



'Taking our first steps together'

PARENT'S HANDBOOK





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A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland: Quality Action Plan 2018

Executive Summary

The Scottish Government is committed to the near doubling of entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year by 2020 for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds. The aim is to provide high quality, flexible early learning and childcare that is accessible and affordable for all families. This is that Quality Action Plan, which sets out the steps we will take over the next three years to ensure that the expansion delivers a high quality experience for all our children.

The Quality Action Plan has been developed in close consultation with a Quality Reference Group, made up of key stakeholders who best understand not only what drives quality, but also how we can further strengthen provision of high quality early learning and childcare in Scotland.

The essential characteristics of quality have been defined by the Group as:

- A high quality workforce
- Strong pedagogical leadership
- Warm and supportive interactions with children
- A holistic curriculum
- A focus on play-based learning
- Good access to outdoor play
- Supporting parents to engage in their children's learning
- Transitions that are well managed



- Professional collaboration
- Provision that is accessible to all
- High quality physical environments
- Clear quality standards and robust self-evaluation and quality assurance regimes. Scottish Government, 2017.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At our Nursery we are committed to offering our families a service that demonstrates and embraces the ‘essential characteristics as laid out above’ we aim to ensure that your child’s time spent with us is a seamless extension of home that allows all our children to develop to their full potential we aim to do this by:

- Putting quality at the heart of our service
- Ensuring our service meets the needs of our children and families
- Improving outcomes and children’s quality of life through play
- Working in partnership with our children and families

Our Facilities and Location

‘Oban’s First Steps’ is a day nursery offering quality childcare we care from babies up to 5 year old children on a full day basis - 8am to 6pm, providing throughout the day a nutritionally balanced; breakfast, snack of fruit and milk a home cooked lunch, and tea. First Steps was opened in 1999 by Ann Burke and was the first Day Nursery in Oban - hence the name and the ethos of parent partnership ‘Taking our first steps together’. After sympathetic restoration and upgrading the former Victorian school has gone from strength to strength, creating a ‘well established, valued and popular Nursery and a cornerstone’ within the community.

Oban is a town that boasts the title ‘Seafood Capital of Scotland’ a lively harbour is dotted with fishing trawlers, yachts, cruise boats and ferries offering trips to surrounding islands such as Kerrera and Mull. Our staff and children take Frequent walks within the community to visit the, local woods, main harbour and railway pier. We take part in local Music Festivities and join other peer groups in healthy play at groups like Toy Library.

We are registered with the **Scottish Care Inspectorate** to provide full day care for 60 children up to the age of 5 years. We are open from 8am to 6pm - Monday to Friday, throughout the year closing only over Easter Weekend, Christmas and New Year Holidays.

We are also a commissioned ‘partner provider’ with our local Education Authority to deliver the Government funded ‘Early Learning and Childcare ‘ (Elcc) to 40 children, these can be taken over two full days using wraparound or on their own either morning or afternoon. These are **Government Funded** sessions of 3 hours and 10 minutes and are delivered **FREE** by the nursery. We deliver these Elcc sessions between the hours of



8.50am to 12.00pm and 1.00pm to 4.10pm- term time only - snacks can be an optional extra and we offer wrap around childcare either side of these sessions so children can spend a full day with us accessing all our wonderful facilities, such as our exciting garden and soft play area.

The nursery day-care is delivered from within our lovely clean, safe and secure environment we offer additional protection by a security entrance and CCTV system that covers our outside/entrance areas. Our marvellous staff are dedicated, caring and qualified SVQ nursery practitioners trained in Paediatric 1st Aid who deliver a wonderful service under the careful and supportive guidance of an established Management Team.

Babies we are registered for 10 babies from 3 months to 2 years old, these lovely rooms are bright and airy with free-play into a conservatory, this allows the natural light to flood into the room, the children can watch the changing seasons around them and with double doors it allows them to access the outside garden areas with ease. The other part of the playroom is used mainly for messy activities, play and exploration of which there are a lot. These separate areas allow the children to explore their senses in a safe and nurturing environment. We follow the guidance from pre-birth to 3 this highlights four key areas: responsiveness, respect, relationships and the rights of the child. More information on the routine is detailed in the room handbook.

Toddler Room - 10 Toddlers' (2-3 years) This room is also bright, clean and welcoming created with this age group in mind and furnished with Community Playthings wooden toys, tables, cloakroom and resources. It comes with a separate nappy changing and toilet area accessed through an intervening space from within the room, it enhances the facilities whilst it fosters and encourages independence in toileting, hand washing and tooth brushing. With access to quiet and cosy areas within this room for children to rest or explore, along with easy access to resources to promote self choice. Activities are planned and offered supporting pre-birth to three and planning in line with current guidance using floor books and encouraging interaction with parents and children.

