



Early Years in Fife

Early Learning & Childcare

Applying for an ELC place for children 3 and 4 years old 2023/24



Fife Council offers Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to all 3 and 4 year olds from the first intake after their qualifying birthday until they are due to start school. This can be up to 1140 hours in most settings.

We are offering different session times in ELC settings for 3 and 4 year olds so you will have more choice.

Families may be able to share their 1140 funded hours between different ELC settings.

What are my options?

There will be several different ways for families to access their ELC entitlement, these will include:

- In a private ELC setting that is in partnership with Fife Council.
- At a playgroup that is in partnership with Fife Council.
- With a childminder who is in partnership with Fife Council.
- Term time in a Fife Council ELC setting.
- Across the whole year in a Fife Council ELC setting.

When should my child start ELC?

Every child is entitled to an ELC place from the first intake after their third birthday.

That means:

- **Starting ELC in August:**
Your child must be three before 31 August 2023.
- **Starting ELC in January:**
Your child must be three before 31 December 2023.
- **Starting ELC in April:**
Your child must be three before the last day of February 2024.

What session types are available in a Fife Council ELC setting?

- 6hrs Mon - Fri (Term Time)
- 4hrs 40mins am Mon - Fri (49 weeks)
- 4hrs 40mins pm Mon - Fri (49 weeks)
- 10hrs Mon and Tues, Wed am (46 weeks)
- Wed pm, 10hrs Thurs and Fri (46 weeks)

How do I apply for a Fife Council ELC place?

You should only complete one Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) application form per child for a Fife Council ELC provision. An online application form for 3 and 4 year old placements for academic year 2023-24 can be found at fife.gov.uk/earlyyears. A paper version can be collected from and handed into your first choice Fife Council ELC setting by **31 January 2023**.

How do I make my choices for a Fife Council ELC setting?

Fife Council is working hard to ensure places are matched to the needs of children and families. You are free to make an application to the ELC setting of your choice.

Please check your preferred ELC setting will be offering the session times you are looking for. You can find a list of nurseries and the sessions offered at fife.gov.uk/earlyyears

For a place in a Fife Council ELC setting you are asked to provide up to five choices on your application form. The more

choices you put on your form, the greater the chance you will be offered one of your preferences. However, please note that you should only put choices on your form that you may accept if offered.

Will I get my first choice?

Some nurseries or session times will be oversubscribed. If we are unable to offer your first choice, we will then look at your other choices to see if we can offer you one of these.

An admissions policy is in place to ensure fairness when allocating places - this can be found at fife.gov.uk/earlyyears

Please note that the place you are offered may not be your local ELC setting as nurseries do not operate in the same way as school catchment areas. In addition, children with siblings in a school may not always be offered a space in the nursery in that school.



Where do I apply for a Fife ELC place?

Before applying, you should check that your ELC setting offers your session(s) of choice. You can find a list of nurseries and the sessions offered at

fife.gov.uk/earlyyears

Online applications can be made at **fife.gov.uk/earlyyears**

If you are unable to submit your application online, please contact a Fife Council nursery. Applications must be received by **31 January 2023** for any child who will be attending any Fife Council ELC setting between August 2023 and July 2024.

If your child has additional support needs, please contact the headteacher of your first choice ELC setting.

You will be notified in April 2023 to advise you of where your child has been offered a place.

How do I apply for a funded ELC place at my preferred private nursery, playgroup or childminder?

You will be able to apply for a funded early learning and childcare place at your preferred private nursery, playgroup or childminder, if they are in partnership with Fife Council.

Applications for private nurseries, playgroups, and childminders in partnership with Fife Council should be made directly with these individual establishments and services.

A list of all current funded providers is available at **fife.gov.uk/earlyyears**

It may be possible to share hours between different Early Learning and Childcare providers up to a total of 1140 hours per annum. For example, this may be between an ELC setting and a childminder. You can state this on the application form.

