



**Onthank Early Childhood Centre
Meiklewood Road
Kilmarnock
KA3 2ES**

Telephone No:	01563 534660
Email:	Fiona.mackellar@eastayrshire.org.uk
Centre Blog:	Glow – Onthank Early Childhood Centre
Centre App:	Available on appropriate mobile devices
Denominational Status (if any):	Non-Denominational
Centre Roll:	Capacity: 151
Further information:	www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/schoolhandbooks

Section 1



Dear Parents/Carers,

A warm welcome to Onthank Early Childhood Centre.

Joining our Early Childhood Centre is your child's first, important step in becoming part of our school community.

We recognise that you are your child's first and most important educator and we look forward to working with you and sharing the extensive knowledge you have of your child. Sharing this knowledge with us will help us to build on your child's previous experiences and will enable us to plan for future development.

Our Early Childhood Centre offers high quality education with highly qualified, caring and motivated staff whose primary concern is the wellbeing and development of your child. Great care is taken to ensure that our children experience an exciting, motivating and appropriate experience that will allow them to develop at a pace suited to their individual needs and interests. The main vehicle for learning is through play and fun.

We hope the following pages give you a flavour of our Early Childhood Centre. Should you have any further questions, we are always happy to help.

We look forward to a long and happy association with you and your family.

Kindest regards

Fiona Mackellar
Head Teacher
Onthank Early Childhood Centre

Onthank Early Childhood Centre Vision, Values, Strengths and Aims

Our Vision

- Working together to inspire, nurture and to build a better future for all.

Our Values

- Onthank staff team values honesty, caring and respect.

Our Strengths

- As a staff team we will bring the strengths of kindness, fairness and teamwork to the centre.

At Onthank Early Childhood Centre we Aim:

- To create a safe, happy and caring environment in which everyone is made welcome.
- To promote independence, self-esteem and confidence in an atmosphere that encourages respect for themselves and others.
- To provide a curriculum that promotes challenge, enjoyment, personalisation and choice in learning.
- To provide an environment inside and outside which extends their sense of wonder and lets children experience success and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- To work in partnership with parents, the local community and outside agencies.

Above all we hope that your time as a family at

Onthank Early Childhood Centre is a happy and enjoyable experience.

We share the vision and principles expressed for all the citizens of East Ayrshire in the Community Plan.

All our vision, values and aims take into account the Rights of the Child. Our aims reflect the principles of the Health and Social Care Standards, Curriculum for Excellence, Realising the Ambition and How Good Is our Early Learning and Childcare. Onthank Early Childhood Centre is registered to provide a nursery service for a maximum of 151 children aged from two-five years.

The service is located in Kilmarnock and is available Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service is provided between the hours 8.30am until 4pm, with children attending either mornings, full days or blended models with childminders. From August 2024 the centre will only operate full day or blended model provisions.

The centre moved to its current building in August 2014. This was purpose built and provided additional space to accommodate children. The centre further undergone more extensive work in 2020 to provide additional indoor learning environments and largely equipped outdoor environments that will encourage and facilitate our children to be outdoors in all weathers.

Session Times

- Full Day Sessions – 9am-3pm.
 - Blended Model - individual agreements with the childminder.
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- Due to the high volume of children, we have staggered start and finish times to ensure everyone enters/exits the building safely. Therefore all children still receive 6 hours per day of funded childcare however start/finish times vary from playroom to playroom.
 - It is expected that a responsible adult over the age of 16 will bring your child to and collect from the Centre.
 - In the interest of safety, it is essential that you tell a member of the Management Team, Clerical Staff or your child's key worker if your child is being collected by someone not known to us.
 - On arrival when your child is signed into the centre, your child's safety is then our responsibility and alternatively once your child has been signed out, your child's safety is your responsibility.

