

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE TO 600 HOURS PER ANNUM**  
**Meeting: EDUCATION EXECUTIVE**  
**Date: 17 JUNE 2014**  
**Author: JOINT ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014. The Act's provisions for an expansion in funded early learning and childcare provision will see:

- Phase 1 - from August 2014, entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds rise from 475 hours a year to a minimum of 600 hours. The same provision will be extended to 2 year olds who are 'looked after', under a Kinship Care Order or with a parent appointed guardian.
- Phase 2 - from August 2014 to extend provision to 2 year olds from "workless or job seeking households".

Education Executive agreed the Phase 1 Implementation Strategy on 29 April 2014.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Education Executive on where Education Services are with:

- Plans for Phase 1 of the Implementation Strategy from August 2014.
- Plans to introduce Phase 2 of the Implementation Strategy as it affects 2 year olds from "workless or job seeking households" from August 2014.

**3. PHASE 1 - IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY UPDATE**

3.1 Since the last Education Executive meeting on 29 April 2014, Education Services have made the following progress against each of the key planned areas:

Flexibility of service delivery

(i) Nursery Classes

All nursery classes have now agreed opening and closing times based on an extended session of 3 hours 10 minutes incorporating a core session of 2 hours 45 minutes with 25 minutes of flexibility for drop off or pick up around this. Each establishment has now confirmed this to parents and staff and Appendix 1 details the opening and closing times set.

(ii) Day Nursery Establishments

Within our establishments offering extended provision they will provide additional flexibility by relaxing the restrictions on when the free entitlement can be used. This will mean parents can use their entitlement over 2 days per week rather than 5 days subject to availability within the establishment.

- 3.3 Increase from 475 to 600 Hours - To meet the increase from 475 to 600 hours we need 24 FTE additional Early Years Officers from August 2014.

Following a recruitment advert we received 199 applications from which we have selected 24 Early Years Officers for appointment from August 2014.

- 3.4 Increase Capacity in Existing Nursery Classes in Primary Schools - The capacities of the nursery classes in Kinnaird Primary School and Maddiston Primary School will be increased by 40 places and 20 places respectively.

- The Headteachers, Staff and Parent Councils of each school have been informed.
- Capital funding has been allocated within the 2014-15 Capital Programme.
- The projects are currently on track for August 2014 completion.
- Application has been made to the Care Inspectorate for approval of the variations.
- 3 additional staff are being appointed.

- 3.5 Establish Additional Early Years Campuses - Table 1 sets out our plans to establish 3 new campuses to provide 87 additional extended provision places.

- Headteachers, Staff and Parent Councils have been informed.
- Capital funding is allocated for 2 (Kinneil and St Margaret's) of the 3 projects within the 2014-15 Capital Programme. We will also consider if there is scope for accelerating the 2015-16 capital funding to enable the Bonnybridge proposal to be delivered earlier.
- Consultation with architects on the design, build and procurement plans are underway.
- Recruitment of the additional staff (8.4 full time equivalent per campus) will take place in advance of the new campus opening.

**Table 1** **3 New Campuses to Provide 87 New Extended Places**

Ward	School	Estimated Completion date	Places - each campus will provide places for
Ward 1 Bo'ness & Blackness	Kinneil Primary School	January 2015	3 Babies 10 Toddlers <u>16 3 and 4 year olds</u> 29 Places in each
Ward 8 Lower Braes	St. Margaret's Primary School	January 2015	
Ward 5 Bonnybridge & Larbert	Bonnybridge Primary School	Session 2015-16	

- 3.6 Increase Places in Existing Early Years Centres/Campuses - The baby, toddler and 3 and 4 years olds extended provision in Larbert Day Nursery will be increased by **34 places** during session 2015-16.

- The Manager, Staff and setting users have been informed.
- Capital funding will be allocated within the 2015-16 Capital Programme.
- Feasibility and design plans are being developed in consultation with Development Services.
- Recruitment of the additional staff (6.5 full time equivalent) will take place in advance of the new provision opening.

3.7 **Partner Provided Places** - Partner Providers were briefed on our Phase 1 Implementation Plan.

Our commissioning agreement with each partner provider will be updated to incorporate the increase in entitlement to 600 hours and to notify the increase in funding from £1,600 to £2,100 per annum.

