

EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES & HOUSING

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE REGISTRATION 2026/27



Registration opens Monday 02 February at 9am until Friday 06 February at 5pm.

If your child turns three years old between 1 March 2026 and 28 February 2027, they become eligible for their first year of funded Early Learning and Childcare place the term after their third birthday as below:

Children born between	Eligible to start
1 March 2023 – 31 August 2023	18 August 2026 (the Autumn Term)
1 September 2023 - 31 December 2023	05 January 2027 (the Spring Term)
1 January 2024 - 29 February 2024	12 April 2027 (the Summer Term)

To register, complete the online registration form during registration week. Forms can be accessed on the Early Learning and Childcare section of the OIC website www.orkney.gov.uk where information on all local settings and childminders in partnership is available. Online registration forms can be accepted after this deadline but please be aware that some settings may be oversubscribed.

In the Papdale catchment area there are two settings, Papdale and the Strynd. Glaitness is also available to Papdale catchment parents. When registering for Papdale catchment, parents will indicate their first choice, followed by their second and third, in the event that their first choice is oversubscribed at the time of registering. Once registration opens, places are allocated in the order they are received.

If your child is three or four years old and is currently attending their first year of Early Learning and Childcare they will automatically be carried forward for their second year of Early Learning and Childcare in their current setting. They do not need to complete a registration form.

Children aged two years old may be eligible for a place the term after their second birthday if parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits or are care experienced. Registration for a two year old place is continually open. Application forms are available from the Early Learning and Childcare section of the OIC website www.orkney.gov.uk. Forms should be completed no earlier than three months prior to the date of the child's second birthday.

If you have any queries or require any further information or assistance in completing the ELC registration form, please contact the Early Years Team, Education, Communities & Housing on 01856 873535 ext 3220/2458 or email elc@orkney.gov.uk.



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PRIMARY ONE REGISTRATION 2026/27



Registration opens Monday 02 February at 9am until Friday 06 February at 5pm.

If your child is five years old on or before the first day of the school term, Tuesday 18 August 2026, your child will start school this August.

If your child is five years old on or between Wednesday 19 August 2026 and Sunday 28 February 2027, your child can start school on 18 August 2025. However, you have the option to defer your child's entry to school. All children who are eligible to defer will automatically be able to access an additional year of funded Early Learning and Childcare.

Parents and guardians who wish to enrol their child for Primary One should complete the online registration form during registration week. P1 Registration forms can be accessed under 'Schools' in Education/Learning from the OIC website www.orkney.gov.uk where information on starting primary one will also be available. Online registration forms can be accepted after this deadline.

If you choose to defer your child, please confirm this with your Early Learning and Childcare setting during registration week and your child will automatically be carried forward for an additional year. You will not need to complete a registration form for Primary One.

If you have any queries or require any further information or assistance in completing the P1 registration form, please contact the head teacher at your local school or the Education Department, Education, Communities & Housing on 01856 873535 or email education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk.