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All About Early Learning & Childcare

A Parent Guide to Nursery Places in the Glasgow City Council Area – 2021/2022

Introduction

In August 2021 all children aged 3-5 years old and some 2 year olds are entitled to 1140 hours of Scottish Government funded early learning and childcare (ELC).

Families can use their child's funded entitlement at any Glasgow City Council nursery, Funded Provider or Registered Childminder meeting the National Standard for Early Learning & Childcare and contracted by the Council.

We use the following terms throughout this guide:

- **ELC** refers to statutory funded nursery provision for 3 to 5 year olds and some 2 year olds
- **Parent** refers to both parents and carers
- **Funded Provider** refers to any private, voluntary or independent sector nursery who meets the National Standard AND is in contract with the Council to provide ELC
- **Registered Childminder** means any registered childminder working from their own home, who meets the National Standard AND is in contract with the Council to provide ELC. This contract is managed via the Scottish Childminding Association
- **Blended place** refers to the potential to split your child's 1140 hours entitlement between more than one provider
- **Local area admissions panel** refers to the panel of nursery heads which decides on the allocation of nursery places in a local area.

1.0 What is my child entitled to ?

All children aged 3-5 are entitled to up to 1140 hours per year of funded ELC. Children become eligible according to when their 3rd birthday falls. In Glasgow, you can access your child's funded entitlement from the Monday after their 3rd birthday.

Some 2 year olds are also entitled to up to 1140 hours per year of funded childcare where they meet the criteria set out in Section 4 of this guide. If your 2 year old meets the criteria for funded ELC, they can access it from the start of the first term AFTER their second birthday OR the start of the first term AFTER you start receiving any of the named benefits or tax credits within the eligibility criteria.

Your child is also entitled to up to 1140 hours of funded ELC where it has been agreed that they should defer their entry to primary school and have a further funded year in nursery. Please see Section 5 of this guide for more information on deferring entry to school.

Children who do not live in Glasgow can also access their funded ELC entitlement under the Council's cross-boundary agreements with neighbouring local authorities. The local authority you live in may need to agree your funded place. More information on cross-boundary places is available on the Glasgow Family Information Service website - – www.gfis.org.uk or by calling **0141 287 7350**.

Children under 3 who do not meet the criteria for eligible 2 year olds (as set out in Section 4 of this guide), are not entitled to any funded nursery provision and parents are expected to pay for any hours in a nursery or with a Registered Childminder themselves.

In Council nurseries, exemptions or reductions in fees for under 3's nursery places may apply depending on certain family circumstances. For example, children under 3 who are accessing a Community Childminder as a result of a referral from the Early Years Family Support Team, will have the costs of the childminder met.

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2.0 How can I access my child's nursery entitlement?

You can choose to access your child's 1140 hours entitlement in either a Glasgow City Council nursery, a Funded Provider nursery or with a Registered Childminder who is part of the Council's ELC framework. Information on all nurseries in the Glasgow City Council area and Registered Childminders can be found on the Glasgow Family Information website – www.gfis.org.uk or by calling **0141 287 7350**.

You can access your child's hours over 50 weeks of the year August to July; or over term-time August to June. If you access the hours all year round over 50 weeks then you will be entitled to 22.8 hours of funded nursery provision per week. If you access them during term-time only, you will be entitled to 30 hours of funded nursery provision per week. Some Funded Providers may spread your child's entitlement over 52 weeks which would make the weekly entitlement 21.9 hours.

You cannot access any more than 30 hours of funded nursery provision per week. You also cannot access 1140 hours of nursery provision over anything less than 38 weeks of the year. These limits are set by the Scottish Government.

The entitlement is pro-rata. This means that if your child starts nursery after August their entitlement for that year is proportionally reduced.

You don't have to access the full 1140 hours of funded ELC if you do not wish to.

Where a nursery or childminder has enough capacity, you may be able to access more than 1140 hours if you need it and pay for the additional hours.

3.0 When and how should I apply ?

The application processes described below apply to all children - including children under 3 who do not meet the criteria for funded ELC.

