48 weeks in mornings, afternoons or a combination of two full days and one half day, or 6 blocks per week term time taken as 3 whole days.

As of August 2021 2yr old entitled children and our 3yrs and 4yrs old children will be offered 1140 hours.

In Hillbank Early Childhood Centre, our shared vision is: "To work in partnership with parents, carers and the community, enable all our children to be healthy and included, to experience laughter and fun every day in a nurturing and safe environment and so have the best start in life".

Our overarching aim is to provide a service appropriate to the needs of the individual children and families. To give children the opportunity to experience learning situations that support all aspects of their development and to ensure everyone is valued and respected as individuals.

Our Aims:

- To provide a welcoming environment and a Service which is responsive to the needs of all children staff and carers
- To strive to provide an excellent standard of integrated quality care and education for all children and to continue to implement the 600hrs of early learning and childcare as detailed in the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act
- To offer a balanced programme ensuring depth, breadth, challenge and progression of learning experiences and opportunities which enable all children to achieve their own potential
- To provide support guidance and learning opportunities through appropriate early interventions for parents and carers
- To promote a caring and nurturing environment which shows respect for others, positive attitudes and equal opportunities for lifelong learning

- To develop and maintain effective communication and partnerships with allied health professionals other early years providers schools and the local community

  All staff members are registered with the SSSC and The Head of Centre is registered with the GTC. Our aims reflect the key principals of the Health and Social Care Standards of

  - Dignity and respect.
  - Compassion
  - To be included
  - Responsive care and support
  - Wellbeing

and we practice and self-evaluate using the National practice guidance for Early Years in Scotland namely Realising The Ambition–being me and How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare

We encourage parent involvement in Hillbank Early Childhood Centre as partnership working is high on the agenda and the benefit to the children is very positive. In normal circumstances parents are regularly supporting our Dean Park days, and home link initiatives. Using learning Journals has been really helpful in maintaining contact with our parents during these times of restrictions due to COVID 19.

Parent and Child Sessions

As new guidance is issued and restrictions eased we hope to again be able to invite parents in to our parent and child play sessions. These have always been a huge success over the years as parents and carers came along with their child/children to our Bookbug and sensory sessions. Nursery rhymes, action songs and story time are a firm favourite as well as the sensory experiences/activities provided for children and parents.

Please keep up to date with what we are offering meantime.

Baby Massage

This has again been another firm favourite with new mums and Community Practitioner Elaine Rutherford is trained in this discipline. Hopefully this will be starting again in the near future.

General Information

Currently information is shared mainly through our Learning Journals, Facebook, our School App, telephone, email and at drop off and pick up time. There are also notice boards in the foyer. Newsletters, fliers and progress meetings provide information both about the Centre and about events within the community. Our new Learning Journals are proving to be very successful in capturing children learning and progress. All parents can access their individual child's profile by providing a personal e-mail at registration. We would be very grateful if parents/guardians log on at least monthly to view your child's progress and achievements, please leave comments on their learning journal; this is very much appreciated. Parent/guardians can also upload pictures and stories about their child's achievements at home too. If you have any difficulty with logging on please speak to a staff member and we can assist you.

Hillbank 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 have links with all local Primary Schools, James Hamilton Academy and Willowbank School where individual children can access specialised resources.

We have links with Social Services, Psychological Services, Health: Health Visiting Service, Community Paediatrics, Visual Impairment Team, Speech and Language Department, Rainbow House, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Department, Community Police, Women's Aid, Housing, The Ranger Service and also with Voluntary Organisations and local businesses. Within the NWKAC we lead a regular Rag bag appeal as well as supporting the local Foodbank and further away through Rights Respecting Schools we support a little school in a village in Arua in Uganda.

SECTION 2 Transition from Home to Nursery

All our transitions are planned to consider the children's individual needs. Transitions are now recognised as central to young children's experiences and well-being. We support parents and carers and children during this time to ensure transitions are as smooth as possible.

