



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

CUSTOMER SERVICES: EDUCATION

Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit

HANDBOOK

2023-24



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Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit
Arrochar Primary School
Tarbet
Arrochar
G83 7DG

Tel: 01301 702261

E-Mail: enquiries-arrochar@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Dear Parents/ Carers

Welcome to Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit. We hope you will find this booklet helpful in introducing you to Pre-5 Education and to what goes on in our unit.

I hope it will answer most of your questions. However, if you wish any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school or on the above telephone number or by e-mail.

The Early Learning & Childcare staff and I look forward to a happy association with you and your child in our unit.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher



Section One

Our Children, Their Future: The Vision

Our aspiration is to ensure that Argyll and Bute is the best place in Scotland for our children to grow up. Our vision is that **together we will realise ambition, excellence and equality for all**. Our vision sends a signal about the importance we attach to education, is simple in message and is recognised by everyone. This is best captured as:



Our vision is underpinned by our values: **respect, openness and fairness**. This vision will be delivered for all our children through the following 6 key objectives.

We will:

- **Raise educational attainment and achievement for all**
- **Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people**
- **Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed**
- **Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life**
- **Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement**
- **Strengthen leadership at all levels**

The Vision for Early Years Service in Argyll and Bute

We want every child to have access to the best possible learning and healthcare services that meet their individual needs and which promote resilience and wellbeing. We are committed to creating a system and climate whereby every child can fulfil their potential as a successful learner, confident individual, effective contributor and responsible citizen.

Across Argyll and Bute we believe that:

- Every child should have opportunities to engage with quality services that meet their needs, support their achievement and sustain their well being.
- Children's interests, achievements and well being should be promoted and celebrated.
- Children should be offered opportunities that enable them to extend their potential and become powerful lifelong learners.

In addition, we are clear that the pathways to this lie with the skills and capabilities of professionals working with young people and families. The high quality service that we want to be part of is:

- Driven and sustained by strong values and an emphasis on continually doing the right things for children.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Collaborative and connected.
- Evaluative and responsive.
- Skilled and learned.
- Confident and professional

Establishment Aims

Arrochar Primary Early Learning & Childcare Unit provides pre-school education for up to 17 children from Arrochar and the surrounding area. Staff work in partnership with parents in developing children's learning experiences. This involves learning about, valuing and building on children's prior learning experiences so that they become confident, eager and enthusiastic learners who are looking forward to starting school. Under developments of a Curriculum for Excellence, we strive to help children develop as Successful Learners (learning to learn), Responsible Citizens (learning to live with others), Confident Individuals (learning to be) and Effective Contributors (learning to do). To do this, we will seek to:

- ❖ Provide a safe and stimulating environment, in which children feel happy and secure
- ❖ Encourage the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of children
- ❖ Promote the welfare of children
- ❖ Encourage positive attitudes to self and others and develop confidence and self esteem
- ❖ Create opportunities for play
- ❖ Encourage children to explore, appreciate and respect their environment

In achieving these aims, we will seek ways in which to:

- ❖ Take account of the individual needs of children
- ❖ Provide equal opportunities and social justice
- ❖ Promote positive attitudes to multicultural, non-sexist society
- ❖ Form partnership with parents/ carers
- ❖ Recognise the importance of community
- ❖ Recognise learning as a life-long process

We respect and welcome children and parents/ carers of all religions, faiths and beliefs.

Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit is a non-denominational, co-educational and multicultural establishment.

Section Two: General Information

Staff Details

Acting Head Teacher	Marianne Docherty
Childcare and Education Workers	Kathryn Haggarty Joanne Stark Susan Tighe
ASN Assistant	Catherine Driscoll
Classroom Assistant	Catherine Driscoll
Support For Learning	Barbara Gillies
French (Tuesday)	Joanne Stark
Clerical Support	Tracey Marshall
Janitor	Sandra Kay
Cleaning Supervisor Cleaner	Rachel Buchanan Nick Morton Grant
Music (Tuesday) French (Tuesday)	Margaret Mortimer Margaret Mortimer

Early Learning & Childcare Unit Information

Capacity	17 children
Hours	Monday – Friday, 9am – 3pm
Stages covered	3 and 4 year olds
ELC Unit Location	Arrochar Primary Early Learning & Childcare Unit is situated in the grounds of Arrochar Primary School, Tarbet, Arrochar, G83 7DG. Tel: 01301 702261
Parent Notice Board	The notice board is located in the Early Learning & Childcare Unit entrance area. It contains information which we hope will be of interest to you.

