



**Versions of this leaflet are
available on request on
audiotape, in Braille, large
print or your own language.**

 **Phone 01620 827199**

Contact us

Early Years and Childcare Team

John Muir House

Haddington

East Lothian

EH41 3HA

Freephone: 0800 0288 629

Email: childcareinfo@eastlothian.gov.uk

www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Pre-school education and childcare for 3 to 5 year olds in East Lothian



The best start in life!

Here in East Lothian we are proud of our tradition of high quality pre-school education and childcare for 3 to 5 year olds. Your child will get the very best start in one of our nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools, or partnership centres. Please read on to find out more about what we do.

Getting started

This booklet is for parents and carers who want to know more about pre-school education in East Lothian. On the back cover, you can find information about how to contact us, and how to arrange interpretation and translations for Council business.

The information is set out in four sections as follows on page 1:

1 About our nurseries and enrolling your child

This section tells you:

- ▶ what age your child has to be to start nursery
- ▶ about our nursery schools, classes and partnership centres
- ▶ how to enrol for pre-school education
- ▶ how to enrol at a nursery or centre outside East Lothian.

Pages 2+3

2 What happens at nursery?

Section 2 looks at how we work with your child in nursery, and covers:

- ▶ Curriculum for Excellence
- ▶ the importance of pre-school education
- ▶ daily observation
- ▶ staff qualifications
- ▶ how we ensure the quality of our pre-school education.

Pages 4+5

3 Making sure that your child is supported and included

We know that every child is different. Section 3 looks at what we can do to support children and families, including:

- ▶ nursery places for children with additional support needs
- ▶ deferred entry to primary one
- ▶ our commitment to equal opportunities
- ▶ additional hours of childcare for working parents
- ▶ early years centres
- ▶ help with childcare costs.

Pages 6+7

4 Making a comment, suggestion or complaint

We would like to hear from you about how well you think we provide nursery and early years services to you. We need to hear about when we do things well. We also need you to tell us when we've got it wrong. The information you give us will help us to improve and develop the services that we provide. In Section 4, we tell you how to make a comment, suggestion or complaint, including how to use:

- ▶ The East Lothian Council Education Complaints Procedure
- ▶ The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
- ▶ The Care Commission.

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About our nurseries and enrolling your child

What age can your child start nursery?

From the school term after their third birthday, your child is entitled to a free, part-time nursery place, provided by your local council. If your child's third birthday is in March or April, your child will be entitled to a nursery place from the beginning of the next school year in August. All children may have up to five part-time sessions per week during term-time in a nursery centre.

Nurseries, nursery classes and partnership centres

East Lothian Council provides nursery education at its own nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools. It also provides pre-school education in partnership with private, voluntary and independent nurseries. We call these partnerships centres. We fund pre-school education places at our partnership centres.

How to enrol your child for pre-school education

As soon as your child is two, you can put their name on the waiting list for any council funded pre-school centre. You may put your child's name on more than one waiting list. The head teacher or nursery manager will offer you a place when one becomes available.

How to enrol at a nursery or centre outside East Lothian

If you would like your child to attend another nursery outside East Lothian, please get in touch with the nursery of your choice. You may be eligible, but may have to be placed at the end of their waiting list. If you wish to use a partnership centre in another local authority area, an application for a funded place should be made through them. Your funding will then be arranged by that local authority.



Nursery schools and classes do not have catchment areas therefore your child will not be entitled to a Primary 1 place in the school in which your child has attended nursery, unless you live in the catchment area for that school.

We cannot guarantee that you will get your first choice of centre, but we will provide you with a place at one of our nurseries as long as you live in East Lothian and your child is the right age. We give priority to children with additional support needs. Please contact centres for information about what they provide.

If you are already using a partnership centre for childcare and you wish to continue to use the centre for pre-school education, then you should let the centre know that you want a funded place for pre-school education with them once your child becomes eligible.

You will find a list of nursery schools, classes and partnership centres at the back of this leaflet. This information is also on our website at www.eastlothian.gov.uk

If you would like further information about any pre-school education or childcare service, call Childcare Choices, our childcare information service on freephone 0800 0288 629.



Curriculum for Excellence

All our nursery schools, nursery classes and partnership centres follow the Scottish Government's pre-school curriculum as set out in *Curriculum for Excellence 3-18*. Your child will have learned a great deal at home. Nursery staff build on this to plan activities and experiences that promote your child's development and learning to enable them to become a:

- ▶ successful learner
- ▶ confident individual
- ▶ responsible citizen
- ▶ effective contributor.

For more information on *Curriculum for Excellence*, visit:
www.eastlothian.gov.uk

The importance of pre-school education

Pre-school education covers a broad range of learning experiences and helps your child's all-round development. It enables your child to continue to develop skills and knowledge, become more independent and mix with other children. It also helps prepare your child for primary school.