Staff Information

Management Team

Head Teacher - Fiona MacKellar

Acting Depute Manager/Equity and Excellence Lead – Linzi Stewart

Senior ELCP - Amy Law (Maternity Leave, returns May 2024)

Senior ELCP – Marianne Deans

Acting Senior ELCP - Sarah Peacock (Maternity Cover)

Clerical

Susan Bolton - Senior Clerical Assistant

Early Learning and Childcare Practitioners

Abbie Fisher (Part time)

Agnes Galloway

Arlene Goodwin (Part-time)

Christine Calder

Coline Armstrong

Debbie Boax

Elaine Scott

Elaine Smith

Gillian White

Harriett Hill

Jennifer Bigham

Jennifer Johnson (Part time)

Julie Barrie

Julie Gillies

Lauren Little

Lynn Dysart (Part time)

Lynne Jamieson

Mary Stewart

Megan McMillan (Maternity Leave until 2025)

Rebecca Hill (Part time)

Early Learning and Childcare Support Assistant

Joan Colman

Julie Mallon (Part time)

Supply Staff

Lisa Hill

Staff Information

Photographs of all members of staff are on the notice board located inside the main reception.

There will always be a member of the management team at the front entrance at the beginning and end of each session should you wish to pass on any information or to discuss any concerns you may have.

All staff within each playroom are responsible for every child. Whilst your child will have a key person who will complete your child's Learning Journals and individual Care Plans, in their absence all other practitioners within the playroom will ensure continuity and consistency of learning and care is upheld through building effective and nurturing relationships with all children within the playroom.

Respectful Relationships – Promoting Positive Behaviour

All children are treated fairly, with respect and given lots of encouragement. The Centre promotes positive behaviour through devising our own Golden Rules with the children and following the nurture principles.

Staff are aware and understand that all behaviour is a form of communication and we truly believe in time in and not time out.

Onthank Early Childhood Centre - Golden Rules

- We have kind and gentle hands.
- We use our listening ears.
- We use our walking feet indoors.
- We look after the toys.
- We are all friends and try our best.
- We use our normal voice indoors.

Nurture Principles

- Children's learning is understood developmentally.
- The Centre offers a safe base.
- Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem.
- Language is understood as a vital means of communication.
- All behaviour is communication.
- Transitions are significant in the lives of children.

Opportunities to participate within the Centre

Woodland Adventures

We aim to visit our outdoor woodland area on a regular basis and access outdoor learning on a daily basis where children will participate in a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning. We ask that parents/carers provide your child with an all-weather waterproof suit and wellingtons and any other weather appropriate clothing (with their name clearly marked). Parent/carer volunteers are always welcome to help facilitate this learning experience.

Section 2

Transition

Onthank Early Childhood Centre aims to develop a seamless transition for all children and parents from their Home to our Centre. To achieve this seamless transition we will engage and work collaboratively with our parents to meet the needs of all the children accessing our service.

Associated Primary Schools:

Onthank Primary School,

Meiklewood Road,

KILMARNOCK,

KA3 2ES

01563 525477

Mount Carmel Primary School,

Meiklewood Road,

KILMARNOCK,

KA3 2ES

01563 525897

Support for children and young people and parents/ carers

Fiona MacKellar - Head Teacher

Linzi Stewart – Acting Depute Manager/Equity and Excellence Lead

Marianne Deans - Senior ELCP

Amy Law - Senior ELCP (Maternity Leave)

Sarah Peacock- Acting Senior ELCP (Maternity cover)

Onthank ECC Complaints Process

Onthank ECC aim to provide a high quality service to the people we serve, but sometimes things can go wrong. If this happens, please tell us, so we can put it right. If you have experienced a problem with our service or have a complaint to make, the quickest way to get it resolved is to contact the Head Teacher Fiona.

- **Stage 1:** If the Head Teacher is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution to your enquiry or complaint, you can raise a formal complaint via the Council's Complaints Procedure.
- Your complaint will be reviewed by a manager within education and a response provided within five working days
- **Stage 2:** If you are not satisfied with the response received, you can ask for a further review of your complaint by senior management and we will aim to respond within 20 working days.

