

Department of Corporate and Community Services

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Date: 6 November 2020

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TO: Councillors P. O’Kane (Chair), C. Merrick (Vice Chair), C. Bamforth, T. Buchanan, D. Devlin, C Gilbert, A. Lafferty, J. McLean, and G. Wallace; Dr F. Angell, Ms D. Graham, Ms M McIntyre and Mr D Morris.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Education Committee will be held on **Thursday, 12 November 2020 at 10.00am.**

The agenda of business is as listed below.

CAROLINE INNES

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DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Please note this is a virtual meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Declarations of Interest.**
3. **Early Learning and Childcare Admission Policy – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 - 60).**
4. **Eligibility for School Clothing Grants in East Renfrewshire – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 61 - 66).**
5. **SQA Presentation.**

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE12 NOVEMBER 2020Report by Director of EducationARRANGEMENTS FOR APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO EARLY LEARNING AND
CHILDCARE ESTABLISHMENTS**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek elected member approval for the revised policy and procedure for the application and admission arrangements for early learning and childcare establishments within East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Elected members are asked to approve the revised arrangements for application and admission to early learning and childcare establishments (Appendix 1).

BACKGROUND

3. The Scottish Government set a transformational agenda for Early Learning and Childcare by 2020 which was published in March 2017. The vision was to almost double the entitlement to free ELC from 600 hours to 1140 hours per year by 2020 for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds and is underpinned by the key principles of Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility and Affordability.
4. In September 2017 Education Committee approved East Renfrewshire's expansion plan including the 1140 hours models of delivery for early learning and childcare. Over the last three years, regular reports have been brought to Committee to update elected members on the progress being made in delivering on this commitment.
5. Earlier this year, in light of the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, the Scottish Government announced a delay in the implementation of the statutory duty to deliver the full 1140 hours of entitlement from August 2020. In spite of this delay, in June 2020 elected members approved the allocation of places for the current session based on 1140 hours, while recognising the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the potential delivery of this provision. Since August, all eligible children across East Renfrewshire have been able to access this enhanced entitlement based on 1140 hours.

REPORT

6. Members will be aware that through the gradual implementation of the enhanced funded entitlement of 1140 hours to all eligible children over recent years, there

has been an ongoing requirement for regular reviews and alterations of the Education Department's existing application and admission arrangements for accessing early learning and childcare. These alterations have built on the existing arrangements and ensured consistency in approach as the additional entitlement was introduced across the authority.

7. With the full implementation of the additional entitlement, the department has undertaken a review of the existing arrangements ahead of the admission window (for entry in August 2021) opening later this year. The revised arrangements are attached as Appendix 1.
8. The new arrangements, as defined in the appendix, will be implemented for all future applications.
9. In undertaking this review, the department has sought to align the arrangements with those in place for admissions to both primary and secondary school. Both processes are undertaken by the same team within the Education Department and this will ensure a greater consistency in our approach across all age groups.
10. The revised arrangements set out the statutory duty of the Council to secure that the minimum amount of early learning and childcare is made available for each eligible child residing within the authority and clearly defines the arrangements in place to ensure that this can be delivered to all eligible families. This will be undertaken whilst reflecting the Scottish Government's Blueprint principles of ensuring a high quality provision which is flexible, affordable and accessible. In addition, the revised arrangements reflect the Scottish Government's *Funding Follows the Child* approach, providing families with choice on how they wish to access their funded entitlement, in line with the Council's financial capacity.
11. Whilst separate to the arrangements for the admission of eligible children, the wider review offered an opportunity to revisit the process currently applied to for non-eligible children. Where possible, we have sought to ensure consistency across both processes, whilst recognising the different arrangements that may need to be applied. These new proposed arrangements are outlined in Part 2 of the attached appendix.
12. Should any further changes be required as a result of legislative changes at a national or local level, this will be reflected and updated as appropriate within these arrangements.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

13. Members will note that this approach outlined in the arrangements provides families with greater choice on how they wish to access their child's funded entitlement. Any offer of a place within a funded provider will remain subject to both physical and financial capacity being available, in line with the Council's commitment to achieving best value. The department will continue to monitor the available budget to support provision where it can be made.

CONCLUSION

14. In seeking to fulfil our statutory duty in the provision of early learning and childcare to eligible children, the department has undertaken a review of the

existing arrangements for the application and admission to local authority establishments. The revised arrangements reflect the national guidance and provide clarity and transparency in the policy used to allocate places to children within East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATION

15. Elected members are asked to approve the revised arrangements for application and admission to early learning and childcare establishments (Appendix 1).

Dr Mark Ratter
Director of Education
November 2020

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Local Government Access to information Act 1985

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East Renfrewshire Council – Education Department

Arrangements for Application and Admission to Early Learning and Childcare Establishments

November 2020

Part 1 – Application and Admissions for Eligible Children

Part 2 – Application and Admissions for Non-eligible Children Aged 2 and Under

Appendices

- 1. Early Learning & Childcare Communities (2020/21)**
- 2. Early Learning & Childcare Operating Models (2020/21)**
- 3. Order of Priorities – Eligible 2-year old places**
- 4. Order of Priorities – 3 and 4 year old places**
- 5. Early Years Intervention Group Information (0-3)**
- 6. Early Years Intervention Group Information (Additional Educational Support 0-5)**
- 7. Cross Boundary Policy**

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Part 1 – Application and Admissions for Eligible Children

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The following document sets out the Education Department's policies and procedures for receiving applications and allocating places to all eligible children seeking a place in one of the authorities early years establishments. Eligibility is defined in more detail in section 3.
- 1.2. As outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the authority has a duty to secure that the minimum amount of early learning and childcare is made available for each eligible child belonging to its area.¹ This 'minimum amount' is known as the 'funded entitlement'.
- 1.3. The above Act requires the authority to consider the method in which it makes early learning and childcare available in ensuring it is flexible enough to allow parents an appropriate degree of choice when deciding how to access the service. The service provision remains under review, subject to regular ongoing consultation, as outlined in the Act, and will be updated as required.²
- 1.4. The Scottish Government has developed a 'Funding Follows the Child' approach which provides families with choice on how they wish to access their funded entitlement. This approach enables families to access their child's funded entitlement from any establishment (including local authority, private, voluntary and independent providers and childminders) who meet the National Standard, has a place available and is willing to enter into a contract with the local authority. Any offer of a place will be subject to physical and financial capacity being available, in line with the Council's approach to ensuring best value.

2. Context

2.1. Early Learning and Childcare Communities

- 2.1.1. Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision for 3 and 4 year old places in East Renfrewshire Council is divided in to communities. Each local authority establishment and funded provider is aligned to a particular community. Parents are encouraged to apply for an ELC place in their community. The location of the property of the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides shall be used when determining the local Early Learning and Childcare Community for the child.
- 2.1.2. The current communities and allocated establishments are provided in Appendix 1.

¹ *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*, Part 6 available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/part/6/enacted>

² Ibid.

- 2.1.3. Each residential property located within East Renfrewshire Council aligns to a particular geographical community. This is accessible via the Council's online mapping tool which will advise of which ELC community a property relates to. This is available via the Council's [website](#).
- 2.1.4. Early Learning and Childcare for under 3 year old places is limited and there is no requirement for families to apply within their local Early Learning and Childcare community.
- 2.1.5. Where applicable, applications received are processed in line with the community in which children reside, unless otherwise requested by the applicant. These requests are considered in line with the decision making process, detailed in section 5. Further information on the specific community any property would fall within can be provided by request to the Education Department.
- 2.1.6. Where it is not possible or practicable for a family to access a place within their community, families can apply for a place within a different community and this will be considered in line with the decision making process outlined in section 5.
- 2.1.7. The Early Learning and Childcare Communities do not align to existing school catchment areas and attendance at a particular establishment does not afford any additional priority or right for subsequent primary school registration or the consideration of placing requests. Further details regarding school admission applications and the allocating of schools places is available in the Council's school admissions and placing request policies available via the Council's [website](#).

2.2. Early Learning and Childcare Models

- 2.2.1. Local authority establishments offer a range of different operating models to meet the needs of families in accessing their child's funded entitlement.
- 2.2.2. The operating models offered in each establishment will be determined by its opening times, service patterns and whether term time or all year provision is provided. All East Renfrewshire ELC establishments operate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Only certain models will be available in particular establishments. Further information on the specific models currently available to families is contained in Appendix 2.
- 2.2.3. Within each Early Learning and Childcare Community, all of the different operating models will be available for families to access across different establishments.
- 2.2.4. The operating models available for families to access their child's funded entitlement remain under regular review, subject to the statutory consultation to understand the needs of families, and will be updated as appropriate to best reflect changing service demands.

3. Eligibility

3.1. Entitlements

3.1.1. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 determines the eligibility criteria for children who are entitled to funded early learning and childcare.

3.1.2. Those currently eligible to receive funded early learning and childcare are:

- All children aged 2 who meet the Scottish Government's eligibility criteria
- All children aged 3 and 4 (ante- and pre-school years)

Children will receive their full entitlement for each school year in which they are eligible and a pro-rated amount for each part-year in which they are eligible.

3.2. Eligibility of 2 Year Old Children

3.2.1. Eligibility for 2 year old children is currently determined by a range of different criteria:

- Children who are 2 or over and are, or since they have turned 2, have been:
 - Looked after by a local authority
 - The subject of a kinship care order
 - The subject of a guardianship order
- Parents in receipt of one of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)
 - Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
 - Incapacity of Severe Disablement Allowance
 - State Pension Credit
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit:
 - But not Working Tax Credit, with earnings of £16,105 a year or less
 - And with Working Tax Credit, with earnings of £7,320 a year or less
 - Universal Credit, where household take-home pay is £610 month or less
- Parents who are care experienced themselves.

3.2.2. The above criteria is determined by the Scottish Government and are subject to change. Further information on the criteria is available from the Scottish Government's website.

3.2.3. Children from families meeting the above criteria will be able to access their funded entitlement from the start of term following their second birthday. See table 1.

Table 1

Where a child's birthday falls on or between the following dates:	The child will become eligible from the following school term:
1 March – 31 August	August (autumn term) occurring in that year
1 September – 31 December	January (spring term) following their birthday
1 January – last day February	March/April (summer term) following their birthday

3.2.4. Where possible, the authority will seek to make provision closer to the child's second birthday however this is not guaranteed as entitlement is only as outlined in Table 1.

3.3. Eligibility of 3 and 4 Year Old Children

3.3.1. All 3 and 4 year old children have a universal funded entitlement.

3.3.2. All 3 and 4 year old children have a funded entitlement to a maximum of 2 years of early learning and childcare provision.

3.3.3. Children will become eligible to access their funded entitlement from the start of the term following their third birthday. See table 2.