Enrolment

Details of enrolment are normally announced in the local press and by means of posters in local shops. During enrolment week, you are welcome to call at the school at any time during school hours. However, a telephone to the school office to make an appointment will ensure that you are dealt with promptly.

Registration

Early Learning and Childcare Provision for Pupils Aged 3-4 Years

As a result of the Children and Young People Bill, there was an increase to 600 hours of early learning and childcare provision for all three and four year olds and looked after two year olds as of August 2014. The move to 600 hours meant that all children are entitled to an additional 125 hours per year of funded childcare and early learning provision. This has now been increased to 1140 hours, which started from April 2019 in our Pre-5 Unit.

The vision is to bring together early learning and childcare through an increase in funded hours. By a more integrated approach, the aspirations are for an increase in early learning experiences for our children and to allow for the needs of children and families to be better met.

Please see www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childcare-and-pre-school-education for information.

Enrolment Procedure

Parents of children who are eligible for **three year old provision** should complete an enrolment form during the specified enrolment week. Parents of children who are eligible for **four year old provision** should complete an enrolment form during the specified enrolment week.

How Parents Can Help

Your children arrive in the Unit with experience, knowledge and a variety of skills developed in your home. You know your own child better than we ever can. Therefore, if you have any concerns regarding your child, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with us.

Attendance

In the event of illness or absence from the Early Learning & Childcare Unit, you should phone the school before 9.15am to inform us of this.

Arrival and Departure

Parents should plan to arrive with their children for 9am and collect them at 3pm.

Parking Procedures

Please park in the car park opposite the Tarbet Hotel and walk the short distance along the footpath to the Early Learning & Childcare Unit. The bus bay outside the school is for the school bus and taxis, **please do not park in it.**

Collecting Your Child

Children must always be brought to the Unit and collected by a responsible adult of 16 years or over. **If a child is going to be collected by someone other than the usual person / people, please ensure that the staff are aware of this.** The parent of the pupils whose home arrangements have changed should phone the school, or tell a member of staff, of the new arrangements. Although we try to be as flexible as possible, it would be helpful if parents could ensure that they collect their children at the stated times as young children become very anxious if left later. However, any parent who is experiencing difficulties should feel free to approach the Early Learning & Childcare Unit or school, who will endeavour to find a solution.

Excursions and Consent Forms

When outings and excursions are planned you will be advised in advance. You will be asked to complete consent forms which give your permission for your child to take part. Please note that

children cannot take part in outings unless completed consent forms have been submitted by their parent/guardian. Parents may also be asked to come along as helpers, so that we have a good adult to child ratio.

Transport

Transport is not normally provided for children attending Early Learning & Childcare establishments. The Council may, however, provide transport to and from these units for children with additional needs who may require to travel some distance to take up their placement.

Insurance

Sometimes, children like to bring something special or new to the Unit for their friends to see. Parents should, however, ensure that valuable items are not left at the Unit as the authority has no insurance to cover the cost of such personal items. Claims submitted are likely to be met only when the authority can be shown to have been negligent.

Emergency Closure Arrangements

Occasionally, circumstances might arise which would mean the Early Learning and Childcare Unit would have to close. Such a situation might arise during severe weather or power failures. If this happens, we will do all we can to let you know about the details of closure and re-opening. It is essential that we have up-to-date contact details, phone numbers and mobile numbers for parents and emergency contacts in case children have to be sent home before a session has finished.

We may keep in touch by telephone, notices in local shops, text messages, Twitter, email and announcements in the press and on local radio.

Emergency Contacts

Parents with children in the Unit are asked to provide the name, address and telephone number of a **local** contact person for use in case of emergency.