3.8 **Employee Engagement** - Staff representatives contributed to the development of the Phase 1 implementation strategy and will continue to contribute as this is implemented and Phase 2 develops.

Staff representatives have attended project groups involving front line Senior and Early Years Officers, Managers and Headteachers. The key objective of these groups is to support communication and encourage discussion and debate to help inform decisions.

We have also written to all staff in early years updating them on the Phase 1 Implementation Strategy and the Governments proposals for 2 year olds from "workless or job seeking households".

Meetings also take place with trade union representatives representing all staff groups involved (EIS, UNISON, GMB). These meetings are particularly helpful to address issues arising from across the workforce and also as important contribution to shaping decision making.

#### **4.0 UPDATE ON ADMISSIONS POLICY**

4.1 The Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy has been updated to support implementation of the Phase 1 Implementation strategy.

This incorporates changes in response to the expansion in hours arising from the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014.

The allocation criteria within the Policy remain unchanged however, the wording throughout has been updated to reflect the new Act and sections have been clarified in response to feedback from Headteachers and Managers. The updated policy is attached as Appendix 2.

#### **5.0 PHASE 2 - EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE TO 2 YEAR OLDS FROM "WORKLESS OR JOB SEEKING FAMILIES"**

5.1 **Background**

The Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014 was amended in its final stages to include extending the provision of 600 hours of free early learning and childcare to 2 years olds from "workless or job seeking households".

5.2 **Resource Allocation**

As yet, we still await confirmation of the resource allocation from the Government to support this but we are compelled to deliver this from August 2014 within the Act. Discussions are continuing at a national level between ADES, COSLA and Government to agree this and Education Officials from Falkirk have been party to some discussions.

5.3 **Estimate of Number of Eligible 2 year olds**

Education Executive noted that we estimate this change will benefit around 280 children from August 2014 increasing to 505 children from August 2015. The Scottish Government estimate 70% take up of this entitlement by those eligible, meaning that from August 2014 we are planning to increase our overall capacity for toddlers by 196 places and from August 2015 by 354 places.

#### 5.4 Distribution of Eligible 2 year olds

Table 2 sets out the expected distribution of 2 year olds by ward based on data received from the Department of Work and Pensions.

**Table 2: Expected Distribution of Eligible 2 Year Olds by Ward**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Estimated Demand for Places</b>
Ward 1 Boness/Blackness	18
Ward 2 Grangemouth	31
Ward 3 Denny/Banknock	22
Ward 4 Carse/Kinnaird/Tryst	17
Ward 5 Bonnybridge/Larbert	15
Ward 6 Falkirk North	39
Ward 7 Falkirk South	26
Ward 8 Lower Braes	14
Ward 9 Upper Braes	14
	<b>196</b>

Note: The exact locations of the families who qualify will not be known until they apply for a childcare place.

#### 5.5 Challenges Faced

While it is true and was noted by Education Executive that we will face significant challenge in being able to provide this additional capacity from within our existing early years infrastructure we are developing a short term way forward that recognises a limited contribution from the private and voluntary sector from August 2014.

#### 5.6 Assessment of the Private and Voluntary Sector Contribution

We invited the local private and voluntary sector to meet with us. The purpose of this was to seek views from the undernoted providers on working with us in meeting the challenges in the delivery of the additional provision for 2 year olds.

- Voluntary Sector - Early indications suggest places will be available in local family centres.
  - Langlees Family Centre
  - Braes Family Centre
  - Bo'ness Family Centre
- Partner and Non-Partner Nursery Providers - At this stage only limited interest was indicated from these providers.
- Childminders - A limited number of childminders attended the meeting and only a few of those indicated they could assist at this time.
- Playgroups - The playgroups represented at this stage are unlikely to be able to provide these additional places.

