



# CAMBUSBARRON PLAYGROUP NEWS

## August 2019 opening

We will be offering 6  
hour sessions from  
8:45am-2:45pm,  
9am-3pm or  
9:15am-3:15pm.

For session  
2019/2020 children  
should bring a  
packed lunch. From  
August 2020 lunches  
will be provided as  
part of the Early  
Years Expansion  
project.

## Contact Us

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## We're looking to make changes.....



At the Open Meeting a couple of weeks ago I announced some of the main changes which we will be making at Playgroup in order for us to deliver the increased entitlement of 1140 hours (the Early Years Expansion). The main changes which will affect parents are:

### *Parental Involvement*

Parental involvement has always been a key feature of the Playgroup service with parents asked not only to take turns on a duty rota but also to serve on the management committee and organise fundraising activities. The original playgroup model relied on duty parents effectively acting as staff "helpers" but regulations such as, for example, Child Protection and Infection Control mean that parents can no longer perform many tasks like accompanying children to the toilet or making snack which previously supported the staff team. The responsibilities of a Committee role and the need to organise fundraising events are now time consuming and onerous for parents who are busy with young families, work and other commitments. The transient nature of the committee with its varying levels of commitment and experience in Early Years services conflicts with a professional organisation and hampers our ability to deliver a consistent level of service.

As a result we have decided to change our business model away from being led by a parental committee to being managed by a Board of Directors. The intention is that the Board will be less likely to suffer from the rapid turnover that occurs with the parent committee. The Board is open to anyone to join and, while we would hope that some parents would want to be involved, we can also recruit more widely involving a broader range of people. The Board structure also allows for staff to serve as Directors and, as Service Manager, I intend to nominate myself to be a Director and consequently be in a position to use my experience and professional knowledge more effectively.



### *Charitable Status and Funding*

Our funding model is compromised by limitations placed on us by Stirling Council. We have no control over the amount of money they pay us for funded places and, to remain competitive with Stirling Council nurseries, we are limited by what we can charge for non funded places and additional hours. In order to increase our sustainability we are looking to offer additional services such as holiday clubs and Woodland Play sessions for other village organisations. To facilitate this we intend to change our business model from Charity to a Community Interest Company (CIC), a type of social enterprise which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. While still retaining charitable aims, a CIC is more flexible than the charity model and will allow us to diversify when appropriate to generate additional income as the Board sees fit. Our aim is that the CIC will be a more secure business model which will rely on generating income and sourcing independent funding streams rather than relying on parents organising regular fundraising events.

*It's all in the name.....*

The previous changes will be transparent to many of our service users, the last change will be more obvious. At the open meeting I explained some of the history of playgroups which originally were set up and run by mothers for mothers. The dictionary definition of Playgroup is

*"a regular meeting of a group of preschool children at a particular place, organised by parents for their children to take part in supervised creative and social play"* while according to the Scottish Families Information Service (which is funded by the Scottish Government)

*"Playgroups provide sessions of play and education for children and are run by volunteers and/or parents. Children can take part in activities such as, art, craft and construction activities, sand and water play, adventure play, music and movement, books and stories etc, as well as the opportunity to socialise with other children."*

While, on the other hand,

*"Nurseries are run by a team of staff and activities and learning experiences are planned by skilled staff to enhance every aspect of a child's development. At nursery, children are involved in activities such as playing, learning new skills and developing social skills."*

The differences in these descriptions highlighters the legacy that the maternal led organisation still persists. Despite the fact that regulation mandates that Playgroups and Nurseries must both have a professionally qualified and registered staff team, are both registered to provide "Daycare of Children Services", both offer early learning and childcare and both conform to the same regulation and legislation there is an obvious difference in the perception of the level of service provided which makes a playgroup a less attractive option for many parents.

In consequence, when we register as a Community Interest Company we intend to do that under the new name, **Cambusbarron Village Nursery**. Cambusbarron Village Nursery is proud of our origins in the playgroup movement but we also celebrate our ability to deliver a valuable, high quality and professional service. We will build on the strong foundations laid down by Cambusbarron Playgroup and continue to provide early learning and childcare with a strong focus on our role and position in the community and also building on the success of our Woodland Play sessions.