Table 2

Where a child's birthday falls on or between the following dates:	The child will become eligible from the following school term:
1 March – 31 August	August (autumn term) occurring in that year
1 September – 31 December	January (spring term) following their birthday
1 January – last day February	March/April (summer term) following their birthday

3.3.4. Where possible, we will seek to make provision available from the day after the child's third birthday. However this is not guaranteed as entitlement is only as outlined in Table 2.

3.3.5. Where a family chooses to access their child's funded entitlement in a funded provider, the authority will seek to provide funding from the day after their third birthday. However, this is not guaranteed as entitlement is only as outlined in Table 2.

3.4. Eligibility of Children Deferring Entry to Primary 1

NOTE – this policy remains under review by the Scottish Government and will be amended as required.

- 3.4.1. If a child will reach the age of 5 during January or February (after the August in which they are supposed to commence their primary education), parents/carers may choose to defer entry until the following academic year. A fully funded nursery place will be available for such children.
- 3.4.2. If a child will reach the age of 5 between September and December (after the August in which they are supposed to commence their primary education), parents/carers may also choose to defer entry until the following academic year. However, there is no automatic entitlement to an additional fully funded year of early learning and childcare.
- 3.4.3. Where a decision is made to defer a child with a September to December birthday, a decision on the eligibility of the child for funded early learning and childcare will be based on the authority's existing Deferred Entry Policy (Appendix).

4. Application Process

4.1. Eligible Children Aged 2

- 4.1.1. Applications for children who meet the eligible 2 year old criteria should be made online from when the child reaches 20 months of age. There is no fixed application window for children who will receive a funded entitlement as an eligible 2 year old place. Where the form cannot be completed online or where assistance is required, a paper version can be provided by contacting the Education Department.
- 4.1.2. Given the limited number of establishments offering this provision and to provide additional flexibility in family choice, there is no requirement for families to only apply within their local Early Learning and Childcare community.
- 4.1.3. Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child, their residence within East Renfrewshire and how they meet the qualifying criteria for funded entitlement for an eligible 2 year old. This evidence must include:
 - The child's birth certificate
 - A recent Child Benefit Statement or Council Tax Notice
 - A recent letter from DWP/HMRC outlining benefit qualification

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information when proof is not satisfied. In the event that the required documentation is not available, the Education Department can provide further guidance.

4.2. Eligible Children Aged 3 and 4

- 4.2.1. Applications for children who will become eligible for their funded entitlement over the following academic year (August onwards) should be made during the Early Learning and Childcare application window. The exact details of the application window is published annually but runs from the beginning of December until the last day in February.
- 4.2.2. Applications received after the application window closes on the last day in February will be processed after all the initial allocations have been made.
- 4.2.3. Applications should be completed online, however, where the form cannot be completed online or where assistance is required, a paper version can be provided by contacting the Education Department.
- 4.2.4. Applications should be made for a place within the Early Learning and Childcare Community in which the family reside. Should the family wish to apply for a place outwith their community, this will be subject to space being available within the relevant community.
- 4.2.5. Applications should be made considering the requirements for the 2 years of the funded entitlement (both the ante- and pre-school years) of Early Learning and Childcare. The model applied for at age 3 will be used in the provision of the 4 year old place.
- 4.2.6. Only one application per child may be submitted for a place in a local authority establishment. Parents/carers will be asked to indicate preferential choices based on the specific models available at specific establishments.
- 4.2.7. Where a family wish to access their funded entitlement with a funded provider, contact should be made with the provider directly as soon as possible and prior to the end of June. Where a place cannot be provided or a family decide not to take up this place with a funded provider, they can seek a place in a local authority provider, where space is available. This process is outlined in section 4.5.
- 4.2.8. Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child and their residence within the Early Learning and Childcare Community. This evidence must include:
 - The child's birth certificate
 - A recent Child Benefit Statement or Council Tax Notice

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information when proof is not satisfied. In the event that the required documentation is not available, the Education Department can provide further guidance.

4.3. Deferred Entry

- 4.3.1. Where a family is choosing to defer a child's entry to Primary 1, and they wish the child to continue to attend the Early Learning and Childcare establishment, an application must be submitted to the authority during the Early Learning and Childcare application window (4.2.1.).
- 4.3.2. Further evidence to support the deferral may be required and where necessary the Education Department will seek further information from the parent/carer and the ELC establishment.
- 4.3.3. Applications for deferred entry to primary school must be made in line with the [School Admissions Policy](#). If a decision is taken by the parent/carer to defer entry to primary education, they will be required to apply for a place in the preferred catchment school in January of the deferral year in order to be considered for a primary 1 place commencing the following academic year in August. This application will be treated as a new application to register the child and will be considered along with all other applications submitted as part of the Normal Placing Round.

4.4. Change of Circumstances Prior to Decision Making Process

- 4.4.1. Should a child's residency change after the submission of an application but prior to the decision making process, the parent/carer should inform the Education Department in writing.
- 4.4.2. If the new address is within the same community, it is expected that the child shall continue with the existing application. Should there be a request to change to a different establishment within the same community, this must be reflected in an updated application. This can be obtained from the Education Department.
- 4.4.3. If the new address is within a different community, it would be expected that the application would move to the new community. The authority will seek to offer a place following the same selected model in any establishment which has space available. Should there be a request to remain within the original community, this would be subject to space be available. This must be communicated to the Education Department. Any failure to provide this information could result in the allocation being withdrawn.

4.5. Applications Outwith the Normal Application Window

- 4.5.1. Applications for a place within a local authority establishment to commence at any point during the academic year out with the normal application window should be made directly to the Education Department. Appropriate evidence will be required to support the application.

4.5.2. Where places are available, the Education Department will arrange for the child to commence their place at the establishment with the remaining funded entitlement calculated on a pro-rated basis.

4.5.3. Applicants may find that the preferred establishment/operating model is already full. In this situation, in ensuring the authority meets its statutory duty, an alternative place will be offered. Every attempt will be made to offer a suitable place within the Early Learning and Childcare Community however this is not guaranteed.

4.5.4. Where families are seeking to access their child's funded entitlement within a funded provider, this will be subject to the available physical and financial capacity. The Education Department will arrange for the child to commence attendance with the provider when available.

4.6. Applying for a place before being resident in East Renfrewshire

4.6.1. Applications for Early Learning and Childcare places prior to becoming resident within East Renfrewshire can be made during the annual application window should proof of future residency able to be supplied.

4.6.2. Out with the application window, applications must only be made no more than 4 weeks in advance of taking up residency.

4.6.3. On application, satisfactory documentary evidence of future residency must be supplied. Only on the provision of appropriate evidence will a place be temporarily held. On becoming resident within East Renfrewshire, further documentary evidence must be supplied to confirm residency (if applicable).

4.7. Blended Model

4.7.1. Where a family wish to access their child's funded entitlement through a blended model (splitting the funded entitlement over more than 1 provider), separate applications will require to be submitted to each individual provider. This includes where one of the providers being accessed is the local authority. Parents/carers have a responsibility to note this in the application to ensure that it is considered in the decision making process.

5. Decision Making Process

5.1. This section considers the process for assessing applications submitted for Early Learning and Childcare and the allocation of places across establishments. All decisions on allocations will be processed in line with the guidance outlined below.

5.1.1. All decisions on the allocation of places are undertaken by the appropriate Local Admissions Panel:

- Local Admissions Panels for Under 3 Year Olds (LAP Under-3) are held approximately every 4 weeks to consider rolling applications.
- Local Admissions Panels for 3 and 4 Year Olds (LAP 3 & 4) are held annually throughout March and April to consider applications received in the normal application window.

5.2. Eligible Children Aged 2

5.2.1. Decisions on the allocation of places to children within this category will be taken in line with the Education Department's Order of Priorities for Eligible 2 Year Old Places. (Appendix 3).

5.2.2. All applications for children meeting the criteria for a funded entitlement from age 2 will be considered at the appropriate Local Admissions Panel (LAP Under-3) approximately 8 – 12 weeks before the child's second birthday. Any applications received after a child has turned 2 will be considered at the next scheduled LAP, held approximately every 4 weeks. Membership of the Local Admission Panel includes Heads of ELC Establishments and Education Department Officers.

5.2.3. All children with an eligibility from age 2 will be allocated a place in an establishment within East Renfrewshire, in line with the authority's statutory duty.

5.2.4. All allocations only apply to the current eligibility and do not automatically afford any priority for applying for a further 3 and 4 year old place at the establishment.

5.2.5. The Education Department will inform families of a decision on their application following each LAP. If the family preference cannot be accommodated, the application will remain live and be considered at the next LAP. The application will remain open throughout the year until an application is submitted for an eligible 3 and 4 year old place. Where a family do not wish to retain their application, they must advise the Education Department.

5.3. Eligible Children Aged 3 and 4

5.3.1. Decisions on the allocation of places to eligible children aged 3 and 4 will be taken in line with the Education Department's Order of Priorities for Eligible 3 and 4 Year Old Places. (Appendix 4). All applications received in the application window will be provided with an offer of Early Learning and Childcare in line with the authority's statutory duty.

5.3.2. All applications submitted within the normal application window will be considered through the annual allocations exercise. Applications are not prioritised based on the date they were submitted within the application window. Three and Four Year Old Local Admissions Panels (LAP 3 and 4) meet during

March and April of each year to allocate places based on the published order of priorities. Local Admission Panels are organised for each ELC community with membership of each LAP including all Heads of ELC Establishments for that community and Education Department Officers.

- 5.3.3. Priority will be given to families applying for their child's funded entitlement in their Early Learning and Childcare Community.
- 5.3.4. Places for eligible children aged 3 and 4 are allocated for both years of the funded entitlement (the allocation covers both the ante- and pre-school years) of Early Learning and Childcare.
- 5.3.5. Should the Order of Priorities be exhausted or there is a need to determine between otherwise equal applications within an oversubscribed establishment, a ballot will be held for any remaining places. The ballot will be carried out by the LAP.
- 5.3.6. Families not successful in their application for their first preference (whether operating model or establishment) will be offered their second or third choice.
- 5.3.7. All initial allocations will be communicated to families by the end of April in advance of August starting dates. Families will be notified of their offer of a place and asked to confirm their acceptance. This is required within 14 days of the offer being made. Where there has been no response within the 14 day period, the offer will be withdrawn and the place made available through the ballot process for remaining applicants.
- 5.3.8. Following the initial round of allocations, it will be determined whether there remains capacity within any establishment to undertake a further allocations process and/or ballot for any families who were initially provided with their second or third preference. This will only be undertaken where spaces become available in the first choice of establishment.
- 5.3.9. Any applications which are received after the closure of the application window will be considered late applications and will only be considered after the completion of the initial round of allocations. The Order of Priorities will be used and thereafter a ballot to determine allocations.

5.4. Children with Additional Support Needs

- 5.4.1. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 provides the legal framework which underpins the system for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people. The Act places a duty on education authorities to make appropriate arrangements for identifying those

children for whose school education they are responsible, who may have additional support needs, including those at the pre-school stage. The duty also extends to include those children who are about to be provided with early learning and childcare.

