



Falkirk Council

Children's Services

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE ADMISSIONS POLICY – 3 YEAR OLDS

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1 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that early learning and childcare places are allocated fairly and equitably in accordance with legislation and national policy, supporting the values of:

- flexibility
- accessibility
- quality
- affordability
- best value

1.2 The local approach in Falkirk takes account of the following:

- All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 1140 hours per annum (pro-rata).
- All ELC provision is non-denominational.
- Adult:Child ratios are nationally regulated.
- The various demographics and geographical spread within the council area.

1.3 Across the Falkirk Council area, Early Learning and Childcare is delivered through a mixed economy of provision types:

- ELC Classes
- ELC Centre
- Private Partner Providers
- Partner Childminders
- Third Sector Partners

A full list of Falkirk Council's ELC establishments is available on Falkirk Council website.

2 DEFINING ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, all 3 and 4 year olds are defined as eligible to receive 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare per annum (pro-rata); and, become eligible for funded early learning and childcare from the beginning of the first term after their third birthday:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Child's birth date | 1 st March to 31 st August |
| Eligible from | August (autumn term) occurring in that year |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Child's birth date | 1 st September to 31 st December |
| Eligible from | January (Spring term) following their birthday |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Child's birth date | 1 st January to last day February |
| Eligible from | March/April (summer term) following their birthday |

- 2.2 In Falkirk Council, by local arrangement, children who turn three years old between 1st August and 28th (or 29th) February commence funded early learning and childcare one calendar month after their 3rd birthday.
- 2.3 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 also defines some 2 year olds who would be eligible for 1140 hours (pro-rata) of targeted childcare. Falkirk Council's arrangements for placement of these eligible children are detailed separately.

3 ALLOCATING PLACES

Funded Early Learning and Childcare in a Falkirk Council establishment

3.1 Funded early learning and childcare places at Falkirk Council establishments are allocated according to priority groups; and, in date of birth order.

- Priority 1** Children who are care experienced, either temporarily or long term, as specified in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995;
Children with or affected by additional support needs (see Appendix 1).
- Priority 2** Resident within the Primary School Catchment; or the aligned ELC Centre (see Appendix 2)
a Children who have applied for an additional pre-school year (deferred year), where the intention is for them to remain within their existing establishment.
b Children who are in their pre-school year.
c Children who are in their ante pre-school year who have a sibling in the same ELC setting
d Children who are in their ante pre-school year.
- Priority 3** Resident within the ward boundary
a Children who have applied for an additional pre-school year (deferred year), where the intention is for them to remain within their existing establishment.
b Children who are in their pre-school year.
c Children who are in their ante pre-school year who have a sibling in the same ELC setting
d Children who are in their ante pre-school year.
- Priority 4** Resident within Falkirk Council area
a Children who have applied for an additional pre-school year (deferred year), where the intention is for them to remain within their existing establishment.
b Children who are in their pre-school year.
c Children who are in their ante pre-school year who have a sibling in the same ELC setting
d Children who are in their ante pre-school year.
- Priority 5** Resident out with Falkirk Council area
a Children who have applied for an additional pre-school year (deferred year), where the intention is for them to remain within their existing establishment..
b Children who are in their pre-school year.
c Children who are in their ante pre-school year who have a sibling in the same ELC setting
d Children who are in their ante pre-school year.

3.2 When applying, parents are invited to identify first, second and third preferences of setting. Every effort will be made to meet parental first choice. This cannot be guaranteed and is dependent on the number of places available and the priority given to applications.

3.3 Allocation Timeline

(a) Parents/Carers Responsibility

| | |
|--|--|
| 1 st December to last day in February | Application window for all new applications for 3 year olds & Deferred Entry |
| 30 th April | Parents deadline for advising of rejections/changes to notified allocations |

(b) Allocation Timeline – Local Authority Responsibility

| | |
|--|---|
| No later than 15 th April | All parents are notified of their allocated 1140 place |
| 1 May – 31 May | Consideration and allocation of late applications and change requests from parents. |
| From 1 st June to end of term | ELC settings will contact parents to arrange induction, start date and any additional childcare requests (where applicable) |

