



CVN Newsletter

November 2023



About Us

We provide high quality early learning experiences for children from 2½ to school age. We operate in partnership with Stirling Council to offer fully funded (free) places to eligible* children. We welcome younger children on a fee paying basis. We place a high value on the benefits of outdoor learning particularly on learning in a natural environment and provide regular Woodland Play Session held in the local woodlands.

We offer 6 hour sessions between 0845-1515 Monday-Friday during school term times.

* Eligibility criteria can be found in Stirling Council's [Nursery Admissions and Charging Policy](#).

We are a Community Interest Company

We are a nonprofit making organisation and any surplus is invested back into our service for the benefit of our community.

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November

We hope you all enjoyed the October break and weren't too washed away in all of the rain! We are happy to be back and to welcome some new faces to nursery.



Hallowe'en

Hallowe'en is always an especially fun time in nursery. Our children were busy making apple muffins, dooking for apples, picking and decorating pumpkins as well, of course, as dressing up.

We went out round the village guising and put a CVN slant on the American Trick or Treat tradition where we went Treat or Treating. Ringing random doorbells and handing out some home made Hallowe'en goodies. We hope the recipients all enjoyed them as much as we enjoyed sharing our Happy Hallowe'en smiles.



My treats were fabulous. Thank you so much 🎃👻xxxx



Was lovely to see [the children] & my treats were fab! Thank-you. 🎃👻❤️



We also visited the ladies at their Rock 'n' Reel class to help them get into the Hallowe'en spirit!



Welcome to Katie



Hello! I'm Katie. I live in the village. I am a mum of 3 boys and as a family we love spending time outdoors, particularly in the woods in Cambusbarron. I am so excited to be joining the amazing team at CVN. I am very passionate about the benefits of outdoor learning in early years.

I look forward to developing my skills in this area; learning, exploring and having lots of fun with all the children and staff at the nursery. I'm looking forward to getting to know all of the children and families so please feel free to come and have a chat any time.



Dressing for the Weather



With the clock change and winter setting in, we are mindful that the woodland environment may pose greater challenges. Nevertheless, we are committed to being in the woods at every possible opportunity although our priority is to ensure that children enjoy our sessions and want to go out to engage with nature.

Flexibility is key to this so, in the event of poor weather conditions, we may cut sessions short and adapt accordingly. We may also deviate from our previous regular Wednesday/Thursday schedule to get the best from the winter weather.

Please make sure children come to nursery prepared to go to the woods.

While we do provide waterproofs and wellies, drying our supply can be challenging during wet weather. If you have your own, please bring them along.

It's also worth noting that even when we're not in the woods, we still spend a significant amount of time outside in the garden, so it's always a good idea to have wet weather gear at the ready.

You may like to take a look at a [video](#) on our YouTube channel demonstrating how to dress for the woods in colder weather.



Introducing Martha

Martha is a Forth Valley College student studying an HNC Childhood Practice.

She will be with us on Mondays and Tuesdays until next summer. She tells us "I play the violin and love to sing. I have sung in the regional National Youth Choir of Scotland for many years and have taken part in lots of concerts including Christmas Carol Concerts at Stirling Castle.



I enjoy dancing and have taken part in several dance shows over the years. I enjoy spending time in nature especially out at Flanders Moss and in the Trossachs. I hope to pursue a career as an Early Years Practitioner."

Tapsalteerie Theatre

We were very grateful to have a visit from Jackie of Tapsalteerie Theatre recently. Jackie offered a range of popular stories and our children chose to hear Stick Man, one of our favourites. They were enthralled as Jackie retold the story accompanied by a variety of music, songs and actions.



By engaging in experiences within the expressive arts, children and young people will recognise and represent feelings and emotions, both their own and those of others.



Learning through Play



Building on children's play interests staff are currently focussing learning activities on time, numbers and dinosaurs

Children have been exploring watches and clocks as well as noticing numbers in our environment. Staff are building on these interests to develop children's understanding of numbers and what they represent. We are looking at what happens when during the nursery day, noting patterns and routines to support children to develop an understanding of what time means. It won't be long until we are counting the number of sleeps until Santa comes!

Dinosaurs are a perennial favourite and we have been identifying and comparing carnivores, herbivores and omnivores as well as working out which kinds of dinosaurs fly or can run really fast!

More generally we are continuing to use the Wellbeing Buddies. We are learning to be like Responsible Robbie and look after our resources and tidy up our things when we have finished playing with them. We are being like Respected Rhiya and Included Isabella when we are kind to our friends, take turns and share our belongings.

Children have been learning to be like Healthy Henry by eating healthy foods, brushing their teeth, washing their hands and wearing the right kind of clothes to suit the weather outside.