During transitions parents and carers are encouraged to support their child within the garden area during their initial enrolment period, gradually increasing the time within each session. We recognise that all children have different needs and consider this during this time. We have developed a Care Plan where the child's key worker and parent/carer meet during the transition period and discuss in more detail the child's individual needs. Due to Covid pandemic we have developed a Hillbank video for parents and children which gives an overview of both inside the nursery playrooms and our generous outdoor areas, this will be posted on our home Facebook page for the start of each new term.

Transition from Nursery to Primary

At Hillbank Early Childhood Centre we continue to develop good communication with local Primary Schools. Parents are advised to enrol their child within their catchment area in the first instance if considering a placement request. Children who transfer to primary school from the Centre have the opportunity to meet with their teacher. Primary 1 teachers visit prior to children starting school, this has proved to be invaluable.

Parents and carers can access our transition policy which is located within our Policy folder at the front entrance of the building. Should your child transfer to our establishment from another centre, or vice versa, it is best practice for establishments to share assessment information gathered to ensure smooth transition and continued progress.

We work closely with staff in receiving Primary Schools, to ensure a seamless transition to Primary 1. There are 6 primary schools listed below within the local area, which the majority of our children attend on leaving the early years setting.

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

Hillhead Primary
2 Kilmaurs Road
Kilmarnock
Tel No. 01563 521504

Loanhead Primary
Dick Road
Kilmarnock
Tel no. 01563 522938

Mount Carmel Primary
Meiklewood Road
Kilmarnock
Tel No. 01563 525897

St Andrews Primary and Early Childhood Centre
Grassyards Road
Kilmarnock
Tel No 01563 533555

Onthank Primary and ECC
Meiklewood Road
Kilmarnock
Tel No. 01563 525477

James Hamilton Primary and ECC
Sutherland Drive
Kilmarnock
Tel No. 01563 533221

Support for children and young people and parents/carers

STAFF	JOB TITLE
Isabelle P Campbell	Head of Centre
Caroline Butcher	Depute Manager
Christine Tonner	Equity and Excellence Lead
Elaine Love	Senior Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Lorraine Morrison	Senior Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Laura Brown	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Fiona Cameron	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Alison Gardiner	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Chelsea Gray	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Aileen Good	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Jean Hamilton	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Lynne Hettrick	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Kayleigh Turnbull	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Christine Kennedy	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (Job Share
Claire Mackie	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (Job Share)
Rosaleen McCluskie	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Jamie leigh Clark	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (Job Share)
Fiona Paton	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Abby Donnelly	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Sarah Lochery	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Kerry McCoy	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Alison Brown	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner
Stephanie Bickerton	Early learning and Childcare Practitioner (Support)
Isaac Woodward	Early learning and Childcare Practitioner (Peripatetic)
Lesley Anne McCourt	Early Learning and Childcare Support Worker
Sheila Miller	Early Learning and Childcare Support Worker
Elaine Rutherford	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (community)
Lynnette Milligan	Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner (community)
Maureen Mullen	Clerical Assistant
Jennifer McCrone	Catering Assistant (Part-time)
Wendy Sands	Catering Assistant (Part-time)

The provisions made for children and young people with additional support needs.

Hillbank Early Childhood Centre provides an inclusive learning environment for all children. Every child has the right to be included and supported. The Additional Support Needs Coordinator is Isabelle Campbell. (Head of Centre).

We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure each child's individual needs are supported and respected. We acknowledge that parents and carers play an important part in formulating any care plan or individual learning plan which will help support the child's development and interests. A full health care plan and a risk assessment is completed if necessary, prior to a child attending the centre, this ensures that all the relevant information is available and recorded to make sure your child's individual needs and requirements are fully met. As we operate an inclusive service all our playrooms can support children with additional and complex needs. Some of our staff have attended training in moving and handling and have accessed specific training to support children with additional needs. We work with visiting specialists to ensure children receive the best care and educational programmes that will support the child's individual needs and interests.

Advice and support may be sought from other professionals.

The Educational Psychologist visits the Centre to work with staff to ensure the most effective support possible is in place for each child. Their role is often giving advice and the sharing of expertise with staff. The Educational Psychologist for Hillbank ECC is Claire Ferguson. Staff may discuss the support needs of individual children with the psychologist in order to ensure that support plans are appropriate to the individual needs of the children. Parental consent is always requested.