For Council Nurseries:

Applications can be submitted at any time in the year and will be considered at a local area admissions panel. The local area admissions panel considers all applications received across the area and allocates places in line with the priorities in the Council's nursery admissions policy. We use a scoring system to prioritise applications where demand exceeds availability of places because we have extended statutory duties to provide places in some circumstances to vulnerable families. More information on the nursery admissions policy may be found on the Glasgow Family Information website – www.gfis.org.uk or by calling **0141 287 7350**.

The panel meetings for children starting nursery in August, take place each year in April/May, therefore, you should aim to have your application submitted before 31st March. Places will be allocated across the whole year at the April / May meetings. If your application is submitted later in the year, your child will still be considered for a place but there may be fewer places available in your chosen nursery.

An application form can be obtained from your chosen nursery and should be returned there once completed.

For Funded Provider Nurseries:

Applications can be submitted at any time in the year and if a place is available you may be offered it. Funded Providers tend to offer on a first come first served basis and do not use the Council's prioritising admissions criteria. You should contact the Funded Provider nursery of your choice directly for information on how to apply.

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For Registered Childminders Providing ELC:

Applications can be submitted at any time in the year. If you wish to use a Registered Childminder to access your child's entitlement, you should ask them if they are registered with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to provide funded ELC places in Glasgow and if they have capacity to admit your child.

Childminders must be part of the Council's ELC framework to provide funded ELC and this is administered through Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). Information on Registered Childminders is available from the Glasgow Family Information Service website – www.gfis.org.uk

Once they have confirmed they are part of the Glasgow framework, you should contact SCMA to request an application form. You will need to provide a copy of your child's birth certificate and proof of address.

SCMA Contact details: Scottish Childminding Association, Argyll Court, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4 TY Tele: 01786 445377

4.0 What is the funded ELC eligibility criteria for 2 year olds?

Funded ELC is available if your child is aged 2 and is currently, or since they turned 2 has been:

- looked after by a local council
- the subject of a kinship care order
- the subject of a guardianship order

Your child can also access funded ELC if they have turned 2 and you were yourself care experienced at any point during your own childhood. You should speak to the nursery if you feel you meet this criteria.

Your child can also get funded ELC if they have turned 2 and you receive one of these benefits:

- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
- any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

If you receive tax credits or universal credit, then you can earn a certain amount of money and still be eligible. If you receive :

- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit, then your earnings can be **£16,480** or less
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and income is **£7,500** or less
- Universal Credit and household take-home pay is **£625** a month or less

If you think you may be eligible to access funded ELC for your 2 year old then as well as applying for a nursery place or a place with a Registered Childminder, you must provide evidence that you meet the eligibility criteria. For Council nurseries, this can be provided directly to the nursery for the head of nursery to agree.

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You can make a further online application to the Council to check whether you meet the eligibility criteria. You must do this if accessing an eligible 2's place with a Funded Provider nursery. You must register with My Account online using the following link and from there will be able to upload any documents that may evidence your eligibility:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/17458/Early-Learning--Childcare>

Checking whether you meet the eligibility criteria for a funded place for your 2 year old is a separate process from applying for a nursery place. You need to apply separately for a nursery place or a place with a Registered Childminder.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, you may still be offered a place for your 2 year old but you would have to meet the costs yourself.

5.0 How do I apply for a deferred entry place?

Children can access a deferred year in either a Council nursery, a Funded Provider partner nursery or with a Registered Childminder who is part of the Council's ELC framework.

All children who have their 5th birthday on or after the first day of term in August up until the last day of February, are entitled to defer entry to school should their parents wish it.

Children who have their 5th birthday between 1st March and the first day of term in August must start school in August and exceptions can only be made in extreme circumstances where there is substantive evidence that it would be in the best interests of the child to defer. This would normally only apply to children with significant additional support needs.

Children who have their 5th birthday between 1st January and the last day of February are guaranteed to receive a funded place during that deferred year. This is guaranteed because we receive funding from the Scottish Government for these places.

Children who have their 5th birthday between the first day of term in August and the last day of December are entitled to defer entry but are not currently automatically entitled to funded ELC during their deferred year.

Scottish Government is working towards making a funded year an entitlement for all children from August 2023 but at present, the Council receives no funding for children born between August and December and therefore, the Council must agree whether or not to fund the place.