*What happens next?*

We will shortly be registering our CIC and beginning the process of re-registering with the Care Inspectorate. We are also about to renew our tender agreement to deliver funded provision with Stirling Council.

Parents wishing to enrol their child at Cambusbarron Village Nursery should contact Lynda in our office ([admin@cambusbarronplaygroup.com](mailto:admin@cambusbarronplaygroup.com)/01786 430497). Fees for non funded places are under review and will be published as soon as possible. All of our paperwork is being revised awaiting our registration so we ask that, for now, parents complete Cambusbarron Playgroup documentation to request a place.

At present there are still a lot of decisions to be made and things to be worked out so I don't have all the answers yet, but, please do get in touch if you have any questions and I will do my best to answer them. I've appended some of the questions I've already been asked below for your information.

Kind regards

*Janet*

## *Previously asked questions*

### Does my child need to come for a whole 6 hour session?

No. For some families this is not appropriate and so we aim to provide a half session of 3 hours. That said Stirling Council have made the decision that it will not be possible to split a funded session so a funded child attending for a half session will use their funded entitlement for the whole session. So despite attending for 3 hours this “spends” 6 hours of entitlement. Unfortunately we have no control over the way the council does this and parents should bear this in mind.

For children not yet eligible for funding the case is different however no less complex. We understand that generally children who are not eligible for funding are younger and for many a 6 hour session feels too long. We are in the process of determining how we can provide for non eligible children and are aiming to set a charge for a 3 hour session. The problem is that, while we want to be able to provide places for non eligible children, we have to accept that a child attending for part of a session blocks another from attending for a whole session. This is much the same problem as we have encountered just now with children attending only part of the week potentially preventing a child from accessing a full time space. Our overall aim however is to be as flexible as we can to meet the needs of our families whilst accepting that financial implications and council stipulations will have an impact. Our committee will be meeting shortly and will agree a decision. Once the committee has come to a decision it will remain that, once established, the Board of Directors will need to ratify it.

### Can I split my funding across settings?

Yes. There is a firm commitment from the Government to facilitate this and, in theory, a child may “spend” their 1140 hour entitlement across as many settings as required. In practice however this may not be straightforward or achievable as different settings offer different arrangements to deliver the 1140 hour entitlement. Some local authority settings for example are open an extended year (ie through the school holidays) and provide 25 hours of funded care per week. Children are entitled to 5x 5hour sessions each week. Some other local authority settings such as Cambusbarron Nursery are open term time only and are providing 30 hours of funded care per week and children are entitled to 6x 5hour sessions a week. (Someone mentioned at the Open Evening that they had been told that Cambusbarron Nursery would also be offering a 9am-3pm session option. I have checked this with Stirling Council and been told that this was a mistake by the nursery and that their sessions will be from 8am-1pm and 1pm-6pm). Settings like ourselves are open term time and offering 5x 6hour sessions. The variety of combinations are confusing and can make accessing a child’s full entitlement difficult.

### How will lunch be provided?

From August 2019 children should bring a packed lunch with them. The Community Centre kitchen is in the process of being refitted and we will have a dedicated fridge in which to store lunch boxes. From August 2020 the Government has committed to providing lunches for children (for now I am led to believe it will be a hot lunch) and I will confirm arrangements nearer that time.

### Can I still come along to a session with my child?

Yes. We always welcome parental involvement and recognise the significant benefits it brings to a children’s learning and to the building and maintaining of relationships.

### What will happen to Woodland Play Sessions?

We are committed to continuing Woodland Play and, indeed, intend to develop this part of our service. We are in consultation with Cambusbarron Community Development Trust and, when they have completed the purchase of an area of woodland, we hope to establish a permanent base in the woods which will allow us better storage, shelter and other facilities. This will facilitate our ability to deliver sessions. At the moment however we are working on the best way to deliver woodland play as part of a 6 hour session and are considering options such as starting a session in the woods and walking back to the centre for lunch, running a set day/morning every week, running twice weekly etc.