

East Dunbartonshire Council

Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy

Updated June 2019

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1. Rationale

1.1 Early Years

East Dunbartonshire Council is committed to the provision of high quality early years experiences for all children. We aim to provide places that meet the needs and demands of both children and families, offering flexibility of provision where possible. This document provides guidance on the admission of 0-5 year old children into local authority Early Learning and Childcare centres (ELCC). The policy also covers the admissions process 3 and 4 years old children accessing procured places within Funded Provider centres.

This Early Years Admissions Policy sits within the context of the Education Service Early Years Strategic Plan and the Early Years Charging Policy.

East Dunbartonshire Council are working towards the expansion of entitlement to 1140 hours in 2020, in accordance with the Scottish Government: Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Years and Childcare in Scotland. Details are outlined and timelines for the admissions process for centres providing 1140 hour provision.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 determines the eligibility of children, who are entitled to early learning and childcare. In all cases, the current entitlement is to fund 600 hours early learning and childcare places, with some centres providing 1140 funded hours.

2. 1140 Delivery Models

2.1 Overview

The Scottish Government is introducing an increase to the funded entitlement to all **eligible** 2, 3 and 4 year old children to 1140 hours by August 2020. We currently have four Early Learning and Childcare centres providing 1140 provision. Provision is detailed in Section 2.2.

With effect from August 2019, a number of additional local authority centres will move to the new delivery model for 1140 hours. Where there is capacity, children aged 2 to 5 years old from families in the following categories will be eligible for 1140 hours funding:

- Children on the child protection register or looked after;
- Children who live in an area which is Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2;
- Children from households in receipt of these benefits:
 - a. Income Support(IS)
 - b. Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
 - c. any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
 - d. Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
 - e. State Pension Credit
 - f. Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit and income is less than £16,105
 - g. both maximum CTC and maximum Working Tax Credit and income is under £6,900
 - h. support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - i. Universal Credit (this can be claimed if income is less than £610 per month)

All other provision will start providing the increased 1140 entitlement for all children in session 2020 -2021.

2.2 Local Authority Provision

Early learning and Childcare Centre	Current provision	August 2019 - 1140 provision	August 2020 - 1140 provision
Auchinairn ELCC	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	1140 provision	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.
Lennoxtown ELCC	0-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	1140 provision	0-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.
Hillhead ELCC	0-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	1140 provision	0-5 year old, extended year 8am-6pm.
Twechar ELCC	2-5 year olds, 3-5 year olds, extended year, 8am-6pm.	1140 provision	2-5 year olds, extended year 8am-6pm.
Meadowburn ELCC	3-5 year olds, term time, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	3-5 year olds, extended year 8am-6pm.
Holy Family ELCC	3-5 year olds, term time, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	3-5 year olds, extended year 8am-6pm.
Craighead ELCC	2-5 year olds, sessional, term time.	August 2019 – eligible children	To be confirmed after consultation
Torrance ELCC	3-5 year olds, sessional, term time.	August 2019 – eligible children	To be confirmed after consultation
Castlehill ELCC	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	2-5 year olds, extended year 8am-6pm.
Clober ELCC	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.
Baljaffray ELCC	3-5 year olds, term time, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	3-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Milngavie ELCC	3-5 year olds, term time, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	3-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Killermont ELCC	3-5 year olds, sessional, term time.	August 2019 – eligible children	3-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Colquhoun ELCC	2-5 year olds, sessional, term time.	August 2019 – eligible children	2-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Lenzie Meadow ELCC	2-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	2-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Gartconner ELCC	2-5 year olds, term time, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	2-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.
Cleddens ELCC	0-5 year old, extended year, 8am-6pm.	August 2019 – eligible children	0-5 year olds, extended day, 8am-6pm.

2.3 Session Times, Split placements

Sessions for children attending the four 1140 pilot centres can use up to 24 hours per week. This can be sessions Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m.- 12.45 p.m. or 1.00 p.m.-5.45 p.m. or alternatively 2 and a half days per week over the extended year.

Parents can purchase additional hours in accordance with the EDC Charging Policy.

Places and sessions should be allocated, subject to the individual needs of the child or family and availability within the chosen ELCC.

2.4 Meals and Snacks

By August 2020, all eligible children accessing 1140 hour provision will be entitled to a free meal, provided during their session/day. Details of the meals provided can be accessed from individual centres. Snacks will be provided throughout the day for all children.

2.5 Blended models

A blended model approach to placements for children have been established in some pilot centres. This includes time in identified centres and time with a childminder each week.

