



Early Learning and Childcare

Glaitness Nursery



Welcome

A Warm Welcome to Glaitness Nursery

We are delighted to welcome your family to Glaitness Nursery.

We believe every child deserves to feel safe, valued, respected and included. Through nurturing relationships and high-quality play experiences, we support children to become confident, capable and enthusiastic learners.

Starting nursery is an exciting milestone and we look forward to working in partnership with you to make this transition a positive experience for your child.

Karen Petrie

The Early Learning and Childcare Team

Nursery Manager

Karen Petrie

Senior Early Years Practitioner

Lead Early Years Practitioners

Shaaron Kennedy, Liam Falls, Stephanie MacKenzie

Key groups and Practitioners

Cygnets – Steph, Claire, and Ruth

Otters – Gemma and Shayna (EYSW)

Selkies- Laura and Karina

Hedgehogs – Nikki and Sarah

Bumblebees- Vaila and Kayla

Puffins – Liam and Katharine

Butterflies – Shaaron, Sally and Jane (EYSW)

Staff supporting the key groups

Tracey, Heather, Susan, Christine, Judi, Nicola, Leah (Trainee)

Our Vision

At Glaitness we believe:

'Learning through play in a nurturing way'

Inspiring and supporting our youngest children and their families to be all they can be.

Our Ethos and Values

At Glaitness Nursery we value children as unique individuals who are naturally curious and keen to learn. We believe that young children learn well when their interests are built upon in stimulating environments. Our curriculum is play based and we value children's freely chosen play, where they marvel at the discoveries they make for themselves. We believe adults should be tuned in to each child and sensitively nurture their development by extending their learning. We value genuine relationships between our children, their parents, our staff and staff from other agencies, working together so our children grow and develop holistically to realise their potential.

Our Aims

- To create a safe, happy place where learning is challenging and fun for everyone.
- To build genuine positive relationships with children and their families and connections in our wider learning community.
- To value parents and carers as their child's most important educator and together, celebrate learning and progress.
- To provide rich, developmentally appropriate learning experiences in a well-resourced stimulating environment both indoors and out.
- To listen to children, value them as individuals and celebrate what makes us all unique.
- To continually evaluate what we do and encourage all staff to develop and remain curious so we can strive to provide excellent education and care at Glaitness Nursery.

We help children grow into: **Confident Individuals, Successful Learners, Responsible Citizens, and Effective Contributors.**

Curriculum Rationale – How We Learn Together

To support Orkney's future, we nurture a strong, inclusive learning community through a balanced and thoughtful approach to early education. We offer:

- Child-led and adult-initiated learning with skilled facilitation
- "In the moment" planning driven by children's ideas and interests
- Opportunities for rich, purposeful play and planned experiences
- Time to revisit and consolidate new concepts
- Guidance for resolving conflicts positively
- Encouragement to ask questions and express curiosity
- Chances to make choices and build independence
- Safe challenges that support risk assessment and resilience
- Literacy and maths-rich play supported by skilled adult interactions
- Access to indoor and outdoor learning environments across the school grounds

Our goals for children at Glaitness Nursery:

- 😊 Be happy, healthy, and resilient
- 🤩 Be enthusiastic, well-rounded learners
- 🙌 Be sociable, confident, and curious
- 🛒 Be independent and capable
- 🚀 Make strong progress
- 🧠 Enjoy their learning every day

What Is 'Early Learning and Childcare'?

The phrase comes from the **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**. It highlights the importance of learning in a nurturing, caring environment—replacing the older term "Pre-school education." At Glaitness Primary School, our dedicated nursery setting is where we provide high-quality Early Learning and Childcare for children from birth to school age.

Your Child's Entitlement

All children are entitled to **1140 hours** of Early Learning and Childcare each year. You can choose:

- **Term-Time:** 30 hours per week
- **Year-Round:** 25 hours per week

☺ Lunch is provided daily by the School kitchen.