Our initial assessment of the views presented is that there is limited places available from the local private and voluntary sector providers. Our findings show that whilst a number of individual providers may be able to accommodate limited numbers of children they cannot fill the provision gap we face. A number of key factors/questions were noted during our meetings with them concerning:

- Hourly rate/retention payments
- Care inspectorate registration
- Role of Education Scotland in Inspection of 'learning provision'
- Increased paperwork concerning pupils plan
- Quality checking by Education Service on learning provision

#### 5.7 Phase 2 Short Term Approach

This proposed short term approach provides a starting position from August 2014 that recognises the challenges faced and will enable us to:

- Source suitable places for all eligible 2 year olds (via Family Support Worker link).
- Assess the level of demand from families.
- Assess the extent to which transport/distance is a limiting factor in families accepting a place.
- Assess where the high levels of demand are.
- Continue to work with the private and voluntary providers to develop provision in their areas subject to local demand.
- Formulate the longer term Phase 2 Implementation Plan to meet future demand in local areas.

It is proposed to appoint a Family Support Worker to engage with those families seeking a place for their 2 year old to help find a suitable place that meets their needs.

Thereafter we propose to report back our Phase 2 Implementation Plan to Education Executive next session with further details on how we can deliver this in the longer term.

### **6.0 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT DRAFT STATUTORY GUIDANCE**

- 6.1 Education Executive is asked to note that Draft Statutory Guidance has been prepared by Scottish Ministers in relation the early learning and childcare elements of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 6.2 The draft guidance was received on in May 2014 and a response is due in June 2014. Given the timescales involved and that the guidance is of a technical nature supporting the application of the policy direction set within the Act.
- 6.3 Education Service will submit their response to Social Work Services who will then pass all comments to the Children's Commission to formulate an overall response.

### **7.0 WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 7.1 Education Services currently provides 12 Modern Apprenticeships in Early Learning and Childcare Practice to school leavers. This scheme is widely recognised as being very successful within the sector and by Education Scotland. Apprentices who complete the apprenticeships mostly go on to find employment within Falkirk Council nurseries.

Given the projected demand to recruit early years practitioners it would be prudent to retain this commitment and in addition we have agreed with the Employment Training Unit to increase the number in August 2014 from 12 to 15 apprentices.

- 7.2 In addition to the Modern Apprentices, a cohort of 12 senior phase pupils will be studying towards a HNC/HND in Early Learning and Childcare through our Senior Phase partnership with Forth Valley College, from August 2014.

These local young people will, in addition to the Modern Apprentices, increase the number of trained local people suitable for future employment in our nurseries.

## **8. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Phase 1 - There is no change to the financial and resource implications noted by Education Executive on 29 April 2014.
- 8.2 Phase 2 - At the time of writing there has been no confirmation from the Government of the additional resource allocated to Falkirk Council to support revenue and capital implications.

Education Executive are asked to note that Education Services is proposing to appoint a full time Family Support Worker at a cost of £27,000 per year from the expected funding

## **9. EQUALITIES AND POVERTY ASSESSMENT**

- The effect of the proposals in this report on groups who share protected characteristics in terms of the Equality Act 2010 and those experiencing poverty has been assessed.
- The expansion of nursery places, particularly baby and toddler places in areas where there is currently no Council provision, will have a positive impact on women, lone parents, disabled parents, young parents, all of whom are groups more likely to make use of these services.
- The ongoing monitoring of provision across the Council area will allow us to continue to address potential inequalities.

## **10. NEXT STEPS/WAY FORWARD**

- 10.1 Phase 1 - To further support the implementation of the 600 hours from August 2014 we will require to:
- Implement the revised Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy.
- 10.2 Phase 2 - The following task require to be taken forward to support the implementation of the 600 hours for 2 year olds from "workless or job seeking households" from August 2014:
- Recruitment of 1 FTE Family Support Worker.
  - Continue to consult with the private and voluntary sector.
  - Respond to consultation on the Draft Statutory Guidance.
  - Assess the resource allocation from the Government.
  - Confirm the Phase 2 Implementation Strategy.
- 10.3 In addition, the following workforce planning and development initiatives will be developed for consideration by Education Executive early next session:
- Increasing the Modern Apprenticeship intake from 12 to 15 from August 2015.
  - Introducing a scheme to provide employment to senior phase students completing their HNC/D studies in Early Learning and Childcare.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 11.1 Education Executive are asked to note:

- (i) the Phase 1 implementation update;
- (ii) the workforce planning and development implications set out in section 7; and
- (iii) the response to the statutory consultation will be co-ordinated by the Children's Commission.