There is an expectation that childminders will work in partnership with their link centres, to provide a holistic approach to children's learning and development, this will be part of contractual requirements.

2.6 Funded Providers

From session 2020-2021, parents can access a placement with Funded Providers who have successfully completed the new tender and commission process. Split placement requests from children out-with the authority, or children from East Dunbartonshire applying to other authorities, will be subject to the Cross Boundary funding agreement.

Funded Providers that meet the National Standard will apply to provide places to deliver 1140 hours to parents, which will be free from point of entry for 3 and 4 year olds. All funded providers will deliver services for children aged 3 and 4 years old in line with the National Standard. Funded providers are subject to inspections by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. Comprehensive support is provided to funded providers by the Education Service.

Parents can access their entitled funding provision for 3 and 4 year olds from funded providers throughout the authority. Parents are required to complete the funding applications via the EDC online application forms, however the provider will have responsibility for allocating the spaces within their Centre. Parents should ensure their place is confirmed with their chosen Centre prior to applying for funding.

3. Eligibility for Early Years Provision

3.1 Those entitled to funded provision:

- All children aged 4 are eligible for a funded place.
- 3 year old children become eligible for funded Early Learning and Childcare the day after their 3rd Birthday.
- Two year olds who are (or have been since they turned 2) cared for by the local authority (looked after and accommodated - LAAC).
- Two year olds who are (or have been since they turned 2) cared for under a kinship care order.
- Two year olds from families assessed as requiring support.
- Children from households in receipt of these benefits:
 - a. Income Support (IS)
 - b. Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
 - c. any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
 - d. Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
 - e. State Pension Credit
 - f. Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit and income is less than £16,105
 - g. both maximum CTC and maximum Working Tax Credit and income is under £6,900
 - h. support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - i. Universal Credit (this can be claimed if income is less than £610 per month)
 - j. Under 2's from families assessed as requiring support.

4.0 How to apply for a Place for a child under two years

4.1 Babies to Two year old places

4.1.1` Local Authority centres that provide childcare for children under the age of 2 years old

Three centres offer places for children under the age of 2:

Cleddens ELC Centre
Lennoxtown ELC Centre
Hillhead ELC Centre

4.1.2 How to apply for a place for a child under two years

Each of the centres above provide paying and Local Admissions Panel (LAP) supported places. Families that are seeking paying places or a supported place should apply directly to the identified centres. Any child or family, which is assessed as requiring support, must have a request for assistance from social work, health or education to support the application. Allocations are managed for children under 2 years within the centre.

Supported places will be allocated with the expectation that parents will engage in some work related activity, such as job seeking, employability programmes, training, studying, centre events and family support programmes such as parenting programmes. Engagement with services will inform the outcome of the termly review LAP meetings.

Parents should be aware that a place for a child under two years does not automatically mean they will transition to a two year old place, as this is dependent on availability. However where possible the transition will be facilitated to provide continuity for the child.

4.1.3 Admissions Process and Bandings for Children under 2

BAND 1 - CHILD PROTECTION

- a) Referral of a child by the Social Work Department deemed to be in need of protection – automatic admission.
- b) Children referred by:
 - o Social Work Department
 - o Psychological Services
 - o Health Professionals
- c) Referral from Social Work Department to support young parent(s) wishing to remain in school.

(All requests for assistance from Social Work or Health will be considered by LAP – Locality Admissions Panel. Applications from outwith East Dunbartonshire Council will not be considered.)

BAND 2

- a) Requested by parent, who is resident within the locality;
- b) Requested by parent who is resident outside locality but within EDC.

4.2 Two to Three year old places

4.2.1 Local authority centres that provide 2 year old provision are:

Auchinairn ELCC	Castlehill ELCC
Lennoxton ELCC	Clober ELCC
Hillhead ELCC	Colquhoun ELCC
Lenzie Meadow ELCC	Cleddens ELCC
Twechar ELCC	Gartconner ELCC
Craighead ELCC	

4.2.2 How to apply for a place for a child aged two years

Parents should only complete one application form per child (application forms should be completed online at the EDC website ; Early Learning and Childcare page). Where an application is to be formally referred or supported by Social Work, Health or Education parents must still complete an application form as described above. Parents/carers must provide a birth certificate, council tax bill and utility bill which can be uploaded at the time of completing application and where applicable proof of entitlement.