5.4.2. Such applications shall be considered through the Early Years Intervention Group (Appendix 5) and allocated in line with the authority's Order of Priorities.

5.5. Reserved Places

5.5.1. In line with primary and secondary schools, the Director of Education may wish to hold a small number of places within an Early Learning and Childcare community in 'reserve'. The holding of 'reserve' places is on the legal basis that exists for primary and secondary school admissions.

5.5.2. The number of places to be held in reserve depends on a range of different factors. These 'reserve' places may be used to accommodate families moving in to the relevant community or children who may require a place at short notice, for example emerging child protection or other welfare issues.

5.5.3. The number of reserved place, if applied, will be kept as low as possible to ensure as many children as possible can be accommodated within a community. Where there are reserved places held, the number will be kept under regular review and utilised as necessary.

5.6. Enrolment

5.6.1. Where a provisional offer of a place is made, this place remains unconfirmed until the appropriate necessary documentary evidence has been submitted and approved. The authority retains the right to request further information when proof of either residency or eligibility is not satisfied.

5.6.2. The acceptance of a place within an establishment does not confer any additional priority should the parent/carer wish to submit a placing request for entry in to primary school. This applies even in cases in which a child attends a nursery class in a primary school and latterly seeks a place within that primary school.

5.7. Change of Circumstances

5.7.1. If a child's residency changes to one out with East Renfrewshire Council's boundary after the allocation of a place within a local authority establishment and the parent/carer wishes for the child to attend the allocated establishment, the ELC team must be advised of this in writing, The ELC team will consider this application in accordance with its procedures for the processing of applications and parents/carers will be advised of the outcome of the application to remain. In undertaking this the authority will look to work with the family to offer support in

terms of what is in the best interests of the child whilst ensuring fairness and consistency in operating the application procedures. This may include the child retaining the allocated place.

- 5.7.2. If a child's residency changes to out with East Renfrewshire and the family access their child's funded entitlement with a funded provider, the continuing attendance would be subject to the West Partnership's Cross Boundary Protocol (Appendix 6) and in line with Funding Follows the Child guidance. The Education Department should be contacted to make arrangements in these circumstances.

5.8. Unhappy with the Decision Making Process

- 5.8.1. All children will be offered a place to access their funded entitlement and every effort will be made to provide this within the Early Learning and Childcare Community and in line with the requested attendance patterns, fulfilling the authority's statutory duty.
- 5.8.2. Where a family is unhappy with the allocated funded entitlement, a new application can be made out with the normal application window (section 4.5) to seek an alternative space in another establishment. Such applications will be processed accordingly and places allocated if available.
- 5.8.3. There is no formal process for parents/carers wishing to appeal the decision making process and allocated establishment and operating model. Should applicants remain dissatisfied with the way in which their application has been processed, the authority's formal complaints process should be followed. Further details on the Council's complaints procedure is available from the Council's website.

6. Additional Information

6.1. Additional Hours

- 6.1.1. Additional hours may be available from establishments for parents/carers to purchase to supplement their existing funded entitlement. The availability of additional hours will vary depending on the allocation of places and therefore there is no guarantee that any additional hours will be available for purchase. Availability of additional hours is dependent on a range of factors, including physical and staffing capacity and may be subject to change. There is no guarantee of continuing provision of additional hours outwith the agreed term.
- 6.1.2. Individual establishments will advise on the availability of additional hours directly. Parents/carers should apply directly to the establishment with their request for additional hours.

6.1.3. Where the purchase of regular additional hours is agreed, parents/carers will sign a contract agreeing to East Renfrewshire Council's payment terms and conditions. The minimum purchase is one hour and all hours booked must be paid in advance.

6.1.4. The facility to purchase additional hours is on an ad-hoc basis and the availability is dependent on a range of factors, including physical and staffing capacity and may be subject to change. There is no guarantee of continuing provision of additional hours.

6.1.5. In all cases, persistent late collection or non-payment may result in the service being withdrawn.

6.1.6. As part of East Renfrewshire Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable children and families and its aim of providing access to affordable early childhood services, an exemption from payment may be applied. The application for this and agreement of would be through the Early Years Intervention Group (EYIG).

6.1.7. Full information on the Council's early learning and childcare charging for services is available from the Education Department.

6.2. Transport

6.2.1. There is no statutory duty for local authorities to provide transport for early learning and childcare.

Part 2 – Application and Admissions for Non-eligible Children Aged 2 and Under

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document outlines the Education Department's policy and procedure for receiving applications and allocating spaces to children aged 0-2 in early learning and childcare establishments where there exists no statutory funded entitlement.
- 1.2. There is no statutory early learning and childcare entitlement for all children under the age of 2 and only a limited numbers of 2 year olds are eligible for fully funded early learning and childcare, as defined by criteria set by the Scottish Government. The application and admission process for eligible 2 year old children is detailed in Part 1.

2. Context

- 2.1. Within East Renfrewshire Council there is limited local authority provision for children who do not have a funded entitlement, as defined by the Scottish Government.
- 2.2. Provision for children aged 0-2 is available in the following establishments:
 - Arthurlie Family Centre
 - Glen Family Centre
 - Isobel Mair Family Centre (ASN Only)
 - McCready Family Centre
- 2.3. Provision for children aged 2-3 is available in the following establishments:
 - Arthurlie Family Centre
 - Cart Mill Family Centre
 - Glen Family Centre
 - Isobel Mair Family Centre (ASN Only)
 - Madras Family Centre
 - McCready Family Centre

3. Application Process

- 3.1. Parents/carers wishing to apply for a place for a child aged under 3 without any existing eligibility for a place are required to complete an online application through the Council's website. Where the form cannot be completed online or where assistance is required, a paper version will be available from the Education Department.
- 3.2. There is no fixed application window and applications will be considered all year round.

- 3.3. Applicants will be required to provide documentary evidence to support their application. This will include evidence on the age of the child and their residence within East Renfrewshire (if applicable).
- 3.4. Given the limited number of establishments offering this provision, there is no requirement for families to only apply within their local Early Learning and Childcare Community.
- 3.5. All applications for Isobel Mair Family Centre must be made through the EYIG.

4. Decision Making Process

4.1. All decisions on the allocation of places within this age group will be taken in line with the identified order of priorities. All received applications will be granted one of the following priorities to determine how a decision will be taken on allocation:

- Priority 1 – Child Protection, Prevention, Looked After, Kinship Care and Additional Support Needs.
- Priority 2 – East Renfrewshire resident wishing to purchase a place.
- Priority 3 – Non-East Renfrewshire resident wishing to purchase a place.

4.2. Priority 1 Applications

- 4.2.1. Where a child is assessed as being priority 1, the case will be considered by the Early Years Intervention Group (EYIG) (Appendix). Referrals for individual children can be considered from education and partner agencies, with supporting assessment evidence using the GIRFEC National Practice Model.
- 4.2.2. The EYIG considers applications/referrals and determines allocations of resources including ELC places on a monthly basis.

4.3. Allocation Priority 2 and Priority 3 Applications

- 4.3.1. Applications under the remaining priorities will be considered following the allocation of priority 1 places by the EYIG. In addition, all 2 year olds with an eligibility to funded provision will be allocated a place in line with the process outlined in Part 1. Thereafter, where capacity allows priority 2 applications will be considered followed by priority 3. All applications will be considered by the Local Admissions Panel for Under 3s (LAP Under-3) which meets every 4 weeks.
- 4.3.2. Children who are 2 years old and not entitled to a funded early learning and childcare entitlement under the national criteria may still be given a funded place in a council nursery depending on the family circumstances and the needs of the child; however, such places are offered on a case-by-case basis and are heard by the EYIG.

4.3.3. Where remaining applicants are identified as the same priority, it may be necessary for a ballot to be conducted.

4.4. Enrolment

4.4.1. Where an offer of a place is made, this place remains provisional until the appropriate necessary evidence requirements have been submitted and approved. The authority retains the right to request further information when proof of residency is not satisfied.

4.4.2. The acceptance of a place within an establishment does not confer any additional priority should the parent/carer wish to submit an application for their funded entitlement.

4.5. Change in Circumstances

4.5.1. Should the residency of the child change, parents/carers are required to inform the establishment to ensure that the appropriate charging is in place.

4.5.2. Where the residency arrangements have changed, there is no guarantee that a place will continue to be provided and the application may be reassessed under the new priority.

East Renfrewshire Council
Early Learning & Childcare Communities
2020/21

Community 1: Newton Mearns G77	Community 2: Busby/Clarkston/Eaglesham G76
Calderwood Lodge Nursery Class Crookfur Family Centre Hazeldene Family Centre Isobel Mair Family Centre* Maidenhill Nursery Class Mearns Nursery Class St Cadoc's Nursery Class	Busby Nursery Class Carolside Nursery Class Cart Mill Family Centre Eaglesham Nursery Class Netherlee Nursery Class Overlee Family Centre (opening 2021)
Community 3: Giffnock/Thornliebank G46	Community 4: Barrhead/Neilston G78
Braidbar Nursery Class Giffnock Nursery Class Glenwood Family Centre Thornliebank Nursery Class	Arthurlie Family Centre Carlibar Family Centre Cross Arthurlie Nursery Class Madras Family Centre

*ASN Specific Provision

East Renfrewshire Council
Early Learning & Childcare Operating Models
2020/21

From August 2020 nursery classes offer two delivery models which equate to 30 hours per week over term time:

- **Core Hours:** 9am-3pm 5 days per week
- **Extended hours:** 8am-6pm 3 days per week

Family Centres offer two delivery models which equate to 23 hours and 45 minutes per week over 48 weeks:

- **Stretched A:**
 - 8am -12.45pm 5 days per week OR
 - 1pm - 5.45pm 5 days per week
- **Stretched B:**
 - 2 full days 8/8.30am-5.30/6.00pm AND
 - One half day 8am – 12.45pm or 1.15-6pm

Order of Priorities for Allocation of Eligible 2 Year Old Places within East Renfrewshire
Council Early Learning and Childcare Establishments

Effective for Session Commencing August 2021 and Beyond

For use when applications exceed available places

In the event that the number of applications received for a particular establishment and operating model combination is greater than the number of places available, the criteria below are used to allocate places and are listed in order of priority:

1. East Renfrewshire resident where one of the following conditions has been met: child protection, prevention, or additional support needs. *Automatic entry will be given to any child considered by the Social Work Department to be in need of protection, who is looked after by the authority, or whose admission will prevent reception in to care.*
2. East Renfrewshire resident where a sibling attends the establishment and will continue to do so in the next session.
3. East Renfrewshire resident where the child is part of a single parent/carer family and where it would be advantageous to the care and welfare of the child and/or family to attend the requested establishment.
4. East Renfrewshire resident with no other listed priority.
5. Non East Renfrewshire resident.