### 11.2 Education Executive are asked to agree:

- (i) the revised Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy;
- (ii) the proposed implementation of Phase 2 as set out in section 5;
- (iii) the resource implications as detailed in section 8.2;
- (iv) the next steps/way forward set out in section 10; and
- (v) that a further report updating progress on phase 1 and phase 2 is brought to Education Executive early next session.

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**Joint Acting Director of Education**

**Date:** 4 June 2014

Contact Officers: Eileen Hutton, extension 6631/Kenny McNeill extension 6652.

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 - Draft Statutory Guidance

# Phase 1 : Note of Expanded Opening Houses of Nursery Classes

# Appendix 1

Schools	Morning Session				Afternoon Session			Early Pick Up Ends
	Early Start Commences	Core Hours		Early Pick Up Ends	Early Start Commences	Core Hours		
Falkirk	am	am	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
Bainsford	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40		12.30	15.15	15.40
Bantaskin	8.35	8.50	11.35	11.45	12.15	12.25	15.15	15.30
Carmuir	8.35	8.50	11.35	11.45	12.30	12.40	15.25	15.40
Comely Park	8.30	8.50	11.35	11.40	12.35	12.45	15.35	15.45
Easter Carmuir	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40		12.20	15.05	15.30
Langlees	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	14.50
St Francis	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50		12.20	15.05	15.30
Denny								
Antonine	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Bankier	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Bonnybridge	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Denny	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Dunipace	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Head of Muir	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Nethermains	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
St Joseph's	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
St Patrick's RC	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Larbert								
Airth	8.30	8.55	11.40			12.20	15.05	15.30
Bothkennar-no nursery								
Carron	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Carronshore	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Inchlair	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kinnaird	8.30	8.45	11.30	11.40	12.20	12.30	15.20	15.30
Ladeside	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50		12.30	15.15	15.40
Larbert Village	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50	12.20	12.30	15.15	15.30
Stenhousemuir	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50		12.30	15.15	15.40
St. Bernadette's	8.35	9.00	11.45			12.30	15.15	15.40
Braes								
Avonbridge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.45	13.00	15.45	15.55
California (am only)	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maddiston	8.35	9.00	11.45			12.30	15.15	15.40
Shieldhill	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Wallacestone	8.30	8.50	11.35	11.40		12.20	15.05	15.30
Graeme								
Hallglen	8.30	8.50	11.35	11.40		12.20	15.05	15.30
Laurieston	8.30	8.55	11.40			12.20	15.05	15.30
St Andrew's	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
St Margaret's	8.30	8.55	11.40		12.20	12.45	15.30	
Victoria	8.30	8.45	11.45	11.55	12.30	12.45	15.30	15.40
Westquarter	8.30	8.55	11.40			12.20	15.05	15.30
Whitecross (am only)	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bo'ness								
Bo'ness	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Deanburn	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Grange	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Kinneil	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
St Mary's RC	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Grangemouth								
Beancross	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50	12.30	12.45	15.30	15.40
Bowhouse	8.40	9.00	11.45	11.50		12.30	15.15	15.40
Moray	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55		12.30	15.15	15.40
Sacred Heart R.C.	8.45	9.00	11.45	11.55	12.30	12.45	15.30	15.40

**NOTE:** Gaps in the early pick up/start times indicates that the flexibility is used up at the start or end of the session.





**Falkirk Council**  
*Education Services*

**EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE  
ADMISSION POLICY**

**May 2014**



**This policy supersedes all previous statements on Early Years Admission**

1. Introduction
2. Admission Policy
3. Application Procedures
4. Deferral to Primary Education : Entitlement Provision Procedures
5. Allocations Procedures
6. Admission Procedures
7. Attendance
8. Appeals Procedures
9. Guidance

APPENDIX - EY1 Timetable for Admission Procedures

## **NURSERY EDUCATION ADMISSION POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

To provide an effective framework for educational establishments to allocate early learning and childcare places.

### **UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES**

The underpinning principles of this policy will:

- ensure a fair and equitable allocation of early learning and childcare places
- ensure that all children with additional support needs will be provided with a suitable early learning and childcare places
- ensure that all early learning and childcare places will be allocated using the same criteria.

### **COURSE OF ACTION TO BE FOLLOWED**

All education establishments must implement this policy in the allocation of early learning and childcare places.

All establishments must follow the timetable to ensure that parents are informed timeously of the allocation of places.

