

Education Authority

Notes of Guidance and Application Form for Admission to Pre-School Education in September 2016

Transfer and Open Enrolment
Updated: November 2015



Notes of Guidance for Parents and Guardians on Admission to Pre-School Education in September 2016

Date range for children in their final pre-school year 2 July 2012 – 1 July 2013



Checklist

1. **Have you** completed the following on the application form?
 - Name (as entered on Birth Certificate)
 - Address (home address **NOT** that of a relative/childminder)
 - Date of Birth (as entered on Birth Certificate)
 - Section C if you meet the socially disadvantaged circumstances criteria.
2. **Have you** nominated all providers that you would be prepared to send your child to? Failure to nominate all the providers you would be interested in could mean that your child may not secure a place.
3. **Have you** read and considered how your child would meet the criteria for each provider you are prepared to nominate?
4. **Have you** stated your reasons for preference, which are related to the admissions criteria? Eg other siblings attended, first child in family.
5. **Have you** completed only **1** application form? This form covers **ALL** Education Authority (EA) regions therefore, list all providers regardless of EA region.
6. **Have you** attached the **Birth Certificate** to your application form and any other information that a provider may require?
7. **Have you** signed and dated the application form?
8. **Have you** noted that the closing time for submitting the application form to your first preference provider is **before 12.00 noon on Wednesday 13 January 2016?**

Questions and Answers

What is a funded pre-school place? A pre-school place provided under the Pre-School Education Programme. There are normally 5 sessions per week, each lasting at least 2½ hours per day during the school year. Nursery schools and primary schools with nursery units can offer either full time (4½ hours per day) or part-time (2½ hours per day) sessions which can be either morning or afternoon sessions. A few schools have both full-time and part-time sessions. Voluntary/private providers offer part-time sessions (normally 2½ hours per day).

Which children qualify for funded pre-school education? Funded pre-school places are available for those children who were born between 2 July 2012 and 1 July 2013 (target age children). If there are still places available children born between 2 July 2013 and 1 July 2014 (underage children) may be admitted to nursery schools or nursery units but not to private/voluntary settings.

Where are pre-school places available and how do I obtain further information? Pre-school places are available in nursery schools, primary schools with nursery units and voluntary/private settings that have funded places. Information on pre-school providers with places available and the Procedure for Admission to Pre-School Education can be found on the EA's website at (www.eani.org.uk/admissions). Here you will find a Schools Directory which you can search to identify all the pre-schools in your area. You can view, download or print the admissions criteria of the pre-schools you are interested in. A reference booklet containing criteria for the pre-schools in your area is available in each pre-school and in public libraries. Local providers will give you a copy of their own criteria on request.

What are statutory criteria? Legislation issued by the Department of Education requires providers to give preference to children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their target age year. This is defined by the Department of Education as *a child whose parent is in receipt of Income Support or Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance: where an award of Income Support has been 'converted' into an Employment and Support Allowance and the Social Security Agency has confirmed that the level of benefit remains the same then the parent should continue to be treated as in 'socially disadvantaged circumstances'*.

How do I apply for a funded pre-school place? Application forms are available from your local pre-school provider or from the EA's website. You should complete only **ONE** application form and on it list **ALL** the providers where you would be willing to accept a place. Even if your child's name is already on a waiting list for admission you must still submit an application form. You must also fill in an application form if your child is currently attending a setting as there is no automatic entitlement to a second year pre-school education placement. Fill in your child's details in Section A of the application form i.e. name, date of birth, home address including house number and postcode, and parent/guardian's details. If you change address after completing the application you must inform the EA of your new address in writing.

In order to complete Section B of the form you should carefully examine the admissions criteria of the pre-school providers in your area and clearly demonstrate on your form how you meet the admissions criteria for each preference that you list. It is vitally important that you give the provider all the information that is relevant to either the statutory criteria or the sub-criteria determined by the provider because if you do not put the information on the form as to how your child meets a particular criterion then the provider cannot give your child consideration under this criterion. You are strongly advised to list more than one preference, as there is no guarantee that you will be successful in obtaining a place at your first preference provider. List only providers that are included on the EA's Schools Directory.

