



Lochgoilhead Primary School and ELC

ELC Admissions & Settling in Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of:

Lochgoilhead Primary and ELC

On Friday 3rd May 2024

Signed: Louise Blair Designation: Head Teacher

Articles of the UNCRC (the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)



Article 3 Best interests of the child

Article 14 Health food, water and the environment

Health and Care Standards (Health and Social Care Standards - My support, my life).

1.12 I am fully involved in assessing my emotional, psychological, social and physical needs at an early stage, regularly and when my needs change.

1.19 My care and support meet my needs and is right for me.

1.23 My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected.

1.27 I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.

2.14 I am fully informed about what information is shared with others about me.

4.11 I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance, and best practice.

1. Statement of Purpose

1.1

Within our Early Learning and Childcare setting, practitioners and managers aim to ensure that the admission of children is fair, equitable and responsive to the needs and preferences of individual children and their parents or carers. This Policy ensures that early learning and childcare places are allocated fairly and equitably in accordance with national legislation and policy.

Children will experience consistent high quality early learning and childcare. This means consistency of relationships with staff and other children; and consistency of experiences". Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Early Learning and Childcare, Statutory Guidance.

At Lochgoilhead ELC, we aim for children to feel safe, stimulated, happy and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff and the other children in their group. We want parents to have the peace of mind that their child's wellbeing is our primary focus.

We aim to help parents and their children to settle quickly but easily by considering individual needs and circumstances of their families.

We carefully consider the transition that is tailored to you and your child's needs reviewing these closely when changes occur.

Settling in days in Lochgoilhead ELC are key to ensuring smooth transition and to ensure good communication/information sharing. They are a great opportunity for families to see the ELC, meet our staff and the other children. We aim to recognise and support the individual needs of children and their parents during the settling in period.

We aim to provide a solid foundation for learning in our ELC setting in preparation for P1. We aim to work in partnership with parents/ carers to settle the child into our ELC.

What is transition?

Transition concerns the change a child encounters from one place to another. As children develop from birth throughout childhood they move, or transition, from one learning environment or settling to a new one. Often, these transitions involved a process of change that requires them to adapt their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to meet new expectations. By the time a child reaches school age they may have already experienced several transition periods including the transition from home to setting; transition between room bases; transition from one provider to another during the working week; the transition from a childcare provider to a school.

Transition is like a journey and takes time, preparation, and planning. Practitioners will help a child's journey by supporting them before, during and after the transition occurs. Practitioners will work together with parents, sharing information that is pertinent to the child ensuring a smooth transition.

Transition involves a process of change that require a period of adjustment for you and your child. To help family to adapt to change, we aim to provide as much continuity of education and care as possible. We will accomplish this by sharing information about your

child and working closely with you, other providers who care for your child should your child be part of a split placement with another ELC.

2 Guidance documents

The [Equality Act 2010](#) contains provisions to ensure that any act of discrimination is an unlawful offence and ensures that protection is in place for individuals being discriminated against for any of reason. We believe that no child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. This is in line with the [Health and Social Care Standards: 1.1 - 1.5](#).

1.3

[Supporting Children's Learning: Statutory Guidance on the Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) Act \(Scotland\) 2004 \(as amended\) Code of Practice](#), published in 2017, promotes good practice in relation to communicating with parents. The good practice outlined within the document is also in line with Getting it right for every child ([GIRFEC](#)). We recognise due care and attention must be given to the parents, carers and child's need for time to settle into the setting and aim to work in partnership with parents or carers to settle the child into the setting's environment.

1.4

We will comply with the Care Inspectorate's registration requirements for children of a specific age only to be admitted to the setting, ensuring that the service provided is age and stage appropriate. This allows the principles of the standards to be put into practice and each individual child to be safe and have appropriate learning and playing opportunities, in line with the [Health and Social Care Standards, at points 1.17, 1.19, 1.20, 1.23](#)

1.5

The [Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#) published in July 2021 follows the provisions as set out in [Part 6 of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), as it is through these functions that early learning and childcare is defined. We will link to this guidance to assist our delivery of the funded early learning and childcare entitlement for eligible children.