Daily observation

Pre-school staff will watch your child at play, listen and talk to them so that we can plan how best to develop your child's learning. This helps us to:

- ▶ build up a *Learning Story* and *Transition Record*, showing your child's progress
- ▶ make suggestions on what they need to learn next
- ▶ comment on your child's strengths and interests.



We will share this information with you regularly and will pass it on to your child's primary school. We have developed close links between primary schools and nurseries. Nursery children visit their new primary school before they move on to primary one to help them make a smooth transition.

Quality of pre-school education

East Lothian Council's Department of Education and Children's Services Early Years and Childcare Team and Quality Improvement Team support and review all our nurseries, including our partnership centres. We encourage nursery staff to take part in regular training opportunities.

All nurseries are registered and inspected by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (The Care Commission) and by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE). This ensures that they provide high quality pre-school education and care.

Nurseries must meet the *National Care Standards - Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16*. The Scottish Government set out the National Care Standards and the Care Commission monitors how well nurseries and centres are achieving them.

To view a copy of Care Commission inspection reports on a nursery centre, go to www.carecommission.com

All nursery schools, nursery classes and partnership centres use the Scottish Government's *The Child at the Centre* self-evaluation framework. The framework provides centres with measures that help them to work out how well they are achieving and what they want to do to help them best meet the needs of their children.

To view a copy of HMIE inspection reports on a nursery and to view *The Child at the Centre*, go to www.hmie.gov.uk

Making sure that your child is supported and included



Children with additional support needs

All our nurseries offer places for children with additional support needs. Please discuss your child's needs with the head teacher or manager of your chosen nursery. They will talk to you and East Lothian Council's Pre-school Education Support Officer about the best provision for your child.

Our nursery staff will carefully observe and assess the different ways in which your child learns to identify their needs.

They can also give you advice on The Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT). This is a one-door approach to the assessment and planning of intervention for any child under 5 years old, who may have additional support needs. You can get more information about this from your local Health Centre or East Lothian Council's Children's Services social work team: 01875 824090 or email children&families@eastlothian.gov.uk

Deferred entry to primary one

If you think that your child is not ready to move on to primary school, please speak to the nursery staff. We have produced a leaflet about deferred entry to primary one, which you can get from your nursery or by contacting us at the address on the back page of this booklet. Our nursery staff will be able to give you more advice.

Parents of children with a January or February birthday may request an extra year in nursery, if they feel that a deferred year would be of benefit to their child.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to ensuring that all children have equal access to the curriculum. All aspects of pre-school education in East Lothian are underpinned by a multicultural, anti-racist approach. Your child will take part in activities which help them to recognise the cultural diversity of our world.



Qualified staff

All council nursery schools and classes have a teacher and nursery nurses who have a relevant qualification in childcare and education. Some partnership centres have a teacher, who works together with nursery nurses and nursery assistants. The East Lothian Childcare Partnership funds childcare training so that all staff who must register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) have an opportunity to obtain a relevant qualification. East Lothian Council's Pre-school Education Support Officer and experienced teachers provide teaching support, training and feedback to all partnership centres.

Additional hours of childcare

Parents who work or are in education or training may be able to buy wraparound care in some local authority nursery schools and classes. Wraparound care provides childcare before the school day begins and after it ends. It offers a safe, relaxing experience with a programme of activities to suit each child. Wraparound care is available at Dunbar and Tranent Early Years Centres and Levenhall Nursery School. Parents can also pay for extra hours of childcare in most partnership centres. Please ask the nursery staff at your centre about what they offer.

Help with childcare costs

You may be able to get help with your childcare costs. The Working Tax Credit (freephone 0845 300 3900) and Access Funding for Students (ask your college for more information) are designed to help families pay for childcare.

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Making a comment, suggestion or complaint



Feedback, comments, complaints and suggestions about Council services

Your feedback helps us to see how well our services are performing, so we like to hear from you. If you want to make a comment or suggestion about an East Lothian Council education service, school or centre, contact them directly or email us at educationenquiries@eastlothian.gov.uk

If you would like to make a complaint about an East Lothian Council education service, please ask your school or centre for a copy of the Education Complaints Procedure. It tells you all about our Education Complaints Procedure and includes a form where you can make your comments.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

You can also take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, although it is usually better to use the Council's complaints procedure first. You should contact the Ombudsman within 12 months of the date that you first noticed the problem you are complaining about. In special circumstances, the Ombudsman may be prepared to deal with matters that have gone on longer than 12 months. Please write to:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	Tel: 0800 377 7330
4 Melville Street	Fax: 0870 011 5379
Edinburgh EH3 7NS	email: ask@spsso.org.uk

Care Commission

You can also complain to the Care Commission about any service that is registered with them, for example, a nursery school, class or centre. Contact them at: www.carecommission.com

South East Regional Office	Or	Care Commission, Compass House
Stuart House, Eskmills		11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY
Musselburgh EH21 7PB		Tel: 01382 207100
Tel: 0131 653 4100		Fax: 01382 207289
or 0845 600 8335		LoCall: 0845 603 0890

