



# Deferred Entry to Primary School

An additional year of funded Early  
Learning and Childcare

# An additional year of early learning and childcare

The law (set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980) states that children must start school in the August following their 5th birthday, therefore parents/carers have a legal right to defer entry for 4-year old children if they wish to do so.

Many parents believe that starting school at age four is not in the best interests of their child and that starting school at a young age puts them at a disadvantage both academically and emotionally. Every child is different and taking advice from your child's early years setting can help you to reach this decision.

Children born in January or February are automatically entitled to an additional year of early learning and childcare. Currently there is no automatic right to an additional year of early learning and childcare for children born from the day after the school year starts in August to the end of December.

## Q: How do I apply for an additional year of early learning and childcare?

### January and February birthdays:

- Applications for an additional year of early learning and childcare should be made to your child's existing early years establishment by mid-February.
- Children should still be enrolled at primary school by the set date and the school informed of your right to defer.

### August to December birthdays:

If you wish to defer your child's entry to primary school there will be an opportunity for you to attend a meeting at your child's current early years establishment to discuss and consider the benefits of this for your child. At the meeting consideration will be given to your child's wellbeing plan and the following key aspects relating to your child's learning and development:

- their approach and attitude to learning
- their ability to communicate their own needs, feelings and ideas
- their levels of independence and self-help
- their emotional and personal development including self-confidence and self-esteem
- relationships and friendships with other children and adults
- their cognitive development

Decisions will be made prior to the spring break to ensure that a child's placement has been confirmed before the Primary 1 induction programme begins.



## **Offering your child an additional year of early learning and childcare**

If your child currently attends an early learning and childcare establishment and you wish them to continue at this service we will provide a placement there. Otherwise your child will be offered a place in a local authority early learning and childcare establishment or with a recognised provider who has been accepted onto the framework to provide early learning and childcare. This includes private and voluntary sector providers as well as childminders.

## **Informing the primary school**

Once you have been informed that we have agreed to offer your child an additional year of funded early learning and childcare, you should inform the primary school immediately that your child will not need a placement at the school.

The head of the early learning and childcare establishment will also contact the primary school to confirm the decision to defer entry to school.

## **If you are not happy with any decisions**

We do our best to ensure that applications are treated fairly and transparently.

If you are concerned that we have not considered your application properly, please discuss this with the head of the early learning and childcare establishment.

A full list of our establishments is available at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

For further information or advice you may also contact Children's Services at the address below:

**Children's Services  
Council Headquarters  
Renfrewshire House  
Cotton Street  
Paisley PA1 1TZ**

Phone: **0300 300 0170**

Email: [cssupport@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:cssupport@renfrewshire.gov.uk)



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