



2024/25

ELC APPLICATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

Perth and Kinross Council Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Application Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does my child have to go to a nursery if they are three or is it optional?

A. Although most children accessing ELC before starting school, this is not a requirement. You can also choose to attend a non-funded setting if you prefer and not access your 1140 hours of funded ELC.

Q. I don't want to access my full 1140 hours. Is this possible?

A. There is no requirement to use your full entitlement of funded ELC. Attendance patterns available will be dependent on the ELC setting you wish your child to attend and will offer a maximum hours per week, e.g. a term time place is up to 30 hours. Please select which sessions you would like to access on the application form, e.g. Mon-Tues-Wed.

Q. Can I access half days in a Local Authority setting?

A. Some attendance patterns offer half days. For example, the 50 week pattern offers five morning sessions. The term time pattern does not allow you to apply for half days, but this may still be possible depending on the ELC setting. In this case, please apply for the full days on the application form and mention your intention on the form. You will not be able to take the unused hours and add them to another day, e.g. the unattended afternoon session hours will be forfeited.

Q. The form doesn't allow me to apply for my funded provider. How can I make this application?

A. If you are wishing to use all your funding at a funded provider, e.g. a private nursery, please contact the funded provider directly. If you are wishing to split your funding between a Perth and Kinross Council setting and a funded provider setting and/or childminder, please complete the application for the PKC setting and indicate that you are wishing to split your funding when asked. Please note that this is not an application for the funded provider/childminder, just for our information. Please also contact the funded provider/childminder directly regarding availability and their registration process.

Q. I was actually trying to apply for a space for Session 2024/25, can I still apply?

A. Yes, you can apply for Session 2024/25 until the end of the school year by using this link - [Register for a local authority nursery place for school year - Perth & Kinross Council](#)

Q. In the 45 week model, can I have three full days instead of two full and two half days?

A. Unfortunately, this is not possible in a Perth and Kinross setting. You may be able to access a third full day at a local funded provider in your area, depending on their availability. Please see [Nursery locality and attendance patterns - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#) in your area.

Q. In the 50 week model, can I have full days?

A. Unfortunately, this is not possible in a Perth and Kinross setting. You should be able to access full days over 50 weeks at a local funded provider in your area, depending on their availability and opening hours. Please see [Nursery locality and attendance patterns - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#) for other providers in your area.

Q. Will children already at a school nursery have to reapply for next year using the online service or will the school do this?

A. All children will have to apply for session 2025/26. If a child is already attending in a 1140 hour pattern and wishes to retain that place, parents/carers will be asked to complete a new application form to confirm they are keeping this attendance pattern for their child. This declaration is part of the online form.

Any families wishing to access an additional year of ELC for a child who will turn 5 years old between the start of the school year in August and 28 February 2026, will also have to re-apply to confirm their place.

Q. What are the choice of hours?

A. Perth & Kinross area has been grouped into 11 ELC communities, each of which will have available a mix of attendance options at local authority, partner provider nurseries and childminders including term time, 45 week and 50 week options as appropriate, with some settings offering hours between 8.00 am – 6.00 pm. You can find out more at [Perth & Kinross Council - Early learning and childcare options \(pkc.gov.uk\)](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/early-learning-and-childcare-options).

Q. My child is already in nursery do I need to do anything?

A. All will need to complete the online application. Returning children will need to confirm that they wish to retain , no need for birth certificate upload however you may need your birth certificate at hand when completing the online application as you will be asked for information from it.

Q. Is there a minimum of sessions I must take?

A. No you can have as little as one.

Q. How many choices can be submitted at application?

A. 3 choices. Please select in order of preference. You will also have the opportunity to detail any other attendance patterns you would accept at your preferred setting(s) if the setting has more than one option, e.g. if applying for a 45-week extended hour model, please state if any other options are suitable. This will be used if we need to ballot for space and you are not successful in obtaining your first choice.

Q. Are Gaelic speaking nurseries available for non-Gaelic speakers?

A. Yes, all children have access to Gaelic speaking nurseries.

Q. Will I be able to visit the nursery before applying?

A. This may be possible. Please contact the setting directly to set up a visit. Please note that if your application is not submitted by the deadline, it will not be considered in the initial allocation of places.

Q. Where can I find a list of childminders who work with PKC to deliver funded ELC?

A. To find out which childminders operate in your area please check <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/21887/Find-my-nearest-childcare-providers>

Q. Will my child having a sibling in the school be given preference when selection is made?

A. No, having a sibling in the school does not increase your application priority.

Q. Can the hours be split over the day in different settings for example mornings in one and afternoons elsewhere?

A. No, parents/guardians may wish to access their ELC hours as a split funded option but must be over different days. This is available at funded providers and at other Local Authority settings.