Some children may have more complex needs may require additional support through the Team around the Child Meetings. 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 THREE

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

School Holiday Arrangements 2021/2022

Term	Break	Detail / Attendance	Date	Cumulative Holiday Total	Cumulative Working Days
First	Mid Term	Teachers (In Service) Teachers (In Service) Pupils return *Local Holiday *Local Holiday Pupils return Close Teachers (In Service) Pupils return Close	Tuesday 17 August 2021 Wednesday 18 August 2021 Thursday 19 August 2021 Friday 17 September 2021 Monday 20 September 2021 Tuesday 21 September 2021 Friday 8 October 2021 Monday 18 October 2021 Tuesday 19 October 2021 Wednesday 22 December 2021	1 2 7	85
Second	Mid Term	Re-open Close Local Holiday Local Holiday Teachers (In Service) Pupils return Close	Thursday 6 January 2022 Thursday 10 February 2022 Friday 11 February 2022 Monday 14 February 2022 Tuesday 15 February 2022 Wednesday 16 February 2022 Friday 1 April 2022	17 18 19	145
Third		Re-open Local Holiday (**May Day**) **Teachers (In Service) Local Holiday Pupils return Close	Tuesday 19 April 2022 Monday 2 May 2022 Thursday 5 May 2022 Monday 30 May 2022 Tuesday 31 May 2022 Wednesday 29 June 2022	30 31 32 66	195

subject to change in alignment with Gold Cup weekend
***** Local Government Election***

Session 2022/2023: Teachers (In Service) – Wednesday 17 August 2022
Pupils return – Thursday 18 August 2022

Good Friday - 15 April 2022

Pupils attendance will be 190 days after deducting 5 In Service days

Public Holidays 2021

- **Friday 1 January**
- **Monday 4 January**
- **Friday 2 April**
- **Monday 5 April**
- **Monday 3 May**
- **Friday 17 September**
- **Monday 20 September**
- **Monday 27 December**
- **Tuesday 28 December**
- **Wednesday 29 December**
- **Thursday 30 December**
- **Friday 31 December**

Attendance and Reporting Absence

In our Centre we note attendance twice a day - morning and afternoon and either a phone call or a text is sent to parents if their child is absent and we are unaware why. If your child is not going to be attending, please let us know by 9.15 am on the first day of absence, We keep a register for all children signing them in on arrival and out at departure.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Children are encouraged to play together, share and turn take. Staff encourage children to respect others feelings and support children to manage their own behaviour. Staff communicate with children in ways which are appropriate to their age, abilities and level of development. Staff may use happy/sad faces, thumbs up or down to promote and encourage positive behaviour. The use of praise and encouragement reinforces positive behaviour and helps children build confidence and self-esteem. We understand that a child's age and stage of development can play an important factor in their behaviour and we look at different strategies and support which we can deploy within the playrooms.

We recognise that at times children can display emotional behaviour whether they are with us or at home, therefore it is important that we work with you to support your child at this time. Within the 3-5 playroom, we help to promote positive behaviour and the development of good social skills through small and large groups. Children come together and talk about our Golden Rules and about how behaviours which are inappropriate have negative outcomes. The word Respect along with Rights and Responsibilities help them to understand social behaviour. This develops interpersonal skills, strengthens relationships and enhances self-confidence while allowing the children and staff members to have fun together. Our golden rules are posted within each playroom and we ask all parents and carers to share these at home reinforcing and promoting a positive attitude.

Our Golden Rules:

"Walking feet, Listening ears, Quiet voices and Gentle hands"

Dress Code

Children have the best fun when they are doing creative and activity-based work. We always try to make sure they wear aprons but it can be messy fun, so please dress your child in suitable clothing. Please also make sure that your child has suitable outdoor clothing as outdoor learning takes place on a daily basis. We have polo shirts and sweat shirts which can be purchased locally with the Hillbank logo embroidered on. The colours are jade and purple.

Security and Visitors

We consider that the safety and wellbeing of children and staff at Hillbank Early Childhood Centre is of paramount importance. All adults working in our Early Childhood Centre have an enhanced disclosure prior to employment with EAC. All staff working in our Early Childhood Centre wear name badges for identification and all students and visitors will also be expected to do so.

