

Education and Learning Directorate

Beattock Primary School

c/o Moffat Academy

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Any enquiries please contact

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29 January 2024

Dear Craigielands Community Woodland

As the Manager of Beattock Nursery, I would be very interested in supporting the community woodland project and would like to take this opportunity to give you some background information.

At Beattock Nursery, we follow a Froebelian Approach for our youngest learners. This follows a pedagogy approach that supports children's real-life experiences. To learn more about sustainability, our children have funded and created their own garden area called 'Wee Dig It' where they have the opportunity to be involved in growing various crops before harvesting and cooking the produce. They have also been lucky enough to see the life-cycle of a chicken as a local family/farmer donated eggs which the children watched hatch in their incubator. They then reared the chickens and donated eggs to neighbours. This is just a small example of the involvement we have with our local community.

Our Nursery pupils and staff, along with representatives from the Border Forest Trust and Community Council planted an avenue of trees in the local play park in memory of our late friend and Community Council member Martin Brown. Outdoor Learning is a huge part of our daily routine and we enjoy visiting areas such as the local Heritage Park, play park and the ponds within the Manor Park. We would very much welcome a new community area and would be delighted to be involved with your team.

Current Research in the UK into Forest School and its impacts on young children found positive impacts on children in terms of confidence, social skills, language and communication, motivation and concentration, physical skills and knowledge and understanding.

Recent training with Learning through Landscapes (a leading UK-based charity dedicated to enhancing outdoor learning and play for children) highlight the difference they make see below:

85% of Teachers said it resulted in more creative learning and environmental awareness

85% Healthy active play had increased

65% Observed improved attitudes to learning

73% Behaviour had improved
64% Reported reduced bullying
84% Improved Social Interaction

As the above statistics show, outdoor learning has a very positive impact on children's learning. I feel that input from The Community Woodland will provide support to our youngest learners in nursery with quality experiences in their local community.

Beattock Nursery will fully support the ownership of the local woodland if we are able to access the area with your support to provide experiences such as Forest Schools or an Outdoor Classroom. Such resources are too much for a small nursery to maintain independently.

We would be hugely appreciative if Beattock Nursery could be kept informed of the progress of the project and we sincerely hope it a success for our local community. Good luck on the next steps of your journey.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Jill Murray
Beattock Nursery Manager
Email: [REDACTED]