

Outdoor Learning and shelters

ELC Expansion

East Dunbartonshire

Outdoor Learning

As part of our Centre improvements for 1140 hours expansion support was offered to our teams to encourage better use of outdoor spaces. A project – Outside - In was developed to problem solve any concerns or issues arising with the environment and due to staffing. One of the barriers in getting children outdoors was that when they were indoors it became difficult to encourage some children out, regardless of the provocations. To mitigate this we asked 6 Centre's to pilot outdoor drop off to children who chose. As an incentive we offered boot rooms and outdoor clothing for children. Not all Centre's and parents were fully on board, we gathered some parent views on this. Around a third said they did not wish this for drop off, the rest said yes or maybe. Of those who said maybe very few provided an explanation for their opinion. This has since become something of a necessity during Covid, as our Centre's operate 8am to 6pm we could not stagger start times and therefore had to stagger drop off points around the Centre's, including outdoors. Clober EYC received very positive feedback from parents on the outdoor environment and in being able to drop their children off outdoors.

Outdoor Shelter

Lennoxtown EYC is one of 11 centres within East Dunbartonshire that has access to one of the outdoor shelters we provided to support year round access to outdoor, providing a cosy, dry space for registration, activities and snack.

Dropping my child off outside really helped with him settling into nursery life. Initially he was not happy to go into the building, but this changed when given the opportunity to meet staff in the playground, it made a great difference.

Initially I was a bit unsure of this drop off opportunity as it wasn't always my child's keyworker, but this gave us the opportunity to get to know other staff in the nursery. The nursery had all the equipment needed and I could even order the lunch and leave messages to be passed on. Saved me time in the long run when I was rushing to work.

The outside start helped me understand the importance of playing outside in all weathers. Staff were happy and welcoming regardless of the weather and they would provide the children with welly boots and waterproofs ready to play.

