



Early Learning and Childcare

Enrolment Information for Parents

Local Authority Nurseries and Partner Centres

Academic Session 17/18

Who can have Free Early Learning and Childcare?

The eligibility for entitlement to free early learning and childcare follows the same birth date bandings as school entry i.e. from 1 March to 28 February in any year. For 17/18 the eligibility dates for 3 and 4 year olds to have free places is as follows: -

Eligibility for Free Early Learning and Childcare	“Three Year Olds” Eligible Birth Dates	“Four Year Olds” Eligible Birth Dates
August 2017	1/3/14 – 31/8/14	1/3/13 – 28/2/14
January 2018	1/9/14 – 31/12/14	
April 2018	1/1/15 – 28/2/15	

Within the above bandings for 3 year olds - **school nurseries** can provide a place in nursery as soon as the child reaches their third birthday. The parent will however, have to pay until the child is eligible for a free place in the following term i.e. in the January or April. The 16/17 charge is £3.80 per hour but this is likely to rise to £4.00 per hour in August 2017.

Partner Centres generally offer the opportunity to pay for places for children before their third birthday but parents should check with the individual centre.

For children who are 3 after 28/2/15 there is no requirement to provide a place in a school nursery until the following August, but if there is space and sufficient staffing then a place could be offered if the parent is willing to pay, or the child is eligible as a “two year old”.

Eligible Two Year olds – i.e. those from households in receipt of certain benefits, can take up their free place at a school nursery as soon as they reach their **third birthday**. Please contact one of the following Family Resource Co-ordinators for further information or to request for an application form :-

North Area	Dawn Meston	01955609665	dawn.meston@highland.gov.uk
Mid Area	Jackie Ross	01349868496	jackie.ross@highland.gov.uk
West Area	Tracy McIlvar	01478613697	tracy.mcilvar@highland.gov.uk
South Area	Liz Scott	01463702740	liz.scott@highland.gov.uk
	Hayley Brown	01479812974	hayley.brown@highland.gov.uk

What is the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds?

Eligibility for Free Early Learning and Childcare	“Three Year Olds” Eligible Birth Dates	“Four Year Olds” Eligible Birth Dates	Entitlement of No of Hours 17/18
August 2017	1/3/14 – 31/8/14	1/3/13 – 28/2/14	600
January 2018	1/9/14 – 31/12/14		400
April 2018	1/1/15 – 28/2/15		200

The entitlement to hours for 2017/2018 will run from 15 August 2017 to 14 August 2018. As school nurseries currently only operate in term time, some parents may wish to only take a proportion of their entitlement at the school nursery and “bank” their hours to use at a different provider in holiday periods.

In any setting the maximum free entitlement that can be taken in any week is 16 hours and the maximum in any day is 8 hours. More hours can be taken but they will have to be paid for. For example if the nursery is open 8am – 6pm and the child attends for the whole day (10 hours) then they would have to pay for 2 hours for that day. If a child claims their 16 hours per week in a school nursery in term time then they will have nothing left to use in holiday periods elsewhere, as they will have used their full entitlement of 600 hours.

If you do want to split your child’s entitlement between two centres then this needs to be stated at the outset as we will not be able to fund the other setting if you have used your full entitlement at a school nursery.

Enrolment Procedures

Enrolment Week for 2017/2018 will take place in the week beginning 13 February 2017.

To enrol for a place in a School Nursery – you can apply on-line through the Highland Council website or you can attend the school in person during “enrolment week”.

To enrol for a place in a Partner Daycare Centre or Playgroup centre then you should contact them directly for details of their procedure.

Admission procedures

- All children are required to enrol for their **initial** Early Learning and Childcare place at their preferred nursery. **If they wish to remain at the same nursery for their four year old year then they should simply confirm this to their nursery and provide an update of their details.** For school settings, if they have moved out of the catchment and have no siblings attending the school then they cannot be guaranteed a place until all other enrolments have been processed.
- Birth certificates or other official confirmation of birth must be checked at enrolment or, if enrolling online for a school nursery, then they need to be scanned in at the time of submission or presented at the school before the end of February.
- In some schools, where there is significant pressure on the school roll then Council Tax records will also be checked to verify the address details.
- It is hoped that the majority of parents of eligible children will enrol during enrolment week, however enrolments can be accepted throughout the year where places are still available.

Admission Policy for School Nurseries

Priority is given to children living within the catchment area and also to any children that are assessed as “in need” defined in the Children Scotland Act 1995. If after allocating the places to children as stated above, there are still places remaining, then those places may be allocated to children outwith the catchment according to the following criteria in order of priority:-

1. To four year olds with siblings attending the school
2. To three year olds with siblings attending the school
3. To four year olds
4. To three year olds

Non-catchment enrolment applications

If you enrol your child in a school nursery that is outwith your catchment there is no guarantee that your child will get a place in Primary 1 at that school. You would have to make a placing request at the time they were due to enrol for Primary 1 and there is no guarantee that that would be granted. Attendance at the nursery is no guarantee either that another year at nursery is automatically provided if you no longer live within the catchment.

Preference forms and settings that are oversubscribed

In order to assist in allocating places, where there is a possibility that school settings may be oversubscribed parents are requested to complete a “preference form”. It will ask for you to state your second and third preferred choices of nursery or daycare for your child to attend.

Deferred entry to Primary 1 i.e. additional year at nursery

- It is a statutory requirement for a child who is five before the start of the school session to attend primary school.
- Any deferral for children whose fifth birthday is before the start of session should be supported by a recommendation from Psychological Services.
- If a child has a January or February birthday, parents may decide that they wish to defer their child’s entry to school and in this instance a further funded year is guaranteed. **For those children born between September and December, a further year is only funded if there is agreement of staff and parents that this is in the child’s best interests.**

Admission Policy for Partner Centres

There are no catchment restrictions on Partner Centre settings and they will therefore generally accept enrolment applications from anyone who is eligible for a funded early learning and childcare place.