



EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS





What is Funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)?

Eligible families can access up to 1140 hours of Scottish Government funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) each year for 3 and 4 year olds. Some 2 year olds are also eligible for funded early learning and childcare.

You can access:

- no less than 1 hour per day and
- no more than 10 hours per day.
- A maximum of 30 hours per week if taken over term time and 23 hours per week if taken over 50 weeks.
- No less than 38 weeks in a school year (August to June).
- No more than 50 weeks in a school year (August to July) – If you want to use less than 50 weeks, but more than 38 weeks then please advise your funded ELC provider when you intend to take the holiday weeks.

The benefits of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

- Children are encouraged to learn through play with other children.
- Children develop their language and social skills in a safe and fun environment.
- Families have more flexibility to organise their family life.
- Family members gain the opportunity to get back to work, study or training.
- Staff are trained to create opportunities for play and learning to help a child's all round development.
- All ELC centres provide education in line with Early Level Curriculum for Excellence.
- Learning opportunities will provide challenges and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence, and relevance.

Funding Start Dates

Your child's start date to funded early learning and childcare depends on their birthday.

Born Between	Eligible for funded hours from	Funded Hours based on start date
1 March to 31 August	Start of school session in August	1140 hours
1 September to 31 December	January	630 hours
1 January to last day in February	April (after the Easter holidays)	306 hours

Lunches and Snacks

The Scottish Government provides funding so that children accessing expanded ELC hours or are eligible for free school meals will receive a free meal if they access their funded place over the lunch time period.

In school settings, meals are provided through our catering service.

All our nursery menus are carefully planned to meet national nutritional standards set by the Scottish Government. Further details are available on [our nursery school meals](#) webpages.

Our funded providers also provide nutritious and healthy lunches. Please speak to them directly to see what they are able to offer.

All children who attend nursery for 2 or more hours a day receive a portion of milk or where milk cannot be consumed a non-dairy alternative drink and a healthy snack (a serving of fresh fruit or vegetables) as part of the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme.

[Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme - Maternal and child health - gov.scot](#)

Eligible children who attend nursery for full days also receive a funded afternoon snack.

Split Placements

You also have the opportunity when completing the enrolment application form to apply to use hours at up to 3 different settings every week.

Holiday Cover

You have the opportunity when completing the enrolment application form to apply to use hours at one setting during term time and another during holidays. To enable the funded hours to last more than 38 weeks (Term Time) the number of hours used per week is reduced, unless you want to pay for the hours during the holidays.

Deferred Entry

- Children do not have to start Primary 1 until the year after they turn 5 years old.
- Legislation changed from August 2023 meaning that children who have not had their 5th birthday by the time school starts in August, are entitled to another year of funded ELC.
- You can apply for a deferred entry using the ELC enrolment form.
- Please note there is a deadline for deferral applications of the **31 May**. After this date we cannot take any new or withdraw any already approved applications.
- If you are deferring, then you do not need to complete a P1 enrolment form unless you withdraw your ELC deferral form.

Where can my child access their ELC hours?

Eligible children can receive their funded hours entitlement with a school provider or one of our funded private and voluntary providers or one of our funded Childminders.

Funded ELC Providers	Contact Details	Funding Weeks Provider Offer
Berwickshire Catchment		
Duns Community Nursery	manager@dunscommunitynursery.com	50 weeks
Fogo Nursery	fogonursery@gmail.com	Term Time
Chirnside PS Nursery Hub	01890 818274	50 weeks
Coldstream PS Nursery	01890 882189	Term Time
Duns PS Nursery	01361 886140	Term Time
Greenlaw PS Nursery	01361 810254	Term Time
Swinton PS Nursery	01890 860237	Term Time
Donna Long Childminding	07740056522 or dlchildminding@yahoo.com	48 weeks
Adventure Begins....	01361883977 or 07976980342	50 weeks
Earlston Catchment		
Busy Bees Melrose	01896 820400	48 weeks
Cherrytrees Nursery Melrose	01896 820123 or marie.green@cherrytrees.email	48 weeks
East Green Nursery	eastgreennursery@yahoo.com	Term Time
The High Street Nursery - Lauder	kelly@thehighstreetnursery.com	50 weeks
Channelkirk PS Nursery	01578750242	Term Time
Earlston PS Nursery Hub	01835 825199	50 weeks
Gordon PS Nursery	01573410245	Term Time
Lauder PS Nursery	01578722346	Term Time

Melrose PS Nursery	01896822103	Term Time
Newtown PS Nursery	01835822263	Term Time
St Boswells PS Nursery	01835823252	Term Time
Blainslie Childminding	07766497876 or jennyerwin@btinternet.com	46 weeks
Lizzie Bizzie's Childminding	Lizziebizzie.minding@outlook.com or 07792995057	46 weeks
Westruther PS Nursery	01578 740271	Term Time
Eyemouth Cluster		
Highway Day Nursery	highwaydaynursery@yahoo.co.uk or 01890 751768	48 weeks
Seashells Nursery	Seashellsnursery@hotmail.co.uk	50 weeks
Cockburnspath PS Nursery	01368830333	Term Time
Coldingham PS Nursery	01890771241	Term Time
Eyemouth PS Nursery Hub	01890750692	50 weeks
Reston PS Nursery	01890761205	Term Time
Galashiels Cluster		
Tweedbank Early Learners	manager@tweedbankearlylearners.co.uk	Term Time
Balmoral PS Nursery	01896 753400	Term Time
Burgh PS Nursery	01896 752761	Term Time
Clovenfords PS Nursery	01896 662755	Term Time
Heriot PS Nursery	01875 835223	Term Time
Langlee PS Nursery	01896662700	Term Time
St Margaret's PS Nursery Hub	01896752096	50 weeks
St Peter's PS Nursery	01896753185	Term Time
Stow PS Nursery	01578730218	Term Time
Tweedbank PS Nursery	01896754807	Term Time
Fountainhall PS Nursery	01578760247	Term Time
Hawick Cluster		
Cherrytrees Nursery Hawick	01450 378051	48 weeks
Denholm Playgroup	denholmplygroup@yahoo.com or 01450870101	Term Time
Wiggly Worms Nursery	01450373969 or enquiries@wigglywormshawick.co.uk	50 weeks
Burnfoot CS Nursery	01450 373043	Term Time
Drumlanrig PS Nursery	01450 373521	Term Time
Newcastleton PS Nursery	01387 375240	Term Time
Stirches PS Nursery	01450 374389	Term Time
Trinity PS Nursery	01450 373434	Term Time
Wilton PS Nursery	01450 372075	50 weeks
Katrina Skelton Childminder	01387 375709	46 weeks
Little Wonders Childminding Service	rshalfpenny@hotmail.co.uk	46 weeks

