

Delivering the transformational expansion to provide 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare across East Dunbartonshire by 2020



Early Years

Enriching our children's early learning experiences through high quality and nurturing family centred approaches.



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East Dunbartonshire Council

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The Blueprint for 2020: The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland* sets out the ambitions of the Scottish Government, for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds to receive 1140 hours of funded childcare by August 2020.

This provides East Dunbartonshire Council with an exciting opportunity to invest in the crucial early years of our children's lives, with the key principles of efficiency, quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability at the heart of all provision. It will not be an easy task and there will be challenges as we seek to deliver on this expansion. Planning will evolve over the coming years as the Council responds to learning through our pilots, changes in local circumstances, and in the way that parents tell us they wish to use Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) services.

This newsletter aims to update you on the journey in East Dunbartonshire so far, and progress we have made towards phasing in this entitlement, and future newsletters will keep you informed along our journey to implementation.

Our offer

East Dunbartonshire Council is proud of its high quality early learning and childcare provision and recognises the significant contribution this has on a child's development. The 1140 hours agenda will provide an opportunity to further develop the good work already established in our settings, and bring about positive changes in services, ensuring the four Blueprint principles – quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability - are in place to meet the needs of our children and families.

The East Dunbartonshire Early Years Strategic Plan 2018-2021 sets out progressive and innovative improvement outcomes, grounded in early years theory, evidence and consultation feedback with children, families and communities. This was approved by Council in March 2018 as part of the Revenue Budget.

The last few years have seen a fundamental shift in early years provision. The successful delivery of 600 hours and introduction of new extended day and extended year models has resulted in enhanced flexibility and accessibility for affordable childcare.

The Council will take a phased approach to introducing the 1140 hours entitlement, in line with funding received from Scottish Government. This will allow us to learn from the pilot projects to inform future service delivery and ensure we are safeguarding our high quality provision. Integral to delivering on the entitlement will be both the Council's funded providers in the voluntary and private sector, and local childminders, ensuring parents have access to a choice of provision.

Delivery models

The Council is piloting a single-core operating model that is flexible and sustainable. Almost all centres will move to an extended day and year provision.

Phasing for 1140 hours has begun, with pilots in Auchinairn and Lennoxton for 3 to 5 year olds receiving positive feedback from both our ELC practitioners, and families. The Council offer includes:

- half-day morning or afternoon sessions, over the full year
- full day, over the full year
- early opening hours, if there is sufficient demand (additional charge)
- option to purchase additional hours if available.

* (<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/1665/downloads#res507517>)

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Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility, Affordability

The home is the first and most important place for children to grow and develop... high quality ELC offered should support parents in their role as the primary influence on child outcomes. Promoting parental engagement in children's learning while children attend ELC is an important opportunity to make parents feel valued, instil them with confidence in their role and demonstrate that educational institutions are accessible and approachable, (cited in A Blueprint for 2020: The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland. Quality Action Plan, The Scottish Government, 2017, p15).

Building on what we've learned from the successful pilots of 1140 hours in Auchinairn and Lennoxton and the needs of our families and communities, further phasing in 2018/19 will include:

- Auchinairn (Place area*) - continue to deliver 1140 hours pilot on extended day and year for all 3-5 year olds and increase to include provision of 1140 hours for eligible 2 year olds from August 2018. Also pilot a 'blended model' with childminders.
- Lennoxton (Place area*) - continue to deliver 1140 hours pilot on extended day and year for all 3-5-year olds and increase to include provision of 1140 hours for eligible 2 year olds from August 2018. Also, introduce provision for 0-2-year olds from August 2018 and pilot a 'blended model' with childminders.
- Hillhead (Place area*) - introduce 1140 hours pilot on extended day and year for all 3-5-year olds and eligible 2 year olds from August 2018. Also, introduce provision for 0-2-year olds from August 2018 and pilot a 'blended model' with childminders.
- Twechar - introduce 1140 hours pilot on extended day and year for all 3-5-year olds and eligible 2 year olds from August 2018.
- Holy Family - move to extended day and year during session 2018/19 and continue to deliver 600 hours; this expansion will ensure that the centre is well placed to deliver 1140 hours in 2020.
- Meadowburn - move to extended day and year during session 2018/19 and continue to deliver 600 hours; this expansion will ensure that the centre is well placed to deliver 1140 hours in 2020.