Please note:

The criteria will be applied in the order shown above. If for any category the number of requests exceeds the number of places available, the next succeeding criteria will be used to prioritise these requests and so on until all priority criteria have been exhausted. If, after this process, two or more requests cannot be distinguished as having priority, then a ballot will be held to allocate the places available. This ballot will be organised by the Local Admissions Panel (LAP).

Order of Priorities for Allocation of Eligible 3 and 4 Year Old Places within East Renfrewshire
Council Early Learning and Childcare Establishments

Effective for Session Commencing August 2021 and Beyond

For use when applications exceed available places

In the event that the number of applications received for a particular establishment and operating model combination is greater than the number of places available, the criteria below are used to allocate places and are listed in order of priority:

1. East Renfrewshire resident where one of the following conditions been met: child protection, prevention, or additional support needs. *Automatic entry will be given to any child considered by the Social Work Department to be in need of protection, who is looked after by the authority, or whose admission will prevent reception in to care.*
2. East Renfrewshire resident where a funded ELC place has been granted to support deferred entry to primary school.*
3. East Renfrewshire resident in pre-school year with no existing Early Learning and Childcare provision in place (*Note – this does not include families who have intentionally left an existing allocation*).
4. East Renfrewshire resident residing within the Early Learning and Childcare Community of the establishment.
5. East Renfrewshire resident where a sibling attends the establishment and will continue to do so in the next session.
6. East Renfrewshire resident where the child is part of a single parent/carer family and where it would be advantageous to the care and welfare of the child and/or family to attend the requested establishment.
7. East Renfrewshire resident with no other listed priority.
8. Non East Renfrewshire resident.

Please note:

The criteria will be applied in the order shown above. If for any category the number of requests exceeds the number of places available, the next succeeding criteria will be used to prioritise these requests and so on until all priority criteria have been exhausted. If, after this process, two or more requests cannot be distinguished as having priority, then a ballot will be held to allocate the places available. This ballot will be organised by the Local Admissions Panel (LAP).

* This is based on the current national approach and will be updated in line with any changes to the policy outlined by the Scottish Government.

Appendix 5

Early Years Intervention Group (0-3)

Appendix 6

Early Years Intervention Group (Additional Educational Support 0-5)

Appendix 7

West Partnership Cross Boundary Protocol 2020/21

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EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE LOCAL ADMISSIONS PANEL: GUIDANCE FOR ALLOCATION OF NURSERY PLACES FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-3 YEARS.

RATIONALE

East Renfrewshire Council ensures that the allocation of nursery provision for children aged 0-3 years of age is fair and proportionate to meet the needs of children and families.

The education department will nominate an officer from the department to chair the Local Admissions Panel (LAP) to manage allocations. This panel will consist of Heads of Establishment and central administration staff.

This guidance sits within the context of the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* and the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014* and it acknowledges the significance of children's rights, within the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989*:

UNCRC Article 18.3: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

PROCESS

1. All applications must go through the central admin team, including those for children aged 0-2 years of age, as these will only be processed and allocated via the LAP. Individual establishments must not allocate places out with this process. Pertinent details will be recorded on the admissions system. **In order that admin staff have time to prepare it is important that head teachers submit any applications two weeks before the LAP meeting.** The agenda will be shared with all panel members, highlighting all eligible two year old children one week prior to each LAP. No late applications will be considered until the following month.
2. The administration team will ensure all information required for the meeting is detailed and will follow up with parents / carers if any information is missing, including proof of benefits or any eligibility criteria. If an application is incomplete or does not have proof of benefits it will not be considered and will be moved back to the next LAP meeting. This will support effective decisions made by the panel and will avoid applications being deferred to the next panel meeting.
3. When parents approach an establishment to complete an application form this must be checked for accuracy and proof of benefits completed. This must then be scanned and emailed to the admin team. Where parents of eligible two year olds approach an establishment, staff should offer support to complete the application form, check and include proof of benefits and scan and email to the admin team.
4. The LAP meeting will take place on the last Thursday of each month during term time and will follow on from the Early Years Intervention Group (EYIG). This will ensure any children who have not been allocated through the EYIG are considered through the LAP meeting. This may include parents whose children meet the eligibility criteria for two year old places or those who would be required to pay.
5. Children who already attend an establishment in a 0-2 placement must complete an application form and provide proof of benefits if they are eligible for a two year old place. They will be entitled to 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (pro rata) from the term after their second

birthday, although where space allows they may be given an earlier start date. Spaces will be allocated using Family Centre delivery models Stretched A and Stretched B. If a parent wishes a child to access additional hours these must be paid for or referred through EYIG.

6. Head Teachers, or their representatives must come to the meeting with clear information on available spaces for children aged 0-3. This will ensure that business can be concluded and avoids delays in the process. The following members are expected to attend as *appropriate to referrals*:

Head of Centre, McCreedy Family Centre
Head of Centre, Glen Family Centre
Head Teacher, Isobel Mair Family Centre
Head Teacher, Arthurlie Family Centre
Head Teacher, Cart Mill Family Centre
Head Teacher, Neilston Primary/Madras Family Centre

7. The panel will consider applications and allocate those where families meet any eligibility criteria using the priority criteria and banding system detailed below. Families will be offered their preferred choice of establishment in order of first, second and third options, dependent on availability. Where demand exceeds places available a ballot will be held.
8. The panel should consider the dates of birth of children who are about to turn two years of age in terms of timescales from application to allocation of a place. For example, it would be reasonable to allocate a child who was one year and ten months at the date of the meeting as time will be required for parents to be notified and a home visit completed.
9. In the case of an eligible two year old, their start date would be on or after their second birthday for those with birthdays from August to February, children with birthdays from 1st March until the start of term will begin at the start of the new term in August. Head teachers should consider bringing applications a month earlier where there may be issues with timescales on the months the panel does not meet, e.g. December. It would be reasonable to include children who are one year and nine months or thereabout.

“2 year olds from households where a parent or carer is in receipt of certain benefits will be eligible from the first term after their second birthday; or, the first term after the parent starts receiving those benefits. Those 2 year olds will remain entitled to early learning and childcare regardless of whether the parent in their household remains on those benefits or not.” <https://www.gov.scot/publications/early-learning-childcare-statutory-guidance>

10. It is important that the panel allocate all eligible two year old children before any other children are considered. Children should be offered their entitlement of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare in each year that they are eligible and a pro rata amount for each part of a year in which they are eligible. The administration team must contact parents if there is any doubt about eligibility criteria and parents / carers will only be allocated a place when evidence of benefit entitlement has been received. Places will follow the family centre delivery models of Stretched A and Stretched B.
11. All other children should be considered in age groups, i.e. 0-2 and 2-3, as above if there are more children than spaces then a ballot will be held. **HEAD TEACHERS MUST ENSURE THAT ANY PLACE OFFERED TO FAMILIES ON A PAID BASIS IS NOT TO THE DETRIMENT OF**

ELIGIBLE CHILDREN. THIS MUST BE CAREFULLY MONITORED.

12. When allocating paid spaces to families who have children under two, parents must be advised in writing that there will be no guarantee that their child will be able to take up a two year old place. This is to ensure that sufficient spaces are available for new eligible two year old applications.
13. If any applications are not allocated at the LAP meeting, parents should be informed that their application was unsuccessful. Central administration staff will communicate with parents who have been unsuccessful and establish if they wish their child to be considered at the next LAP Meeting. These applicants will not have any more of a priority than new applications.
14. All decisions will be documented by the central admin staff and will be updated on the central database to enable accurate monitoring and reporting to Scottish Government, with a particular emphasis on eligible two year olds.

ALLOCATION

15. The administration team will share a brief minute of the meeting with office staff in relevant establishments who will have responsibility of ensuring accurate records are held of each child's place. This will include details of any eligibility or entitlement and any fees due as a result of placement in the early learning and childcare setting.
16. Head Teachers will be responsible for communicating with successful applicants and allocating a place, with relevant start date as soon as possible after the meeting (within 5 working days). The Early Learning and Childcare Administration Team will keep a record of all eligible two year olds who are allocated a place.
17. Arrangements for starting early learning and childcare; and, stopping in relation to starting school, are set out under the Provision of Early Learning and Childcare (Specified Children) (Scotland) Order 2014.

First term after the child's 2nd or 3rd birthday means the following:

Where a child's birthday falls on or between the following dates:	The child will become eligible from the school terms set out below:
1 March – 31 August	August (autumn term) occurring in that year
1 September – 31 December	January (spring term) following their birthday
1 January – last day February	March/ April (summer term) following their birthday

18. In practice many settings will be able to offer children a start date nearer their 2nd birthday, however where a two year old turns three between 1 March and the start of the school term they will not begin their three year old placement until the start of the new term in August. If a paying child turns three in March they will continue to pay until August when their 3 year old entitlement begins.

Priority Criteria

Criteria	Detail	Free spaces
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children in need of protection (including kinship care) • children with additional support needs assessed by psychological services • households where parents get qualifying benefits (see below) 	Yes

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2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Renfrewshire children who don't qualify under priority 1 	Charged at £2.25 per hour within a family centre
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who don't live in East Renfrewshire 	Charged at £2.25 per hour within a family centre.

Eligible Criteria for Two Year Olds under Priority 1

Parents in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit and income is £16,105 or less
- tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and income is £7,320 or less
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with household take-home pay, is £610 a month or less

The Scottish Government have plans to include children of care experienced parents within the eligibility criteria, more guidance on this will follow.