Suitable Clothing

During sessions, children have access to a variety of messy play and outdoor play activities. In order that they may enjoy these activities to the full, they need to be appropriately dressed. Please do not send your child to the Unit in his/her best clothes. Please also do remember to provide a jacket and a pair of wellington boots (which will stay in the nursery), as we try to go out into the playground every day at all times of year for outside play and activities. Could you also ensure that your child is dressed in clothing that they are able to change out of and in to for e.g. P.E., fitness, toilet stops etc. It would also be helpful if all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child's name.

Indoor shoes are required for all children and gym shoes ensure safety during games times. It would be very helpful if all items of footwear are marked with pupils' names.

Snacks and the Promotion of Healthy Eating

The children have a healthy snack during each session. This snack is provided by the Early Learning & Childcare Unit, along with milk or water. Parents are asked to notify staff of any food allergies their child may have. Snacks may also be linked into the themes we are working on.

We would ask that you send £10.00 per term for the Early Learning & Childcare Fund, which is used to buy playdough, presents, fund parties, contribute towards the cost of outings and fund the daily healthy snack. This works out at £1 per week. The staff will advise you when the money is due.

School Meals

School meals are cooked at the school each day. Menus are sent home in advance, and are also available on the Argyll and Bute website, and parents and carers are invited to discuss this with their child. We encourage healthy eating, school lunches are planned so they are well balanced, vegetables and fresh fruit are available daily.

However, some pupils prefer a packed lunch, we have prepared a separate sheet with guidance on what could provide a well-balanced packed lunch.

At present we have pupils and staff in the school with allergies. Please do not send your child to school with nuts or kiwi fruit. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Free school meals are also available if you receive any of the following:-

- Income support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related element of employment and support allowance
- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit (Income should not exceed £16,105)
- Child Tax Credit but and Working Tax Credit (Income should not exceed £7,330)
- Support under Part V1 of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit (monthly take home pay for period must be must be under £610)

No Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted in the Early Learning & Childcare Unit or any other part of the school's buildings or grounds.

Child Protection

The issue of child care covers many aspects within the Early Learning & Childcare Unit. Our aim is to create an ethos where children feel secure and confident, all staff are aware of issues relating to Child Protection and the procedures they should follow. The Head Teacher, is the lead Child Protection contact for the school and Early Learning & Childcare Unit.

Section Three: Medical Information

Medication

If your child is in need of medication during his/her time at the Early Learning & Childcare Unit, you should discuss his/her requirements with the staff of the Unit. Prescribed drugs will be given at the discretion of the Head Teacher and you will need to fill in a form, which authorises staff to administer the drugs to your child. The clerical assistant will give you the necessary form to fill in.

You should note that no non-prescribed medicine will be administered by staff. All medicines must have a doctor/ chemist's label on it with the child's name and dosage before a member of staff can administer it.

You will be asked to complete a medical/ personal information form when your child joins our Unit, informing us of any known allergies or illnesses. Appropriate action will then be taken by staff in partnership with the school nursing team, e.g. healthcare plans, staff training etc. If this medical/ personal information changes for any reason, please inform a member of staff.

If your child suffers from asthma, you must tell a member of staff in the Early Learning & Childcare Unit if there are any activities which are likely to bring on an attack. Spare inhalers should be stored in the school office. Forms can be obtained from the school office to allow a member of staff to administer the inhaler.

If your child suffers from epileptic attacks, you must tell staff what emergency treatment to give. An agreed action plan will be put in place after taking medical and parental advice.

During the summer months, please ensure that sun barrier cream is applied to your child before coming to the Unit. It would also be beneficial if you could send a hat or cap for your child to wear during outdoor play sessions.

If your child becomes ill

Children who are obviously unwell should be kept at home where they will be more comfortable.

The school should be phoned on the first day of any period when your child is unable to attend the Unit due to illness.

Please ensure that your child does not return to the Early Learning & Childcare Unit until they are clear of infection, e.g. diarrhoea and vomiting – minimum period of exclusion is 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea and vomiting; impetigo – minimum period of exclusion is until lesions are crusted or healed.