Allocations are managed for 2 year olds within each centre. Families who are eligible for an entitled place can access their place the term after their 2nd birthday. Families who are not entitled and have applied for a paying place or have been assessed as requiring support can access early learning and childcare from their child’s second birthday, subject to availability.

Supported places will be allocated, with the expectation that parents will engage in some work related activity such as job seeking, employability programmes, training, studying, ELC centre events and family support programmes such as parenting programmes. Engagement with services will inform the outcome of the termly review LAP meetings.

Parents should be aware that applications must be completed for a funded 3-5 year old place. Places are dependent on centre capacity. However efforts will be made to ensure continuity for children.

4.2.3 Admissions Process and Banding

BAND 1 – CHILD PROTECTION

- a) Referral of a child by the Social Work Department deemed to be in need of protection – automatic admission.
- b) Children referred by:
 - a. Social Work Department
 - b. Psychological Services
 - c. Health Professionals
 - d. Education

- c) Referral from Social Work Department to support young parent(s) wishing to remain in school.

(All requests for assistance from Social Work, Health or Education will be considered by LAP – Locality Admissions Panel and/or by EYCAT – Early Years Community Assessment Team. Applications from outwith East Dunbartonshire Council will not be considered.)

BAND 2

- a) Eligibility for an entitled early learning and childcare place for two year olds

If a child is born from:	They will be eligible for a two year old place from:
1 st March to 31 st August	August
1 st September to 31 st December	January
1 st January to 28 th February	April

Children from households in receipt of these benefits:

- a. Income Support(IS)
 - b. Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
 - c. any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
 - d. Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
 - e. State Pension Credit
 - f. Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit and income is less than £16,105
 - g. both maximum CTC and maximum Working Tax Credit and income is under £6,900
 - h. support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - i. Universal Credit (this can be claimed if income is less than £610 per month)
- b) Children who are not eligible but parents are funding the place will be allocated with the following priority:
 - i) Resident within locality;
 - ii) Has a sibling that attends the same ELC centre;
 - iii) Resident outside locality within EDC.

4.3 Three to Four year old places

Children will be eligible for funding from the day after their 3rd birthday. Funding is currently allocated over 38 weeks. For children whose birthday falls within a holiday period, funding will commence the first day after the term time holiday.

4.4 How to apply for a place for a three or four year old child

Parents should only complete one application form per child. Application forms should be completed online at the EDC website: Early Learning and childcare page. Where an application is to be formally referred or supported by Social Work Services, Health service or Education service parents should still complete an application form as described above. Parents/carers must provide a birth certificate, council tax bill and utility bill, which can be uploaded at the time of completing application.

- Children aged three returning to Local Authority ELC for their four year old place should complete the **continuation** form.
- Children aged three returning to a funded provider for their four year old place should complete the **registration** form.
- Children who will be turning three should apply the January prior to their child’s third birthday by completing a **registration** form.
- Early Learning and Childcare places are allocated for the academic session – August to June or July for Extended Year places. Funding applications must be done in advance of a child turning 3 years old.
- Applications are made in January each year.
- The dates relate to the Session 2019/20 and have required some changes due to the funding from the child’s 3rd birthday:

If a child turns 3 years old between January to February 2020	Applications should already have been made in January 2019
If a child turns 3 years old between March to June 2020	Applications to be made by the end of August 2019.
Applications for places for Session 2020/21 should be made in January 2020	

Any parent having difficulty accessing the online application should contact a centre or alternatively seek support from their locality HUB.

As part of the implementation of provision, places will be allocated based on locality, which will provide a range of provision within each area. The locality areas have been defined as follows:

- Bearsden / Milngavie/ Torrance;
- Bishopbriggs;
- Kirkintilloch/ Lenzie/ Milton of Campsie/ Lennoxton/ Twechar.

Early Years Services will ensure that information about applying for places and the date for the receipt of completed application forms are fully advertised in the community through posters, website and social media.

Early Years Services endeavour to allocate children’s placements in line with the parent’s choice. However, parents should indicate a second choice of ELC centre. If a place is not available at the first choice of centre, the allocation team will then allocate at the second or the nearest centre to the parents address within the locality.

Where there is insufficient provision to meet the demand, decisions must be taken to determine which children should be given the available places. Where possible, siblings will be allocated a place in the same centre. There are circumstances that will give some children priority for admission. The same priorities will be used for all local authority centres. If demand exceeds the available places; a ballot will be conducted to ensure a fair allocation against the current funded hours model of that centre.

