



# MANAGEMENT CIRCULAR

3a

Education Services, City Chambers, 40 John Street, Glasgow G1 1JL

**July 2021**

Management Circular 3a

To Heads of all Educational Establishments

## **Entry to All Early Years Establishments**

The purpose of this Management Circular is to provide a policy statement for admission to nursery. It should be read in conjunction with the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Operational Guidance and Charging Arrangements for additional hours. These may be found here xxx on Glasgow Online.

All applications for admission to nursery must be submitted on the GCC nursery application form, lodged initially with the Head of Nursery and recorded as soon as possible after receipt by the nursery on the SEEMIS Early Years system, irrespective of the length of the register of applications or waiting list. The register of applications should not be closed to new applicants even when all places in an establishment have been allocated and all requests for a placement should be recorded.

All children must be admitted to GCC nurseries in accordance with the priorities within the attached admissions policy guidance.

All children aged 3 or 4, agreed deferred entrants to school and those 2 year olds who meet the eligibility criteria are statutorily entitled to up to 1140 hours of funded ELC per year. Where a GCC nursery has insufficient capacity to admit an entitled child, every effort should be made to direct parents /carers to alternate nursery provision. This may include directing them to Funded Provider partnership provision. Parents / carers should be encouraged to indicate more than one preferred choice of nursery on their application to assist with this should the need to direct them elsewhere arise.

Transport is not provided by Education Services in respect of early years services and the expectation is that parents / carers will make their own arrangements for travel to and from the nursery.

Yours sincerely

Maureen McKenna

Executive Director of Education

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### **Nursery Admissions Policy Statement**

This document provides guidance on the admission of children aged 0-5 years into Glasgow City Council nurseries, including nursery classes within primary schools. It does not include guidance on admission to Funded Provider nurseries or Registered Childminders working within the Council's Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) framework.

The Council has a duty under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and predecessor legislation, to ensure that the most vulnerable children or those in greatest need are prioritised when places are allocated in its' nurseries.

The Council also has a duty to make available up to 1140 hours of funded ELC to every eligible child whose parent / carer wishes it – either in a Council nursery or with a Funded Provider nursery or Registered Childminder.

In addition to meeting those statutory duties, the Council aims as far as is possible, to support the needs of families already in employment or entering education, training or employment.

Where demand for nursery places outstrips availability, all applications will be scored against a set of prioritised banding criteria to determine the relative priority of each application received.

Our overarching aim is that every eligible child in Glasgow should be able to access flexible, affordable ELC of the highest quality.

### **Key Principles**

The provision of ELC services for children in Glasgow should be in accordance with the following principles of the service :

- Parental / carer engagement and choice will lie at the centre of our early years system
- Parents / carers can expect the same high quality, affordable service wherever they choose to access it
- Family needs will be understood and accommodated to the best possible extent by nursery leaders and staff teams
- The wellbeing and best interests of the child will be core to service delivery

### **Entitlement & Eligibility**

#### **3 & 4 Years Old**

All children aged 3 or 4 years are entitled to up to 1140 hours per year of funded ELC regardless of residency status, citizenship or ethnic background.

Children become eligible for funded hours according to when their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday falls.

For 3 year olds, the child's funded entitlement begins from the Monday after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and they should be admitted to nursery on, or as soon after as is possible, that date.

For 4 year olds, children should be admitted as soon as practicably possible after a place has been allocated as they are already of eligible age.

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### 2 Year Olds

Children aged 2 years old are entitled to up to 1140 hours per year of funded childcare where they meet the criteria set out below. This entitlement applies regardless of residency status, citizenship or ethnic background.

Eligible 2 year olds may begin to access funded hours from the start of the first term AFTER their second birthday; OR the start of the first term AFTER the parent / carer starts receiving any of the named benefits or tax credits within the eligibility criteria.

Funded ELC is available if a child is aged 2 and is currently, or since they turned 2 has been:

- looked after by a local council (this does not have to be GCC)
- the subject of a kinship care order
- the subject of a guardianship order

A child can also access funded ELC if they have turned 2 and their parent / carer was themselves care experienced at any point during their own childhood.

Children can also access funded ELC if they have turned 2 and the parent / carer receives one of these benefits:

- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
- any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Where a parent / carer receives tax credits or universal credit, they can earn a certain amount of money\* and still be eligible. If they receive :

- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit, and income is **£16,480** or less
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and income is **£7,500** or less
- Universal Credit and household take-home pay is **£625** a month or less

*\*income thresholds are subject to change and may be updated annually.*

Parents / carers who may be eligible to access funded ELC for their 2 year old must provide evidence that they meet the eligibility criteria. This can be provided directly to the nursery for the head of nursery to agree.

Alternatively, parents / carers can make a further online application to the Council to check whether they meet the eligibility criteria. The parent / carer must register with My Account online using the following link and from there will be able to upload any documents that may evidence their eligibility:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/17458/Early-Learning--Childcare>

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### **Deferred Entrants to Primary School**

Children are entitled to up to 1140 hours of funded ELC where it has been agreed that they should defer their entry to primary school and have a further funded year in nursery. This entitlement applies regardless of residency status, citizenship or ethnic background.