If unsure, please contact the school or medical centre for advice.

Should your child become unwell during their time at the Unit, then we would try to reach you by phone. If, however, we cannot reach you at your home/work, then we would use the emergency contact number supplied by you on your child's registration/ personal information form. Please ensure we have up to date contact details for your child.

Minor Accidents and Upsets

Any minor accidents will be dealt with according to Argyll & Bute Council's first aid procedures. The accident will be recorded both for our records and for parent information and the person picking up your child will be informed. Ann Huggans is the school First Aider. Mrs Joanne Stark and Ms Kathryn Haggarty are all first aid trained.

If we feel your child needs medical attention, we will telephone you or your emergency contact person.

If your child is upset for any reason during the course of a session, you will also be informed of this. We would likewise appreciate information on bumps, bruises and upsets that occur outwith the Unit.

If you have any concerns in relation to your child's health and development, you should discuss these with your health visitor. If we identify concerns, we will inform you, and discuss these with you, and if appropriate request attention, e.g. speech and language therapy.

You will be informed, in advance, of any visits to the establishment by medical staff.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Updated legislation introduced in May 2018 and requires all businesses to protect and properly manage all customers' privacy data – this includes Local Authorities. The main changes under GDPR are:

- GDPR give people more rights to know how their personal data is being used.
- It gives them the right to be 'forgotten' and their personal data deleted if they wish.
- It enables people to see what personal data is being held about them and to make sure their personal data is correct.
- It gives increased importance for the protection of children
- It creates increased importance for not allowing people without permission to see or use others' personal data
- If someone's personal data has been used by people without permission, they have to be told what happened.

The full detail of the new legislation can be found at www.ico.org.uk

A link to the general privacy notice for education can be found at [www.argyll-](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/privacy/education-general)

[bute.gov.uk/privacy/education-general](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/privacy/education-general). This privacy notice outlines the information that we require to provide Education for Children and Young People, who we will share that information with, why we need the information, what we will do with the information and how long we will keep the information.

General information:

Children's work on display

Children's work is often displayed in the classroom and school corridors. In addition, work is often displayed in other Council buildings as part of exhibitions. This may include their name.

Section Four: Early Learning & Childcare Curriculum

Our Aims

Through the curriculum provided for children, staff seek:

- ❖ To provide a caring stimulating environment where children can develop fully as individuals
- ❖ To talk with children, helping them to think and reason, to listen and hear, to look and see, and to touch and feel
- ❖ To encourage and extend the children's interest and natural curiosity so that they want to find out more about the world in which they live

How We Promote Learning

Within the Early Learning & Childcare Unit we plan for a bright, comfortable, stimulating environment which encourages children to learn through play. There is a carefully designed programme of activities delivered flexibly to match the needs and interests of the children. Many activities are planned around a theme which extends to all areas of play, physical areas outside and inside the Unit, painting, drawing, music and role play corners, book corner and quiet area.

Play is recognised as making a major contribution to all aspects of children's development and learning. Our staff will help the children during play by encouraging them to become interested and absorbed in activities and by making sure that children can cope with activities, increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

By working in partnership with parents/carers, by valuing and building upon the children's learning experiences and by broadening these learning experiences in their pre-school years through play and exploration, the children become confident, keen and enthusiastic learners who are looking forward to starting school.

At Arrochar Primary Early Learning & Childcare Unit, the curriculum has been reviewed in order to incorporate Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 guidelines. Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 aims to produce a simplified, coherent education system that meets the needs of a changing society and allows youngsters to develop fully. Central to Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 is the idea that the curriculum should develop what are known as the four capacities in young people.

These are to be:

- ❖ successful learners
- ❖ confident individuals
- ❖ responsible citizens
- ❖ effective contributors

What We Do

Within the planned programme we provide a framework for action which provides both a balance across key areas of development and is adjusted, adapted and customised daily to match the individual needs and interests of each child and enables each individual to achieve. We share the planned framework of activities with parents as well as with pupils. **The pupils are fully involved in the planning process.**

Curriculum for Excellence

Bringing learning to life and life to learning.