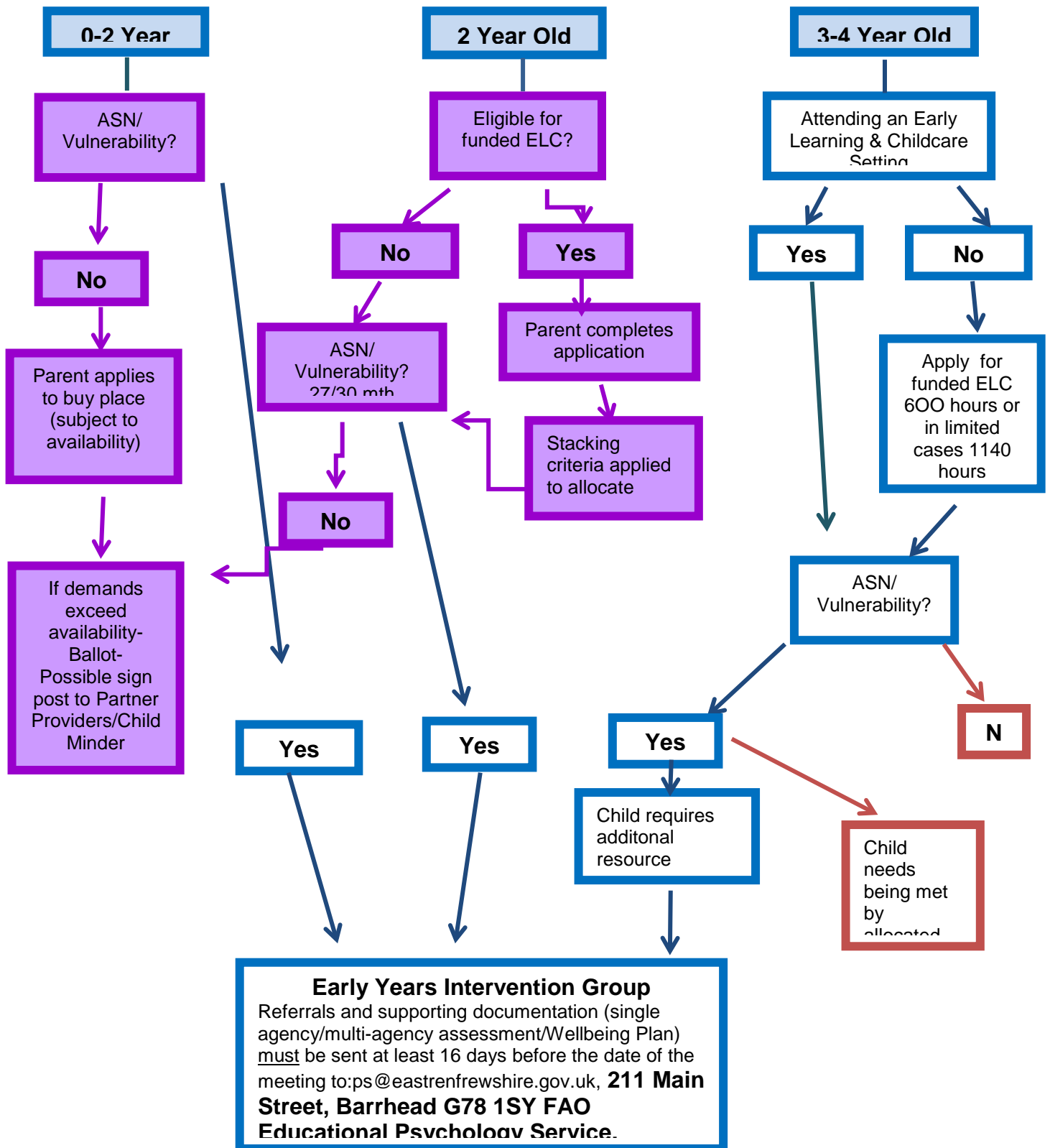
Within Priority 1 and 2, the highlighted stacking criteria may be used, to support effective allocation of places to support early intervention and prevention.

Once Priority 1 children have been allocated a place a **ballot may be necessary** if the number of applications received is greater than the number of places available. The ballot for all establishments will take place at the panel meeting.

Band	Criteria
A	Child protection, Prevention, Looked After and Additional Support Needs
B	Children from households who are in receipt of the following benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support • Jobseeker's Allowance • Employment and Support Allowance • Incapacity benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance • Pension Credit • Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and household income is less than £16,105* • Maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit and household income is below £6,420* <i>*The income thresholds for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit can vary annually</i>
C	Children for whom English is an Additional Language.
D	Children whose parents are returning to training or work.

Date: October 2020

Local Admissions Panel pathway highlighted in purple.



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Model for Allocating Additional Educational Support for Children Aged 0-5 years

RATIONALE

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 provides the legal framework which underpins the system for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people. The underpinning Code of Practice (Scottish Government, 3rd Edition 2017) defines the factors which may give rise to additional support needs as:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Disability or health need
- Social and emotional

The Act places a duty on education authorities to make appropriate arrangements for identifying those children for whose school education they are responsible, who may have additional support needs, including those at the pre-school stage. The duty also extends to include those children who are about to be provided with early learning and childcare education; in practical terms those who are under 3 years of age.

The Children and Young People Act places duties on local authorities to *Get it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC). Two of the 10 core components of the GIRFEC approach are for agencies to have:

- A coordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, and agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the *Wellbeing Indicators*; and,
- Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that lead to the right help at the right time

These components are at the heart of East Renfrewshire's approach to allocating additional educational resources for our youngest children.

Legal definition of additional support needs

1. -(1) A child or young person has additional support needs for the purposes of this Act where, for whatever reason, the child or young person is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided for the child or young person.

(1A) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), a child or young person has additional support needs if the child or young person is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (c.36)).

(1B) But where, in the course of identifying (in accordance with the arrangements made by them under section 6(1)(b)) the particular additional support needs of a child or young person who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (c.36)), an education authority form the view that the child or young person is, or is likely to be, able without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided to or to be provided for the child or young person, subsection (1A) ceases to apply."

<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/>

MODEL

The department has established a multi-agency process to ensure resources, including Early Learning and Childcare, are allocated equitably to support children aged 0-5 years and their families.

Process

1. A multi-agency group, known as the Early Years Intervention Group, led by the Education Department is attended by a range of partners who come together to discuss referrals and allocate resources accordingly.

Membership of the group:

Early Years Prevention Officer (Chair)
 Depute Principal Educational Psychologist (Vice Chair)
 Team Manager, Health Visiting Team (HSCP)
 Health Visitor Team Lead (HSCP)
 Head Teacher (Arthurlie Family Centre)

The following members will be asked to attend as *appropriate to referrals*:

Depute Head Teacher of Carlibar Communication Centre
 Head of Centre, McCready Family Centre
 Head of Centre, Glen Family Centre
 Head Teacher, Carlibar Primary School
 Head Teacher, Isobel Mair Family Centre
 Head Teacher, Cart Mill Family Centre
 Head Teacher, Neilston Primary/Madras Family Centre

3. A member of the Educational Psychology Service Administration team processes all applications; prepares the agenda and issues the minute for all meetings. They also maintain a database which allows referral data to be monitor and tracked. A member of the Early Learning and Childcare Administration team attend meetings to inform on the availability and record the allocation of places. Separate guidance has been prepared for the administration process.
4. The Early Intervention Group meets on a monthly basis for a half day to consider new referrals and discuss assessments. The group make recommendations based on robust assessment and all decisions are outcome focussed. Attendance at the group is dependent on the relevance of referrals.
5. The system draws upon existing strengths related to multi-agency working within family centres with a presumption that young children under 3 years of age are best supported by their family but that some will require additional support to be able to do this effectively. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014, introduced an entitlement to 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare for eligible two year olds if families are in receipt of specific benefits (Appendix 1). Children who are eligible for this provision should be referred directly to the Local Admissions panel unless family circumstances require a bespoke package of support.
6. When gaining consent from parents to make a referral to the Early Years Intervention Group, the referrer should ensure that they clearly explain the referral process, the information which

will be shared, and the membership of the group (Appendix 2).

7. Relevant referrals include needs arising from both disability and vulnerability. The 27 - 30 month developmental assessment carried out by health visitors forms an important part of the assessment information gathered in order to inform the allocation of educational resources or relevant referral. As the 13-15 month assessment is implemented, this too may lead to referrals for support from an education service.
8. Referrals follow the framework promoted by the national practice model and therefore, should include a single agency or integrated assessment, such as a wellbeing plan. The case information provided by the referrer must be robust and sufficient to allow the resource group to make decisions based on the facts presented.
9. The following referral processes should be followed when requesting educational psychology support or any other resource:
 - ❖ For children not currently in an educational provision where the referrer is requesting educational psychology support, the key personnel or lead professional should make the referral to the Early Years Intervention Group.
 - ❖ For children not currently in an educational provision, requesting any other resource the named person or lead professional should make the referral to the Early Years Intervention Group.
 - ❖ For children currently in an educational provision where there is a link educational psychologist and the referrer is requesting educational psychology support, the lead professional/key personnel should make the referral to the Joint Support Team (JST) meeting. If the JST agrees that a referral for direct educational psychology support is required then a referral should be made to the Educational Psychology Resource Group.
 - ❖ For children in an educational provision which does not have an ERC link educational psychologist then a referral requesting educational psychology support should be made to the Early Years Intervention Group.
 - ❖ For children currently in an educational provision requesting any other resource, the lead professional/ key personnel should make the referral to the Early Years Intervention Group following discussion and agreement at a Joint Support Team meeting (or other multi agency child planning forum). For children not currently in an educational provision, requesting any other resource the lead professional/ key personnel should make the referral to the Early Years Intervention Group.
10. The Educational Psychology Service will maintain a centralised database for children (aged 0 to 5 years) who have been referred to the Early Years Intervention Group for additional educational support.
11. The EYIG provides the forum for objective and solution focused discussion to determine the need for additional educational resource. Possible outcomes from referral to the EYIG include the following:
 - ❖ No additional resource required
 - ❖ Request for assistance from health services and/or social work
 - ❖ Family First
 - ❖ Further assessment/intervention from the Educational Psychology Service
 - ❖ Outreach services from family centres, including play visits
 - ❖ Home visiting teacher
 - ❖ Sensory support service
 - ❖ Outreach support from PSADU

- ❖ Assessment period within PSADU
- ❖ Placement within an ELC setting

12. Placements to family centres for children under 3 years are for 48 weeks and will generally follow the 1140 attendance models for family centres:

- Stretched A 5 x 4 hrs 45 minutes half day sessions (morning or afternoon)
- Stretched B 2 full days (9 & ½ hours) and one half day.

The minimum placement is 2 half days or one full day per week, this may not always manifest in children attending nursery, but could include outreach sessions from nursery staff working at home with the child / parent, and will include sessions in the nursery which parents / carers will be expected to attend, such as Family Day. Some children whose place was allocated prior to the introduction of 1140 hours in August 2020 may still have term time places which do not fit the 1140 model, these term time places should now be phased out.

13. It is the responsibility of all professionals working with a child and family to actively participate in planning and evaluation processes. If additional support is allocated by the Early Years Intervention Group, it is important that consideration is given to how such support (and other support provided to the child and family) is coordinated:

- ❖ Where children have lead professionals they should continue to coordinate all aspects of support planning, regardless of what additional support is provided by the resource group.
- ❖ Where children have no lead professional and are allocated placement within a family centre, then the family centre should coordinate support planning/evaluation.
- ❖ Where children have no lead professional and are allocated other educational support then the health visitor should coordinate support planning/evaluation.
- ❖ Where children are allocated outreach support or placement within the PSADU (and have no lead professional) then the child's mainstream nursery should continue to coordinate support planning/evaluation.

14. Decisions made will be noted and sent to the referrer. Partners in attendance have a duty to feedback to the appropriate service. For audit purposes any ELC placement will be confirmed with relevant setting.

15. Evaluation and review of the additional supports allocated by the Early Years Intervention Group will be led by the key personnel, lead professional, where appropriate, or head of the Early Learning and Childcare establishment. In line with duties under the ASL Act, all reviews should involve parents and children.