If you have completed the Council's complaints process and you are still unhappy, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to look at the complaint. Further information is provided in the leaflet a **guide to making a comments, suggestions and complaints** or on the Council's website

www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/complaints

Complaints about care -You have the right to contact the Care Inspectorate with any complaint that you have about an Early Childhood Centre and you can make a complaint:

- 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- a list is here:
www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/our-offices

Mediation and Advocacy services are also available through enquire- the Scottish advice service operated by Children in Scotland, for additional support for learning 0845 123 2303 or email: info@enquire.org.uk

Additional Support for Learning

The Education Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 provides the legal framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning. The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential. It also promotes collaborative working among all those supporting children and young people and sets out the rights of children, young people and parents within the system. The Act has been subsequently amended by the Education Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2009, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

At Onthank ECC we want to ensure all children and young people get the support they need to reach their full learning potential. We have a system which focuses on overcoming barriers to learning and getting it right for every child (GIRFEC).

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people.

The GIRFEC approach aims to make it easier for parents, children and young people and the services that support them- such as early year's services, schools and the NHS- to work to get it right.

Find out more about GIRFEC at www.gov.scot/girfec. Or speak to a professional supporting your child, such as a teacher, nurse practitioner, childminder, health visitor or social worker.

Section 3

Entitled Two year olds

Requests for assistance (RFA) are generated by your Child's Named Person (Health Visitor) in the first instance and this is then presented to the Resource Allocation Group (RAG) which meets at the end of the month. RFA can include children who require a particular session to facilitate regular appointments due to complex or multiple medical or additional support needs or where an assessment panel has agreed that the child's identified needs will be best met in a flexible session.

Funded Early Learning and Childcare for entitled two year olds are available if families are in receipt of a qualifying benefit, further information can be obtained online through East Ayrshire Council's website. Two year old children are eligible for a funded place under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act if they are: Looked After, under a Kinship Care Order; or have a parent-appointed person. You can find the application form on East Ayrshire Council's website.

Attendance

We ask that parents/carers report the absence of their child to the Centre on the first day of absence. If known in advance that your child is going to be off, please inform your child's key worker/clerical staff.

We ask that where possible you adhere to the door opening times indicated as learning experiences begin shortly after arrival and children coming in late or leaving early disrupt these times for the whole playroom.

We do, however, appreciate that unforeseen circumstances/appointments etc. out with session times are unavoidable but we ask that you inform a member of staff as soon as possible.

Our opening hours are 8.30am-4pm, if you require to call into the centre, please do so within these hours.

Dress Code

Uniform

If you wish your child to wear our uniform (although this is not compulsory), sweatshirts and polo shirts are available from Ayrshire Schoolwear Shop which is situated in Princes Street, Kilmarnock.

We ask that you ensure your child's name is on ALL items of clothing/footwear and that you provide a change of clothes in their bag should they be needed at any time.

We highly recommend that you do not put any good clothing/footwear on your child as we cannot fully prevent paint and other such materials/resources marking/staining children's clothing or footwear.

Security and Visitors

The Centre has a very secure key fob entry system throughout. There is a secure door into the main building. An intercom system is in use for times the office is closed. All visitors to the Centre are requested to sign the visitor's book. The main playroom doors are kept closed/locked during sessions where only staff can gain access to leave or enter through a fob. Fire exits are still accessible from inside the playrooms. The outdoor areas have gates that remain closed at all times.

Medical Matters

Childsmile

The NHS provide tooth brushing and tooth varnishing services to all children attending an Early Years Centre. You will be required to grant consent for Childsmile to engage with your child within the centre.

Medication/Allergies

If your child is required to take any medication or has any dietary/allergen needs we should be aware of, please inform their key worker. You will then be asked to complete a medical consent form and this will be reviewed every term to ensure it is kept current.

Communicable Diseases

Infections are common in childhood. For some diseases a period of exclusion from nursery is necessary to ensure that your child is fit to resume normal activities and to ensure that he/she does not pose a risk to other children and staff.

