

KIRKHOPE & YARROW EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE

HANDBOOK for PARENTS & CARERS



2025/2026

Dear Parent/Carer

WELCOME to KIRKHOPE & YARROW EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE

Kirkhope & Yarrow Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) is a small, rural ELC situated in the village of Ettrickbridge, 6 miles from Selkirk. It adjoins Kirkhope Primary School and serves the rural communities of the Ettrick and Yarrow valleys, as well as children from further afield who are attracted to the small rural setting.

Our ELC has a warm, welcoming, nurturing ethos, where children can develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. Our environment is set up to stimulate children's natural curiosity, develop language and mathematical skills, offering a wide range of learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. We hope that your child will soon feel part of our learning community!

We welcome and encourage input from all stakeholders. If you have any queries, suggestions or feedback or can offer any assistance, please get in touch as we value your input to improve the service we provide.

This handbook provides you with basic information about the ELC. I am happy to answer any queries you may have. We look forward to working together with you to achieve the best for your child.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. D Cornwall

David Cornwall
ELC Manager & Acting Headteacher
Email: david.cornwall@scotborders.gov.uk

ELC direct line: **07542 867072**
Kirkhope Primary School office: **01750 52231**

Kirkhope Primary School website: www.kirkhopeprimaryschool.co.uk
Yarrow Primary School website: www.yarrowprimaryschool.co.uk

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC
Kirkhope Primary School
Woodend Road
Ettrickbridge
Selkirk
TD7 5JJ



Disclaimer

Throughout this handbook, the word "parent" is intended to mean the guardian or any person who has parental responsibilities (within the section 1 (3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) for the care of a child, or young person. Please note that whilst information provided within this handbook is considered to be correct at the time of printing, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the time the document reaches parents.

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MEET the ELC TEAM

	
Mr. Davy Cornwall ELC Manager & Acting Headteacher	Mrs. Sarah Scott Early Years Officer
	
Miss Suzanne Turnbull Early Years Practitioner	Mrs. Catherine Paton Early Years Practitioner

Other Staff

Ms. Danielle Paterson : Early Years Teacher (Central Team)
Mrs. Cara Elliot : Classroom Assistant & Playground Supervisor
Mrs. Fiona Hewson : Business Support Assistant
Mrs. Jackie Davie : Catering Assistant
Mr. Dave Halfpenny : Janitor

We aim to recruit the best teachers and staff to deliver a superb education and early learning and childcare for your child. Recruitment and selection procedures are rigorous and consistent and a security check – through the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG).

All teaching staff are registered with the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS).

All Early Years practitioners working with children are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and all employees are required to fully adhere to the SSSC code of practice.

STARTING at KIRKHOPE & YARROW ELC

All ELC 4 children (4-year-olds) start at the beginning of the new term in August. All ELC 3 children (3-year-olds) can start ELC the term after their 3rd birthday. Please complete our online enrolment form by visiting the Scottish Borders Council website – www.scotborders.gov.uk.

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC offers 1140 hours provision for children. This equates to full time provision in line with the school day and includes a free lunch.

Children are able to access 1140 hours at any school nursery or any funded provider of their choice. (Check with providers what they can offer). Parents can choose to have their child with only one provider or have split/blended placements across providers.

Children are given an 'All about me' sheet before they start ELC. This gives parents the opportunity to share information about the child's family, interests and about them as an individual. Please fill this in as soon as possible and return to a member of staff. We collate all the information which is used to support child led planning and experiences helping us to make a smooth transition for every child into our ELC setting.

The ELC permission form includes information needed with regards to taking photos and for children to take part in experiences in the local environment. Free school lunches are provided to ELC children and can be booked via the ParentPay System which will become available to you once you have enrolled your child. If you wish to provide your child with a packed lunch, this is also available but please let a member of staff know.