Our families

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is at the heart of all early learning and childcare in East Dunbartonshire. Parents currently have the choice to use their child's 600 hours funding entitlement at either a local authority centre or one of the Council's funded providers in the voluntary and private sector. This will continue with 1140 hours and be enhanced through opportunities to blend the offer with childminders. This 'provider neutral' offer will ensure that parents can expect the same high quality, affordable service wherever they choose to access it.

All local authority ELC centres now have a trained Family Champion who is able to nurture families, providing trust-based, preventative and early intervention positive parenting advice and support. Family learning approaches ensure parents have opportunities to be involved in their child's learning.

*The 'Place' approach in East Dunbartonshire mobilises a multi-agency response to provide additional support to children and families who are experiencing multiple deprivation, including living in poverty. In response to extensive consultations with families and our multi-agency partners, and our experience of working with families, the Council is introducing a family-centred approach in Hillhead and Lennoxton ELC areas by introducing provision for babies and toddlers, aged 0-2-years old.

Community engagement will be very important in the implementation of the change to the delivery model. The new model is currently being trialled in two areas and there has been extensive engagement with parents to discuss and promote it. Monitoring of uptake is ongoing, and will inform future engagement planning.

In developing the Council's plan for 1140 hours a number of consultations were undertaken:

- Consultation with parents in the two pilot areas where the Council is offering 1140 hours: Auchinairn Early Learning and Childcare Centre; and Lennoxton Early Learning and Childcare Centre.
- Consultation with parents in Holy Family Nursery which moved to an extended day provision during 2017/18.
- An online survey.
- A focus group of parents which was held in Milngavie and open to all parents within East Dunbartonshire.

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The online survey had 564 responses. Some key points included:

- 63% of parents stated they wished full year provision with 37% requiring term time only
- 53% required full days and 23% wanted half days
- The most popular reasons for choice of provision were:
 - ◆ **Reputation**
 - ◆ **Trust**
 - ◆ **Educational and social development**
 - ◆ **Good quality/inspection report.**
- 87% said they required more flexibility
- 72% stated they would pay for additional hours
- Comments from parents varied but a high number expressed the view that they required all year provision and that sessional places were not suitable.

Our workforce

The Early Years workforce in East Dunbartonshire is highly skilled and valued by children, families, and senior managers. The expansion of ELC will create new opportunities for our workforce, including promoted posts across the Council settings. Innovative staffing models will take into account learning from 600 hour models and current 1140-hour pilots, and feedback from practitioners.

Extensive engagement with staff, centre leadership and the Trade Unions will be undertaken. The proposed model will require change to working patterns for a large percentage of staff, in particular a move away from term time contracts to all year employment. We recognise that this will have some advantages for staff in relation to salary levels but it will change their current working patterns. There will be extensive support to this process from the Council's Human Resources and Business Change teams. The workforce planning includes:

- Quality training.
- Continue to expand the number of modern apprentices.
- Recruit staff for new and pilot centres.
- Support staff to undertake qualifications as required for their role, including leadership programme.
- Develop a programme with colleges/schools and employers as a pathway to early years employment.

There has been discussion with the Trade Unions and they are supportive of the expansion particularly as it provides employment opportunities for employees within East Dunbartonshire Council.

Funded providers, including childminders

- Funded providers (including private providers, voluntary groups and childminders) are important in order to provide flexibility to parents.
- There has been ongoing involvement and working groups with our funded providers and this will continue, including support and advice from East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action.
- The rate being paid to funded providers is being reviewed in order to support meeting the challenges of providing a well-qualified workforce that retains staff. Guidance at a national level will inform decisions.
- Childminders will be integral to parental choice and the delivery of 1140 hours. Planning for all aspects of this blended approach continues and further updates will be provided in future newsletters.

Registration

- Registration will continue to take place in January/February each year for admission in August. Information will be available for parents on the registration leaflet, Council website and social media. Staff will continue to assist parents and provide as much information as possible.

Please contact your Head Teacher or Head of Centre for more information regarding the implementation. Alternatively, email the Early Years team on ELC1140@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

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