Q. I am applying to defer my child's entry into P1, do I need to complete an application form?

A. Please note that children who will turn 5 years old between the start of the school year in August 2025 and February 28th, 2026, can automatically access an additional year of ELC should you decide this is the best option for your child. Further information regarding an additional year of ELC can be found at https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/50553/Additional-Year-of-ELC-Parent-Guidance/pdf/Additional_year_of_ELC_Parent_Guidance.pdf?m=638042136528870000

Q. My preferred setting isn't in my local community can I still apply?

A. Yes. Parents are entitled to apply to any Local Authority-managed nursery class and/or funded provider for their child's funded ELC place, however, priority criteria has changed – pre-school and ante-pre children living within the ELC Community are now higher priority than children who live out with that locality.

Q. I am about to move house and do not have a council tax bill for my new address. What should I do for council tax proof?

A. Please upload a formal document stating your new address and your intent to move, e.g. a letter from a solicitor or rental agreement. You may be required to upload this in both the council tax and utility bill section although if you wish to upload two different pieces of evidence you may. If you do not know your future address or have no formal documentation, you will need to apply on your current address.

Q. What if I can't scan or photograph my documents can I take the original to the setting?

A. Yes, if you are having trouble uploading evidence, please take the originals to any Perth and Kinross nursery setting. Please give the setting your application reference and the child's name and DoB.

Q. When will I get a decision?

A. Standard emails to parents allocating ELC places will be sent out initially on 24 March (if you have met the initial deadline for submission). Cross-boundary places will be sent out week commencing 2 June.

Q. How are placement decisions made?

A. Nursery Places for August 2025 are being allocated following Perth and Kinross Council's nursery allocation policy. The policy allows for a fair and transparent approach to nursery places and PKC try where possible to offer families nursery options which best suit their needs. It is not possible for everyone to get their first choice, however we will work to allocate the most appropriate placement for all families.

In alignment with the policy, every child is given a priority based on their age and where they live (whether or not they live in the community). Nursery placements are then allocated based on these priorities and if there are not enough spaces for all children within a priority to have their first choice, we hold a ballot or in-house draw. All children are then given a number and this number determines where they are on the allocation waiting list.

Q. What happens if I haven't responded to the nursery offer within a week? Will the place still be available?

A. Parents are required to advise of their decision within one week from receipt of the email. Once the reply has been returned the place is assigned to the child and parents should enrol the child at the setting. If you have not responded within the timescale, we will attempt to hold your place, however further non-reply will be taken as you not wanting the place and it may be offered to someone else.

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Q. What happens if I decline an offer? Can I get my next choice?

A. We will attempt to offer your first choice wherever possible, or a different pattern at your first-choice setting if there is more than one option offered in that setting. It is recommended that you accept the placement offered and then email ELCApplications@pkc.gov.uk to state that you wish to move on to your second choice setting. The ELC Applications Team will advise if there is availability at this setting. If you decline this offer you may not have a nursery space confirmed for Session 2025/26. If you are successful at your second choice then you can then decline the first offer.

Q. Is there a waiting list if I don't get into my preferred choices?

A. For those settings where there isn't enough capacity to fit all applicants, a ballot will be held to determine who can be offered the remaining places. If you are unsuccessful at ballot, we will continue to hold your application for that setting should you wish to be considered when space becomes available.

If a place becomes available at a setting during the allocation process, the place will be offered to the next person on the list as determined by the ballot. If you wish to move on to a second or third choice, please email ELCApplications@pkc.gov.uk to state that you wish to move on to your second choice setting. The ELC Applications Team will advise if there is availability at this setting.

Q. I thought everyone was entitled for up to 30 hours of funding per week, but I was told there was no space at my first-choice setting?

A. There is a high demand in certain settings across Perth and Kinross and it is not always possible to offer everyone a place at their first-choice setting. The ELC Applications Team will work with families to try and find an appropriate place in the community. There are a number of other local authority, funded provider and childminder settings within the community which may be able to offer you your first choice attendance pattern. Please see [Nursery locations and attendance patterns - Perth & Kinross Council](#) for a list of funded provider nursery and childminding settings.

Q. Is there an appeals process?

A. There is no official appeals process. You can contact ELCApplications@pkc.gov.uk with any questions / comments and we will attempt to resolve if possible.

Q. I would rather use my funded hours at my private nursery. How do I change my application over to them?

A. All applications to funded providers should be done directly with them. It is recommended that you confirm any placements with them before telling us to cancel your Perth and Kinross Council application or placement.

Q. Can I start the year with a funded provider and move to a Perth and Kinross Council setting if a space becomes available?

A. Yes, you may switch placements during the year, however this is likely to be at the start of the next term. Please ensure that you discuss your plans with your current setting and are aware of their individual notice periods and your contractual obligations.

Q. What do I do if my circumstances change or I move?

A. If you need to leave your setting, please inform the setting directly with your leaving date. If you require to change to another setting / attendance pattern, please complete the online application form and these will be processed during the year. In some circumstances, changes will not be possible until the start of the next school term, e.g. August / October / January / April.

Q. I have a friend I would like to swap days with is this possible?

A. No. All requests for changes must be in writing and go through the PKC ELC Applications Team as to follow Policy and Procedures.