- All visitors are required to sign in and out for the duration of their visit. A log book is situated at the front entrance for visitors to sign in and out.
- There is a secure entry system, which is used to access the front entrance to Hillbank Early Childhood Centre.
- Anyone entering the Centre is met by a member of staff.
- During the session if children go on an outing they are signed in and out and if visiting different rooms or accessing the garden to comply with health and safety a head count is constantly applied.
- No child will be allowed to leave the establishment unless accompanied by a known responsible adult who is at least 16 years of age and who is noted on their contact sheet.
- In the interests of child safety, if an emergency situation arises and your child is to be collected by someone not known to the HOC or staff members a password is agreed which has to be given on arrival.
- If your child is not able to attend you must notify the Centre as soon as possible.
- CCTV cameras enhance the security as does the perimeter fencing.

Complaints Handling

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of provision you should contact the Head of Centre in the first instance. Our aim is to resolve any complaint as soon as possible at the first point of contact. You also have the right to contact the Care Inspectorate should you feel that your complaint has not been resolved.

- online at www.careinspectorate.com
- by email enquiries@careinspectorate.com
- by phone on 0845 600 9527
- by letter, or by visiting any of their offices

Emergency Procedures / Medical matters

We have a robust fire evacuation procedure and contingency plans in situ to ensure the health and safety of all children, staff and visitors to the centre. We have fire wardens and controllers who are trained in the safe evacuation of the premises. We have trained first aiders who are on the premises and can administer basic first aid treatment if required.

We follow the Care Inspectorate document referred to as "Guidelines of "*the Management of medication in day care of children and childminding services"*. This guidance supports safe and effective practice of our management of all medicines.
The procedure for the administration of all medicines in fully discussed during the induction process.

Data Protection

At Hillbank ECC we follow the Data Protection Policy as outlined by East Ayrshire Council. East Ayrshire Council creates, collects and processes personal information about children and we are bound by the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
We collect information from children, their parents and guardians and we may also receive information from other sources, such as previous ECC. All information is stored securely and we do not share it apart from the circumstances described below, or where the law requires us to do so. Under the Act, we are known as the *Data Controller* and the information we collect is needed for a number of reasons which include, but is not limited to:

- Monitoring and reporting on absence.
- Supporting teaching and learning.

- Monitoring and reporting on your child's progress.
- Providing appropriate care.
- Assessing how well your child's school/centre is doing.

The information we collect will also include details such as contact address or phone numbers and data such as ethnic group, additional support needs and any relevant medical information. Occasionally, we may make information available to other organisations, for example:

- To other schools/centres if you move away.
- To the Scottish Qualifications Authority for examination entries.
- To the Scottish Government and its agencies.

Parent Council details

Prior to Covid 19 The Parents Forum usually met on the first Thursday morning (11.00am) of each month and usually lasted approximately 45mins. This is a great opportunity for parents and carers to be involved in the life of the Centre and very much helps to take forward initiatives. We are looking to getting this up and running again and we will welcome all new members and appreciate the time you give to support the forum. Going forward we are looking at perhaps doing this through another method.

SECTION 4

> "*It is during our very earliest years and even pre – birth that a large part of the pattern for our future adult life is set"* Early Years Framework (2008)

Documents

*"*Hillbank Early Childhood Centre follows the National Guidance Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families, and Realising the Ambition-being me which supports and informs our practice in working with very young children.

The guidance identifies child - centred pedagogy in practice which incorporates: Observations and following the interests of the child, Observation interpretation and documentation of learning, Sensitive interactions, Flexible experiences Variety of spaces and Responsive and Intentional planning informed by the child's actions emotions and words.

Within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the principle that children should be valued and respected at all levels and have the right to have their views heard and acted upon. This means that all adults and agencies should ensure when supporting babies and young children that their views are "given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (UN, 1989, Article 12).

The environment of relationships within an early years setting is just as important as the physical environment (Mortensen & Barnett 2015). One way to describe this is in terms of attachment this can be understood as the balance of security space and a sense of being loved and cherished that children need from us in order to feel safe and cared for and to be able to explore and create for themselves.