Minor Accidents and Upsets

Any minor accidents or upsets such as small cuts, bumps and bruises will be dealt with capably by one of our first aiders. (Linzi Stewart, Marianne Deans & Amy Law)

All of our first aiders have been trained to deal with Anaphylactic Shock and all staff have been trained in the use of defibrillators through Heart Start Training.

We will always telephone you if your child bumps their head. This will then continue to be monitored by staff after the initial phone call and you will be informed of any concerns.

Sunscreen/Sunhats

If the weather is sunny and warm we would ask that sun cream is applied to your child at home before they come to nursery and that they are provided with a hat to wear outside. Could we also encourage you provide sun cream in your child's bag so it can be reapplied throughout the day.

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

The Curriculum

Onthank Early Childhood Centre plan and deliver child led experiences following National Guidelines from documents outlined by the Scottish Government:

- The Curriculum for Excellence.
- Realising the Ambition.
- Health and Social Care Standards.
- Getting it Right for Every Child.
- United Nation Convention Rights of the Child.
- A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged children.

These documents assist practitioners in delivering knowledge, skills and attributes that children and young people need for life in the 21st century, including skills for learning, life and work.

Children have access to all areas of the Curriculum throughout the 2-3 and 3-5 Playrooms and all areas are accessible and meet the needs of the individual children. We believe in providing a cross curricular approach to our children's learning ensuring that Literacy, Maths, Health & Wellbeing and all other areas can be developed both inside the playroom and within our Outdoor Learning Environments.

We believe in child led learning experiences and following the children's interests to develop their skills and knowledge of the world around them. We achieve this through each playroom having their own 'Floorbook' which documents the children's voice, mark making skills and photographic evidence, thus allowing children to have ownership of their learning. Each child has their own individual online learning journal to record their learning and significant achievements.

The staff evaluate the children's learning experiences and consult the children on possible next steps to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Evidence is a vital component of documenting the impact of children's experiences and a valuable tool for staff to self-evaluate how they will plan to take the children's learning forward. Staff link the evidence gathered to the group display boards which allows parents to follow the children's learning journey.

Children are encouraged to have their input into 'Floorbooks' and display boards that are visible for all.

Learning Journals

At Onthank we use an online system created by Learning Journals to record and share significant aspects of your child's learning. Working in partnership with our parents and carers is a crucial aspect of our practice. Learning Journals enables you to access and comment on your child's ongoing progress, as well as share any learning or important events from home. Parents and carers can access their child's profile from home online. Once your child has enrolled at the centre, you will be given a Learning Journals consent form to complete to allow staff to set up your child's profile and send out log in details. If you do not have an internet connection at home, you are welcome to view your child's profile from within the centre. Learning Journals also provide the opportunity for parents to interact by liking and comment on posts created by staff, but also the opportunity to share learning and news from home.

Section 5

Raising Attainment

Equity and Excellence Lead – Linzi Stewart

Onthank Early Childhood Centre aims to work effectively in raising attainment for all those who access our service. The Equity and Excellence Leads role within the centre is to support staff, children and families, working towards achieving the best outcomes for all. The role of the professional is to contribute to the provision of high quality early learning and childcare services that encourages everyone to work together to reduce inequalities and close the poverty related attainment gap.

Onthank ECC Champions

Staff that are called Champions are highly trained within specific areas of the curriculum. They work with children and families to support, challenge and develop children's knowledge and understanding. In turn giving the children the skills required to progress within their learning at the age and stage appropriate to the individual child's development. We encourage parents to support their child within the home by providing home link activities that encourages family learning, thus ensuring we are giving every child the best possible start in life.

Language and Communication Champions –

Onthank ECC Communication Champions are Linzi Stewart, Julie Barrie, Coline Armstrong, Arlene Goodwin, Lauren Little, Jennifer Bigham, Lynn Dysart & Lynne Jamieson.

The importance of children developing good communication skills has been a priority area within East Ayrshire Council. The Early Years Project was developed in August 2017 for closing the attainment gap in Early Language and Communication Development in Children and as part of the project the Speech and Language Team have been working closely with Communication Champions throughout East Ayrshire to support, encourage and develop good speech, Language and Communication skills amongst every child from 0-5 years.