If you'd like to explore additional sessions or make changes, please chat with your child's Key Worker or speak to the Nursery Manager.

- 🌞 **Welcome to the Nursery!**

- Our Nursery Manager leads the team and oversees all the Early Learning and Childcare here. If you ever have a question or just fancy a chat, I am always happy to speak with you—so please don't hesitate to reach out.
 - 🧑‍🎓 **Meet Your Key Worker**
 - Each child is part of a small Key Group, guided by their very own Key Worker. This person gets to know your child really well and is your go-to for anything you'd like to ask or share. From everyday questions to special moments, they're here to support you.
 - 🕒 **Starting the Day Together**
 - Mornings begin with a cheerful "check-in" where children gather in their group to share news and go over the day ahead. They learn about exciting activities, plan what they'd like to do, and enjoy connecting with their friends.
 - 🌈 **Reflecting and Sharing** Before home time, the Key Groups often meet again to chat about their day. It's a lovely way for children to reflect on what they've enjoyed and share this with the grown-ups picking them up.
 - 🤝 **Working as a Team** Key Workers focus on their group, making sure important information is passed along to the rest of the team. Together, the staff carefully plan experiences that match each child's interests and help them grow in their own unique way.
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🏠 **Getting to Nursery – Arrival & Departure**

Our main entrance is tucked in around the side of the school with access from the school playground. There is ample carparking in the school carpark or parents can walk to nursery if that is easier. Parents and children should walk through the school playground at the front of the school and head through the gate leading to the nursery entrance. The inside door is locked to the nursery and can only be opened by the staff with a fob.

The nursery door opens 5mins before the beginning and end of each session, so please arrive on time to help us keep the setting safe and secure once everyone's settled.

Session Name	Time	Duration
 Early Bird	8:30 – 9:30am	1hr
 Morning	9:30 – 12.00pm	2.5 hours
 Afternoon	1.00pm – 3:30pm	2.5 hours
 End of Day	3:30pm – 5:00pm	1.5 hours
 Full Day (incl. lunch)	9:30am – 3:30pm	6 hours

Drop-off & Pick-up Tips for Parents/Carers

To make your child's day feel smooth and secure, we kindly ask:

-  Children should always be dropped off and picked up by an adult (aged 16+). If someone different is collecting your child, such as an aunt or uncle, please let staff know in advance—introductions are always appreciated.
-  Arrive no more than 5 minutes early, and please aim to collect your child at least 5 minutes before their session ends. If you're running late, give us a quick call—late pick-ups can be a little unsettling for little ones.
-  Help children care for nursery toys, books, and equipment—tidying is a big part of our routine., "Stay, Play and Put away".
-  Encourage independence with coats, shoes, and bags—hanging things up and getting ready is a proud part of their day.
-  When crossing the road, use the lollipop man where possible—this helps children build safe habits, especially as they prepare for Primary 1.

Parking & Storage

- Please **do not use the disabled spaces** unless you hold a permit—we want to keep these available for families who need them.
- Bikes, scooters, and buggies can be stored in the covered area right outside the main door. Children should walk their bike or scooter through the playground to keep the other children safe.

Settling In Each Day

When you arrive:

- Your child can hang up their coat and bag on their named peg.
- Help them find their name card, and take it to their Key Group Corner for a warm “check-in” with their Key Worker.

Afternoon Catch-up Time

Parents are warmly invited to join the last 5 minutes of your child’s session. It’s a lovely moment to hear all about their day, see what they’ve created, and receive any reminders or news from the staff. You’re also welcome to share any updates or chat with your child’s Key Worker. Don’t forget to check their tray for anything to take home!

The Early Level Curriculum – Play is Powerful!

At Nursery, we believe play is the work of childhood—it’s how children learn, grow, and connect with the world around them. Keeping your child safe and nurturing their personal, social, and emotional development is always our top priority. When children feel happy and secure, they’re ready to learn and thrive.