Note:

- ❖ Placement at the PSADU will be provided within the child's allocated nursery provision, as far as is reasonable practical. Where assessment and intervention within the PSADU is deemed appropriate, children will be offered a placement for a 12 week period. At the end of the 12 week period, support will be reviewed and recommendations will be referred back to the Early Years Intervention Group.
- ❖ Should emergency circumstance arise; heads of establishments have the ability to make decisions, if satisfied the case warrants an emergency placement. Emergency placements should only be granted where there are multiple risk factors and significant wellbeing concerns which require the child to be protected by immediate placement in an early learning and childcare setting. The referral and wellbeing plan validating this decision will be sent to the Early Years Intervention Group admin for auditing purposes prior to the next meeting.

TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION,

16. Referrals and supporting documentation (*single agency/multi-agency assessment/Wellbeing Plan*) **must** be sent at least 14 days before the date of the meeting to:
ps@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk, 211 Main Street, Barrhead G78 1SY FAO Educational Psychology Service.

Timeline:

2 year old placement	2-3 months prior to 2 nd Birthday
Eligible 2 year olds	Should be allocated through Local Admissions Panel (LAP)- if additional wellbeing concerns to be discussed via JST prior to any referral made to Early Intervention Group
Guaranteed 3-5 placement for children already attending 0-3 provision	February prior to the school session when the child is due to start their 3-5 placement
Referrals for holiday provision	September, February and May
Referrals to PSADU	November, February and May

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Early Intervention Group will monitor referrals and the quality of assessments and support referring professionals to make improvements to allow the group to make objective decisions in allocating resources. The group should keep the arrangements under review and evaluate its effectiveness in responding to needs through quantitative data and qualitative information based on:

- number of referrals (and re-referrals);
- evaluation of plans;
- impact of placements, outcomes achieved;
- feedback from reviews;
- views of group members;
- views of referees; and,
- views of parents and children.

Privacy notice – Early Years Intervention Group

Who will process your information?

The personal information you give to us whilst seeking assistance from the Early Years Intervention Group and any other personal information we hold about you in this context will be processed by East Renfrewshire Council, Eastwood Park Giffnock G46 6UG for the administration of the Early Years Intervention Group and any help or assistance they agree to offer you.

Why do we process your information?

Your information is processed to help us administer the Early Years Intervention Group, part of the Education department. Your information may also be shared with other departments within the council and other organisations for the same purposes and also to check the information we have is accurate and prevent and/or detect crime. Other organisations may include bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds, other councils, public sector agencies, government departments, private companies or partners we use to process information and distribution services for the issue of correspondence.

What is the legal basis for us to process your information?

The council processes your information in order to perform a task carried out in the public interest and also to fulfil its legal obligations to ensure proper administration of the council's financial affairs in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The law gives certain types of information special significance because of its sensitivity e.g. health information. If we process this type of information about you in relation to Education we do so on the basis that it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest.

Do you have to provide your information?

Early Years Intervention Group needs your information to allow them to make the best decision in light of your circumstances and work with you to improve the situation for your family.

How do we collect information about you?

Such information includes:-

Name of Child	Home Authority
Date of Birth	Name of Health Visitor
Address	Health Visitor Contact Details
Name of Referrer	SHANARRI indicators
Designation of Referrer	Desired Outcomes
Name of GP	Parental consent
GP Contact Details	

How long will we keep your information?

The council will hold your information from when you agree to their referral to the service until five years beyond them leaving school.

Who is your information shared with?

Your information will be accessed by council staff that need to do so to administer the Early Years Intervention Group and the services that run alongside it. Information is analysed internally in order to provide management information and inform future service delivery. Your information may also be shared with other departments within the Council. The council also generally complies with requests for specific information from other regulatory and law enforcement bodies where this is necessary and appropriate.

Do we transfer your information outside the UK?

In general we do not transfer personal information outside the UK.

Profiling and automated decision-making

Education does not use profiling or automated decision-making for administration.

Your rights

You have the right to be informed of the council's use of your information. This notice is intended to give you relevant information to meet this right.

Access personal data held about you:

You have the right to access personal information the council holds about you by making what is known as a subject access request. You can receive a copy of your personal data held by the council, details on why it is being held, who it has been or will be shared with, how long it will be held for, the source of the information and if the council uses computer systems to profile or take decisions about you.

1. Request rectification of your personal data
You have the right to request that the council corrects any personal data held about you that is inaccurate.
2. Request that the council restricts processing of your personal data
You have the right to request that the council restricts processing your personal data if you think the personal data is inaccurate, the processing is unlawful, the council no longer need the personal data but you may need it for a legal purpose or you object to the council processing for the performance of a public interest task.
3. To object to the processing of your data
You have the right to object to the council's use of your personal data. The council will have to demonstrate why it is appropriate to continue to use your data.

Complaints

If you have an issue with the way the council handles your information or wish to exercise any of the above rights in respect of your information you can contact the council's data protection officer by post at:

The Data Protection Officer
East Renfrewshire Council
Council headquarters
Eastwood Park
Giffnock
G46 6UG

or by email at DPO@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

You have the right to complain directly to the Information Commissioner's office (ICO).

The address of their head office is: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5EF Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Alternatively, you can report a concern via their website at www.ico.org.uk

The ICO also have a regional office at 45 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7HI

Telephone: 0303 123 1115 e-mail: scotland@ico.org.uk

While you can go directly to the ICO, the council would welcome an opportunity to address any issues you have in the first instance

Appendix 1

Eligible 2 year Leaflet

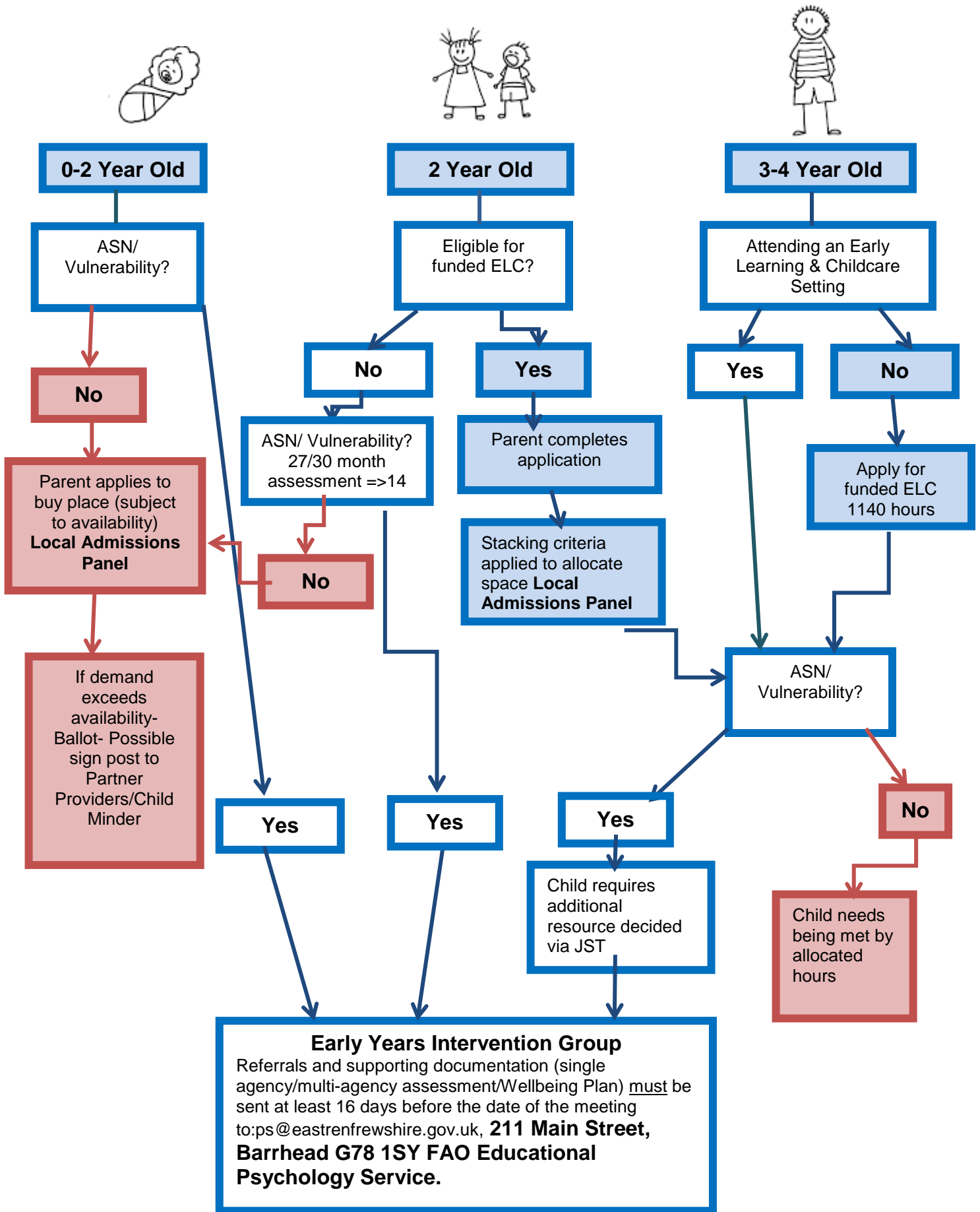


Appendix 2

GDPR Statement

The information you supply will be used by East Renfrewshire Council to administer the Early Years Intervention Group. We will use your information to verify your identity where required, contact you by post, email or telephone and to maintain our records. The council will use this information to perform a task carried out in the public interest. The information will be shared with our colleagues in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to provide this service and to protect public funds by preventing fraud. If you do not provide us with the information we have asked for them we will not be able to provide this service to you. We also need to process more sensitive personal information about you for reasons of substantial public interest as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. It is necessary for us to process it to carry out key functions as outlined by law. If you have provided anyone else's details on this form please make sure you have told them that you have given their information to East Renfrewshire Council. We only use this information to assess your entitlement to this service. You can find out more about how we handle this information and your rights in respect of it by going to www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/privacy. If you do not have access to a computer and wish a paper copy please ask the person making your referral to give you a copy.

