

Early Education & Childcare

Information for Parents/Carers/Staff

Expansion Plan

The Scottish Government is committed to the near doubling of the entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year by 2020 for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds. The evidence tells us that in order to close the poverty related attainment gap, our early learning and childcare service has to start as soon as possible in a child's life. Our aim is to provide high quality, flexible early learning and childcare that is accessible and affordable for all families.



West Dunbartonshire Council

Currently, free provision of early learning and child care is offered to all 3 and 4 year olds as well as entitled 2 year olds. As of August 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act increased this free provision to 600 hours per year. This equates to around 16 hours per week during school term time. This free provision is delivered by a mixture of local authority nurseries, nursery classes attached to schools, partnerships offered by private or non-profit nurseries, and some child-minders. The 16 hours provision per week can be taken in sessions of between 2.5 hours per day and up to a maximum of 8 hours.

The Future

The aim come 2020 is that the free provision will be increased to 1,140 hours per year. This is the equivalent of 30 hours per week over a school year (38 weeks) or 22.5 hours per week over a full year (50 weeks). West Dunbartonshire Council are looking to implement 1,140 hours in a **limited** number of centres from August 2018 as the Scottish Government Funding phases in. After consultation with parents at both national and local level, we found that there was a desire for flexibility with longer opening hours and an increased need for an all year round provision.

West Dunbartonshire Council is looking to implement a mix of the following over the next 3 years:

- 38 Week centres - Opening hours - 8.30 - 4pm (6 hour session)
(eg 8.30 - 2.30pm / 9am - 3pm / 10am - 4pm)
- 50 Week centres - Opening hours - 7.45 - 6pm (4hrs 35 mins session)
(eg 7.45am - 12.20pm, 1pm - 5.35pm)

There may be some flexibility around this to combine hours. We will be working with our centres, partner providers and registered childminders to implement this plan and look to communicate this with parents/carers over the coming period.