### **WHO SHOULD IMPLEMENT THE POLICY**

The policy will be implemented by headteachers and managers in all education establishments providing early learning and childcare places.

### **REVIEW**

The policy will be reviewed by Falkirk Council Education Services during session 2016-17.

### **GENESIS OF THE POLICY**

This policy was developed by a working group established by Falkirk Council Education Services after consultation with appropriate stakeholders.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Admission Policy provides guidelines for all staff who implement the authority's policy in the provision of early learning and childcare.
- 1.2 The policy reflects the goals and values of Falkirk Council. The Council is committed to improving the quality of life for local people by working with all communities, sectors and groups to deliver high quality services which are accessible, accountable, responsive and provide value for money.
- 1.3 Early years establishments work within the principles of Curriculum for Excellence
  - an inclusive approach that ensures equality, dignity and privacy for all
  - a safe and stimulating environment where children and adults learn together
  - a planned curriculum, based on prior learning and play experiences, that develops the whole child
  - appropriate challenges through which all children will realise their own potential.
- 1.4 We seek to provide learning experiences which will enable all young people to achieve their potential and participate in the development of a fair and caring society.
- 1.5 The policy takes into account changes necessitated by the implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act, 1995, the Childcare Strategy, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc Act 2000, Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.
- 1.6 The provision of a flexible integrated early years service to young children and their families where care and education are inter-dependent is a priority of Falkirk Council.
- 1.7 The terms 'pre-school child', 'child in pre-school year' and 'ante-pre-school child' are used throughout this document and each has a precise meaning:

### **Pre-School Child** means

- (a) a child who is under school age and has not commenced attendance at primary school (other than a nursery class in such a school); and
- (b) a child who has attained school age but has not commenced attendance at such a school.

**Child in pre-school year** means that it is expected the child will commence at primary school (other than a nursery class in such a school) the following August.

**Child in ante-pre-school year** means that it is expected the child will commence at primary school (other than nursery class in such a school) not in the following August, but in August one year later.

## **2.0 ADMISSION POLICY**

- 2.1 The policy of Falkirk Council is to secure a nursery place for all children in their ante-pre-school year, their pre-school year and to provide for children with additional support needs. Falkirk Council will secure these places in a variety of settings to include nursery class, pre-five centres, commissioned partner nurseries or playgroups.
- 2.2 Places will be allocated with consideration of parental choice. Wherever possible, places will be provided in response to these preferences.
- 2.3 A child in his/her ante-pre-school year will be eligible for entry to early learning and childcare after the child's third birthday on three agreed dates. These dates have been set by the Scottish Government and are:
- for entry in the autumn term (August), children born from 1 March to 31 August;
  - for entry in the spring term (January), children born from 1 September to 31 December;
  - for entry in the summer term (April), children born from 1 January to 28 February.
- 2.4 All nursery provision is non-denominational.
- 2.5 A nursery class must have at least eight children who attend on a regular basis before it is deemed viable to ensure an appropriate educational experience.**

## **3.0 APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PLACES**

- 3.1 Headteachers and managers 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 and newsletters.
- Education Services will ensure that information is made available in a variety of ways including council website, and will also ensure that information is made available in local newspapers.
- 3.2 Parents should be encouraged to indicate a second and third choice of nursery. If the first choice nursery is unable to provide a place, a copy of the application will be sent to second choice. If the second choice nursery is unable to provide a place, a copy of the application will be sent to the third choice. A copy of the original application will be retained by the First Choice Nursery and the child will be added to the waiting list.
- 3.3 Application forms for nursery places must be received by the nursery of first choice by the last working day in March for all children who are of the ages to start nursery during the following school year (see 2.3).
- 3.4 Parents will be asked to bring the child's birth certificate and to provide valid proof that the address given for the child is the address at which they are ordinarily resident.
- 3.5 The choice of nursery provision can have an influence on the availability of the parent's preferred primary school. Information regarding primary school admissions criteria can be found in Service Circular 1, the Admission Policy.

- 3.6 All heads of nursery establishments are required to make all staff aware of the council's processes regarding delayed entry to primary school.
- 3.7 Parents are entitled to nationally agreed hours of early learning and childcare. For most children this will be taken as a regular session on five days of the week. Other patterns of attendance may be agreed to suit the parent and their childcare needs.