Curriculum for Excellence has been introduced across Scotland for all 3-18 year olds – wherever they learn. It aims to **raise standards**, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world.

Curriculum for Excellence enables professionals to teach subjects creatively, to **work together** across the school and with other schools, to share **best practice** and explore learning together. Glow, Scotland's unique, world-leading, online network supports learners and teachers in this and plans are already in place for parents across the country to have access to Glow.

Teachers and practitioners will share information to plan a child's 'learning journey' from 3-18, helping their progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond, ensuring the change is smooth. They'll ensure children continue to work at a pace they can cope with and with challenge they can thrive on.

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of **knowledge and skills**.

Every child is entitled to a **broad and deep** general education, whatever their level and ability. Every single teacher and practitioner will be responsible for **literacy and numeracy** – the language and numbers skills that unlock other subjects and are vital to everyday life. It develops **skills** for learning, life and work to help young people go on to further study, secure work and navigate life. It brings real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helps young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links **knowledge** in one subject area to another, helping children understand the world and make connections. It develops skills so that children can think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.



Posting letters to Santa!

There will be new ways of **assessing progress** and ensuring children achieve their potential. There's personal **support** to help young people fulfil their potential and make the most of their opportunities with **additional support** wherever that's needed. There will be a new emphasis by all staff on looking after our children's **health and wellbeing** – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure.



Learning about our postal service with Colin, our postman



Learning about oral health from the Oral Health Team, with P1

Ultimately, Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve our children's life chances, to nurture **successful** learners, **confident** individuals, **effective** contributors and **responsible** citizens, building on Scotland's reputation for great education.



A visit from the mountain rescue service



Learning about our community Hydro scheme whilst on our annual Arrochar Challenge sponsored walk



Sports Day fun



Collecting items for 'story sticks', on the shore, when the story teller visited

Additional Educational Needs

Additional Educational needs arise from difficulties in learning or barriers to learning. Many of the difficulties which young children experience are temporary and will be resolved as they develop and learn. Some of them will relate to specific aspects of learning such as speech or language development. Additional help may be needed. If a member of staff or parent has any concerns regarding progress, reference will be made to the Head Teacher who will provide advice or, in consultation with the parent, contact appropriate outside agencies for extra support and advice if this is considered necessary.

Any extra support is provided in a calm, relaxing, friendly environment where children can learn at their own pace and with the promotion of self-esteem being a major consideration.

Tracking Progress

Tracking the children's progress through each area of development is carried out through careful observation of the children as they take part in each of our planned activities. This process is ongoing and continuous and will be recorded both formally and informally to provide an accurate and individual profile of each child's progress.

The tracking process highlights any strengths or development needs your child may have and will enable pre-school staff to help them progress in a way that is appropriate to their needs.

The children's profiles will be updated at points during both the ante-school and pre-school years, using the staff notes and formal observations, in order to take stock of the progress in development of the children. Profiles are used in conjunction with folios containing samples of the children's work.

We have also developed Personal Learning Plans for the Early Learning & Childcare Unit. The staff will work with pupils and parents, agreeing targets to be worked on each term. The Personal Learning Plans will be sent home on a regular basis, for parent and pupil comments. This plan will also go with your child into Primary 1, where the class teacher will be able to see your child's progress.

Each child has their own file containing special pieces of work (chosen by the child), achievements and next steps.

All staff observations are also kept in this file. Parents will get to see these at the open days and parent meetings.

