

Early Education

What do we mean by ‘early education’?

Early Years education is an introduction to the Foundation Phase education and the early year’s provision, which is often referred to as FPN1 (Early Entitlement) and FPN2 (Foundation Phase Nursery) and should offer a sound foundation for future learning through a developmentally appropriate curriculum in Wales.

Can all children access early education?

All children are entitled to access early education through the Foundation Phase curriculum ahead of mandatory schooling, from the term after their third birthday. For the purposes of this guidance we will be referring to this as Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision, although it might be referred to differently from one local authority (LA) to another.

All LA’s in Wales provide a minimum of 10 hours early education (FPN1) per week , either in the local school or in an approved setting like a playgroup, a day nursery or a Cylch Meithrin.

How do I access the early education application forms?

- To access the **Early Entitlement (FPN1)**, please follow the link; [Early Entitlement Funding](#)
- To access the **Nursery provision (FPN2)**, please follow the link; [School Nursery Admissions](#)

Parents not accessing Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision

Working parents do not need to access FPN as a pre-requisite to accessing the [Childcare hours](#) of the offer. However, as this is a combined Offer consisting of a minimum of 10 hours of FPN and a maximum of 20 hours of government-funded childcare, if a parent chooses not to access FPN provision then they will only be entitled to the additional hours of government-funded childcare during school term time (up to 39 weeks of the year) and up to 30 hours of government-funded childcare for the remaining pro-rata holiday entitlement.

Under no circumstances can hours of FPN be swapped for hours of childcare. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that no child receives more than a combined total of 30 hours early education and childcare per week over 39 weeks of the year (term-time weeks).

At the start of the school term when a child is eligible to receive a full time education place, the child will no longer be eligible to access the Offer. In the majority of local authorities, children will be offered a full time education place from the September after they turn 4. Where a school offers a staggered start to the term, parents will not be eligible to use the Offer for these term-time day(s)/week(s) when their child is not actually in the school.

In local authorities where children are eligible to receive a full time education place earlier than the September after which they turn 4 (for example the day or term after a child turns 4), these children will still be able to access the holiday provision element of the Offer until the September after they have turned 4. This is to ensure some consistency in the Offer and to prevent parents being penalised for taking up a full time education place for their child.

Parents will not be able to turn down a full time early education place at the point it is offered across their local authority in favour of continuing to access the Offer during term time.