Applications for three or four year olds will take place in January / February each year. The last day of February will be the closing date for applications. All applications received after the closing date will be subject to available places and funding.

Parents can access their Early Years and Childcare entitlement for their 3 or 4 year old child in the following ways:

- Half day or full day sessions.
- Almost all local authority centres will only offer extended year provision from August 2020.

4.5 Admissions Process and Bandings

BAND 1 – CHILD PROTECTION

- a) Referral of a child by the Social Work Department deemed to be in need of protection – automatic admission.
- b) Children referred by:
 - Social Work Department
 - Psychological Services
 - Health Professionals
 - Education
- c) Referral from Social Work Department to support young parent(s) wishing to remain in school.

(All requests for assistance from Social Work, Health or Education will be considered by LAP – Locality Admissions Panel and/or by EYCAT – Early Years Community Assessment Team).

BAND 2

- a) Any child whose birthday is in January or February, who has completed a deferred entry application.
- b) Any child born September to December, whose parents have exercised the right to defer their child's entry to primary school. This includes children who have been granted funding as well as those funded by parents.
- c) Children aged three returning to the Local Authority ELC for their four year old place. Places will be allocated on the basis of i) within locality
- d) Children who are four and in their pre-school year.

BAND 3

- a) Any child who becomes three years of age between August – June of the following year.
 - i) within locality;
 - ii) sibling that attends the same centre;
 - iii) requested by parent outside locality within EDC;
 - iv) children who become three years of age, where demand meets capacity will be allocated in accordance to their date of birth, then ballot if necessary.
- b) Children transitioning from 2 year old provision to the 3 to 5 year old provision within the same centre.

BAND 4

Any child living outside East Dunbartonshire.

4.4 Deferred entry to school

Parents may request to defer entry to primary school if their child has additional support needs or other concerns which affect their development.

Children born in January or February have the right to an additional year of funding. Children with a January or February birthday that are applying for a deferred school entry should complete a deferred online application that can be accessed at the East Dunbartonshire website. The deadline for submission is the end of January as stated on the form.

Children born in September – December will be subject to approval by the Early Years Community Assessment Team – EYCAT. This will consider assessment by Early Years centre staff, psychological services and/or other agencies as well as the views of parents. If approved, a further year's funding will be allocated.

5. Funded Providers

5.1 Admissions

Funded providers have their own admissions policy. Parents can access their entitled funding for three and four year olds at funded providers, who are in partnership with the authority. Parents/carers are required to complete the funding applications via the EDC online application forms, however the provider will have responsibility for the allocation of places within their centre. Parents should ensure their place is confirmed with their chosen centre prior to applying for funding.

5.2 Service Provision and Quality

All funded providers are registered to deliver services for children aged three and four years old in line with Curriculum for Excellence 3-18. All funded providers are subject to inspections by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

In addition, all funded provider services are required to meet the criteria set out in their contract and engage with the Education Service, who will support centres as they develop and improve the quality of their service.

6. Cross Boundary Funding

6.1 Applications for children, who are resident out with East Dunbartonshire

There is a Cross Boundary Protocol, which has been agreed by neighbouring local authorities. Parents or carers of children aged 3 to 5 years old that are residents in other Council areas may apply to places in East Dunbartonshire Council and Funded Provider centres. Applications will be considered after all eligible applications from East Dunbartonshire have been allocated places. The timing of this request is important to ensure it complies with the local authority timelines for applications. The deadline for applications is the last day in February.

There is no funding for eligible two years that reside out-with the authority, in accordance with the Cross Boundary agreement.

In line with the Cross Boundary Protocol, funding is allocated from the term following the child's third birthday.

6.2 Admissions for East Dunbartonshire Council children applying to other Councils

East Dunbartonshire Council residents may wish to apply for a place in a centre in another Council. Parents who wish to take up provision in other Council areas should contact the relevant local authority directly for advice on their admissions process.

7. Allocation of Places

7.1 Placement offers

Places for children, under the age of three, will be allocated when a place becomes available or when the entitled funding starts the term after the child's 2nd birthday.

Places for children aged 3 and 4 will be offered as follows:

- June notification for August places;
- August notification for January places;
- September notification for April places; and
- April notification for May and June places.

This will be reviewed for 2020 when all families will be informed of all allocations in June.

Extended year contracts for children aged 3 to 5 run from 1st August or agreed start date until 31st July annually.

Contracts must be signed and returned prior to a child starting in the ELCC. Failure to do so can result in a delay in a child's start date.

