



# Should My Child Start Primary School This Year?

Information to Parents on  
Deferred Entry  
2016–2017



Education &  
Children's Services



This leaflet is intended to help you make an informed choice about whether your child should start primary school this year by answering some of the most frequently asked questions we receive. Throughout this document, the word 'parent' should be interpreted as including the child's legal guardian. All information in this document relates to the school year commencing **August 2016**.

Parents of children who will be five on or **before** 16 August 2016 have a duty to educate their child at primary school or make alternative suitable arrangements for his/her education. Early Learning and Childcare does not constitute primary schooling.

Parents of children who will be five between 17 August 2016 and the last day of February 2017 have the following options with regard to when their child commences primary education:

- *Parents may send their children to primary school in August 2016 or defer entry to August 2017, although in most circumstances it is expected that children who will be five before 31 December 2016 should move on to primary school where their needs will be met through an appropriate curriculum.*
- *Parents of children who will be five years old between the start of the school session in August and the end of December who consider that their child may benefit from a further year of early learning and childcare should discuss this with the Headteacher or partner provider. A referral for a deferred entry place can then be made. The Council's Priority Admissions Panel will make decisions on an individual basis.*
- *The Council gives parents of children who will be five between 17 August 2016 and 31 December 2016 the option to defer entry to primary school. Parents of these children considering deferring their child's entry to primary school are advised to consult with the Headteacher/Manager of the child's current early learning and childcare provision.*
- **Children who will be five between 1 January 2017 and the last day of February 2017 are entitled to an additional year of funded early learning and childcare if their parents decide to defer their entry to primary school. The majority of children in this age group are ready to make the transition to primary school. However, because all children develop at different rates, for some younger children a deferred start to primary school may be appropriate.**

The following timetable may be of some help to parents when making a decision about starting primary school:

**Children who are five on or before the start of the school session in August 2016**

*Children who are five before the start of the school session in August this year must start school in August 2016. Alternatively, suitable arrangements should be made for your child's education.*

**Children who are five after the start of the school date in August and the last day of December**

*Children in this age group may start school in August 2016 or defer entry to the following August. The Council's Referral Panel will assess the provision of an early learning and childcare place on an individual basis.*

**Children who are five between 1st January and last day of February 2017**

*Children in this age group are eligible to access an additional year of early learning and childcare if their parents do not wish them to start primary school in August 2016.*

## **Some commonly asked questions:**

**My child has a February birthday and is very confident and mature. Should I defer his/her entry to school because he/she is so young?**

Your child has a right to start school and most children in this age group are ready to make this step. All Primary One classes will have a spread of age ranges and will be organised to support all children.

You may wish to discuss your views with your child's current early learning and childcare provider.

**Can my child who will be five in November 2016 have a deferred early learning and childcare place in a private nursery or playgroup for the session starting August 2016?**

Yes, provided the nursery or playgroup is in partnership with Perth & Kinross Council to provide early learning and childcare. The Council's Referral Panel will assess the provision of early learning and childcare for children who will be five between the start of the school session in August 2016 and last day of December 2016, on an individual basis.

Parents of these children considering deferring their child's entry to primary school are advised to consult with the Headteacher/Manager of the chosen centre. After discussion the Headteacher/Manager will submit the referral for a deferred entry place to provide an additional year of early learning and childcare. Consideration will be given to requests on an individual basis. Forms are available from all nursery schools, and classes managed by this Council as well as partnership nurseries and playgroups.

**My child will be 5 in January 2017 and I can't decide whether he/she should start school in August 2016. I know that children can develop and mature rapidly at this stage and I am worried that if I do not register for primary school there may not be a place for him/her.**

You should register your child for primary school unless you are sure that you will not be taking up the place. However it is important that as soon as you have confirmed your decision you advise the school so that primary one placements in your chosen school can be finalised.

## How can I make my views known about when my child should start school?

This Council is committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that decisions about educational provision for children in this age group take full account of your views and preferences together with those of early learning and childcare staff to ensure your child's needs are met in the most appropriate setting.

You can therefore discuss this issue with staff at your child's nursery or playgroup. They will listen to your views and ensure that they are taken account of in any decision-making.

## My child has no experience of early learning and childcare. He/she will be five in October 2016 and I would like him/her to attend our local primary school's nursery this year. Is this possible?

Yes, you should make contact with your local primary school. Staff there will advise you about your child's placement.

The Council's Referral Panel will assess the provision of early learning and childcare for children who will be five between the start of the school session in **August 2016** and last day of **December 2016**, on an individual basis and referral forms are available from the school.

## With whom can I discuss my child's progress?

If your child already attends a nursery or playgroup, you can discuss this with the staff there. They will have gathered a great deal of information about your child, which will include:

- *how your child has progressed across a broad range of areas of development and learning;*
- *your child's level of independence;*
- *friendships and relationships with other children and adults.*

This information will add to the important information and knowledge you have about your child and will enable you to consider fully what the best arrangement for your own child is.

## Further information on early learning and childcare in Perth & Kinross Council may be obtained by contacting:

Education & Children's Services  
Perth & Kinross Council  
Pullar House  
35 Kinnoull Street  
PERTH  
PH1 5GD

Tel 01738 476200

Email [nursery-educ@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:nursery-educ@pkc.gov.uk)

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

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