

# Expecting Something

April - Oct 2022

The logo for Starcatchers, featuring a cluster of colorful dots in shades of red, green, blue, and black above the word "STARCATCHERS" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.

**STARCATCHERS**



# Expecting Something

## About Starcatchers

Starcatchers is Scotland's arts and early years organisation. We advocate for creativity to be at the heart of every childhood, and create magical, playful experiences for all children, wherever they live, alongside the professionals and communities who nurture them. Arts and creativity for 0-5s and their adults supports positive wellbeing, strong relationships and helps give children the best start in life.

## About the project

Expecting Something began as pilot community engagement project in 2013/14, established by Starcatchers and the Family Nurse Partnership. The pilot engaged parents under 25 and their babies in creative arts activities, helping to support and encourage parent/baby bonding and, importantly, create a sense of connectedness between these young families and their community.

The pilot was hugely successful, and the project continued long-term with local communities in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh, and Lochgelly, Fife. Expecting Something provides a protected time and space for parents to spend time with their little ones, engage with the creative arts, and build friendships and positive connections in their communities.

## Stats

577

Children and their adults engaged in the Expecting Something weekly group and family play events

18

Families attended Expecting Something weekly

22

Sessions took place from April 2022 to October 2022



# Highlights

Over the past 6 months, Expecting Something has delivered 22 weekly 2-hour outdoor creative play sessions for families.

With demand from families for non-clinical services like Expecting Something to provide support and a safe space for families still high, we have removed the 25 yrs-old upper age limit for carers joining the group. This has allowed us to work with older, vulnerable families who have been particularly affected by the Covid pandemic, providing cohesive and consistent support for our Expecting Something participants during this particularly difficult period.

## Visiting artists and visiting places

In response to the interests of our participants, and seeking to provide as many high-quality cultural experiences as possible, we have continued to invite visiting artists such as [Unicorn Dance Party](#), [Tinderbox musicians](#), [Morgan Njobo](#), artist from [Mixed Up](#), and aerial artist Danuta Ramos to Expecting Something sessions.

We have also continued to take the group on visits to explore the local area, including to [Saughton Park](#), [Edible Estates](#), [Dalkieth Museum](#), the [Royal Scottish Academy](#), the [Van Gogh immersive experience](#), Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and to a performance of Starcatchers' baby circus show, [Little Top](#). These visits address issues of access and transportation, and contribute to our participants' familiarity with and ownership of their local areas.

## Connecting with the community

A main focus of Expecting Something's work over the past 6 months has been embedding further in the Wester Hailes community. A significant part of this has been the decision to establish Starcatchers' office permanently in [Whale Arts](#), where the Expecting Something group is based.



*'I am so glad to have found Expecting Something and it's been such a big part of mine and my babies' lives.'*

*Expecting Something has made me and my life better in more ways than I can put into words.'*

**Participant**





*"Since attending these sessions R has developed in so many ways, made many friends and just adores everyone at the group. The staff, Kerry, Katy and Roz are amazing, with both the parents and kids. It isn't just a group for the kids; it's a group for parents to communicate and socialise with other parents."*

### **Participant**



We have expanded Expecting Something's reach and impact by working in partnership with local early years settings and organisations to provide pop-up play sessions in different locations around the community.

Partners have included:

- Gate 55
- With Kids
- Whale Arts
- Edible Estates
- Calder flats residents association,
- Bethany trust
- Space at Broomhouse
- West side plaza
- The Community Wellbeing Collective.

Working in partnership with local organisations has meant we have gained further insight into the needs and circumstances of Wester Hailes' families. The pop-up format has also provided opportunity for working families to join us who might not be able to attend our Thursday morning Expecting Something sessions.

### **Starcatchers Saturdays**

Following the success of Expecting Something pop-up sessions, and reviewing feedback gathered from practitioners and participants, we recognised there was a high demand from the community for more play opportunities at the weekend. To address this, we have worked in collaboration with the Community Wellbeing Collective to establish new weekly group Starcatchers Saturdays: hour-long creative play sessions on Saturday mornings for families with young children aged birth - 5 years old. Participants are also given a free lunch at the end of the session.





# Outcomes

## **For babies**

Greater socialisation and stimulation which in turns helps physical, cognitive social and emotional development

Strengthened relationships with their parent(s) improves the early years experiences of young children

Increased confidence, wellbeing and development through successful engagement with and participation in creative activities.

## **For parents**

Life Skills

Greater emotional wellbeing

Increased parental capacity

Strengthened attachment

Community Connectedness

# Partners

**WHALEARTS**

## Funders:



- BBC Children in Need
- Cattanach
- Henry Duncan
- Perinatal Infant Mental Health Fund
- Stevenson Trust
- The Robertson Trust
- William Grant Foundation

**Thank you for  
your support**