 **Curriculum for Excellence** Scotland’s Curriculum for Excellence follows children from ages 3 to 18 and is designed to offer plenty of choice and opportunity. Its goal is to help every young learner become:

-  Successful Learners
-  Confident Individuals
-  Responsible Citizens
-  Effective Contributors

Children in Nursery and Primary 1 follow the *Early Level* of the curriculum, which covers eight key areas of learning:

 Curriculum Areas
Health & Wellbeing
Literacy & English
Numeracy & Maths
Science
Social Subjects
Religious & Moral Education
Expressive Arts
Technologies

For more information, you can visit: [🔗 Parent Zone Scotland](#) [🔗 Curriculum for Excellence Scotland](#)

 **Realising the Ambition – Being Me** This guiding document supports staff in delivering what young children need most. It builds on the principles of *Building the Ambition* and spans the learning journey from birth through the early years of primary school.

 **Learning Folders** You'll find your child's Learning Folder near their Key Group area—it's full of pictures and updates showing how they're learning and growing throughout the year. You're welcome to contribute, and we encourage you to look through it together with your child—it's a lovely way to celebrate their progress.

 **Keeping You in the Loop** We use Seesaw to share regular updates about your child's learning journey, along with reminders about upcoming events and special dates. It's a great way to stay connected and informed.

Outdoor Play – Learning in Nature

Outdoor play is a vital part of early childhood development. Our children play outside every day, rain or shine! With waterproof suits provided and their own wellies brought from home, they're ready to explore no matter the weather.

We're lucky to have wonderful outdoor spaces—including the school playground, the Skate Park, Keelylang garden with the Poly tunnel, and Muddisdale for Forest school—where children can discover, investigate, and be inspired by nature.

 Our secure nursery outdoor area offers endless possibilities for creativity and adventure. Children can build, imagine, cooperate, take safe risks, and practice physical and social skills. We believe there's no such thing as bad weather—just the need for the right clothing!

 **Resilience & Safe Risk-Taking** We believe learning to bounce back is one of life's most valuable lessons. Children are gently encouraged to persevere after setbacks, embrace mistakes as learning opportunities, and build the confidence to face the unexpected with courage.

Just like at home, children in Nursery explore risk in safe, supervised ways—helping them develop the skills to manage challenges and make good decisions. Whether it's climbing, problem-solving, or trying new activities, we're here to guide them as they grow braver and more resilient every day.

 **Fire Pit Adventures & Woodwork Skills** Some activities, like fire lighting and woodwork, offer bigger learning experiences—and yes, a dash of adventure!

- We use our fire bowl in outdoor areas like forest school or Keelylang garden. Children take part in thoughtful safety chats and understand the rules, with staff closely supervising at all times. Parents are welcome to join the experience.
- In the woodwork, children explore real tools—hammers, nails, saws, and screwdrivers—with careful supervision and safety discussions beforehand. Group sizes are kept small to ensure everyone's well looked after.

Positive Behaviour & Problem Solving

Young children thrive when they feel noticed, encouraged, and understood. We promote kindness, cooperation, and responsibility—whether it's caring for the nursery environment or resolving little conflicts.

Our 'problem-solving' approach helps children understand their feelings, talk things through, and find fair, respectful solutions with adult support. If any difficulties arise, we'll always work closely with you to help your child navigate them confidently.

Working Together – Parental Involvement

Daily chats at drop-off and pick-up are a key part of our partnership with you—we love sharing those small but meaningful updates about your child's day.

Throughout the year, you'll have opportunities to meet staff formally in October and March. But if you ever have questions or just want a catch-up about how your child is getting on, we're happy to set aside time. For families who can't speak to the Key Worker in person, we can offer a Home/School notebook to help keep the conversation flowing.