Funded early learning and childcare in a non Falkirk Council establishment

- 3.4 Falkirk Council works in partnership with local private providers and childminders for the provision of funded early learning and childcare. A full list of partner providers can be found on Falkirk Council website.
- 3.5 Applications are made directly to the provider and funding is arranged for a maximum of 1140 hours per annum (pro-rata). Any additional childcare beyond 1140 hours is by private arrangement between parent/carers and the childcare provider.
- 3.6 Arrangements for the allocation of split placements

Split placements will be considered only:

- (i) For no more than two settings; and,
- (ii) Where each setting offers a unique model of delivery, that is:
 - Any nursery Class and Council ELC Centre.
 - Any nursery Class / Council ELC Centre and a partner childminder.
 - Any nursery Class and a private partner nursery.
 - Any partner childminder and a private partner nursery.

In line with the priority categories in 3.1 above, split placements will be considered as follows:

Stage 1

- Applications for 1140 hours in one setting will be allocated first. This is to support efficient staffing resources and maximise occupancy levels.

Stage 2

- Requests for split placements will be considered where capacity allows, following Stage 1 allocations.

4 NON-FUNDED CHILDCARE OPTIONS

- 4.1 In ELC Centres, where capacity allows and following the allocation of the core entitlement of 1140 hours to all eligible children, it may be possible for parent/carers to purchase additional childcare. This is by arrangement with ELC Centres directly and is charged at the current Falkirk Council's hourly rate.
- 4.2 There is no option to purchase additional hours at a Nursery Class within a Primary School.
- 4.3 Parents are required to give a minimum of 4 weeks' notice for requests to change additional childcare pattern of attendance. This is to enable amendments to charges and contracts. This is by arrangement with ELC Centres directly.
- 4.4 Any additional childcare beyond 1140 hours at a non Falkirk Council establishment is by private arrangement between parent/carers and the childcare provider.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: elc@falkirk.gov.uk

Additional Support Needs Criteria

- (i) Children with additional support needs will be given priority if:
- They are disabled.
 - They have been referred by the Psychological Service or Health Service advising of additional support needs. This will be supported by the appropriate documentation outlining the child's needs for support in nursery.
 - They are referred by Social Work Services, that is to say any child who has been specifically referred by Social Work Services, this may include children in the Child Protection Register.
- (ii) Children who are adversely impacted by:
- Family disability;
 - Long term parental hospitalisation and/or chronic ill-health.
- Supporting referral / documentation may be required.

Early Learning and Childcare Centre – Alignment with Ward Primary Schools

| Ward | Council Ward | ELC Centre | Catchment Areas – Primary Schools | | | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | Bo'ness & Blackness | Borrowstoun | Blackness | Bo'ness Public | Deanburn | Grange | Kinneil | St Mary's | | |
| 2 | Grangemouth | Abbotsgrange | Moray | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Grangemouth | Rannoch | Beancross | Bowhouse | Sacred Heart | | | | | |
| 3 | Denny and Banknock | Myot View | Bankier | Denny | Dunipace | Head of Muir | Nethermains | St Patrick's | | |
| 4 | Carse, Kinnaird & Tryst | Larbert/Inchlair | Airth | Carron | Carronshore | St Bernadette's | Stenhousemuir | | | |
| 4 | Carse, Kinnaird & Tryst | Kinnaird Waters | Kinnaird | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Bonnybridge & Larbert | Bonnypark | Antonine | Bonnybridge | Ladeside | Larbert Village | St Joseph's | | | |
| 6 | Falkirk North | Camelon | Bainsford | Carmuir | Easter Carmuis | St Francis | Victoria | | | |
| 6 | Falkirk North | Langlees | Langlees | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Falkirk North | Woodburn | Bainsford | Carmuir | Easter Carmuis | St Francis | Victoria | | | |
| 7 | Falkirk South | Glenburn | Hallglen | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Falkirk South | Woodlands | Bantaskin | Comely Park | St Andrew's | | | | | |
| 8 | Lower Braes | Parkhill | Laurieston | St Margaret's | Westquarter | | | | | |
| 9 | Upper Braes | Glendevon | Avonbridge | California | Drumbowie | Maddiston | Shieldhill | Slamannan | Wallacestone | Whitecross |