Routines

Routines offer the chance to build self-confidence, curiosity, social skills, self-control and develop communication skills. Through skilful observation and responsive planning staff can support the child's learning and plan their next steps. For some babies and children encountering new or different environments can be stressful. Routines help young children feel secure as they come to know what is happening, and what will happen next.

Relationships

While children's early experiences play a role in shaping their future attitudes and dispositions, it must be remembered that children are able individuals in their own right. With kind and sensitive support, children develop the ability to form secure relationships and grow in confidence which promotes good emotional and social development.

Responsive Care

Responsive care means knowing and accepting children and respecting that they are unique individuals. Young children make sense of the world through adults, and the responses that they receive let them know that the significant adults in their lives are consistent, reliable and trustworthy, and responsive to their needs

Respect

One of the most effective ways of demonstrating respect for children and families is where staff express a genuine interest in them. Children's views, values and attitudes are shaped largely by the family and more indirectly by communities. Respecting parent's knowledge of their children is fundamental to successful practice. (Pre-Birth to Three, 2010). Attachment the early parent/child relationship is viewed as one of the most important factors in child development, especially with regard to how the brain develops and the development of emotional and social skills. (Realising the Ambition, 2020).

Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence builds on the solid foundations developed in the critical years of pre-birth to 3 which is supported by the National Pre-Birth to Three Guidance.

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

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare is another document which provides Quality Indicators and challenge questions with which to self-evaluate against and thus improve outcomes for children.

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. All children now have their own learning journal which is accessed online. This is a secure format and only parents/guardians can access their own child's profile. Learning journals track children's learning, development and progress in all areas of development. Observations, photographs and daily stories are uploaded and parents can contribute to their own child's journey

Playrooms Rainbow Room / Butterfly Room two to three years

We know **how** young children learn best. They learn best in an environment of quality **interactions**, interesting **spaces** and when the **experiences** on offer are set in meaningful contexts. They learn best in environments that inspire them to be curious and creative.

The importance of play
"…play at this time is not trivial, it is highly serious and of deep significance"
(Froebel, 1826)

Our Rainbow and Butterfly rooms are the two main rooms currently for two-three year olds. The resources are planned around specific areas. We have areas for arts/crafts, book area, home corner, sensory, construction and a carpeted area for floor games. Outdoor play is highly promoted in Hillbank and both rooms offer daily access to our outdoor areas.

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How I grow and develop Realising the Ambition: being me.

A young child's development often involves repetition and cycles of actions and interactions. As a starting point, research with young children supports the view that the following dimensions are among the most important aspects of child development, underpinning not just learning but also essential for survival and to flourish. These are: executive function and self-regulation, communication and language, confidence, creativity and curiosity, movement and coordination, and self and social development.

Executive function is sometimes referred to as the brain's "air traffic control system". It includes working memory, which is a set of stores for information we are using right now. When a child focuses on something new or concentrates on something despite distractions these draw on executive function.

Self-regulation, covers all the skills and processes that help us to stay safe and to get through the day. For babies and young children, the necessary abilities, and the brain systems that underlie them, are still developing.

Communication and language, the importance of communication and language development for all aspects of children's lives cannot be overstated. Communication underlies our ability to manage behaviour and emotions, by expressing what we need or using language to regulate how we feel. Language is also much more than words.

Curiosity, as well as creativity, is an innate part of being human. It is the urge to learn and develop, to see what is around the corner, in the box or what happens next.

Movement and coordination, these skills take a long time and a lot of practice to develop. The development of movement and coordination for a child is linked to communication and cognitive development. At Hillbank daily opportunities for outdoor learning and physical activity supports the growth and development of these skills.

Playroom Sunshine Room three to five years

Our Sunshine room currently supports our three to five year olds. We have 4 main areas which consists of Curiosity Corner which comprises of playdough, gloop and STEM, the Creative area is mainly art/craft, construction and junk modelling. The Imagination Station consists of the home corner, reading area and small world. The other area is the outdoor area where we are fortunate to have a variety of active outdoor learning experiences for all the children. The area has been landscaped over the last two years and incorporates a large sand area, wildlife, numerous water and sand stations and resources that challenge and support children's development across all areas of the curriculum.