ELC Group - we can accommodate up to 40 children aged 3-5 years over 2 rooms with adjacent cloakrooms and toilets and free flow into our outside areas. The children in this age group are better at expressing their views and making individual choices and this is reflected in the daily routines: - children are free to choose in which rooms and areas they wish to play, whether 'inside or out' we encourage free flow, children happily and independently change into their coats and wellies to wander outside into our soft pour play area with climbing frame, slide and tree house, wheeled toys and see saw or into the lovely garden to explore the mud pit, kitchen, digging activities or play with their friends in the grass. Skills such as self-registration, independence and trust are encouraged and access to activities that help them to develop skills for a seamless transition to school. This approach allows the staff to develop the children's interests and let them take the lead in their learning. They are offered opportunities in line with Curriculum for Excellence. These areas are well laid out demonstrating the high quality resources in the playrooms from book corner, construction area, puppet theatre/shop to a home corner, tables and chairs from the original elc room to our wonderful new hub with remotely



controlled heating, skylight windows with blinds a fantastic space to enjoy and explore. The bathroom facilities can be accessed from within the room encouraging and fostering independence and hygiene. Whilst child sized sinks in the playrooms foster and encourage children to work together hand washing, setting out the tables, making paints, washing up and collaborating with each other.

Planning - Each room has their own planning sheets for the activities they choose to do in a particular topic or theme, these are displayed on the room notice boards and views are encouraged through the use of floor books. We involve the children and parents in the topics and activities that are planned, though the use of learning journals and encourage communication and dialogue with families and children about their experiences at nursery and give feedback to help plan activities the child will enjoy, by using the sheets on the notice board, learning journals or by speaking to one of the staff. We use a number of different methods to involve the children that are suited to their stage of development encouraging language and literacy, building confidence and enabling our users - these are detailed in the room handbooks.

Outside play area -monitored by cctv - access directly from the room. We have a lovely secure and enclosed playground area with brightly covered red soft pour and an extensive supply of toys and resources within to enhance our active play in this area, along with a wooden Play House, climbing frame with slide and lookout, wooden see saw and many more toys and resources - making it a safe and secure area to play, have fun and explore.

Also, we have created a separate entrance adjacent to the car park for the older children to join their friends the Elc children with their own cloakroom area too.

Our mature garden - this is a wonderful area and it is where we also grow our potatoes, vegetables and fruit, we have a small orchard of fruit trees in their infancy too as well as older flowering Cherry trees to offer shade and daple the sunlight in the summer. We offer a separate area for the younger children to play and in the warm weather it is furnished with parasols and soft play mats and activities. Plenty of open grass to play in and explore and a patio area for table games. Large tyre tractors for imaginative play, and a digging area with toy dumpers. The area is set out with age appropriate toys and activities. We have a mud kitchen, an outside water tray, tap and hose with sprinkler, sand trays and also a patio area for games and activities.

We believe that children should be outside every day regardless of weather and therefore ask that you to ensure that appropriate clothing is provided at all times, whatever the weather.

Holiday and after school club - watch this space :) Club is opening in July 2018 to accommodate our own children during the holidays and after school, in this wonderful familiar environment and surrounded by loving and caring professionals who will ensure they are cared for and have the best fun time at our after school club :)



Car Park - we do provide a car park which has recently been extended, that is intended for dropping and collection of your children during the nursery working day. We urge parents to drive in very slowly, carefully and park with consideration to other users and the children entering and exiting the premises from parent's cars.

Over to you

We view parents as partners in their child's learning and try to involve them as much as possible. We use daily diaries and electronic e-journals to record a child's learning and involve parents in their experience so you can be part of their learning journey, we value feedback and encourage and foster parent participation. Notice boards are updated regularly and list planning and activities in each room. We have a Parents Area in the entrance and display our policies & procedures, care inspection report and registration and insurance certificate, our Annual Progress and Impact Report and Improvement Plan. A comments box is also in place and we display a monthly policy document for parents comments prior to review. We operate welcome parents in for a chat with Management or key workers whenever possible.

We believe that the first steps your child takes will be the building blocks and very foundation of all future learning and we aim to support and promote this in every way. We work within all the recommended curriculum guidance to ensure that you as parents and us as providers are able to understand and contribute as partners in the learning journey for your child's education.

Before your child starts with us you may have a home or nursery visit should you wish in which to discuss your child's individual needs and provide an opportunity to meet the staff and view our provision. At this point we will issue you with a handbook on the specific room your child will be placed in. The booklet should help you to understand the routine of that room and the type of activities being carried out in it, as the children move through the unit new books age appropriate will be issued.

Meals

We provide a rolling breakfast/snack for the children followed by a hot cooked lunch and an afternoon snack. All of the food is prepared by our in house cook and is nutritionally balanced to ensure that we provide a healthy diet for our children and following the 'Setting the Table Guidance' currently available to us. Menus are included in the Welcome Pack, which you will receive from nursery.

Registration and fees

Please contact the nursery for registration information updated information on current policies and procedures and any other queries or questions you may have we are always happy to help.

Email us at manager.firststeps@yahoo.co.uk