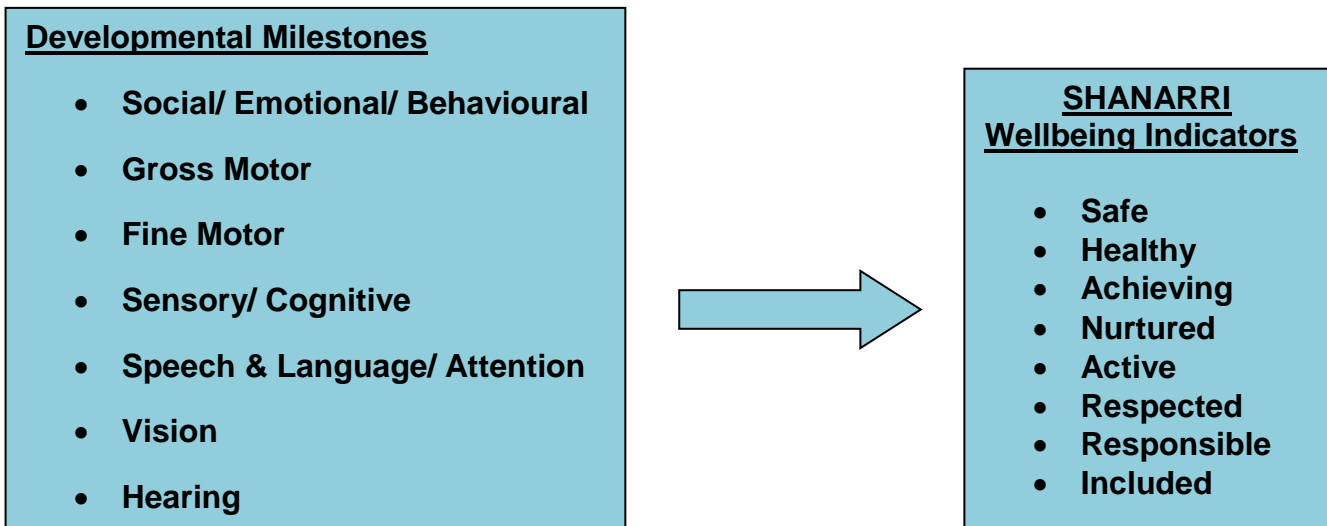
These files will transfer with the child to school. Once the school staff have seen these, they will be sent home with the pupil.



Developmental Milestones

Argyll and Bute Developmental Milestone Tool

The Argyll and Bute Developmental Milestone Tool enables Early Learning and Childcare practitioners to share progress and appropriate next steps in developmental milestones for 3 to 5 year old children within each of the GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) Wellbeing Indicators:



How does this connect with Curriculum for Excellence?

At the heart of Curriculum for Excellence sits the Four Capacities:

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

If we look closer at the Four Capacities, we can see the capabilities and attributes, which describe all the qualities which every child needs to achieve his or her potential. There is a very strong link between the attributes and developmental milestones – some of these attributes are listed below-

- Self respect
- A sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- Resilience
- Self reliance
- Enthusiasm and motivation for learning

By creating firm foundations through the developmental milestones and attributes, the capabilities listed within the Four Capacities will be developed, as will the experiences and outcomes. The Developmental Milestone Toolkit also incorporates significant aspects of learning within literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. It also contains a range of outcomes and experiences from other curricular areas. By focusing on a child's developmental milestones within the context of Curriculum for Excellence, the ELCC setting, home and the child are able to work together to ensure each child's early learning and developmental needs are being met. From time to time, some of our children will need additional help to reach some of their milestones and we may need input from other agencies. This is where we can use the GIRFEC process to help us get the right support for every child at the right time.

Working Together to Support Learning

In Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit we are aware of the importance of children's previous experiences and achievements as important factors in the way they learn. We feel it is important to work together by sharing experiences both at home and at the unit. Parents are kept informed of events and themes that the curriculum is built around through regular newsletters, planning sheets and pupil evaluations, which are e-mailed home or can be found on the Unit's notice board, which is situated just outside the door. Additionally, monthly Soft Start sessions and parent open days, parent afternoons and workshops are held during the year. Parents are welcome to visit the Unit if they wish to share particular interests or information with us.

Two formal parents meetings will be offered each year, and a formal written report will be issued at the end of the session.

Arrochar Primary Early Learning & Childcare Unit's policies are available and are displayed in the main nursery entrance. There is also a suggestion box for your comments.

Listening to a story read by an older pupil



Learning at the Promethean Board



Equal Opportunities

This establishment will ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, additional support needs, rurality or ability. We will ensure that all children feel secure, included and valued. These principles are reflected in our admissions criteria and throughout the planned curriculum.



Having fun, learning about weather on a frosty day



Our monthly music workshop with Snappy Sounds

The Daily Routine

We aim to be flexible. Below, is a typical example of a day in our Early Learning & Childcare Unit:

8.30-8.50	Staff setting up/ paperwork
9 -9.10	Discuss our day with the pupils
9.10-10.15	Free play (including adult led activities)
10.15-10.25	Tidy up time
10.25-10.45	Snack time
10.45-11.45	Free play/ continue with craft activities/ outside play
11.45-12.00	Tidy up time. Get ready for lunch
12.00-12.30	Lunch time
12.30-1.15	Quiet activities and book corner time
1.15-1.30	Toothbrushing
1.30-3	Free play/ continue with craft activities/ outside play Tidy up and hometime

On Mondays:

3.00-4.00	Staff planning/ paperwork
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On Wednesdays:

9.15-9.45	Pre-school children visit P1/2 classroom for health and wellbeing
2.00-2.20	PE with Mrs Ferrari
3.00-4.00	Staff planning/ paperwork

On Thursdays:

9.15-9.45	Pre-school children visit P1/2 classroom for health and wellbeing
3.00-4.20	Staff planning/ paperwork

On Fridays:

11.00-11.30	Pre-school children visit P1/2 classroom for health and wellbeing
11.00-12.00	Working with playgroup pupils in P5-7
3.00-4.00	Staff planning/ paperwork

Section Five: Parent Partnership

Our Aims

- ❖ To form a partnership with parents which will allow the child to move happily between the home and the Early Learning & Childcare Unit

- ❖ To ensure that the needs of pupils are met whilst taking account of parental concerns

Working Together

In Arrochar Early Learning & Childcare Unit, we recognise the importance of parents as the prime educators of their children. We hope that parents will always inform us of important events and interests in the child's home life.

We would like to work with parents to ensure close home/unit links develop. Parents who register children at the beginning of the year will be invited to take part in a pre-entry visit prior to their child's date of entry to the unit. This will provide an opportunity to have full discussion with staff about how the Unit operates and how parents can enrich opportunities we provide. Daily informal contacts as children are brought into the unit and collected are useful for exchanging information about children and updating parents on progress.

During the year, parents will be invited into the Unit for Open days and monthly Soft Start sessions. In September and May, parents' meetings provides the opportunity to evaluate progress made throughout the year and to discuss the transfer to mainstream schooling. Induction days will take place, as required, throughout the year.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Promotion of positive behaviour is a whole school practice. It is important that parents and staff, as far as possible, work with the school in developing a unified approach, to promote positive behaviour through praise and encouragement. We achieve this by the way we talk to each other and to the children, by taking time to listen and explain what is acceptable and by guiding the children and assisting them to learn how to deal with their feelings.

Fundraising

The school has a very active and inclusive PTA which is involved in fund raising activities for the school and the Early Learning & Childcare Unit as well as social events for parents and children. Parents of pupils are encouraged to become involved in the life of the PTA.

Section Six: The Wider Community

Links With Primary Pupils

Children in our Unit attend assemblies with children in our Primary 1 to 7 classes. These assemblies provide opportunities for the younger children to become familiar with their older peers, teaching staff, the school building and routines in the school. It is hoped that these experiences make the transition to Primary 1 an enjoyable and familiar experience for Early Years children.

The Early Learning & Childcare Unit and the Wider Community

This establishment does not operate in isolation. The Unit can have many visitors, students from colleges of further education, secondary school pupils on work placements, people from

the community who are invited to share information, other agencies such as The Police, Road Safety Representatives and the Health Service.

The Unit also arranges visits and outings to places of interest within the local community. These visits help the children to appreciate the world of work and the beauty of our natural environment.

The Transition to Primary 1

We operate an Early Stage session, for two sessions per week. Children in the Unit work alongside staff, Primary 1 pupils and our Primary 1 teacher, on a variety of tasks, including Health and Wellbeing. The main aims of these sessions are to promote child independence, to develop children's confidence in interacting with their older peers and to create opportunities for pre-school children to have positive experiences with Primary 1 staff. This approach helps to develop strong relationships and links for pupils during their pre-school and Primary 1 years, and allows a smooth transition for children between ELC and Primary 1.