Children have also been learning about keeping themselves safe when we are out and about. We are like Safe Stella when we listen to grown ups and learn how to hold hands and cross the road safely.

More generally our children are

- Learning about nursery rules and routines,
- Developing strategies to manage their emotions
- Building stamina, independence and confidence



"Play is the key to unlocking imagination, creativity and complex problem solving."

Ben Kingston-Hughes



ChildSmile



We had a visit from Lisa at Childsmile this week. Lisa reminded the children that they need to brush their teeth for 2 minutes twice a day. She brought along Ollie, baby Ollie and the Pink Panther and our children took turns brushing teeth.



RagBag

We are expecting a Rag Bag collection on Friday November 17th. If you have any old textiles (clothing, curtains, bedding etc) please bring them into nursery. Rag Bag pays CVN for every kilo of textiles collected.





Woodland Play Sessions

Autumn has been an exciting time in our Woodland Sessions. We have watched the leaves change colour and begin to fall from the trees. We have seen lots of mud and water as the landscape changes and we have felt a change in the temperature. This has led to discussions about the weather and how to keep warm and dry.

Our main focus this term has been to build stamina and resilience during our sessions, but as always, so much other learning has taken place. We have been demonstrating incredible persistence and perseverance while practising with fire steels to create a spark. We noticed bumps (or galls) on the under side of a beech leaf and learned about the life cycle of the insect that made them. We harvested some produce from the walled garden.

We have also been working on road safety on our walks to the woods. We have all been wearing hi-vis vests to make sure we are seen by road users.



By climbing a tree I am using my physical abilities and increasing my strength, agility and balance. I am using problem solving skills to make sure I get to my goal safely, I am growing in confidence and having fun!



Playing in water allows me to experience cause and effect. I am learning that my choices affect me and my environment - I can make a big splash and I (and my friends) will end up wet. I am learning that the weather has an impact on the volume, depth and flow of the water. I am discovering different ways to measure the water.



Exploring mud is good for my creativity and expands my vocabulary and literacy skills. I am learning new words to describe the sounds and textures of the mud. I realise that mud can give me clues to what animals visit the woods, this sparks my imagination with thoughts of werewolves - leading to role-play and storytelling.

Christmas Party



Following on from the huge success of our Christmas party with the Oasis group last year, this year, on December 19th, Oasis have invited us to join them in the Church Hall for some Christmas fun and party games.



Eric the Elf

We are delighted to be able to take our children to see Eric the Elf at the MacRobert Arts Centre on December 12th at 1pm.

We have organised a coach to take us there and back. If parents wish to provide a car seat for use in the coach please bring it into nursery on the morning of the 12th. We will be back at nursery by normal pick up time. CVN will be covering the cost of this outing but we would be grateful if parents who are able to would consider contributing towards costs (tickets and transport cost £15 per head, payment can be in cash or via [PayPal](#))

We have very limited availability for parents wishing to come along - please speak to a staff member as soon as possible.



Please select pay friends and family on PayPal to avoid business charges.

Family

We have now moved all of our nursery information over to the Family system. Hopefully parents have managed to log in and find their way around the system. If not, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

Signing In :

Children are now signing themselves in when they arrive at nursery and as part of this process they also record who will be collecting them by selecting that person's profile picture. This is a great way to increase children's feeling of security when being left at nursery and allows staff to support them during a session by reminding them that say, "JoJo" or "Papa" will be coming back soon. To make this easier for children we will be taking photos of adults and helping children to upload them to their profiles. If parents prefer to do that themselves please do!

Permissions :

Family has a useful method of recording parental permissions. We have previously requested permission from parents in the personal plan completed when a child starts at nursery and ask parents to re-confirm permissions every 6 months. This process will be much easier using Family permissions so, in the next few days, we will be asking you to grant permissions again. We understand that this is an extra task for parents but it will streamline things in the longer run so, please bear with us! Personal Plans will also be uploaded to Family and we will ask parents at 6 monthly intervals to confirm the information recorded there remains up to date.

Recording Learning :

We will be recording children's learning in Family and, if you haven't already, you will shortly start to get notifications about your child's learning in nursery. Please remember that learning doesn't just happen in nursery and we'd love to hear about some of the things children are doing at home in the evenings, weekends or holidays. Family allows you to share that very easily with us, if you would like to.



Parent and Family Support

Do you ever feel like you are struggling as a parent? Worried you're not getting things quite right? Are your child(ren)'s behaviours causing you stress and anxiety? Or could you just do with a sounding board? Helen has been there and is keen to share her experiences.