Jedburgh Cluster		
Jedburgh Campus Nursery Hub	01835863273	50 weeks
Countryside Kids Childminding	countrysidekidschildminding@hotmail.com or 07595936916	46 weeks
Kelso Cluster		
Castlegate Nursery	hello@castlegatenursery.com or 01573 226554	50 weeks
Broomlands PS Nursery Hub	01573228152	50 weeks
Edenside PS Nursery	01573224264	Term Time
Ednam PS Nursery	01573224172	Term Time
Morebattle PS Nursery	01573440236	Term Time
Yetholm PS Nursery	01573420363	Term Time
Natalie's Childcare	07931438617	46 weeks
Sprouston PS Nursery	01573 224873	Term Time
Peebles Cluster		
First Nursery	info@firstnurserypeebles.com	50 weeks
Kingsmeadows Nursery	info@kingsmeadowsnursery.co.uk	50 weeks
Newlands Kids	gill@newlandskids.org.uk	Term Time
Rosetta Early Learners	rosettaplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk	Term Time
The Village Nursery	vnwestinton@gmail.com	50 weeks
West Linton Early Learners	07470432119	Term Time
Broughton PS Nursery	01899 830224	Term Time
Kingsland PS Nursery	01721 720025	Term Time
Priorsford PS Nursery Hub	01721 720521	50 weeks
St Ronan's PS Nursery	01896 830349	Term Time
Walkerburn PS Nursery	01896 870235	Term Time
West Linton PS Nursery	01721 726300	Term Time
Fiona Duncan-Kerr Childminder	07793226827 or feemcfee@yahoo.com	48 weeks
Little Acorns Childcare (Childminder)	07788591850 or fionahd@hotmail.co.uk	Term Time
Flora Coull Childminder	fergussonflora@gmail.com	46 weeks
Rebecca Irvine Childminding	beccahirvine1998@gmail.com	Term Time
Selkirk Cluster		
Argus Playgroup	argusplaygroup@hotmail.com or 07309721787	Term Time
Kirkhope PS Nursery	01750 52231	Term Time
Knowepark PS Nursery	01750 23539	50 weeks
Lilliesleaf PS Nursery	01835 870251	Term Time
Philiphough CS Nursery	01750 721774	Term Time

When and how funded ELC places allocated?

Places are usually allocated by the end of March.

Private Nurseries, Playgroups and Childminders each have their own criteria for allocating places.

The criteria for allocation of places in School nurseries:

1	Children considered in need or receipt of statutory care and protection measures. Children supported by significant multi-agency involvement Children referred by educational psychologist
2	Children continuing in the same setting from their 3 to 4 year old funded place. Deferred entry from any setting
3	Eligible 2 year old moving into a 3 year old funded place
4	Children with a sibling in the setting/school (oldest children first)
5	All other eligible children who live in the Scottish Borders (oldest children first)
6	Children who live out-with Scottish Borders (oldest children first) Children will be offered a place in accordance with any agreement between their own local Council and Scottish Borders Council.

If you are not allocated your preferred provider, then they will pass your enrolment application to the selected second choice provider who will contact you to offer a place.

When do I enrol my child?

You need to enrol your child for funded Early Learning and Childcare every year. Enrolment week is publicised usually about the third full week in November. Look out for details in the local press, the Council website (<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/elc>) and social media pages. You can also contact your local school or funded private and voluntary providers or one of our funded Childminders.

If possible, you should enrol your child during enrolment week however it is possible to apply for a place throughout the year.

Before completing the online enrolment form contact the provider(s) where you would like your child to attend to ensure that space is available and discuss your option.

How to apply for a nursery place

Register for a [MyScotBorders account](#) if you do not already have one.

You will need the following documents when making the online enrolment application:

- An electronic copy (or photo) of your child's birth certificate.
- An electronic proof of your address, such as a council tax letter or child benefit notice, is also required to be uploaded at the time of application.

Please note where possible, all children will be able to access a funded place with their preferred provider; however, this cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, it is important to select a second-choice provider when completing the application form.

Now you can complete the [online enrolment form](#) – please note the application form will be closed the week before enrolment to allow for updates.

Information Contacts?

- More general ELC information can be accessed on the Parent Club website - <https://www.parentclub.scot>
- For wider family support please access the [Family support directory | Scottish Borders Council](#)
- If you have any queries or would like any further information, contact the provider of your choice in the first instance and if more information is needed, please contact Scottish Borders Council's Early Years team on EarlyYearsTeamEd@scotborders.gov.uk or 01835 824000.

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