In most cases, deferred entrants will be returning to the nursery they already attend. Where a child does not already attend the nursery, they should be admitted as soon as possible after a place has been allocated as they are already of eligible age.

### **Children Under 3 Years Old**

Children under 3 who do not meet the criteria for eligible 2 year olds have no statutory entitlement to any funded nursery provision and therefore no specific dates for entry to nursery apply. They should be admitted as soon as is practicably possible after a place has been allocated.

Unless exempt under the Council's nursery charging arrangements, parents / carers will be expected to pay for all hours attended at nursery for a child under 3 years old.

### **Children with Additional Support for Learning Needs**

Children with additional needs have the same nursery entitlements as all other children. Nursery applications for children who have additional support needs should be processed in line with the admissions process and banding procedures. Supporting evidence from relevant agencies may be required in relation to their additional needs.

An assessment may have to be undertaken to ensure the appropriate establishment is identified and that the nursery can meet the child's needs. This supports multi-agency and collaborative working to ensure that the service provided is in the best interests of the child.

### **Blended Places**

Some families may choose to split their child's 1140 hours entitlement between two different providers. This can be any combination of Council nurseries, Funded Providers and Registered Childminders working within the ELC framework.

Parents / carers will need to apply for a place separately with each provider and tell them which setting they are splitting the place with, how many hours of funded ELC they wish to take up with each and where they wish to access their child's funded meal and snack entitlement. Under the Scottish Government's funding follows the child principles, it is a matter of parental choice as to the split of the entitlement.

Nursery classes generally operate in a model which does not provide the full 1140 hours, therefore, parents / carers should be made aware that they can access the balance of their child's hours in another setting if they wish to.

In all cases, children will still only be funded for 1140 hours in total across the settings accessed.

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### Additional Hours

Where a nursery has spare capacity after admitting all of their eligible applicants, parents / carers may purchase additional hours over and above their child's statutory entitlement.

Priority will be given to first ensuring that all eligible children can access their statutory funded ELC before extra hours are allocated.

Any hours over and above a child's funded ELC entitlement – or any hours attended where a child under 3 has no funded ELC entitlement – are subject to charges within the terms of the Council's charging arrangements.

### Cross Boundary Places

Children living in other Council areas may be allocated places in GCC nurseries only after all applicants resident in Glasgow have been allocated places. The same entitlements to 1140 hours and entry dates apply to cross boundary children.

Children whose parent / carer moves outwith Glasgow whilst attending a GCC nursery may continue to attend, however, non-Glasgow resident charges will apply for any additional hours regardless of age.

### Banding Priorities

All applications will be scored against the Council's 5 banding priorities (see below) to assist in the allocation of places where demand for places outstrips availability.

Nursery admissions are considered on a local area basis meaning that all high priority applicants across the geography of the local admissions panel will be considered for placement before applicants with relatively lower priority scores.

No charges apply for any hours for children included within the Band One priorities.

#### BAND ONE

- Any child considered in need of protection
  - Children recorded on the child protection register or where it is demonstrated that there is a risk of being recorded on the child protection register.
- Very young mothers
  - Children born to mothers under 16 years of age or of age to still be in full-time education provided within a secondary school.
- Care experienced children
  - Children in the care of the local authority
  - Children subject to statutory supervision orders
  - Children in foster care

#### BAND TWO

- Deferred entrants to primary school – new applicants who do not already attend nursery. There is no need for existing attendees to re-apply and be banded.
- Children who have additional support needs
  - Children who have additional support for learning needs
  - Children affected by the disability of their parent / carer

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- Children who have had periods where their access to nursery has been interrupted (eg. long periods of hospitalisation, children within travelling families)
- Children from families suffering acute stress, where serious or specific concerns have been identified by a referring agency
  - Children who are referred by social work or health services due to domestic violence ; parent / carer has additional support needs ; parent / carer has an acute mental health condition ; parent / carer misuses alcohol or other substances
  - Children referred by an Educational or Clinical Psychologist
- Children living in bed & breakfast accommodation, homeless refuge, transient or who have a pattern of homelessness

### BAND THREE

- All Glasgow resident children aged 2, 3 or 4 years old who are eligible for 1140 hours of funded ELC
- All approved deferred entrants to primary school

### BAND FOUR

- Any Glasgow resident child who had not been admitted under Bands 1-3
  - Children under 3 years old who do not meet the criteria for an eligible 2's nursery place and /or who have not been admitted under Bands 1 or 2
  - Children who are deferring entry to primary school through parent / carer choice but where funding has not been agreed by the Council (*Scottish Government are working towards making a funded year an entitlement for all children from August 2023*)

### BAND FIVE

- Any child not resident within Glasgow
  - Children not resident within Glasgow may only be offered places after all Glasgow resident children have been accommodated