For pre-school year children the entitlement will be offered from August to June.

For ante-pre-school year children the entitlement will be offered pro rata depending on the entry date.

In some council Early Years Centres there will be an allocation of places which are available for parents to buy. Priority for extended or full-time places will be given to accommodate the childcare needs of parents who are working or studying. The procedures for applying for extended or full day places in pre-five centres are as above at 3.3.

The rates charged per place by Falkirk Council nurseries will be decided annually at the time of finalising the Council's budget.

- 3.8 There may be occasions when, in the best interest of the child and family, an extension to the child's normal entitlement is provided at no extra charge.

These are likely to be for families where a child:

- has additional support needs
- is living in a situation where the child's development is impacted upon by the health of the parent or of the child
- is living in a social situation which indicates actual or possibility of danger to life, or health, or of emotional damage which will impact on the child's development and progress
- is in need of extra support because of family crisis
- is defined as 'looked after' as specified in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Places will be allocated at the discretion of the headteacher/manager and are normally at no extra cost.

- 3.9 The headteacher or manager may admit a child prior to his eligible entry date who has attained the age of 3 years where some or all of the criteria listed at 3.8 may apply.

#### **4.0 DEFERRAL TO PRIMARY EDUCATION : ENTITLEMENT PROVISION PROCEDURES**

- 4.1 Information regarding delayed entry can be found in Service Circular 47.

## **5.0 ALLOCATION PROCEDURE**

- 5.1 Early learning and childcare entitlement for all pre-school children is normally 5 morning sessions or 5 afternoon sessions or a pattern agreed between nursery and parent.

Parents' preferences for allocation of 5 morning places or 5 afternoon places or another agreed pattern should be taken into account wherever possible.

Places should be allocated initially where parents request 5 sessions. Fewer sessions should only be offered where a number of children can share a five session place.

- 5.2 When allocating places, headteachers and managers should ensure that both morning and afternoon sessions have pre-school and ante pre-school children within each session.

To facilitate allocation of places, where demand exceeds availability, Area Allocations Groups comprising headteachers and managers will meet to ensure that places are allocated efficiently and fairly.

- 5.3 Parents of children due to start in August will be informed during the first 2 weeks in May by letter if a place is available for their child.

Where a place is not available, a letter informing the parent will be sent during the first 2 weeks in May. This letter will include the following information:

- regret that a place is not available, however a copy of your application form has been passed to your 2nd/3rd choice.

## **6.0 ADMISSION PROCEDURE**

- 6.1 Headteachers and managers will inform parents of the arrangements for induction of children eligible to start in the Autumn term.

- 6.2 Entry for new children to nursery is phased to benefit the children and families.

All children returning will start on the first day of term. Children new to the nursery will be phased in as soon as possible but no later than the end of the third week of term.

- 6.3 It is expected that all pre and ante-pre-school children will be offered a nursery place, although this will not always be the first choice nursery. Children with additional support needs will be given priority (see section 6.4). This includes:

- Any child who has 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.

- Children who are referred by Social Work Services, that is to say any child who has been specifically referred by Social Work Services (usually the family Social Worker), though the child may not necessarily be on the Child Protection Register. Children who are looked after either temporarily or long term as specified in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 are also in this category. Also see 3.8.
- Children who are disabled or affected by disability, that is to say any child who is disabled or who is a member of a family with a disabled person where this disability has an effect on the child's normal life. Such claims should be verified by the headteacher/manager in consultation with health professionals if necessary.
- Children who are affected by parental illness, that is to say any child who is affected short term by the emergency admission to hospital of the parent or affected long term by a parent's ill health. Such claims must be verified and catered for within current staffing allocations and may be time-limited.
- Children already attending the nursery, who are granted funded deferred entry places by Falkirk Council, retain a place although, not necessarily in the same facility. NB: children with September-December birthdays who have not been granted a funded deferred place are allocated a place as outlined in 6.5.
- Children who come from a non-English speaking home, that is to say any child whose use of English is minimal or non-existent.

#### 6.4 Priority System for Nursery Classes for All Other Children

After places have been allocated for special circumstances as outlined in 6.3, in order to allocate places appropriately and because local demand for a specific facility can exceed supply, then the criteria for allocating places set out in Table 1 should be taken into account.

- 6.5 Names of children may be received throughout the session for various reasons and these names will be placed on the waiting list. In all cases, priority will be given in accordance with the principles laid out in 6.3 and 6.4.

The place of children on the waiting list can alter according to the priorities of individual children. This is because older children or those with special needs may be added to the waiting list throughout the session.

If a child has been offered a place in the nursery which is not the parents' first choice, then the child's name should remain on the waiting list of the first choice establishment if this is what the parents want. The child will be considered for a place according to the priorities as set out in 6.3 and 6.4 as will all children named on the waiting list.



**Table 1 : Criteria for Allocating Places**

**Priority is given in the following order:**

**Catchment Area**

- (i) Children as stated in 6.3 within the school catchment area.**
- (ii) Children who are in their pre-school year and who live within the school catchment area.**
- (iii) Children who are in their ante pre-school year and who live within the school catchment area.**

**Allocation Area**

- (iv) Children as stated in 6.3 within the Area Allocations Group.**
- (v) Children who are in their pre-school year and live within the designated area of the Area Allocations Group but outwith the school catchment area.**
- (vi) Children who are in their ante pre-school year and live within the designated area of the Area Allocations Group but outwith the school catchment area.**

**Falkirk Area**

- (vii) Children as stated in 6.3 within Falkirk Council boundaries.**
- (viii) Children who are in their pre-school year and who live within Falkirk Council boundaries but outwith the designated area of the Area Allocations Group.**
- (ix) Children who are in their ante pre-school year and who live within Falkirk Council boundaries but outwith the designated area of the Area Allocations Group.**
- (x) Children with September-December birthdays who have not been granted a funded delayed place but are purchasing a place.**
- (xi) Children who are in their pre-school year and who live outwith the Falkirk Council boundaries.**
- (xii) Children who are in their ante pre-school year and who live outwith the Falkirk Council boundaries.**

## **7.0 ATTENDANCE**

Although enrolment and attendance at nursery is voluntary, it is desirable for the child to have a regular pattern of attendance. There may be occasions, however, when attendance becomes irregular or may stop. Staff should take every possible step to discuss the situation with parents, or other agencies and to encourage and offer support to the family.

A record of attendance using Falkirk Council Education Services attendance records should be maintained daily and monitored regularly.

No child should be removed from the nursery roll without prior discussion with the parent and other involved professionals.

## **8.0 APPEALS PROCEDURES**

8.1 Parents who wish to appeal against a decision affecting their pre-school child should be advised to write to the Director of Education giving background to their concerns.

8.2 The Director of Education will take appropriate action and will ensure that the appeal is fully investigated and considered by appropriate Staff. The parents will receive a written response advising them of the outcome.

## **9.0 GUIDANCE**

Further guidance for headteachers and managers is available in the Falkirk Council Education Services 'Guidance on Early Years Admission Procedures in Nurseries'.

**Timetable for Admission Procedures of Pre-Fives to Early Learning and Childcare**

<b>At start of Spring Term (January)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should inform parents/carers of the nursery enrolment dates in the school. This information should be shared through newsletters, posters, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Late January/Early February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An enrolment should be held within the school to enable parents/carers of children who are eligible to start nursery the following academic year to complete a nursery application form.</li> </ul>
<b>By the end of April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should allocate places for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- August - birth date March-end August</li> <li>- January - birth date September- end December</li> <li>- April - birth date January-end February</li> </ul> following the Early Learning and Childcare Admission Policy. This may take place at an Area Allocations Group. </li> </ul>
<b>During the first week in May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letters to be sent out to parents offering a place and inviting acceptance by return.</li> <li>Contact should also be made by the first choice school with the parents/carers where a place is not available in the first choice school offering the second and third choice on the application form.</li> </ul>
<b>During First Week in June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform parents/carers of children due to start in January and April of the following year that a place will be available for their child and further information regarding a starting date will follow.</li> </ul>
<b>Throughout the Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a record of all application forms received by age taking special note of any additional support needs and other special requirements.</li> <li>Parents/carers may complete application forms outwith the enrolment period and these children should be allocated a place subject to vacancies being available within your class/centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Regardless</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regardless of whether they reside in the catchment area parents/carers can apply to any nursery as their first choice.</li> </ul>