SESSION TIMES

Monday - Thursday:

Morning	8.35am - 11.45pm
Lunch	11.45pm - 12.20pm
Afternoon	12.20pm - 3.05pm

Friday:

Morning	8.35am - 11.50am
Lunch	11.50am - 12.35pm

SNACK

Every day we offer healthy snacks, based on what the children have suggested and following the guidance from 'setting the table'. We offer milk and water daily and will encourage your child to try new foods throughout the year.

If your child has any food intolerances or allergies, please inform a member of ELC staff.



BRINGING and COLLECTING YOUR CHILD

On Arrival:

The main door has a buzzer entry system and can only be opened from inside the building. On arrival, please press the buzzer and a member of staff will open the door to welcome you in.

ELC sessions starts at 08:35 each day. Before 8.35am, staff are preparing for the day and are not able to accept early arrivals, please do not press the buzzer before this time, once ready the staff will open the door.

Please take time whilst in the cloakroom area to look at the notice board to stay up to date with information for the week. There is also a comments box for any comments you may wish to make.

We strongly encourage you to bring your child for the start of each session, so they get the most out of the learning opportunities and experiences that we provide, arriving at the same time as everyone else also helps with any anxieties around coming into the building. If your child has not arrived by 9am, we are required to contact you to find out why. If your child is not attending, please ensure you contact us on 07542 867072 or 01750 52231.

In our ELC, we aim to develop each child's independence. Please encourage your child to change their own shoes and attempt to hang up their own coats. Your child will have their own peg and space to keep their belongings.

Collection:

Your child should be collected promptly at the end of the day - 3.05pm on a Monday-Thursday and at 12.35pm on a Friday. On a Monday to Thursday, the door will be open from 2.50pm onwards, should you wish to come into nursery. If you are not collecting your child at the end of the day, please inform us in the morning so we know who will be arriving for them. Safety of all children is paramount. We will **NOT** allow your child to leave with anyone unless we have your consent and permissions.



** Please note that, by law, no persons under the age of 16 will be able to collect your child **

LUNCH

Lunches are served in the school dining room. A member of the ELC team as well as lunch supervision staff have lunch with the children to encourage use of cutlery, table manners and social skills. We offer a Family Service approach, which provides the children to enjoy the lunch experience, accompanied by staff and giving them independence to self-serve elements of their lunch.

School meals are prepared on the school premises. Scottish Borders Council operates a four-week rotating menu, and parents are asked to order their child's lunch using the Scottish Borders Council ParentPay online lunch ordering system. Log in details will be provided once your child is fully enrolled within the ELC.

ELC pupils are entitled to a free school lunch, as per Scottish Government guidelines.

BRUSHING TEETH

The Childsmile Programme provides preventive oral health advice and support for children aged three and upwards. Free oral health packs containing a toothbrush, fluoride toothpaste and oral health information is given to all children in ELC and Primary 1. Daily supervised teeth brushing takes place after lunch. We will provide your child with their own toothbrush.

Further information can be found at: www.child-smile.org.uk

WHAT to BRING

Your child should be dressed in comfortable clothes that are easy for them to manage. They should also wear appropriate indoor footwear. We encourage independence from an early age and will offer help when required.

We provide aprons for messy & water play should your child wish to wear them. We have over trousers for muddy play & outdoor learning which they are required to wear. However, accidents do happen so please do not dress them in their best clothes! ELC uniform is available to purchase, should you wish to do so.

Please ensure your child has a change of clothes (including socks and underwear). These can be kept in a box provided at their peg. Please encourage children not to bring toys and bags from home.

We are often out and about in the local environment in all weather, so always be prepared for outdoor weather.

Checklist

Please bring at all times:

- Coat
- Spare clothes
- Wellies

From March to October:

- Suncream
- Sunhats
- Apply sun cream before your child arrives

In colder weather:

- Hats and Gloves
- Warm / waterproof coat

As our children play outdoors regularly it is important they are protected from the sun. During March to October, we will use the Met office app to check the UV index daily, even on cloudy days. Sunscreen **MUST** be applied on days where UV levels are moderate, high or very high.