Referral Pathways to the Early Years Intervention Group





Early Years Intervention Group
Guide for Allocating Education Resource



Name of Child		Date of Birth		Date of Early Years Intervention Group	
Name of Referrer					
Protective Factors (High Adversity)					

Child		Parent/carer	
Development indicates that appropriate nurture, care and stimulation are provided/strong loving attachment		Strong attachment with child /Caring skills	
Displays age appropriate development for age and stage		Emotional and developmental needs met by parent/carer	
Receives regular praise and encouragement		Effective parenting skills /appropriate care and guidance	
Healthy and thriving		Attends health care services and medical screenings when necessary /receives sufficient nutrition	
Lives in a warm nurturing home environment		Parents understand the primacy of the needs of the infant or child	
Contact with wider community		Community network- family, friends	
Risk factors (vulnerability/adversity)			
Child		Family	
Child protection register		Domestic Violence	
Looked After (at home)		Mental/Emotional Health	
Looked After (away from home)		Learning Difficulties	
Significant and/or complex ASN (disability/developmental)		Disability – parent or sibling	
Significant and/or complex ASN (vulnerability)		Pre/Post Natal Depression	
Motor needs		Severe financial stress	
Hearing Impairment/Visual Impairment		Parenting Skills	
Language and Communication Needs		Housing Problems	
Social and emotional needs		Homelessness	
Significant Care and welfare concerns		Nomadic or transient lifestyle	
Affected by drugs or alcohol		Parent in prison	
Attachment concerns		Asylum seeker	
Health needs		Limited social networks	
EAL		Physical Health (Illness)	
		Limited engagement with services	
		Caregiver bereavement	
		Single Parent	
Other :		Young mum (= or< 19 years at child's birth)	
		Care Leaver	
		Multiple births	
		3 or more children under 5	
		Parent returning to work	
Outcome- (Resource Required)			

Multiple Risk Factors: Child would be protected by placement within an early learning and childcare setting	
Multiple Risk Factors: Child/family would benefit from placement within an early learning and childcare setting as a result of significant wellbeing concerns	
Moderate Risk Factors: Child/family would benefit from increased support in their current early learning and childcare setting	
Moderate Risk Factors: Child/family would benefit from targeted support in the home and/or community	
Minimum Risk Factors: Child/family would benefit from further assessment	
Low Risk Factors: Child/ family is not a priority for additional educational support	

Admin use only

Name of ELC setting:				Date support provided from:			
AM placement (core hours)		Full time placement (state days)		Holiday placement		Lunchtime placement	
PM placement (core hours)		Term time		52 week placement		Wraparound (give details)	



Appendix 5

The information you supply will be used by East Renfrewshire Council to administer the Early Years Group. We will use your information to verify your identity where required, contact you by post, email or telephone and to maintain our records. The council will use this information to perform a task carried out in the public interest. The information will be shared with our colleagues in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to provide this service and to protect public funds by preventing fraud. If you do not provide us with the information we have asked for them we will not be able to provide this service to you. We also need to process more sensitive personal information about you for reasons of substantial public interest as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. It is necessary for us to process it to carry out key functions as outlined by law. If you have provided anyone else's details on this form please make sure you have told them that you have given their information to East Renfrewshire Council. We only use this information to assess your entitlement to this service. You can find out more about how we handle this information and your rights in respect of it by going to www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/privacy. If you do not have access to a computer and wish a paper copy please ask the person making your referral to give you a copy.

Referral -Early Years Intervention Group

Name of child:	_____	Date of Birth:	_____
Address/postcode:	_____	Home Authority:	_____
Name of referrer:	_____	Date of referral	_____
Designation:	_____	Contact details:	_____
Name of GP:	_____	Health Visitor:	_____
Contact details:	_____	Contact details:	_____

1. What wellbeing concerns have been identified for this child?

Please highlight the appropriate SHANARRI wellbeing indicator/s below:

Safe Healthy Achieving Nurtured Active Respected Responsible Included

2. What are the desired outcomes for the child/family?

3. What additional educational support do you think the child and family require?

Further assessment/intervention from the Educational Psychology Service	
Family First Support	
Outreach services from PSADU	
Sensory Support Service	
Home or community support for families	
Placement within PSADU	
New placement within an early learning and childcare (ELC) setting	
Increase to allocated ELC placement	
Please state the name of the ELC setting (where relevant)	

4. Has the child's parent / carer given consent?

Yes No

It is essential that the parent/carer has been made aware of the following:

- agencies represented at the EYIG
- information contained in this referral will be shared with the members of the PRG and any educational services offered. The case will be regularly reviewed and the educational support or placement may change as a result
- staff from the receiving service/nursery will carry out a home visit, where appropriate

Referrer's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/carer's signature: _____ Date: _____

Please send the completed referral form AND the child's most recent single agency/multi agency assessment and wellbeing plan to the Assessment Team at:

- Psychological Service, 211 Main Street, Barrhead, G78 1SY or ps@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Office Use Only

Check postcode using <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020v2-data-zone-look-up/>

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West Partnership

Cross Boundary Funding Protocol

Session 2020/21

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Update: August 2020

Cross Boundary Inter - Authority Funding Protocol

For parents/carers that are requesting information on Cross Boundary Funding for children aged 2 and 3-5 years placed in Private and Voluntary Funded Provisions

Rationale

“Funding Follows the Child remains the long-term policy framework that will support the delivery of funded ELC, and has been agreed by both Scottish Government and COSLA.

It is expected that local authorities will continue to use the principles and criteria of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard as a framework to shape local funded ELC delivery.

This means placing choice in parents’ and carers’ hands, allowing them to access their child’s funded ELC entitlement from any setting – in the public, private or third sector, including a childminder – who meets the National Standard, has a place available and is willing to enter into a contract with their local authority.

Choice must not be restricted by local authority boundaries, however the overall level of choice available in each local authority may vary depending on local capacity and prevailing public health guidance.”

(Funding Follows the Child, Interim Guidance, Scottish Government, August 2020)

Purpose of Protocol

Prior to Covid-19 the Scottish Government and local authorities within the West Partnership committed to increasing the early learning and childcare (ELC) funded entitlement from 600 to 1140 hours per year from August 2020 for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds.

As a consequence of Covid-19 the statutory duty to provide 1140 hours was delayed, however almost all West Partnership local authorities are moving to this offer for parents from August 2020, with the aim of providing high quality, flexible early learning and childcare that is accessible and affordable for families and supports their recovery from the pandemic.

In order to ensure that the funded ELC entitlement is delivered in high quality settings, it was the intention of the Scottish Government to introduce a Funding Follows the Child approach from August 2020. This approach is 'provider neutral' and is underpinned by The National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare and all settings who are funded providers - regardless of whether they are in the public, private, third sector, or childminders will meet.

The criteria in the National Standard focus on what children and their families should expect from their Early Learning and Childcare experience, regardless of where they access their funded entitlement.

The Scottish Government is keen that the principles of the Funding Follows the Child approach are implemented from August 2020. The West Partnership endeavour to do so, where physical and financial capacity allows.

A significant number of parents / carers are opting for this level of flexibility and choice to meet childcare and family requirements; in particular they are requesting early learning and childcare funding from a local authority that they are not resident in. For clarity of purpose we will refer to these authorities as host authorities.

The duty for providing early learning and childcare lies with the authority where a child lives. These authorities are referred to as **resident authorities**.

Host authorities will continue to accept funding requests from non-residents. **Glasgow City Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council and North Lanarkshire Council** have collaborated to produce clear guidelines and protocol that would support the spirit of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Early Learning and childcare and provide **parents/carers** and families with the opportunity to make such a funding request.

Procedure

Please Note:

Resident Authority:	authority parent/carer and child live in.
Host Authority:	authority in which your child attends nursery.
All Funded Providers:	private, voluntary, 3 rd sector and childminders in contract with the host authority to provide funding

1. Parents/carers can ask a funded provider working in partnership with any of the named authorities to make a request on their behalf to the host local authority of a child for early learning and childcare funding. The funded provider must be in partnership with the host local authority. The timing of this request should be considered to ensure it complies with existing host local authority timelines for allocating funding to funded providers (details of which can be obtained from individual local authorities).
2. An **West Partnership Cross Boundary Admission Group** inclusive of representatives from all participating local authorities will meet in May each year to review funding requests and agree levels of cross boundary funding for the new session commencing August. Funding requests will be granted in the first instance on a reciprocal basis: i.e. the resident authority will match the host authority with funding requests, therefore eliminating the need for payment between local authorities.
3. Where there is an imbalance of number of children placed between host and resident authorities; negotiation will take place to agree the level of cross boundary funding, with payment rates being invoiced at the rate of the host authority.
4. Inter Authority Cross Boundary Funding requests submitted to the Host Authority before 28 February will be agreed at the Inter Authority Cross Boundary Admissions Group in May of each year and further requests (late) will be considered by individual local authorities throughout the year when received.
5. Host authorities will notify their funded providers of the outcome of their request. After which, funded providers or local authorities (depending on resident authority local protocol) will notify parents/carers of the decision.
6. To ensure all local authorities work to provide best value they will closely monitor the number of children attending their funded providers, ensuring careful management of both physical and financial capacity.

7. Parents/carers should be made aware that successful funding requests will commence the month after the child's 3rd birthday, irrespective of the Admission Policy of the resident authority. Returning children remaining with a funded provider will not be required to make a further request. However funded providers must follow the host authorities application process and ensure that information in respect of returning children is available for discussion at the Inter Authority Cross Boundary Admission Group meeting.

All eligible 2, 3 and 4 years olds will become eligible for cross boundary funding as follows:

If your child is born on or between:	They will be eligible for a funded early learning & childcare place from:
March to August	Autumn term (August)
September	October
October	November
November	December
December	January
January	February
February	March

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

Children aged 2 years are eligible for a funded place if a parent is in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit and income is £16,105* or less
- Child tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and income is £7,320* or less
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with household take-home pay, is £610 a month or less

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.

** 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.*

Inter Authority Cross Boundary Process Timeframe

- End of May: **Inter Authority Cross Boundary Admission Group**
 - sharing funding request information
 - agreeing funding requests
- End of June: **Parents/carers** informed of funding request outcome
- End January/
Beginning February: **Inter Authority Invoicing** for Term 1 and Term 2 of current session
(current financial year)
- June: **Inter Authority Invoicing** for Term 3 of current session
(following financial year)

**Due to the global Covid pandemic the timeline for session 2020/2021 has been delayed by approximately 3 months.*

Quality Assurance

This National Standard will ensure families across the West Partnership can expect a consistent, high-quality, approach to ELC provision, reflecting national policy priorities. To obtain partnership status within the West Partnership all funded providers must demonstrate meeting of the National Standard. In addition Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate complement internal quality assurance systems within each local authority.

Financial Implications

This Protocol is written in an attempt to minimise the administrative burden of Inter Authority Cross Boundary Funding whilst maximising parental choice in where a child is placed. Every attempt will be made to have reciprocal arrangements where there is a balance of children in and out of an education authority area. However, it is recognised that on occasions there may be an imbalance of funding requests between local authorities. This Protocol is designed to facilitate discussion and agreement and to ensure neither host nor resident authorities are held liable for funding. It should be noted that this agreement is made within the confines of resident local authority budgets. No additional funding will be charged without this formal agreement and as such **parents/carers and funded providers** should be made fully aware of this Protocol.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Host authorities will continually monitor the children attending funded provider settings, reporting any discrepancies to the resident authority immediately.

Where it is apparent that parents/carers are receiving funded hours in both the resident and host authority, the parent/carer will be liable for any charges incurred by the host authority.