She writes

"I have been getting support from the Parent and Family Support Team for a couple of years now. After struggling with some big behaviours and concerns with my eldest daughter, I had been to see my GP. They referred me to the Family Support Team, and the school also made a referral to CAMHS. I had initially attended the triple P programme (Positive Parenting Programme), which is an 8 week programme which helps develop parenting strategies, and helps you understand why your child behaves the way they do. Our family now also has a dedicated worker who is supporting both me and my daughter. We're getting support with managing big emotions, difficulties with sleeping, filling out paperwork and helping find other organisations that can offer support or advice. My daughter has since been diagnosed as Autistic, but you do not need a diagnosis to access support. It can be simply be that you would like advice and/or guidance to support your children to thrive and achieve.

Parent and Family Support have both individual and group support, targeted discussion groups for specific issues, and cover topics that are challenging for families from hassle free shopping, building relationships and resilience within families, to developing good bedtime routines.

They are community based, and offer generic through to targeted support for children aged 3-8 years old and their families. This support can be from specific support for an individual child through to, for example, managing challenging behaviour, practical support to improve family health and wellbeing, support to parents and children with additional needs and difficulties with sleep issues.

You can contact them directly, as well as through professionals working with your child. Contact email is parenting@stirling.gov.uk. There is more information on Stirling Council's [website](#)."



I know asking for help can be daunting, and it can be hard to talk about things we struggle with. But I'm really happy for any of our parents and carers to approach me and ask any questions about the Parent and Family Support Team, or ask about my experience, or if I can help in any other way. I have found the extra help has made such a difference to my family. It has been a very positive experience amongst a lot of challenging ones. So please feel free to ask!



CVN in the Woods Update

Over the last few weeks we have submitted 2 funding applications, one to the Cambusbarron Community Fund and the other to the Place Based Initiative Programme. The Cambusbarron Community Fund is provided by wind farm money and it supports Cambusbarron community projects which improve or expand community services and facilities for young people.

The Place Based Initiative Programme is funded by the Scottish Government and, this year, encouraged applications from community groups with inspirational and ambitious projects to apply.

We hope that we fit the bill for both of these funds and that our applications will be successful 🌲. If we are, this money will allow us to develop the woodland shelter we will need when we move more permanently to our base in the woods.

We have also been speaking again with our architects who will be liaising with Stirling Council's planning department to ensure that our plans will meet with their approval.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please get in touch!

Campaigning for Equity in ELC

In our last newsletter Jennifer, one of CVN's Directors, explained that CVN is a Community Interest Company and that this means we are a "profit with a purpose" organisation and that any profits we make are reinvested into benefitting our community.

CVN is also a "funded provider" of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) with Stirling Council. This means that CVN is contracted by Stirling Council to provide ELC on their behalf. This is why we are able to offer eligible children "free" places - essentially the Local Authority uses Scottish Government funding to pay CVN for these spaces.

Funded provider nurseries like CVN have been in the news recently. You may have read or seen reports about the lack of childcare, about Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) nurseries closing down or you may be aware of the [Audit Scotland](#) report which states that the sector is "fragile". It's true to say that these are worrying times for funded providers of ELC like CVN.

A Freedom of Information request made by the National Day Nurseries Association showed that, although PVI sector settings deliver **30%** of Scotland's funded ELC, Local Authorities only pay **20%** of Government funding to PVI. Local authorities are putting more money into their own settings than they pay funded provider settings.

So, what does this mean for CVN? As a funded provider CVN, along with **all** ELC services whether in public, private or voluntary sector, must adhere to the [National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare](#). This means that all providers of funded ELC must meet the same standard and deliver the same high quality care, play and learning. But, PVI providers like CVN, are having to do this with less of the Scottish Government funding.

At CVN, our priority is to provide the best care, play and learning opportunities for our children. It is a frustration that we are expected to achieve this with a significantly lower budget than local authority settings.

CVN, alongside other PVI providers and our membership organizations, are actively campaigning to raise the issue of the funding disparity and its impact on children and families. We are grateful to many members of the Scottish Parliament who recognise this inequity and have been petitioning the Scottish Government on our behalf.

The Government has, by design, built that discrimination into its funding of the PVI sector

Willie Rennie MSP North East Fife

If you would like to know or have any suggestions about how we can promote the issues facing funded providers please speak to Jane or any of our board members,

Dates for your Diary

Family has a calendar facility which allows us to keep you updated with events happening in nursery. You should be able to see our calendar on your Family dashboard.

Woods Sessions :Regularly throughout the week (see above)

Rag Bag collection : Friday 17th November 2023

Eric the Elf at the MacRobert : Tuesday 12th December 2023

Christmas Party : Tuesday 19th December 2023

Close for Christmas Holidays : Friday 22nd December 2023 at 12 noon

New Term starts: Monday 8th January 2024 at 0845.