Responsive and intentional learning

Within Hillbank ECC we provide both **responsive** and **intentional** learning for children in our day-to-day practice. By this we mean that we constantly respond to the needs of young children alongside planning and implementing intentional experiences to help them develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Responsive and intentional planning approaches start with our observations and interpretations of the child's actions, emotions and words. This tells us what the child needs for us to provide in their learning environment.

Facilitating playful learning environments

Learning through play requires skilful interactions and conversations in environments that support and extend thinking and actions. It requires adults who are both playful and knowledgeable of the building blocks of early development and learning in order to support and progress learning appropriately. A playful adult nurtures a child's identity as a learner through the connections they make with experiences from home and their ELC. A playful adult creates a comfortable space where children can experience joy and laughter and hence develop playful learning dispositions.

Literacy, Numeracy and Mathematical thinking

We create safe spaces with children to talk, sing, rhyme and play with sounds, vocabulary and print. Role modelling language and building vocabulary to make sense of the world is vital for all young children. The amount and quality of language that children are exposed to is crucial to their progress.

Playful numeracy and mathematical development

Children are curious about the environments surrounding them, even before they are born. They want to know how things work and can use problem solving skills from an early age. Children constantly explore cause and effect through their play.

Numeracy is not just about being able to count. It is about developing number sense which encourages creativity of thought and it allows children to interact with the world around them.

Please click on the link for further reading Realising the Ambition: being me.

realisingtheambition.pdf (education.gov.scot)

Active Learning

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.

Active Learning Outdoors

The outdoor learning environment offers motivational and different opportunities for learning. The children have regular outdoor play, fresh air and exercise. Some learning that takes place indoors can be revisited outdoors, and staff can make connections between indoor and outdoor learning across the curriculum. Different outdoor learning experiences offer opportunities for personal growth and learning skills in areas such as communication, problem solving and working as a team.

Many children excel in the outdoors, "almost as if they had been given permission to come alive."

Children are involved in planning for learning through floor books using mind maps and in the self-evaluation of their learning through discussion at group time and throughout the day. Staff use this valuable information to plan and ensure that the learning experiences provided for the children will stimulate their natural curiosity, further develop skills promote confidence and enable child initiated play and learning.

Health and Wellbeing

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

Our Centre has been awarded “Health Promoting School” status and we have been successful in gaining our fourth “Green Flag as an ECO School Scotland. Christine Tonner and Jean Hamilton have completed their Level 3 in Forest School Training.

We provide opportunities for children to participate in a wide range of activities which promote a healthy lifestyle. Health and wellbeing is integrated across all learning and delivered through play experiences, stories and snack. Children have daily access to the outdoor area, where they learn to explore their natural environment, develop physical skills and learn to share and play cooperatively.

Nurturing Environment

It is important that we provide a responsive and nurturing environment for all our service users. We believe that a developmentally appropriate curriculum will enable all children to access the Curriculum or Excellence at a level appropriate to their individual needs and aspirations. All staff have undergone nurture training and as such, we are committed to embedding nurture principles and practices into the daily work and life of our centre.

Nurture Principles and the Principles in Practice

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally.
2. The classroom offers a safe base.
3. The importance of nurture for the development of self-esteem.
4. Language as a vital means of communication.
5. All behaviour is communication.
6. The importance of transitions in children's lives.

Literacy and Numeracy

All aspects of literacy and numeracy are explored and developed through play, songs, stories and poems as well as the ideas and actions provided by the children themselves. Children are encouraged to develop an enthusiasm for stories and books, poems and rhymes, and to listen carefully.

It is important that the children have plenty of opportunity for free play where they are able to choose from a wide range of activities and resources thus fuelling their own imaginations and letting them be leaders in their own play. Staff are there to extend the learning opportunities to give depth, breadth and balance. We have a wide range of home links which can support both early literacy and numeracy, these are given out on a rolling programme within each playroom.

Parents are encouraged to participate in a way comfortable to the individual.

