



Education Resources

Request for deferred entry 2022/23

Information leaflet for parents

What choices do parents have?

Under current legislation in Scotland, Parents/Carers will be able to consider the following options for their child when considering their readiness for school:

- A child will still have the right to start school at 4½ if they have a birthday in January or February.
- For a child who reaches the age of 4 in January/February and would start school at 4½ years, if the parent/carer feels it is not in the best interests of the child to start school, there is an automatic right to an additional year of pre-school education
- If the child's fifth birthday is between 14 August to 31 December 2022 inclusive and would start school between 4½- 5 years they will have the right to start school
- If the child's fifth birthday is between 14 August to 31 December 2022 inclusive and would start school between 4½- 5 years and the Parent feels that their child is not ready to go to school, the parent has a legal right to defer their child's primary one start until August 2023. The parent can request an additional year of free early learning and childcare, however, approval for this is not automatic and their request will be carefully considered by the central Early Years Service to ensure this would be in the best interests of the child.
- In the event that the Early Years Service do not approve a deferred application if a child's birthday is between 14 August to 31 December 2022 the parent has the possibility to self finance an early learning and childcare space in a South Lanarkshire nursery if space is available.

Principles of deferred entry

- ❖ Decisions about deferring a child's entry from entry to Primary 1 in August and continuing with an additional year of pre-school education will be made on the basis of promoting the best interests of the child.
- ❖ The views of parents/carers will be of central importance.
- ❖ The principal role of the Council will be to support parents/carers in coming to an informed judgement.
- ❖ The Council has a duty to exercise its powers of discretion in relation to children born from 1 August to 31 December.
- ❖ If a child is attending a pre-school education establishment, the staff within the establishment will have detailed knowledge about the child's learning and development. Parents/carers will have the right to discuss any questions they may have about whether or not to seek a deferred entry to P1 with staff of the pre-school education establishment their child attends, whether it is in a local authority, private or voluntary sector. The staff will advise the parents/carers of their assessment of the child's learning and development and their readiness to attend primary school, based on the information recorded in the child's profile.
- ❖ If a child is not attending a pre-school education establishment, the Council will make arrangements for the parents/carers to discuss any concerns they may have with central early years staff.
- ❖ For children born in January or February, the local authority **will provide a free pre-school education place for an additional year** if this is requested by the parents/carers.
- ❖ For children born between 1 August to 31 December, the local authority will provide a free pre-school education place in all cases where there is agreement between parents/carers, the staff of the early years establishment attended by the child and central Early Years, that this is in the best interests of the child.
- ❖ In cases where the Nursery disagrees with the parents/carers as to whether a deferral would be in the best interests of the child, the request would be considered by central Early Years following procedures established by the Council.

Steps to be taken by Parents who wish a deferred entry from school for their child

Parents/carers who have any concerns about whether or not they wish their child to take up a place in P1 the following August should in the first instance discuss the matter with the Head of the Nursery their child attends.

The member of staff will clarify for the parents/carers the procedures for requesting an additional year of pre-school education and will give to the parents/carers a copy of the Deferred Entry request form. A meeting would then be arranged where the child's progress in her/his pre-school education establishment would be discussed, with a particular focus on the child's

- approach and attitude to learning
- ability to communicate own needs, feelings and ideas
- levels of independence and self help
- emotional and personal development, including self-confidence and esteem
- relationships and friendships with other children and adults

The parents/carers should then complete and return the Deferred Entry application form to the early years establishment no later than **31 January 2022**. The nursery will acknowledge receipt of the request and, in the case of children born from 1 August to 31 December, will inform parents/carers about the procedure which will be followed in relation to the request and the date by which they will be informed of the decision.

The decision by central Early Years will be based on clear criteria:

- The level of dependency would prevent the child from benefiting from maximising learning opportunities in P1
- Progression to P1 would be detrimental to the child's educational progress
- There are special circumstances which support the parents'/carers' wish for an additional year of pre-school education

The central Early Years may request additional information in order to reach a recommendation.

In cases where the request for an additional year of pre-school education has been refused, the child still has the right to defer entry to primary school. Parents/carers will not have access to a free pre-school education place, but may wish to pay for a place. The availability of such places cannot be guaranteed, but every effort will be made to accommodate a request.

Additional information

You should note that the above procedures should be followed even where you are seeking a deferred year placement for your child in a pre-school education establishment in another local authority area. Decisions on deferred entry can only be made by the local authority of the area in which the child is resident. If you live outwith South Lanarkshire Council you should contact your own local authority.

If your child is due to start Primary One in August 2022 you must still register him/her at the catchment primary school even if you intend to make a deferred entry request. You should complete the primary enrolment form which is available on the South Lanarkshire Council's website. Advice on procedures is also available from all primary schools and from the Council. This will ensure that each child's application for a primary school place can be considered by the due date.

Parents requiring further information should contact the Head of the Early Years Establishment their child attends, in addition, information is available from Education Resources, email earlyyears@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

NB: The closing date for submission of applications is 31 January 2022.