1.6

[Funded early learning and childcare \(ELC\)](#) is available to all three- and four-year-olds and [eligible](#) two-year-olds. From August 2021. Funding follows the child will help increase choice and flexibility for parents and carers whilst ensuring children benefit from high quality provision. It means that parents and carers – including those of eligible two years olds – will be able to choose to use their child's entitlement at any ELC provider that:

- meets the National Standard
- has a place available and
- is willing to enter into a contract with the local authority

1.7

The [National Standard](#) sets out what children and families should expect from their early learning experience regardless of where they access their child's funded hours.

1.8

Wellbeing indicators originated from the Scottish Education Policy and National Policy GIRFEC support children and young people at various stages of their life. Further guidance can be found: www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/wellbeingindicators

1.9

Child Care Act (2021) ensures care assessments and care plans are in place. This act ensure appropriate provisions are in place for all children and young people. Assessments should be completed in a reasonable timeframe and will depend on the urgency of the need for support. Information will be provided for those needing to access services.

2.0

Realising the Ambition: Being Me (2022) is a **guidance document** released in February 2020 by Education Scotland that aims to support early learning providers while provision is expanded. It provides guidance to nurseries, playgroups, childminders and early years teachers on how to improve the provision for young learners including a focus on play-based learning and the importance of outdoor or 'risky' play.

2.1

Within the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) and the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#), inclusion and equality of opportunity are an entitlement for all children.

Please note that throughout this policy the term 'parents' is used to include all main caregivers.

3. Eligibility and admissions?

Lochgoilhead ELC is a funded provider of early learning and childcare (ELC) with Argyll and Bute local authority which aims to provide the funded entitlement of ELC. From August 2021 when a child is aged 3 and 4, they can get up to a maximum of 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare a year. 2-year-olds may be eligible, please see criteria below. Admissions for this entitlement will be dependent on our admissions criteria set out within this policy and Lochgoilhead ELC having a space available.

3-year-old children are eligible to start the Monday after their 3rd birthday, unless their birthday falls between March and June, when they will start the following August – the same as school.

Children must be 3 years of age by the first in-service day of the new school term in August to start on the first day of term; otherwise it will be the Monday after their 3rd birthday.

A child's entitlement to funded ELC will be 1140 hours (pro rata) over a minimum of 38 weeks within the school year. Some providers offer a different pattern of provision. Information on what providers are offering can be found at the back of this booklet, from each provider or school, or on the Council's website. Contact details can be found at the back of this leaflet.

If you wish to change your child's pattern of attendance or placement you must provide 4 weeks' notice to your current provider in writing. You must also check with the setting that you wish to move to that they can accommodate your child.

Parents of children still aged 4 at the start of the school year (school commencement date) have a legal right to be deferred.

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 funded Early Learning and Childcare place for an extra year.

Children whose fifth birthday falls between August and the end of December also have the right to start school. They also have the right to defer entry to school but a funded Early Learning and Childcare place is not automatic for these children, it is at the discretion of the local authority. In Argyll and Bute a funded place will be provided.

For more information on deferred entries, please contact Early Years.

2-year-old placement

Under part 6 of the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, an entitlement was introduced in August 2014 for some 2-year-olds.

Your 2-year-old child will be eligible for an ELC funded place:

- Income support
- Job seekers allowance (income based)
- Any income related element of employment and support allowance
- Incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance
- Pension credit
- Universal credit - where household earned income is £610 or less per month
- Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit, and your income is less than £16,105
- Both maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit and your income is under £7,320
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Those aged 2 or over who are (or have been at any point since turning 2) either looked after by a local authority, the subject of a kinship care order or a child with a parent-appointed guardian are also entitled to funded ELC.

Additionally, children aged 2 are eligible for funded ELC where they are looked after by the Council or are the subject of a kinship care order or the subject of a guardianship order, along with children whose parents have been care experienced in the past. * This applies to children who have turned two on or after 1st March 2019. The income thresholds for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit can vary annually.