Outdoor Learning

Our secure outdoor play area allows the children to actively explore their natural environment, building confidence and promoting health and wellbeing. We continually strive to develop this area to incorporate a wide range of learning experiences. It can be muddy at times which the children love!! Sometimes we talk about the rear, front and side garden areas and the soft surface to differentiate as each area offers a different play adventure. We have recently had our front outdoor area revamped with lots of natural resources and structures added.

Dean Park Active Outdoor Activity

Our pre-school children have previously accessed our organised active outdoor learning facility at Dean Park on a Wednesday from 10.30 – 15.00hrs supported by staff from all rooms. Hillbank Early Childhood Centre has been recognised as sector leading within East

Ayrshire Council in taking this initiative forward as it has now been ongoing for twelve years. Covid curtailed it this year with staff being unable to move rooms. In the new term with the increase in hours of children attending and therefore more children under three attending all week we will require to carefully consider how we can organise this as staff availability and flexibility has now been reduced. Parental support will certainly be essential to have high adult to child ratios for safety.

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 which help children learn about the tasks and responsibilities involved in looking after a baby.

We might share a story book about how positive relationships can help us to make new friends and how this helps us feel good about ourselves.

Through recognised literature and props we will discuss safety of medicines or other items in the home and how to keep safe.

We will always let you know when we plan to discuss more sensitive topics

Section 5 Achievement and Improvement

From our most recent inspection report in July 2018 we were awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support	6 Excellent
Quality of management and leadership	6 Excellent

We have gained our Gold Award Rights Respecting School, this is a huge achievement and as an Establishment we are so proud of everyone's efforts and commitment in helping to achieve this. We are the first standalone Early Childhood Centre in Scotland to achieve this award.

"It was clear that the highly skilled and motivated staff at Hillbank are fully committed to promoting a Rights Respecting ethos and environment and that the CRC guides their work with children and families/carers".

Our Rights Respecting and ECO Committee will continue to have dialogue every month.

We have worked in partnership with Vibrant Communities and Corporate Enforcement Officers to tackle dog fouling within the local community, we have been instrumental in gaining additional bins within the community and Local Park.

Rhyme of the fortnight has been cascaded throughout all age groups across the Centre developing early literacy skills and parental engagement, due to Covid this is now on each child's learning journal.

Our Facebook page, School App and online parental feedback forms has been very successful in engaging parents within the Centre

We continually work in partnership with Local Colleges, UWS, and Local Secondary Schools to support practical learning/training through work experience

We have provided critical childcare as one of the Hubs within East Ayrshire Council since the beginning of the Lockdown due to The Covid 19 Pandemic.

Literacy

- We have concentrated on the promotion of literacy in both the indoor and outdoor context ensuring more natural resources and mark making resources are available and which are readily available for the children to select and use creatively
- To celebrate World Book Day the children dressed up as their favourite story book character.
- Small targeted individual and group work programmes give additional support in early literacy and language development
- Communication Board now called “getting wee people chatting” is now situated on the main wall at the front entrance door.
- Rhyme and story of the fortnight continued to be promoted through learning journals and Facebook
- Our Equity and Excellence Lead has enabled us to further develop our data on children’s learning and progress and support staff in developing more effective intervention strategies with regards to literacy and numeracy. Further support for ASN through formulating individual learning plans.
- The role of the Equity Lead continued to support the evaluation and collection of Data to improve outcomes for children and families.

Numeracy

- A new and refreshed mathematical area where a variety of natural resources and materials have been added is being well used.
- We have introduced a Mathematical and Numeracy Audit tool, which enabled staff to identify gaps in resource provision.
- New resources have been purchased to support early maths and numeracy across the board.

- Maths has been developed within the outdoor and in particular during our active learning day at Dean Park.

Health and Wellbeing

- We are commitment to ensuring government guidelines relating to Covid are followed at all times, safeguarding all our children, staff and parents at all times.
- We continue to develop daily opportunities for children to engage in active outdoor learning.
- We have achieved our Rights Respecting School Gold Award.
- Regular planned opportunities for children to promote health and wellbeing, independence and social skills, through daily snack, welcome time and outdoor play.
- Children participated in East Ayrshire's Annual Hands up Tally and Walk to School Week to promote active healthy lifestyles.
- SHANARRI principles are embedded throughout daily routine.
- Dean park visits will hopefully recommence in the Autumn Term.
- During Lockdown from Covid 19 we have supported children and families through social media, telephone calls. Special drop off visits and through operating one of the Critical Childcare Hubs.