When your child comes home

messy

look past the mess and see
that your child has been

exploring

learning &

playing

and most of all

having fun!



VISION, VALUES & AIMS

Our Vision

“Achieving Excellence Together”

Our Values (currently under review)

Our positive ethos and climate of respect and trust is based upon shared values across the school & ELC community, including parents, staff and pupils. We want all children to develop the following R.E.S.P.E.C.T. values:

- **R**esponsibility
- **E**mpathy
- **S**haring
- **P**erseverance
- **E**quality
- **C**o-operation
- **T**ruthfulness

Our Aims

- ❖ Enjoy learning through play.
- ❖ Follow rules and routines.
- ❖ Join in happily.
- ❖ Try new things.
- ❖ Recognise their own & others feelings.
- ❖ Achieve their fullest potential.



OUR FACILITIES

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC has one playroom and an outdoor garden area which is accessible to children at all times, and in all weathers, throughout the session. The garden area adjoins the school playground which is used during times when the school children are playing at the sports field, also occasional breaks and lunch if numbers are low and safety allows.

Within the playroom there is a staff kitchen area, where snack, is prepared. From the playroom there are toilet facilities which are accessible at all times for the children. There is also an accessible toilet facility beside the cloakroom and changing facilities.

The playroom provides various continuous provision including:

- A home corner
- A role play area
- Sand and water play
- A library corner
- A writing area
- Painting
- Arts and crafts table
- A construction area

Each of these areas, in addition to the outdoor area, help to develop each child holistically, providing multiple opportunities to learn through exploration and discovery.



LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The ELC environment, both indoors and outdoors, is organised in a way that encourages children to play, learn and explore in order for every child to achieve their full potential. Each area is carefully planned and includes various open-ended resources that encourage creative and critical thinking. Prior knowledge, curiosity and interests of the child are used to constantly review and develop all areas within the playroom to ensure children are engaged and challenged in their learning. The ELC and Primary 1 work on experiences and outcomes within the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence.

Further information about Curriculum for Excellence can be found here:

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/

Throughout the day, the children are encouraged to be independent. They make their own choices as to where to play and which resources they would like to use. Staff are skilled in knowing when to provide input. They may take the lead in a learning activity or engage with a child led activity to extend learning through skilled questioning. At other times staff will observe in order to assess a child's learning in a focused way to identify strengths and next steps.

Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing are embedded in all of the areas and ELC staff actively support the development of these core skills. We also plan learning experiences to allow the children to confidently develop fine and gross motor skills, personal, social and emotional skills, as well as creativity and problem solving and critical thinking skills.

The ELC has regular visits from the Early Years Teacher Team who provides advice and support with professional and curricular development.



TRANSITION

ELC children join in regularly with whole school activities and therefore all children are familiar with the wider school environment and school staff throughout the year.

Between Easter and Summer before starting school (whether that be Kirkhope, Yarrow or another school), the children have planned sessions in their new P1 setting in preparation for starting P1 in August.

With the development of Play Pedagogy in Primary 1-3, the Primary 1 learning environment is very similar to that of ELC, with learning through play featuring prominently. This provides children with a familiar environment as they transition into P1. Early Years practitioners regularly work within the P1 setting to assist with transition and to support the play environment in the classroom.

WORKING in PARTNERSHIP



Keeping you informed

We have a parent group chat on Showbie that is kept up to date with all the upcoming, relevant information concerning the nursery. Please ensure you log in regularly so you know what your child will be doing whilst at nursery.

We have a dedicated page on Showbie entitled Life in ELC and this records what the children have been learning on a day-to-day basis.