These points are only applicable to children receiving funded ELC hours. Children aged 2-year, may start either when a place becomes available, or on an agreed date especially if they are classed as vulnerable 2-year-old according to Health and Social Care or if they are a care experienced child.

Blended placement

However, a range of settings can also be beneficial for children and parents. Argyll and Bute Council will accommodate shared placements across 2 different providers more widely across the week, where this meets the needs of the child and parents or carers.

Continuity should be considered when changing a placement.

Continuity is always seen as being an important part of high quality ELC, therefore careful consideration should be given when changing your child's ELC placement.

Admission process

When your child has been granted a place, parents or carers of a child will be:

- Given a copy of the services handbook (giving detailed information and explanations about the setting, its aims, policies and procedures).
- Parent invited to discuss the admission of their child with a member of staff.
- Asked to provide personal details and information about their child and themselves. Confidentiality of information will be always respected. Care provided is in line with the [Health and Social Care Standards : 1.23, 2.14](#)
- Parents and child can visit the setting before induction sessions.
- Child will be offered induction sessions, which can increase in time and frequency according to the child's need.

4. Meals

Children who are eligible for the funded 1140 ELC hours will also receive funded meals whilst attending as part of their statutory entitlement.

All children regardless of age or eligibility for ELC funding will be entitled to free milk and a healthy snack each day.

5. Further information

Where can I find out information on what ELC is available in my area?

Argyll and Bute Council website (www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning) contains up-to-date information on all Funded Providers across Argyll and Bute, including indoor settings, Childminders and Outdoor Settings. The information covers topics such as individual setting Ethos/Vision, what funded hours they offer and links to their own service website/social media pages.

Further information can also be found at: www.parentclub.scot/ELC

When will I receive confirmation that my child's place is confirmed?

No later than May, following ELC registration. There are a number of processes that follow registration week, including ensuring there is sufficient capacity at the setting you have applied for and staffing levels are correct as per Care Inspectorate standards. What happens if there is not enough spaces at my chosen setting?

Every effort will be made to meet your first preference, but this will depend on the number of places that are available and, on the priority, given to applications. If there are not enough places at your chosen ELC setting a ballot will be held using the priorities of that setting. If you are unsuccessful in the ballot for your preferred provider, you will be offered another ELC place, with your 2nd or sometimes 3rd choice.

You will be kept up to date throughout this process.

6. Settling In

Settling in is an important stage in the transition between home and the ELC setting, or between one setting and another. We aim to make this a smooth transition by:

- We refer GIRFEC documents to ensure that your child's needs are met in our ELC and Primary setting.
- We will carry out an enrolment process to formally introduce and welcome new children and their parents/ carers to the setting.
- Parents and children are given an opportunity to visit the setting and spend short periods of time, depending on need before they join with their setting.
- Each child will have a key worker who will support parents and children from the onset and throughout of their ELC journey and will have a teacher and ASN assistant if they have identifiable needs.
- Giving the child and their carer time to familiarise themselves with the environment.
- Offer a warm and welcoming environment and ensuring each child feels included, secure and valued. This is in line with the [Health and Social Care Standards: 1.9,1.10,1.11](#)
- When children and their families first arrive at our setting, we will have induction in place that ensures positive experiences and an understanding of our ELC policy and procedures.
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions will be suited to the needs of the child and parent within the ELC day. Parents will be updated of their child's progress daily. In the Primary setting, parents will be updated regularly.
- Recognising each child as an individual and his or her readiness to leave the parent or carer and adapt to the new environment specifically in the ELC. This is in line with [GIRFEC](#) Strategies to be identified and put in place to support the child and the parent.
- Sensitively dealing with the parent's or carer's readiness to leave their child.
- Providing strategies to help parents or carers to work with staff during the settling in period. The [Scottish Schools \(Parental Involvement\) Act \(2006\)](#) identifies the key role parents and carers play in a child's life and highlights the importance of parents and carers and staff working together.
- Staggering intake of new children into the setting. Invite parents to stay for sufficient time (if this is deemed necessary) so that the child feels settled and the parent feels comfortable about leaving their child. We continue to liaise with parents and providing updates daily. We will be flexible in response to individual needs, e.g. making arrangements for the child to be collected early on the first few days if necessary. We will consult with parents/ carers when developing strategies to help their child settle into the ELC and Primary settings.
- Providing familiar play and learning activities and experiences. No child will be taken on an outing or visit until they are settled or considered to be a high risk due to their behaviour.
- Providing feedback to parents or carers about how their child is progressing and supporting them in the settling in process.
- Care and attention will be given to the needs of the child, young person and parents. They will be given the support they need from the start and through transition of each setting.