Good liaison with the receiving primary schools is essential if continuity and progression in children's development and learning is to be achieved.

Visits to the receiving primary schools are organised on a regular basis towards the end of a child's pre-school year, to ensure the children get to know the new environment and the adults with which they will be interacting.

Liaison is not only essential in helping to make each child comfortable about beginning school, it is also important to transfer information about children's previous learning, including their interests, strengths and difficulties.

Information about your child's progress is passed on to the primary school in the form of a transition document detailing each child's progress through Curriculum for Excellence.

Along with your child's end of year report from the pre-school staff, you may also request a copy of any information that is passed to the primary school.



Section Seven: Other Information

Complaints Procedures

Argyll and Bute is always anxious to maintain and improve service. If a parent has any suggestions to make about the service they should contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Similarly if a parent has a complaint they should contact the Head Teacher in the first instance. The Head Teacher will follow the code of practice detailed in Argyll & Bute Education Service Complaints Framework.

Useful Contacts

All emails to the Early Years Team should be directed to:

earlyyears@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Should parents feel their complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved they should then contact one of the Heads of Service in Education for Helensburgh and Lomond whose addresses are below:

Heads of Service: Education

Mrs Anne Paterson
Argyll and Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Tel: 01369 704000

Ms Louise Connor
Oban Education Office
Dalintart Drive
Oban
PA34 4EF
Tel: 01631 569195

Early Years Education Manager:

Mrs Wendy Brownlie
Argyll and Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ
Tel: 01369 704000

Quality Improvement Officer

Mrs Kathleen Johnston
Argyll and Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Tel: 01496 301317

Early Years Education Support Officer

Katherine Jamil
Helensburgh Civic Centre
38E, Clyde Street
Helensburgh
Tel: 01546 605511

Preschool Helpline

Argyll and Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Tel: 01369 708503

Childcare Information Service

Mrs S Stewart
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Tel: 01369 708517

Social Care Social Work Improvement Scotland

From 1st April 2002, the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (known as the Care Commission) became responsible for regulating care services against national care standards and according to the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and associated regulations. Education Scotland (formerly HM Inspectorate of Education) is jointly responsible with the Care Inspectorate/ SCSWIS (formerly Care Commission) for the inspection of early education and childcare.

The Care Inspectorate/ SCSWIS (Social Care Social Work Improvement Scotland) will inspect the Unit every couple of years. There will be a joint Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspection periodically

The report of the inspection will be made available to parents.

In the event of a complaint about the running of the Early Learning & Childcare Unit, your first step should be to contact the Head Teacher, Mrs Alison Palmer.

If you are unsatisfied with the response, you may make direct contact with the Care Inspectorate/ SCSWIS at:

The Care Inspectorate
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley
PA1 1BF
Tel. No. 0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

Please note, although the information in this handbook is correct at the time of printing, there could be changes affecting any of the matters dealt within, either before your child's placement begins or during the course of their placement. The Head Teacher will keep you informed of any important changes to the information.

Section Eight: Appendix

Term Dates For This Session

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS – ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

School holidays for all areas of Argyll and Bute – August 2023 to July 2024

Arrochar Primary School - School Holiday Dates 2023-2024

Break	Open / Close	Dates of attendance
Start of term	Open	Friday 11th August 2023 & Monday 14th August Teacher In-service Days
	Open	Tuesday 15th August 2023 Pupils Return
October	Close	Friday 6th October 2023
	Open	Monday 23rd October 2023
November	Close	Friday 24th November 2023 Monday 27th November 2023 - Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 28th November 2023
Christmas	Close	Thursday 21st December 2023
	Open	Thursday 4th January 2024
February Week	Close	Friday 9th February 2024 Monday 19th February 2024 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 20th February 2024
April	Close	Thursday 28th March 2024
	Open	Monday 15th April 2024
May	Close	Thursday 23rd May 2024 Friday 24th May 2022 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 28th May 2024
	Close	Friday 28th June 2024



Holiday dates for subsequent years, where already set, may be found via <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-holidays>