



Welcome Back

A huge welcome to all our returning families, and a very special hello to everyone joining the Ladeside Early Learning and Childcare community for the very first time!

As the summer holidays fade into wonderful memories, our playroom is once again buzzing with laughter, curiosity, and the exciting promise of a brand-new school year. Our staff have been busy preparing an inviting, fun-filled learning environment, and we are looking forward to our new journey of discovery with your little ones.

Our door is always open. Whether you have a question about your child's day, want to share a home achievement, or need some advice about next steps for your child, please don't hesitate to speak to a member of our team.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's Early Learning journey.

Warmest regards,

The Ladeside ELC Team

Staffing

As this is our first newsletter of the year, we thought we would add some staff photographs so that you know who everyone is:



Jacqueline McLaughlin (Interim HT)
Love (EYO)



Amanda Martin (DHT)



Lauryn Fleming (SEYO)



Alison



Laura Greig (EYO)



Emma McRorie (EYO)



Lindsey O'Donnell (EYO)



Lynsey McIntyre



Jennifer Egan (SFLA)



Kimberley Silcock (ELCA)



Deborah Forrest (Catering Assistant)

At the moment, Elaine Brown (EYO) and Amy Lowie (ELCA) are absent. We are really pleased to introduce **Chloe Skinner** who will be filling for us in the coming weeks.



Last Session

Our last term before summer was so busy! Here are a few highlights:

Fun day

We ended last term on such a high note with our unforgettable Fun Day, and we want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who made it so special! The children had an absolute blast bouncing the day away on the bouncy castle, which was easily one of the biggest highlights of the event. Beyond the bouncing, our outdoor spaces were filled with energy and adventure as the children immersed themselves in hands-on outdoor experiences, exploring nature, playing collaborative games, and soaking up the fresh air. It was a wonderful opportunity for our early learning community to celebrate all the growth and hard work from the term, and the non-stop smiles and laughter made it a celebration to remember!



Sports

We wrapped up the term before summer with a fantastic Sports Morning, and we couldn't be prouder of how wonderful the event turned out!

It was heartwarming to see such an amazing turnout of families coming together to cheer on and support our young athletes. Every single one of our children participated with immense enthusiasm, trying their best and showing wonderful team spirit throughout the morning. From classic races to agility games, the children had a brilliant time taking part in all the fun activities. Thank you to everyone who joined us to make it such a memorable, joy-filled celebration for our early learning community!



Transition

Our Primary 1 Transition Programme was a huge success with our children preparing for their big move to school!



A key highlight was our theme based on The Snail and The Whale, which captured the children's imaginations and sparked meaningful conversations about exciting new journeys and big adventures. Through well-structured class visits, the children had wonderful opportunities to explore their new learning environments, meet their teachers, and build confidence ahead of the term. We were also delighted to collaborate closely with our Partnership Nurseries, whose strong links and shared dedication ensured a smooth, reassuring, and connected transition for every single child.



We are absolutely delighted to begin welcoming our new children and families to our ELC family. Our dedicated staff are currently out and about completing home visits, and we would like to extend a huge thank you to all our families for so warmly welcoming us into your homes during these visits.

This term is an especially exciting time for our community, as our nursery is officially expanding to welcome 48 children this session—up from 40 in previous years. We are so thrilled to see our nursery family grow, and we cannot wait to embark on a new year of learning and growing together.



Focus Child

What is the Focus Child Approach?

At Ladeside ELC, we want to make sure every single child gets the absolute best opportunities, tailored specifically to their unique interests, needs, and stage of development. To help us do this, we use a method called the Focus Child Approach.

Instead of trying to observe every child all the time, this approach allows us to shine a special, dedicated spotlight on a few children at a time over a set period (usually a week).

How It Works in Practice

During your child's designated "Focus Week," our staff team works closely together to tune into their world. Here is what that looks like:

- Close Observation: We closely watch how your child plays, what captures their curiosity, how they interact with their peers, and how they solve problems.
- Tracking Development: We check in on their progress across key areas of early learning—from social skills and independence to physical development and communication.
- Child-Led Learning: If we notice your child has developed a passion with dinosaurs, construction, or mixing potions in the garden, we use that exact interest to spark exciting new learning opportunities for them.
- Special Sharing Events: As part of the Focus Week experience, families will be warmly invited into the ELC to join us for special Afternoon Teas and Breakfasts! These cozy gatherings are a great chance for you to see your child in their nursery environment, share their learning highlights together, and enjoy some quality time in the playroom. You will also get a chance to look at their 'Focus Books' which contain photos and key information from the Focus Child observations

Why We Love It (and Why It Benefits Your Child)

- Personalised Attention: It ensures that every child regularly has a deep, comprehensive review of their learning journey.
- Meaningful Records: We build a rich, detailed picture of who your child is right now, capturing special milestones and achievements.
- Celebrating Uniqueness: It celebrates your child as an individual, acknowledging that every child learns at their own pace and in their own way.
- Stronger Connections: Bringing families into our routine bridges the gap between home and nursery, making your child feel proud and supported.

How You Can Help

You play a massive part in this! Before or during your child's Focus Week, we love to partner with you. We may ask you to share:

- What your child has been interested in at home recently.
- Any new milestones, words, or hobbies they've picked up.
- Goals or questions you might have for their learning.

By combining what we see at nursery with what you see at home—and celebrating it together at our upcoming breakfasts and afternoon teas—we create a complete, caring picture of your child, helping them to flourish, grow, and have the best possible time at Ladeside ELC!



Sharing the Learning

We want our families to be a big part of your child's nursery journey every step of the way! Throughout the year, we'll invite you to special events like Stay and Play sessions, Focus Child Breakfasts, fire pit fun, and visits to the woods.

You can stay connected to your child's learning through a variety of ways:

- Online Learning Journals: Check in from home to see your child's progress, individual achievements, and daily experiences.
- In the ELC: Peek at our Floor books to see the children's collective ideas, or browse your child's personal Focus Book.
- Staff Chats: Our team is always here for a friendly catch-up.
- Social Media: Follow us on BlueSky (ladeside-etc. bsky.social) for photos from our events! Look out for access details coming soon.

Celebrating Success & Family Links

We love celebrating with our little people both inside and outside the ELC! If your child achieves something exciting at a club, activity, or family event, please tell us via their Learning Journal or in person. We can't wait to fill our Proud Cloud display with all their amazing stories!

Important Learning Journal Updates

- Accessing Your Account: All new families should receive set up information for their child's online Learning Journal. Please let us know if you need any help with getting logged in.
- Staying Informed: We use the journals to share progress updates, event announcements, and key date reminders.
- Family Photo Request: We are currently asking all families to upload a photo to their child's journal for our What Matters to Me display.



Please check your child's journal regularly and feel free to add your own comments and stories for us to share with your child at nursery!

Absence Procedure - Can we please ask all parents/carers to inform us if your child will be absent from ELC. This can be done via either email ladesideprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk or telephone 01324 503460

Key Dates for your Diary

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Monday 7 th September	Monday holiday – school and ELC closed
Thursday 10 th September	Red Group Focus Breakfast
Thursday 1 st October	Orange Group Focus Breakfast
Monday 12 th October – Friday 23 rd	October break – school and ELC closed