- Procedures and policies will be shared with all parents and a folder accessible by the entrance for referral to at any time.
- Guidance will be followed from out ASN policy for children who have specific learning needs. Referrals will be made to partner agencies for further advice and support.

If a child does not settle and is unhappy and distressed at being in the setting, the child's key worker will discuss with the parents or carers the best way forward for the child and the family. This is in line with the [Health and Social Care Standards, at points 3.1 and 3.4, - 3.13](#)

Complaints Framework

If you have a complaint about your child's ELC talk it over with the Head Teacher or Manager. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, then contact the Early Years Team on 01369 708503 and they will discuss the matter with you, advise you on your options and if appropriate, where you should direct your complaint.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of Louise Blair (Head Teacher) to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. All staff should know and implement this policy within their practice. Parents and carers will be made aware of this policy through the parents' handbook and the enrolment procedure.

The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that all records are relevant and up to date.

Appendix One: Administration of Ballot for ELC Provision

1. If, after registration week, an ELC funded provider has received more application forms than capacity available a ballot will be required.
2. The Early Years Team must be contacted to advise a ballot is required. A meeting will be arranged to categorise application forms by the Manager or Head Teacher.
3. Set the date on which the ballot is to take place.
4. Inform the parents concerned of the ballot date. On the ballot day the names of the children on separate ballot slips should be laid out for checking by those present.
5. From the parents or staff present a person is to be nominated to place the ballot slips into the ballot box.
6. From the parents or staff present a person is to be nominated to draw out the slips.
7. Places should be allocated as slips are drawn out.
8. Once all the places are allocated, slips should continue to be drawn out and the Nursery Application Management System (NAMS) waiting list amended.
9. In the event of any child selected for a place not taking up that place, the place will be offered to those children on the waiting list in the order of the draw.
10. Those children not receiving a place need to be moved to the 2nd choice provider, therefore the Early Years Helpline should be notified with the details of the children for this to be carried out.

Appendix Two: Priorities

Priority 1

For children deferring entry from P1 and staying at nursery an additional year of funding has been agreed by Argyll and Bute Council.

Priority 2

(i) Children on the child protection register or identified through child protection procedures.
(ii) Referral from social work department where the child is deemed to be in need where:

- The placement would help the child remain within the family environment rather than be looked after by the local authority.
- The child is subject of a statutory order.
- The placement would support the child's return to the family.

Priority 3

Supporting statements from the undernoted professionals where there are concerns about the development of the child, parent or family.

- Education establishments
- Health agencies
- Education psychology services
- Social work services
- Voluntary sector agencies

This priority refers to children who require support as a result of circumstances which are placing the child, parent or family at an education, social or health disadvantage. This includes children who are adversely affected by the disability of any other person in the family, or it may include children with English as an additional language where a high level of support is needed.

Priority 4

Child(ren) (for example sibling) who live in the same household and attend the same ELC setting/school.

Priority 5

Reside within catchment area of school.

Priority 6

(i) Children out with Argyll and Bute requesting an ELC place within Argyll and Bute will be placed once all eligible children residing within Argyll and Bute have been placed.
(ii) Children out with Argyll and Bute will not be placed within Argyll and Bute if placing them incurs extra costs for Argyll and Bute.

Contact Information

Argyll and Bute Council – Education Service, Early Years

Early Years Helpline: 01369 708503 Monday-Friday 9-5pm

Email: earlyyears@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Address: Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ

Web page: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning

List of ELC Providers within Argyll and Bute

<http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/childcare-and-pre-school-education>