

Argyll and Bute Council
Community Services: Early Years

**PRIMARY SCHOOL
ENTRANTS
2017-2018**

*Deferred Entry to School –
Additional Year of
Early Learning and Childcare
(ELC)*



Parent Information



Background:

- Traditionally in Scotland all children between 4½ and 5 years of age at the start of the autumn term enrol in primary school.
- However, parents of children whose fifth birthday falls between September and February, have a choice about when their child starts school. Children of this age can start school either in the August before they are five or parents can defer their start until the following August.
- Children whose fifth birthday falls in January or February have the right to start school at 4½. They also have the right to defer entry and to have a free Early Learning and Childcare place for an extra year.
- Children whose fifth birthday falls between the beginning of September and the end of December also have the right to start school. They also have the right to defer entry to school but a free Early Learning and Childcare place is *not automatic* for these children, it is at the discretion of the local authority.

Detail:

- Decisions about whether or not your child would benefit from an extra year of Early Learning and Childcare will, in all cases, seek to be in the best interest of the child. The views of parents will be of central importance. The principal role of the local authority will be to support parents in coming to an informed judgement. In addition the local authority has a duty to exercise its powers of discretion in relation to children born between September and December.
- If a child is attending an Early Learning and Childcare setting, the staff of that setting will have detailed knowledge about the child's learning and development. Parents will have the right to discuss any questions they may have about whether or not to seek a deferred entry to primary school with staff of the Early Learning and Childcare setting which their child attends, whether it is in a local authority, private, independent or voluntary sector centre. The staff will advise the parents of their assessment of the child's learning and development and their readiness to attend primary school, based on the information recorded in the child's profile.
- If a child is not attending an Early Learning and Childcare centre, the authority will make arrangements for parents to discuss any concerns they may have with a member of staff at a local Early Learning and Childcare setting or with centrally-based staff.
- For children born in January or February the authority will offer a free Early Learning and Childcare place for an additional year if this is requested by the parents.
- For children born from September to December the authority will decide whether or not to grant a free Early Learning and Childcare place taking into account the extent of agreement between parents and the staff of the Early Learning and Childcare centre that this is in the best interests of the child. The authority will have arrangements in place to support an appeal.

How to Apply:

- Application forms can be obtained from any primary school or by telephone/e-mail request from the Early Years helpline – see overleaf. Completed application forms should be returned to Early Years by **Friday 10th March 2017**.

Allocation of Additional Year Early Learning and Childcare place:

Applications will be considered by Early Years Service and decisions will be reached as follows:

- Children with January and February birthdays are automatically entitled to an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare.
- Children with September to December birthdays, whose entitlement is at the discretion of the authority, will be considered for an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare following liaison with staff at the child's Early Learning and Childcare provider and taking account of his/her:
 - Approach and attitude to learning
 - Ability to communicate own needs, feelings and ideas
 - Levels of independence and self help
 - Emotional and personal development, including self-confidence and esteem
 - Relationship and friendships with other children and adults
- The local authority offers Early Learning and Childcare in local authority, voluntary, private and independent sectors and will try to allocate an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare according to parental choice. However, in the best interest of the child we believe that wherever possible it is important to access Early Learning and Childcare in the same place throughout your child's Early Learning and Childcare experience to provide continuity and a secure learning environment.
- Where parents wish to place their child/children in an establishment located outwith the Argyll and Bute Council area, the Early Years Service will liaise with the appropriate local authority.

Appeal Procedure:

Where the local authority has not agreed to an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare for children with birthdays in September to December and parents disagree with the decision they should write to the Education Manager for Learning and Achievement who will arrange for an Education Officer to carry out an independent assessment of the child. Following the assessment there will be no further right of appeal.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU SHOULD REGISTER YOUR CHILD FOR PRIMARY 1 AT THE SCHOOL WITHIN YOUR CATCHMENT AREA, IRRESPECTIVE OF YOUR WISH TO DEFER YOUR CHILD'S ENTRY, AS YOU MAY WISH TO WITHDRAW THE APPLICATION FOR DEFERRED ENTRY AT A LATER DATE OR IT MAYBE REFUSED BY THE AUTHORITY

Helpline:

A helpline has been provided by Community Services: Early Years to assist parents with information and advice on all aspects of Early Learning and Childcare for their child. You can contact the helpline by writing, e-mailing or telephoning as indicated below (between 9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday-Friday):

Rona McGillivray, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Telephone: 01369 708503, e-mail: earlyyears@argyll-bute.gov.uk



Argyll and Bute Council

Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon
Argyll
PA23 8AJ

Telephone: 01369 704000
Fax: 01369 708584

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

***If required this information leaflet can be supplied in other languages and formats.
Please contact the Early Years helpline.***