We also keep all parents fully informed about events or developments within the ELC through the Groupcall Xpressions App. Please ensure the school has your up-to-date mobile number and email address to receive communications. We would ask that you download the Groupcall Xpressions app to your phone/device as soon as your child is enrolled within the ELC. Further information can be found at: www.scotborders.gov.uk/groupcall.

Parent Council

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC is supported by 'Friends of Kirkhope' (Kirkhope Primary School) and 'Friends of Yarrow' (Yarrow Primary School). Both meet separately, however ELC matters are discussed at both meetings and parents / carers are welcome to come along to either or both as appropriate.

Consultation

Communication with parents/carers is important. We welcome informal catch-ups with parents/carers at drop-off or pick-up. Individual appointments can be made at any time if you have anything you wish to discuss with the ELC staff regarding your child's progress and development. Please contact Mrs. Hewson in the school office to arrange an appointment. Parent Evenings are arranged twice per year to provide a more formal update on your child's progress.

Come and Play sessions are held regularly. These sessions provide an opportunity to come into the setting and play with your child. Each child has their own Learning Journey on Showbie that will give you lots of up-to-date information about what & how your child is learning, as well as being able to see and celebrate your child's successes with them. We value everything that the children produce. Children's work is sent home or entered into their Learning Journey and it is really important that parents too show an interest in the work they've produced. By looking at your child's Learning Journey together with your child, you can have a rich conversation about their learning and achievements.

UNIFORM

Whilst not compulsory, we do encourage the children to wear the ELC uniform which has proved very popular. The Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC uniform was agreed as follows:

Red Polo Shirt and/or T-shirt with ELC logo
Red Sweatshirt with ELC logo

Please mark items of clothing clearly with your child's name for easy identification if it is mislaid. *(nursery have a small selection of preloved items for a donation, speak to staff if you are interested)*

LOST PROPERTY

Any loss of property should be reported as soon as possible to a member of staff. Usually the earlier it is reported, the easier it is to locate it.

ABSENCE, ACCIDENTS and ILLNESS

Once you have accepted your child's place in ELC, they are expected to attend on the days you have selected. Please contact us as soon as possible if your child is not attending as expected for any reason. If you do not inform us of your child's absence by 9am, we are obliged by law, to contact you and will do so before 9:15am.

To reduce the spread of infection and illness, the following policy applies: if your child has had sickness and diarrhoea, they are required to stay at home for a full 48-hours after their last episode. If your child has an infectious illness, rash, severe cold or temperature then please seek medical advice and keep them off until they are feeling better.

*If you know your child is going to be off for an appointment or holiday, please let us know in advance so we can adjust our snack order.

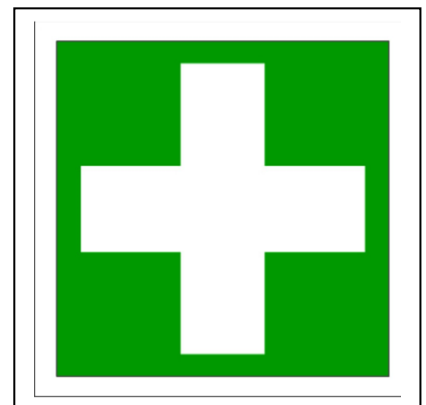
Minor injuries, such as bruises or abrasions, are treated by ELC staff. A number for school & ELC staff are qualified First Aiders. Where an injury is more serious and the child requires medical attention or where a child is unwell and considered unfit to continue the nursery day, parents will be informed immediately. **It is very important that the ELC has an emergency contact telephone number for each child.**

MEDICATION

ELC staff are not permitted to administer any non-prescribed medicines i.e. paracetamol, creams, lotions etc. Prescribed medicines can be administered, **but only on completion of form MED 1**. Forms are available from the school office.

FIRE DRILLS

Once each term the fire drill is practised. The Janitor or Headteacher times and records this event. In addition, the fire alarm system is tested weekly.



POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC is a Scottish Borders Council (SBC) ELC. This means that SBC and national policies regarding the curriculum, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Complaints Procedures apply, as do some school policies and aspects of organisation where appropriate. The work of all SBC Early Learning and Childcare settings are based on 'A Curriculum for Excellence' and 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare'.

Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC is registered with Care Inspectorate and will be inspected by it to make sure that the ELC is meeting the regulations under 'The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001' and in doing so will take account of the national care standards.

Further information about the Care Inspectorate and what it does can be found on its website: www.careinspectorate.com

Child Protection Policy

We have a duty to report any child protection or wellbeing concerns immediately to the Headteacher, who is the Child Protection Coordinator. Concerns shall be recorded clearly. The child will at no time be asked leading questions. If appropriate, the concerns will be passed on to the Child Protection Officer based in Galashiels. They have the statutory responsibility for protection of children from abuse, or suspected abuse and they will decide whether to proceed with a formal referral or not. There are clearly defined guidelines which must be adhered to. If you require any further information, or wish to speak in confidence, please contact the Headteacher.

Photographs & Videos

Under the 'Consent Under Data Protection Act 1998' parents are asked to give permission for their children to be photographed and videoed whilst attending education facilities provided by Scottish Borders Council. Parents and carers may not photograph or video children or staff without express consent.

Complaints

Our aim is to create a successful three-way partnership between the child, the parent and the ELC. It is our policy to encourage open communication between staff and parents at all times. Should a parent wish to make a formal complaint however, it should be made in writing to the Headteacher, who will then consult staff and parents before deciding on an appropriate course of action. All complaints will be recorded, dealt with promptly and all parties concerned shall be informed of the outcome. This too shall be recorded.

If you are totally dissatisfied with the response being given, make it clear to the member of staff that this is the case. You should then write to the Director of Education at Newtown St Boswells and ask for a meeting with an appropriate official.

If a complaint has not been dealt with in a suitable manner you may also write to the Care Inspectorate. Their address is:

Care Inspectorate
Ettrick Riverside Business Centre
Dunsdale Road
Selkirk
TD7 5EB
Telephone Number: 01896 664 400
Website address: www.careinspectorate.com

Data Protection & Confidential Information

Parents have the right to know what information is recorded about their child and to ensure that records are accurate. All children's records are confidential and kept secure. The consent of parents must be sought if their child's details are to be passed on to other people. However, in cases of Child Protection it may be necessary to pass on information to the main investigating agencies without the consent of parents. New Data Protection Regulations ensure that personal data that we hold is processed (collected, used, shared, stored and deleted) correctly.

Emergency Procedures including School/ELC Closures

In the event of an emergency affecting Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC, we have well established procedures in place to cope with almost all situations:

- Group Texts and phone calls are sent out to parents to advise of an emergency. Parents must ensure that we have an up-to-date mobile phone number to enable automatic contact via text messaging.
- Parents will also be contacted by landline where mobile signal is poor.
- In the event of an emergency, the Council's Communications Team work quickly to update the Council website and Facebook with developments and advice on what to do.
- The team also work closely with Radio Borders to communicate information. Parents are asked to tune in to radio Borders for information including school transport, weather and school & ELC closures.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Each child in our care will be

- Encouraged to participate in a range of educational experiences appropriate to their needs.
- Introduced to appropriate issues of gender through correct resources.
- Valued as an individual. No discrimination will be made on the basis of gender, race or ability.
- Introduced to other cultures and encouraged to value the attributes of their own culture as well as that of others.
- Treated positively by staff who will ensure that each child in their care achieves success whenever possible.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC aims to reform children's services by changing existing practices, removing barriers to services and promoting partnership working between different professionals.

It introduces a co-ordinated approach across all agencies for the delivery of support to children and young people as they require it. Locally, we will continue to bring together early years, primary, special and secondary schools with other organisations, health and social care partners to plan and improve services for children.