 **Stay and Play Days** Once the children are settled, you'll see a notice inviting you to "Stay and Play." Whether it's for a whole session or just a little while, you're welcome to join us, get hands-on with activities, and see your child in action.

 **Join the Fun** We also invite parents to come along for outings, lend a hand at parties or picnics, share special talents, or help create crafty items. If you're interested in helping out, just let us know! For some activities, volunteers may be asked to complete a "Disclosure Scotland" form, as part of our child protection guidelines.

 **Family Learning** Throughout the year, I will create PowerPoint presentations that give a peek into how young children learn through play and explore the curriculum. These will be posted on our Seesaw platform, with fun photos of the children at work and play.

Early Years Partners – Supporting Families Together

We're proud to work closely with professionals from **Orkney Health and Care** who support our nursery in lots of wonderful ways—offering expert advice, chatting to children about healthy living, and helping us give tailored support when needed.

 Whenever there's a concern or decision relating to your child, *you'll always be consulted*, and nothing is shared with other professionals without your consent.

 **Health Visitor** Your Health Visitor is your child's *named person* until school age and is here to offer guidance on anything from sleep to hearing and vision checks. They make sure any information shared about your child's wellbeing is handled with care, respect, and confidentiality.

 **Toothbrushing Time** To support healthy smiles, our Tooth Brushing Supervisor helps children brush their teeth during the day as part of the **Childsmile** Dental programme—a proven way to prevent tooth decay in young children.

 **Family Support Workers** Are on hand to help families through common ups and downs, including sleep routines, toileting, eating, or behaviour.

 **Speech & Language Support** If we have concerns about how your child is understanding or using language, we might suggest a referral to a Speech and Language Therapist—always in conversation with you.

 **Educational Psychologist** Sometimes, with your permission, we ask an Educational Psychologist to help us better support a child's development and learning needs.

 **Early Years Team** Led by Catherine Diamond, the Early Years Team works across Orkney supporting nurseries and helping us grow in our practice. They're based at Keelylang and are an important part of our extended learning community.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like help with a referral, we're always happy to chat.

Health, Safety & Medicines

Safety is always our number one priority. Here's how we help keep everyone well and cared for:

- Minor bumps or accidents? We'll complete a form for you to sign at pick-up.
- Bigger concerns like head bumps or eye injuries? We'll always call you straight away.
- Allergies or medical conditions (like asthma or epilepsy)? Just let us know so we can follow the right care procedures.
- Need your child to take medication during the session? Please chat to the Nursery Manager and complete a short medical form.

 Children also take part in *termly fire drills* so they learn to respond calmly and safely in case of an emergency.

Sunshine & Sun Safety

Even when it's breezy, sun protection matters. Here's how we stay sun-safe:

- Apply all-day sun cream before nursery, especially on faces, ears, necks, and shoulders.
- Dress your child in light long-sleeved tops and a sun hat or cap for shade.
- For outings or sunny days, we have emergency sun cream available—only applied by staff when needed.

Clothing & Comfort Tips

Help your child feel confident and comfy by choosing play-friendly clothes that support independence:

-  Easy to wash (they'll be exploring—and getting messy!)
-  Easy to change (elasticated waists, Velcro shoes)
-  Please avoid clogs or high heels—safe shoes like trainers are best

 **Label everything clearly**, especially Glaitness Primary School tops.

 You can order school tops from Trek and Travel or Logo Orkney, and don't forget to check out the school office for second-hand tops.

Extras to Bring:

- Spare pants, socks, top, and bottoms (just in case)
- Wellies and warm coat with hood
- Hat and gloves for chilly days (which can be most of them!)
- Sun hat and long sleeves for sunny outdoor play

 Please avoid sending valuables—just in case they get misplaced.

Snack Time – Healthy & Happy Eating

Children enjoy nutritious self-service snacks in the morning and afternoon:

-  Children can help prepare snacks with adult supervision
-  Fresh fruit, milk, and water are available daily
-  Snacks follow *Setting the Table* nutrition guidance

Snack time is also a moment for chatting with friends, practicing manners, and learning independence—like pouring drinks and tidying dishes.