In order to review and continually improve the West Partnership Cross Boundary Protocol, The West Partnership Early Learning and Childcare Early Years Network will evaluate this protocol for each nursery session.

DRAFT

Funded Provider Process for Cross Boundary Funding

Funded Provider must communicate directly with parent/carer: the process and timeline for Cross Boundary Funding Follows the Child Requests

Submission of Cross Boundary Funding Request:
Information to their local authority –
(NAMS or resident Council process applies)
Submission must include all information as requested as part of
the “funding follows the child” request

Local Authority takes Cross Boundary Funding Request to Inter Authority Cross Boundary Admission Group and informs Funded Provider of the funding start date.

Funded Provider communicates the outcome of Cross Boundary Funding request to parent/carer in accordance with Host Authority process.

APPROVED

Place allocated and must be in line with the Inter Authority Cross Boundary Funding Protocol

All Cross Boundary Funding Requests must be presented at the Inter Authority Cross Boundary Funding Admissions Group.

**Please note:
Funded Provider should only starts a child in setting when “funding follows the child” has been confirmed.**

Appendix 3

XXXX Nursery

Parent / Carer's name and address

Date

Cross Boundary Funding Request: “Funding follows the child” Session 2020/2021.....

Early Learning and Childcare: Child's Name and Nursery

1Thank you for your Cross Boundary Funding request for Session 2020 / 2021. I have passed on your request to XXXXX (insert Local Authority). Your request will be considered in accordance with their Cross Boundary Agreement with XXXXXX (insert Local Authority) and confirmation of your “funding follows the child” request will be communicated to you by August 2020.

Should you have any questions in respect of this request please do not hesitate in contacting me at the nursery.

Yours sincerely

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE12 November 2020Report by Director of EducationELIGIBILITY TO CLOTHING GRANTS**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek elected member approval for a School Clothing Grant policy and extension of the qualifying criteria for the Clothing Grant to include Council Tax Reduction (CTR) as an indicator of eligibility.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Elected members are asked to:
- (a) approve the School Clothing Grant policy and the inclusion of Council Tax Reduction as a qualifying criteria for payment; and
 - (b) homologate the decision of the Director of Education to include Council Tax Reduction as a criterion for School Clothing Grant.

BACKGROUND

3. School Clothing Grant provides assistance to low income families in meeting the costs of essential clothing and shoes for children attending school. It is an annual award of £100 per child in a qualifying household. In most cases, the award is paid during the summer holiday to assist families with buying clothing ahead of the new school year. In September 2018, a national minimum amount of £100 was agreed between the Scottish Government and COSLA to ensure consistency in the grant provided across the country.

4. Applications for School Clothing Grants are made online through the Council's website. Applications can be checked against existing records to determine eligibility and ensure that customers do not have to submit additional information where it is not required. In many cases where continuing eligibility can be demonstrated, the School Clothing Grant can be rolled over in to subsequent years to ensure families are able to access this annual payment without the need for reapplication.

5. Eligibility for the School Clothing Grant remains a decision for each individual local authority. There are a range of different qualifying criteria for the School Clothing Grant currently accepted within East Renfrewshire. These can include:

- Employment and Support Allowance;
- Income Support;
- Job Seekers Allowance;
- Certain amounts of Child and/or Working Tax Credits;
- Housing Benefit; Universal Credit; and
- Support for asylum seekers.

It should be noted that there are specific income requirements for the School Clothing Grant and further information on this is available from the [Council's website](#).

6. There are currently approximately 2,200 pupils across schools in East Renfrewshire in receipt of a School Clothing Grant.

REPORT

7. School Clothing Grants, in addition to Free School Meal entitlements, are currently administered by the business support team within Corporate & Community Services on behalf of the Education Department. The business support team use the existing revenues & benefits system to carry out this function. This system is being replaced later this year. When the new system has been implemented, the administration of free school meals and clothing grants will be undertaken by the Revenues and Benefits team. The current qualifying criteria and process for applying for the School Clothing Grant has developed over time through custom and practice and currently there is no existing formal policy for the administration of this important benefit.

8. A proposed policy is set out as Appendix 1 to this report. This policy document formalises the current practice and sets out a clear policy and procedure.

9. In April 2013, Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was abolished and replaced with the new Council Tax Reduction (CTR) across Scotland. While CTB had been a DWP-administered benefit, CTR is determined by individual local authorities and is a direct reduction in the Council Tax charge individual households are asked to pay. CTR continues to have many of the same qualifying criteria as the previous CTB but is instead administered locally.

10. As a DWP-administered benefit, CTB had previously been included as a qualifying criteria for School Clothing Grant, with recipients often being in receipt of other linked benefits. Given that these other benefits also awarded entitlement to the School Clothing Grant, when CTB was replaced with CTR, it was not considered necessary to also add this as a qualifying benefit. In effect, the qualifying benefits a household would require to be eligible for CTR would in themselves award an entitlement to School Clothing Grant so the duplication was not required.

11. The Council has seen a significant increase in the number of applications for CTR in recent months as a result of the financial hardship being experienced by families exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic with many families requiring additional support, often for the first time.

12. A total of 12 applications had been received for School Clothing Grant by way of CTR entitlement and had been placed on hold due to the uncertainty over the qualifying criteria. In seeking to support these families, the Director of Education agreed to award School Clothing Grant based on CTR, with the School Clothing Grant policy to be updated and formalised for consideration by elected members. In considering the policy as attached, elected members are asked to homologate the decision to include Council Tax Reduction as an additional qualifying criteria for the School Clothing Grant. This would ensure that families in receipt of CTR but who may not be in receipt of other benefits can still access this grant and brings East Renfrewshire Council in to line with many neighbouring authorities.

13. In seeking to support families and tackle the impact of poverty and the cost of the school day, this small change will ensure that all eligible families can benefit without delay.

14. The Education Department is continuing to work closely with the Revenues and Benefits team to improve access to School Clothing Grant amongst other benefits to ensure all families who are entitled to this can receive it. A new IT system is in the final stages of deployment within Revenues and Benefits and will offer enhanced opportunities to explore auto-entitlements and data matching to improve access and take up of this important additional grant for families with low income. In addition, the new system will ensure that assessments of entitlement can be improved, ensuring that only eligible applicants are approved in a timely manner.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

15. In the short-term, the decision to include CTR as a qualifying criteria for the School Clothing Grant will have very limited financial implications and the additional payments can be met from within the existing budgets.

16. The Education Department will continue to work with Revenues and Benefits to monitor the additional applications coming forward, the net impact of this on available budget and if necessary it will be considered as part of a future annual revenue budget process.

CONCLUSION

17. School Clothing Grants remain an important benefit to support lower income families in meeting the additional costs of essential new school clothing and shoes. While based previously on custom and practice, the development of a formalised policy will streamline practice in the administration of School Clothing Grants and provide clarity to customers on the process, practice and criteria for applying.

18. The addition of Council Tax Reduction as a qualifying criteria replaces the discontinued Council Tax Benefit scheme and ensures that we maximise the number of lower income families who can benefit from the School Clothing Grant in future.

RECOMMENDATION

19. Elected members are asked to:

- (a) approve the School Clothing Grant policy and the inclusion of Council Tax Reduction as a qualifying criteria for payment; and
- (b) homologate the decision of the Director of Education to include Council Tax Reduction as a criterion for School Clothing Grant.

Report Author

Graeme Hay, Education Senior Manager (Leading Business Change)
Tel: 0141 577 3217
Graeme.Hay@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Convener Contact Details

Councillor Paul O'Kane, Convener for Education and Equalities Tel: Mobile 07718 697115

Local Government Access to information Act 1985

School Clothing Grant Policy & Procedure Document

1. Background

- 1.1. School Clothing Grants are administered by East Renfrewshire Council to provide families with financial support in meeting the costs of essential clothes and shoes for children to attend school.
- 1.2. This document sets out the nature of and the eligibility criteria for the School Clothing Grant and the application and awarding process. This document will be used by both the Education Department and Corporate and Community Services to administer the School Clothing Grant.

2. School Clothing Grant

- 2.1. The School Clothing Grant is an annual payment made to eligible families to support with the costs of essential shoes and clothing for children to attend school. The majority of payments are made during the summer months to provide families with financial support in purchasing a new uniform for the forthcoming school year.
- 2.2. The School Clothing Grant is currently a single annual payment of £100 per child in each eligible household. Families will receive a £100 payment for each child attending school (primary and secondary). The minimum value of the grant is set nationally, agreed between the Scottish Government and COSLA, and is subject to review every two years.
- 2.3. There are no restrictions on the use of the School Clothing Grant with families being able to use the money to best suit their own needs.

3. Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1. East Renfrewshire Council is responsible for determining the eligibility criteria for the awarding of the School Clothing Grant. Any changes to the criteria can be agreed by local decision making structures subject to budget.

3.2. The current eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Employment & Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based)
- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit with a gross annual household income of less than £16,105 for 2019/20 as assessed on your 2020/21 HMRC tax credits award letter (TC602)
- Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit with a gross annual household income of less than £16,105 but above £7,330 for 2019/20 as assessed on your 2020/21 HMRC tax credits award letter (TC602)
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with a gross annual household income of less than £7,330 for 2019/20 as assessed on your 2020/21 HMRC tax credits award letter (TC602)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Housing Benefit
- Universal Credit (where your maximum monthly earned income from employment does not exceed £610)

- Council Tax Reduction (not single person or student discount)

3.3. The above criteria are based on the current (November 2020) criteria and will be updated annually in line with national uplifts as reflected in other benefit awards.

3.4. The Director of Education will retain the right to make discretionary awards of School Clothing Grant in extenuating circumstances.

4. Application & Awarding

4.1. Applications for the School Clothing Grant should be made through the Council's website. This will ensure that applications are dealt with as quickly as possible. Where internet access is not available, applicants can speak with Customer First to request a physical application.

4.2. Where possible, East Renfrewshire residents' eligibility will be assessed through any existing benefit awards data held by the Council. Where this is not possible and for those who are non-East Renfrewshire residents, further information is required and applicants will be asked to submit evidence to support their application.

4.3. Successful applications will receive payment directly to their bank account normally within 15 days of receipt of the application where all the correct information has been supplied.

4.4. Where an application is made for a child subject to a successful placing request, payment will be made when the details have been verified by the school.

4.5. Where a pupil reaches S5, confirmation of their continuing attendance at school will be sought prior to the award of the School Clothing Grant. These details will be verified by the school.

4.6. The School Clothing Grant is an annual award based on current circumstances and any award does not confer a continuing eligibility beyond the current year. Where entitlement to a School Clothing Grant is based on a continuing eligibility to a benefit, the annual award may be rolled in to subsequent years where evidence to support entitlement is available to the Council. For grants made based on annual income, annual applications will require to be made to ensure continuing eligibility and payment of the award. Recipients will be contacted to make an annual application should this be required to ensure payment is only awarded where an eligibility exists.