In ELC we refer to the following GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators which are central to our work:

- SAFE
- HEALTHY
- ACHIEVING
- NURTURED
- ACTIVE
- RESPONSIBLE
- RESPECTED
- INCLUDED



More information about "Getting it Right for Every Child" can be found at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

Creating healthy childhood experiences is a shared responsibility for all. Working together we can ensure all children and young people have a sense of belonging, self-worth and self-confidence to achieve their unique potential.

Healthy Beginnings

Top Tips

Safe • Active • Included • Responsible • Respected • Achieving • Healthy • Nurturing

- Start your day with a healthy breakfast
- Eat more fruit & vegetables
- Keep food and drinks containing sugar to a minimum
- Enjoy family meal times
- Brush teeth at least twice a day - 'Spit, don't rinse!'
- Register with a local dentist
- Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish
- Be active, move more
- Explore different kinds of play and physical activity everyday
- Increase outdoor learning
- Reduce screen time - Phones, Tablets, PCs & TV
- Think of the 4 Bs- Bath, Brush Book & Bed

What?



Why?

- Helps concentration
- Healthy Teeth
- Helps digestion
- Helps body grow and develop
- Healthy skin
- Energy

Healthy eating and physical activity are essential for positive growth and development.

Healthy snacks are provided during your child's ELCC journey, continue to give these types of snacks for your child to have at break times throughout primary school.



Bottles used in class should be filled with plain water only.

Good hydration makes a difference to how children think, feel & function!

Contacts

Joint Health Improvement Team: health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Food & Nutrition Coordinator: Hazel.Scott@scotborders.gov.uk

NHS Borders Oral Health Promotion: Helen.brand@borders.scot.nhs.uk



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Community

Visits are organised within the community and links exist with the community police officer, health centre, dental services, etc. as well as with educational services such as Speech and Language specialists.

ELC Logo

The Kirkhope & Yarrow ELC logo was designed in 2018 by Kieran Faulds (P6) at Yarrow Primary School.



USEFUL LINKS

- Kirkhope Primary School
www.kirkhopeprimaryschool.co.uk
- Yarrow Primary School
www.yarrowprimaryschool.co.uk
- Care Inspectorate
www.careinspectorate.com
- Scottish Borders Council
www.scotborders.gov.uk
- Education Scotland Parent Zone
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/index.asp>
- Education Scotland
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>
- Childsmile
www.child-smile.org.uk

HOLIDAY DATES

For session 2025-2026

Autumn term

- Monday 18th & Tuesday 19th August 2025 - Staff In-service days (school & ELC closed).
- Wednesday 20 August 2025 - Pupils resume.

Mid-term holidays

- Monday 13th to Friday 17th October 2025 - October holiday (school & ELC closed).
- Monday 20th October 2025 - Staff In-service day (school & ELC closed).
- Tuesday 21st October 2025 - Pupils resume.
- Monday 1st December 2025 - St Andrew's Day holiday (school & ELC closed).
- Friday 19th December 2025 - Last day of term.

Christmas holidays

- Monday 22nd December 2025 - Friday 2nd January 2026.

Winter/Spring term

- Monday 5th January 2026 - All resume.

Mid-term holiday

- Friday 13th February 2026 - Last day of term.
- Monday 16th to Friday 20th February 2026 - February holiday (school & ELC closed)
- Monday 23rd February 2026 - Staff In-service day (school & ELC closed).
- Thursday 2nd April 2026 - Last day of term.

Easter holidays

- Friday 3rd to Friday 17th April 2026

Summer term

- Monday 20th April 2026 - All resume.

Mid-term holidays

- Monday 4th May 2026 - May Day holiday (school & ELC closed).
- Tuesday 5th May 2026 - Staff In-service day (school & ELC closed).
- Wednesday 6th May 2026 - Pupils resume.
- Friday 12th June 2026 - Selkirk Common Riding holiday (school & ELC closed).
- Thursday 2nd July 2026 - Last day of term.