🚫 Please don't send cakes or sweets, or home-baked treats during nursery sessions (due to health and hygiene regulations). We try to introduce healthy, child-friendly options.

Lunch Time – A Taste of Independence

Lunch is freshly prepared each day by the team in the School Kitchen and enjoyed in our nursery dining area. All children eat together in small groups, with an adult at each table to help make lunchtime calm, sociable, and special.

Lunch is more than just a meal—it's a valuable learning opportunity. Staff encourage children to:

- Serve their own food
- Pour drinks
- Make healthy choices
- Practice skills in maths, communication, and wellbeing

We take time with lunch so children can truly enjoy the experience. Meals are fully funded by the Local Authority and follow nutritional guidance set out in "Setting the Table." Each term, a menu is shared with families—slightly different from the school's menu to meet the needs of younger children. Options include:

- A hot main course or sandwich
- Soup
- Dessert (fruit, yogurt, or pudding)

Our staff are gentle and encouraging, helping children explore new flavours and keeping an eye on what and how much they eat. If you'd like an update on how your child is getting on at lunch, your Key Worker is always happy to chat.

 For children with packed lunches, please refer to our separate guidance on healthy lunchbox choices.

Keep Us in the Loop – Updates & Info

To help us care for your child safely and consistently, please let us know about any of the following:

School Office/Nursery Updates:

- Change of address or phone number
- New emergency contact details
- Updates to medical conditions
- New medication needed during nursery (a form will be provided)

Nursery Team Updates:

- Changes at home (e.g. family separation, hospital stays, bereavement)
- Any worries your child might have (e.g. struggling to settle)
- Changes in who will be dropping off or picking up

Please reach out anytime—whether it's a question, concern, or update. We're here to help.

Emergency Contact & Sickness Guidelines

We ask all families to provide the name and contact details of someone local we can call if you're unavailable during an emergency.

If your child is unwell, especially with vomiting or diarrhoea, please keep them home for at least 48 hours after the last episode to help keep everyone healthy. Let us know if your child will be absent—either via phone to the school office or by speaking with nursery staff.

For phone conversations with your Key Worker, try calling before or after the session to ensure they're available.

Sharing Concerns – We're Listening

We work closely with parents to support positive behaviour and tackle any worries. If you'd like to talk more about your child's experience, simply ask to speak with our Nursery Manager.

If you'd prefer to raise a concern more formally or speak to someone outside the nursery, you can contact:

- **Catherine Diamond** Early Years Lead, Education Department 📞 01856 873535 ext. 3220
- **Care Inspectorate** 🌐 careinspectorate.com ✉️ concerns@careinspectorate.com 📍 Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY 📞 0845 600 9527

Leaflets with more info are available in our waiting area.

The Care Inspectorate and HMIE regularly inspect Early Learning and Childcare settings to ensure national standards are met.

Your Privacy Matters

We're committed to handling all data with care and keeping it secure. For full details on how we manage data, visit the Orkney Islands Council's privacy policy:  www.orkney.gov.uk/Online-Services/privacy.htm

Appendix 1: Glaitness Nursery Policies

Policy	Scan the QR Code to Access the Policy
Accident/Illness Policy	
Administration of Medicine Policy	
Asthma Policy	
Bereavement and Loss Policy	
Biting Policy	
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	

Confidentiality Policy	
Fire Safety and Evacuation Policy	
Nutrition and Snack Policy	
Infection Prevention and Control Policy	
iPad and Digital Technology Policy	
Linen and Laundry Policy	

Missing Child Policy	
Personal Care and Intimate Care Policy	
Settling In and Transitions Policy	
Sleep and Rest Policy	
Understanding, Supporting and Nurturing Behaviour Policy	
Volunteers and Students Policy	