The ability to communicate effectively is a key skill in life and as a child develops, it is important we nurture their communication skills so they are capable of expressing themselves, clearly and confidently, in all aspects and areas of their life.

A child learns to communicate by watching and listening to their parents/carers, and then mimicking their words and actions; the more you communicate with your child, the earlier and quicker they will develop these skills.

Onthank Early Childhood Centre is the first Centre to receive 'Language and Communication Friendly Environment' accreditation award in June 2019, which will be maintained.

Through interactions and play within the Centre a child will develop social skills, interpersonal skills, listening and attention skills alongside their communication skills.

Communication Champions will provide targeted support to aid all aspects of communication, working closely with the speech and language team as well as parents and carers.

Maths Champions – Linzi Stewart & Marianne Deans

The Maths Champions use the 'Magic Maths' area to introduce and model concepts to small groups of children and the intended learning concepts are also delivered within the Maths area of the playroom to allow children to extend their own learning at a pace appropriate to their development. 'Magic Maths' is supported by two Maths Champions who work collaboratively with the children's key workers to identify the children who may require targeted support or challenge.

Massage in Schools Champions – Debbie Boax and Christine McColl

As part of our commitment to raising attainment through health and wellbeing, we have staff members who are qualified in the school massage programme. Children will be issued with a leaflet as part of their induction pack which gives more details about the programme and its benefits.

Section 7

Daily Snack/Lunch

Children will be offered a variety of fruit each day in line with the 'Setting the Table' nutritional guidelines.

Fresh water is always available and accessible for children.

Our Lunch menus have been devised following the NHS Health Scotland National Guidance and food standards for Early Years childcare providers in Scotland document – Setting the table.

We follow this guidance as research has proven that eating habits developed within the early years frequently can last into adulthood, so therefore our aim is to support the development of positive food habits from an early age.

All children who attend will have a lunch provided for them, apart from any 2 year olds who attend through the Resource Allocation Group (RAG).

Please make a member of staff aware if your child has any allergies or dietary requirements which have been medically diagnosed and listed on their medical records.

A digital version of the Early Years Lunch Menu can also be sourced through East Ayrshire Council's Website.

Birthday Celebrations

As we follow the 'Setting the Table' guidelines on nutrition, birthday cake is sadly not allowed within the centre. Your child will celebrate their 'special day' with their group and will be presented with a card and small gift to mark the occasion.

Car Parking

There are limited spaces in the car park situated in front of the centre which we share with Onthank Primary School and Mount Carmel Primary School. Can we please ask that extreme care is taken when using the car park and that the one way system is used at ALL times but especially during the busiest times of the day.]

Social Media

You will be issued with a photographic consent form as part of your child's induction to Onthank ECC where you can identify if you give consent or not for your child to appear on Facebook, Glow etc. We have a Glow Education account where pictures/videos of the children whose parents have given consent are uploaded to demonstrate the high quality learning taking place within our centre.

We use social media/school app/email to notify parent/carers of forth coming events or important information. Please ensure you can access one of the below forms of communication:

- Your personal email address (please let the centre know if a) you do not receive any emails or b) you change your email address.
- Glow – (Google) Onthank Early Childhood Centre Glow.
- Facebook - Onthank Early Childhood Centre.
- School App – Safer Schools Scotland (Please see Linzi for the unique code to access the app.

Mental Health

Improving mental health is a priority for the Scottish Government and here at Onthank ECC we have mental health first aiders:

Fiona Mackellar - Head Teacher

Linzi Stewart – Acting Depute Manager/Equity and Excellence Lead

Julie Barrie – Early Learning and Childcare Practitioner

We look forward to welcoming our children and families who are returning to the centre and we are excited to meet our new children and families as they begin their learning journal at Onthank Early Childhood Centre.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any further questions or concerns.

Kind Regards

Fiona MacKellar
Head Teacher