The Council makes these decisions using a simple assessment process which takes account of the views of the parent, the nursery and the supporting evidence around the child's learning and development needs and the progress they are making. Where the Council does not agree that there is significant educational benefit

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to a child deferring entry to school, you may still choose not to send your child to school but you would have to fund any nursery or ELC childminding place yourself.

Applications for a funded deferred year for children born between the first day of term in August and the last day of December should be submitted by 28th February to allow them to be processed in time for allocation decisions to be made in April / May. We will aim to make a decision on your application by 31st March.

You should speak to the nursery or Registered Childminder your child attends in the first instance for more information on how to apply for a deferred year.

6.0 How do I apply for a Blended Place?

You can choose to split your child's 1140 hours entitlement between two different providers if that is what suits your family needs best. This can be any combination of Council nurseries, Funded Providers and Registered Childminders.

You will need to apply for a place separately with each provider and tell them which setting you are splitting the place with, how many hours of funded ELC you wish to take up with them and where you wish to access your child's funded meal and snack entitlement.

You will still only be funded for 1140 hours in total across the settings you use. You can take up more than 1140 hours if the settings have the capacity to offer you more but you would have to fund any extra hours yourself.

7.0 What hours will my child be offered?

Most children attend nursery or a Registered Childminder for either half days or full days. A half day is usually between 4 and 5 hours long and a full day between 6 and 10 hours long depending on the opening hours of the nursery.

You can choose a mixture of full and half days and the nursery or childminder will do their best to meet your needs although that can depend on the pattern of hours that other families are looking for. Nursery classes which are part of primary schools generally only offer half day places as their staffing model does not support full day access. You would need to use a blended model with another provider if you wish to access the full 1140 hours.

Council operated nursery classes which are part of primary schools and a small number of other Council nurseries are open from 8.30am to 4.30pm term-time only. Some Council nurseries operate longer hours 8am to 6pm on a term-time basis.

Most Council nurseries, Funded Providers and Registered Childminders operate between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday all year round but you should speak to your chosen nursery or childminder to check their opening hours.

8.0 What happens if I don't get offered a place in my first choice of nursery?

When applying to a Council nursery you will be asked to list your first, second and third choice of nursery in case it is not possible to offer a place in your first choice. You should only submit an application to your first choice nursery. All applications are held on a central IT system and if you apply to multiple nurseries, the

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system will automatically delete any previous applications and assume that the one made most recently is your first choice.

If your first choice of nursery cannot offer you a place, your application will automatically be passed to your second or third choice for consideration. Your second and third choices can include Funded Providers and Registered Childminders.

9.0 What if I need more than the funded ELC hours?

If you need more than the funded ELC hours it may be possible for you to be offered additional time if the nursery or Registered Childminder has enough space to do this. You should speak to the nursery or childminder in the first instance.

In Council nurseries, priority will be given to ensuring that all eligible children can access their statutory funded ELC before any extra hours are allocated.

Any hours over and above your child's funded ELC entitlement – or any hours attended where your child has no funded ELC entitlement – are subject to charges within Council nurseries, Funded Providers and Registered Childminders.

10.0 Will I have to pay anything for my funded ELC provision?

Your child's 1140 hours ELC entitlement is fully funded. You should not be asked to pay anything for your 1140 hours; or to pay a deposit or upfront charge; or be required to take extra hours if you only wish to access your child's funded ELC entitlement. Your child will also be entitled to a free meal, milk and a healthy snack each day as part of their funded entitlement.

You may be asked to pay a deposit or upfront charge if you are applying for a place with a partner nursery for a child under 3 years old who is not eligible for any funded ELC hours.

If you use hours over and above your child's funded ELC entitlement, you will have to pay for those and may also have to pay for any additional meals or snacks provided during those hours. Charges for additional hours vary between providers and you should speak the nursery or Registered Childminder for further information.

Some Council nurseries may ask for small donations for the nursery toy fund. This is voluntary and your child's nursery place is in no way affected if you choose not to donate.

Further Information

Further information on all early learning and childcare services in Glasgow, including out of school childcare can be found on the Glasgow Family Information Service website – www.qfis.org.uk or by calling **0141 287 7350**

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