Literacy

Use of ELLAT to prioritise areas for improvement in literacy skills in all children in their preschool year.

In partnership with S & L identify areas requiring language promotion and development.

Further develop literacy rich environment inside and out across the centre.

Our Communication Champions will lead on supporting individual children in specific areas of speech language and communication with small group and individual programmes being rolled out.

Continue to promote story telling in different contexts and use storytelling to fuel enquiry curiosity and creativity.

Staff further develop the use self as an excellent resource - Concept cat telling stories every week and retelling familiar stories. Story of the week will be rolled out across the Centre for all ages.

Rhyme of the fortnight will continue to be promoted as will home link initiatives.

Weekly book bug sessions to be delivered remotely focusing on early language, communication and speech acquisition promoting parental involvement reaching out to the local community.
(Material from I Can Toolkit)

Numeracy

In house ELMAT to assess mathematical and numerical understanding and ability of preschool children. Areas for development will be highlighted and addressed.

Maths Champions to be identified for each age group. Time factored in to weekly timetable.

Roll out of Home Link maths 3-5yrs and 2-3yrs. Base lines will be established so improvements are evidenced Evaluations will ensure best quality and curriculum design.

Realising The Ambition-being me and HGIELLC self-evaluation tool will help staff to reflect on children's experiences, the environment, learning outcomes, as well as their own staff child interactions.

Moderation event looking at specific strands from ELMAT.

Health and Wellbeing

Video footage of interior and outdoor areas of Hillbank ECC available to children and families to support transitions.

Transition documents and information leaflets written to explain CV19 controls within Hillbank ECC to alleviate worry and concern.

Photographs and names of the staff members who will be caring for the children in the room in advance of the child's transition.

Regular supervision for all staff.

Embed Realising the Ambition – being me in our day to day practice.

We will be delivering a programme called PEEP which focuses on parental engagement through activities with their child.

Continue with FIT 15 and Yoga across 2-5years.

Dog Therapy targeted intervention.

Introduce Living Eggs programme which will give the children an understanding and valuable experience of life cycles and growth and development, the programme encourages social interaction and promotes caring and nurturing skills

Continue to offer our Nurture group to identified children

Technologies

Continue to develop Learning Journals this has proven to b e a huge success in involving parents in their children's learning

Support children, parents and staff to develop their understanding of more effective use of ICT to develop children's learning, curiosity and thinking skills.

Continue to support all staff with the new FACE/EAGER system.

To look at further developing STEM within the day to day practice and purchase additional resources to further develop the children's knowledge and understanding of early science technology engineering and maths.

Section 6

Assessment

Within Hillbank ECC the key worker system is operational. Staff work with their group of children observing their individual learning and identify their next steps. Each child has an individual learning journal where photographs, observations and stories are recorded and next steps identified.

Children's progress is carefully monitored using the Benchmarks and Experiences and Outcomes within the Curriculum for Excellence (Early Level).

Expressive arts, Religious and moral education, Health and wellbeing, Sciences, Languages, Social studies, Mathematics and Technologies.

Reporting to Parents and Carers

Appointments are also arranged when each parent/carer can discuss their child's progress usually twice a year. They will have an opportunity to discuss their child's individual profile and ask any questions regarding their learning. When children move on from nursery to nursery and to primary school we ask parental permission that the child's transition report and tracking moves with them.

A care plan is completed within 28 days after each child has started nursery with parents and carers. This allows pertinent information to be shared with regards to the child's individual needs and interests, this allows a starting point for each child's learning.

Section 7 Further Information

If you require further information please contact
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Cabinet Member with responsibility for Lifelong Learning, Education, Skills and Culture Councillor Fiona Campbell.

Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Young People, Environment, Climate Change and Net Zero, Equalities and Inclusion Councillor Claire Leitch.

Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing, Welfare and Poverty Councillor Jacqui Todd.

Helpful contact details and websites

http://www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk/ http://www.careinspectorate.com/

Care Inspection Report 2018
www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=298619