7.2 Changes to Allocation

Parents wishing to request a change to attendance must complete an alteration form, which can be obtained, completed and returned to the ELCC. A period of four weeks' notice is required for any change request to attendance. The Centre will inform parents if the change can be accommodated.

One change per term will be permitted to attendance patterns. Any parent wishing to make a second change within a term should speak to a member of the ELC centre management team.

7.3 Charging

- The hourly rate for Early Learning and Childcare is subject to review annually.
- Two children attending an ELC Centre: a discount of 15% is applied to the fees for the older child.
- Three or more children attending ELC Centre a discount of 15% is applied to the fees for the two older children.
- 10% discount is applied for any child attending a full time place (50 hours per week)
- Charges will apply for all hours allocated to children under 3 (unless exempt) and to children who are deferring entry as a result of parental choice (i.e. not entitled to a continued funded place and not supported by EYCAT)
- Children who start placement the day after their 3rd birthday will not start any extended contract hours until the following week to facilitate settling in.

Invoices are issued monthly and in advance. Hourly rates are reviewed each year and are subject to an increase. Further information is detailed in the Charging Policy.

7.4 Absence

Parents must inform the Centre management team of any child with a long-term absence over a period of three weeks. In the event of a child's long-term illness, parents will not be charged for any contracted additional hours. Supporting evidence may be required.

8. Local Admissions Panel

8.1 Locality Admission Panel Members

Each Locality, as defined in Section 4, have an established Locality Admissions Panel (LAP) to discuss and agree placement requests.

The LAP team will comprise of :

- A member of the Senior management from ELC Centres in the locality;
- A representative from EDC Early Years Team,
- Representatives from Health, Social Work or any other relevant agency regarding Band 1 applications and supporting Requests for Assistance.

8.2 Bandings and Decisions for Locality Admission Panel Meetings

The banding as detailed in Section 4 should be used unless there are exceptional circumstances. Approval must be sought from the Education Officer (Early Years and Primary) or the Chief Education Officer.

The Early Years Team representative will be responsible for co-ordinating the meetings, recording decisions made and informing the Early Years' Service Manager of outcomes. The ELCC senior management is responsible for feeding decisions back to the professional making the Request for Assistance (RFA). The person that has made the Request for Assistance is responsible for informing the family the decision of the Request for Assistance.

LAP meetings take place termly where current places will be reviewed and decisions regarding new applications are made. Parents should be aware that places are subject to discussion and change at each meeting.

There may be occasions when a RFA emergency place may be considered out with the LAP meetings. This will be discussed by no less than three professionals.

9. Allocation of Places for Children with Additional Support Needs

9.1 Admissions

The Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT) allocates places at Campsie View ELC, Castlehill, Harestanes and Wester Cleddens Enhanced Learning Resources. Places in specialist resources are subject to a 10-week contextual assessment before a recommendation is considered by EYCAT for the options detailed below :

- Placement to finish. Enhanced transition to mainstream placement with support recommendations;
- Continue ELR/ Campsie View placement;
- Continue ELR /Campsie View placement (start of P1);
- Request for alternative Tier 2/3 Early Years placement.

If a child is allocated a place within a specialist resource, this will be in addition to their funded entitlement attended within a mainstream setting.

There may be occasion when a referral is made for an emergency place at a local authority Centre. This will be at the discretion of the Education Officer (Early Years and Primary).

9.2 Inclusion

All centres focus on the development of a curriculum for all. Supporting learners is underpinned by the principles of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child). The EDC Including Every Learner policy details the process to ensure best outcomes for children.

10. Holiday Places

In 2019/20, parents can apply for holiday provision within local authority ELC Centre provision. Application forms can be obtained from any Centre, six weeks prior to a holiday period. Holiday places will be subject to availability.

Places are allocated with the following priority as follow:

- a) Children who attend a local authority ELC
- b) Children within the locality.
- c) Children who live within East Dunbartonshire.
- d) Children who live out-with East Dunbartonshire.

10.1 Holiday charging

Holiday attendance will be charged as per the Charging Policy.

11. Enquiries

11.1 Enquiry procedure

In the first instance, parents who require clarification, with the decisions made regarding admissions to centres should contact their Centre to discuss the enquiry. If they require any further information, they should contact Customer Services.

12. Complaints

12.1 Complaints procedure

If a parent has a complaint regarding the admissions procedures, they can refer to the East Dunbartonshire Complaints procedure that can be accessed on the East Dunbartonshire website.