



Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre



Spring Newsletter 2024



Welcome to our Spring newsletter. We have now welcomed all our new children and their families into the centre for this academic year. We have many exciting learning opportunities happening across the zones and available to try at home using learning links. We are working hard to continue the work on our allotment space, and you may have seen that the construction of our poly tunnel is now complete. We are very excited to be expanding the opportunities for our children to plant and grow their own fruit and vegetables and this space is going to develop the learning experiences our children participate in. The development has been possible due to grant funding and Education Scotland are very keen to showcase our work over the coming months as an example of high-quality practice. We are delighted and will be seeking the expertise of our gardening families as we expand the opportunities available in this space!

Pop in and See: Connecting our Improvements to Children's Learning

We would love if you could join us to share with you the developments, we have been working on through this year's improvement plan. These have included learning links, nurture, and our outdoor allotment space. We want to show you how these are impacting on your children's learning and the opportunities available to them across our environment. Our 'Pop In' session will be on Wednesday 27th March from 4:30pm to 5:30pm. Please come along and take a stroll through our learning environment and see how we are trying to ensure that improvements are always being made to make the experiences for our children the best they can be. Our priorities also link to our families and the local community so your ideas for our future journey are important to us. We look forward to chatting with you when you pop in!

Transition Programme



The children who are moving on to primary school in August have transition visits pending. Some of the schools have started these already. Each of the primary schools will have their own programme in place and they will be in contact with you directly to provide the details. We will have our own additional programme with the schools and will be taking the children on extra visits as well as inviting their teachers into the nursery to see the children in our learning environment. Further details will be issued as soon as the schools confirm them. We are confident this will happen very soon.

Children's Clothes and Belongings

Just a gentle reminder to label all clothing for your child, this is very helpful. We try extremely hard to return all clothing. We would ask if you could regularly check your child's shoe bag and replenish them if required. The recent wet weather has meant there have been lots of changes required! Our lost property is overflowing so please have a look and see if your child is missing any items of clothing.

Diary Dates

Parents Meetings

The parent's meetings will take place week beginning 20 May 2024. These will be spread over the week. Your child's keyworker will be in touch nearer the time to make a suitable arrangement with you.

Leavers Ceremony

The ceremony for children who are leaving nursery to start school in August will take place on Saturday 22 June 2024. There will be more information nearer the time, but we know that families like to have the date saved in advance.

Staff Team Update

We would love to welcome Rebecca Cardy to our Spateston team, we are delighted to have her join us. Zoe Docherty our Early Years Graduate will be leaving us temporarily to take up the post of Acting Depute Head of Centre in Paisley ELC. Her post within Spateston ELC has been interviewed and Kirsty MacFarlane will be acting as our graduate in the interim. This has resulted in some changes within the team with Jane Inglis taking over Kirsty's key group. Georgia Knox will be leaving Spateston to take up a new post in Lochwinnoch ELC, we wish Georgia all the very best in her new venture, we will miss her. We are delighted that Karolina Wasik will be returning to Spateston in a full-time capacity. Tracy Ashcroft has now taken up her temporary ELCO post to cover Bethany's maternity leave. We are about to interview for two support workers to join our team as well as a part time ELCO. The children are very familiar with the staff who are taking on these interim roles which we are delighted about. Continuity for the children and our families is crucial. If these changes will impact on you we will be chatting with you individually.

Spring Holidays

The nursery will be closed to all children on Friday 29 March 2024 and Monday 1 April 2024. Term time children will remain on holiday until Monday 15 April 2024. All other children will continue their normal placements when the nursery reopens on Tuesday 2 April 2024. The centre will be closed to all children on Thursday 2 May 2024 for an in-service training day and Monday 6 May 2024 for a public holiday. There is a term time holiday on Friday 24 May and a closure for all children on Monday 27 May 2024.





Please have a look at the fantastic learning that has been happening so far!



Within our Imagination Zone the children have been creating their own stories and discussing being the author and illustrator. 'Once Upon a Dream' has been one of the favourites. The length of the story they are writing has been discussed and how many pages it has. Some of them have been using the letter wood cookies to spell out their names and the names of members of their family then using them as a guide as they write it. Exploring different types of print has been interesting especially newspapers. The link to the creative zone has allowed the children to make their own paper. The children's imagination at our small world space has been drawn to pirates and we are seeing them use other resources to add bridges and castles. Investigating rhythm and the beat of the music has been exciting as the children explore the musical instruments. They have been tapping or clapping the syllables in their name.

Within our Social Zone the children have been developing their baking skills. They are expanding into new recipes that have been researched online and in our cookery books. The ingredients for the recipes have been listed and then ordered in the food shopping, which the children do every week. The baking process has involved the children weighing out what they need, identifying the numbers and deciding if they need more or less. Using the timers to countdown the baking of the cakes has been a crucial part of the process that some of the children have taken very seriously. The children's carrot cake, cheesecake and raspberry cake have all been favourites. Delicious! Vegetables from the greengrocers have been delivered each week and the children have made their own hummus as a dip for some of the vegetables. Choosing their favourite soups and making them is something we want to expand on so watch out for our soup bags and recipes that you can all try making at home as a family. Remember to send us the photographs!

Within our Creative Zone we have been busy painting and drawing all different types of amazing pictures, including portraits of our families, animals and even our favourite fictional characters! We are becoming authors and illustrators as we create our very own storybooks, where we have been expressing our imaginative thoughts through writing and mark making in our books. Children have been expressing themselves further within the busy junk modelling area, where they have been creating, cars, trains, fire engines, jet packs and crowns. Children have shown a particular interest in fairies and have started to design and create their own wings, dresses, wands, crowns, houses, and castles. Clay has been used within the creative zone as a relaxing form of expressive arts. Children have been creating mermaids, volcanoes, transformers, helicopters, and even decorative bowls, where they have been expanding their knowledge about 3D shapes and objects.

Within our Discovery Zone the children have been building a variety of structures using the wooden blocks. Their interest has been the emergency services, and this has extended over the past few weeks with fire stations, fire trucks and police cars. A visit to Johnstone Fire Station has taken place and the children loved researching the real thing. Camper vans and tents have created further discussion with the children using their problem-solving skills to recreate their own. In the darkness of their enclosures, they were experimenting with torches, looking at the shadows and the shapes these made. Sticks and peas are used for the children to design 3D structures and they could design their own houses with the help of the staff some children were understanding the difference between 2D and 3D shapes.

Within our Outdoor Zone the children have been experiencing lots of wet weather play. They have been building their own shelters to protect them from the storm as they play in the covered area sandpit. There have been lots of visits to the forest when the weather has been safe. The children have continued to build their shelters and have hot chocolate and toast made at their fire. There has been lots of discussion around the safety of the fire and the children know the boundary and when they can safely get nearer it to make their toast or melt their marshmallow! The children have used the water in the pipes to create a flow, very quickly realising that when they pour the water down the pipes the balls in the pipe move along faster. The children worked out that a basket at the end of the pipe was needed to collect all the balls so that the game could start again.

