

Guidance for Deferred Entry

If your child turns 5 AFTER the first day of term in August you can wait until the next year for them to start school.

They will be eligible for an additional year of funded early learning and childcare – either in a council, funded provider setting or childminder.

NOTE: If your child attends a setting in another local authority contact them to confirm.

How to defer a place:

- 1. Discuss your request** with your child's early learning centre or childminder.
- 2. [Register online for your child's catchment school](#)**
- 3. Apply to defer their place (by 15 March 2025)**
 - **Apply online** – you will receive an automatic email granting your deferral.
 - **Apply via email** – ask your Early Learning setting or childminder for an application form. We will send you a letter by the end of March 2025.

labelling a deferred place

If you want to withdraw a deferral request, contact Pupil Placement Team by 15 March 2025 at pupil.placement@midlothian.gov.uk. After this date, the main round of placing decisions will have taken place and there may not be a place available at your child's catchment school. We may have to seek a place at an alternative primary school.

Points to consider

A lot of emotional and social development will happen between the time parents/carers apply for a deferral in March and the start of primary school in August.

School teachers focus on the needs of the child in both Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools. Children aged 3-5 in Early Learning and Childcare settings and those in Primary 1 classrooms, usually work within the Early Level of the Curriculum for Excellence. Both settings have a focus on play and outdoor learning.

Guidance for Retained Year

If your child turns 5 ON or BEFORE the first day of term in August and have exceptional circumstances you can apply for an additional year of funded early learning and childcare – either in a council, funded provider setting or childminder.

NOTE: If your child attends a setting in another local authority contact them to confirm.

How to apply for a retained year:

- 1. Discuss your request** with your child's early learning centre or childminder if you are concerned your child is not ready for school or how their additional support needs will be met.
- 2. [Register online for your child's catchment school](#)**
- 3. Headteacher/Manager at the setting or childminder will complete application with you (by 2 February 2025).**
Applications should be scanned/photographed and emailed to Pupil.Placement@midlothian.gov.uk or posted to Pupil Placement, Midlothian Council, Children, Young People and Partnerships, Fairfield House, 8 Lothian Road, Dalkeith EH22 3ZG
- 4. The panel will consider your application.**
A letter will be sent to you with the decision by the end of March 2025.

Interventions for children with Significant Additional Support Needs

If your child has significant additional support needs, an additional year of Early Learning and Childcare may be considered as an intervention if it is agreed by the parent/carer and the core team around the child that this would be in their best interests. There must be clear targets to be worked on in this additional year.

Examples of when a retained year of early learning and childcare is considered an intervention.

- The child has additional support needs affecting their development
- The family has only recently arrived in the UK and the child has not experienced early learning and childcare and needs time to adjust to school life
- The child may have missed a lot of early learning and childcare through illness
- The child has a summer birthday and was born very prematurely

Decision making process

All applications are considered by a panel of early years professionals.

The panel may ask for additional information from the team around the child or they may visit the setting that the child is attending to further assess their needs.

Decisions about a retained year are best made as part of the ongoing profiling of a child's development and learning which is done by the Early Learning and Childcare provider. Schools have an obligation to support the needs of all children and the needs of each child will be planned for through the transition process to school.

In considering the best decision for each child, we will take account your views and the child's:

- Approach and attitude to learning
- Ability to communicate their own needs, feelings and ideas
- Levels of independence and self-help
- Emotional and personal development, including self-confidence and esteem
- Their relationships and friendships with other children and adults
- Additional support needs

Funding

Where the council has agreed to an additional publicly-funded Early Learning and Childcare year and you wish this to be in the private or voluntary sector, the Council can only make appropriate arrangements for payment to a setting in Partnership for Early Learning and Childcare.

If your child attends a setting in another local authority contact them to confirm funding arrangements.

Appealing a decision

Where the Council has refused an additional publicly-funded Early Learning and Childcare year you can appeal through normal Council procedures but there is no legal right to an appeal.