If a provider offers both full-time and part-time places you can list up to two preferences for this provider. This means if you would prefer a full-time place for your child at a provider but would also be willing to accept as a lower preference a part-time place you should name that provider twice on the form.

If you wish to apply for a place for your child on the basis of meeting Statutory Criteria you **must** have Section C of your application form stamped by the Social Security Agency.

Read the declarations, sign and date the form in Section D. NB: If a parent gives false or misleading information (e.g. date of birth, home address) and because of this the child obtains a place, the place will be withdrawn.

Where do I return the form to? Take the completed form and your child's Birth Certificate to your **FIRST** preference provider before 12.00 noon on Wednesday 13 January 2016. Some providers may require other verification documents with the application form. Others indicate that they may contact parents/guardians if they require further documentation.

How do pre-school providers decide who to accept? Apart from the Statutory Criteria, each provider sets its own admissions criteria to be applied when too many children apply to their setting. If a provider has more applications than places, it must select children for admission by applying its admissions criteria. If all applicants meet the statutory criteria, it is the individual provider's sub-criteria that determine which children are selected for admission. These sub-criteria could include whether the child has a family connection with the school/playgroup e.g. a brother or sister previously attended, the distance from the child's home to the school/playgroup, etc.

How does the admissions procedure operate? The pre-school education admissions procedure operates in two stages: **Stage 1** takes place between Wednesday 13 January 2016 and Friday 15 April 2016 and deals only with target age children. **Stage 2** takes place between Monday 18 April 2016 and Friday 3 June 2016 and deals with target age children who did not secure a place in Stage 1 along with underage children and children resident in the Republic of Ireland.

In each stage the application forms of those children not selected by a provider will be returned to the EA for onward transmission to the next provider named on the application form. This procedure continues until the child is selected by a provider named on the form, all preferences named have not selected the child, or the time allowed has elapsed.

During Stage 2 school based providers with places available consider applications received for target age children who were unplaced at the end of Stage 1 and who have now nominated further preferences along with applications received for underage children and any new applications. Voluntary and private providers with places available in Stage 2 will consider applications for target age children who were unplaced at the end of Stage 1 who have now nominated further preferences and any new applications from target age children. These settings are not permitted to consider applications from underage children.

Can I change my preference? Apart from those necessitated by exceptional circumstances, no changes of preference will be processed during the admissions procedure. If you wish to change your preference, for any reason other than in exceptional circumstances, you must withdraw the original application and submit a new application. If this occurs after 12 noon on Wednesday 13 January 2016 your new application will be treated as a late application. If you wish to change your preference because of exceptional circumstances e.g. change of address which necessitates a change of preference, you must submit a written request for a change of preference to the EA for consideration along with verification of the exceptional circumstances. Further information is available from your regional EA office.

When would my application be considered late? If your application is received after 12 noon on the 13 January 2016 your application will be treated as late and will not be considered until all punctual target age applications are considered. Further information on late applications is available on the EA website.

Can I submit more than one application? NO. If you submit more than one application form you will have made a false declaration. In the event that parents are discovered to have lodged more than one application form, then the first application lodged will normally be treated as the formal expression of parental preference and all other application forms will not be processed.

When will I be notified of the outcome of my application? There are two dates of notification. (Stage 1) letters will be issued by providers on **Friday 15 April 2016** advising those parents whose target age children they are accepting. The EA will advise parents of those target age children not selected by any provider and will include information regarding places available. Parents will have an opportunity to request further preferences for Stage 2.

(Stage 2) letters will be issued by providers on **Friday 3 June 2016** advising those parents whose children they are accepting. The EA will advise parents of those children not selected by any provider and will include information regarding places available.

Can I appeal against a decision not to admit my child? Only in the case of applications made to a nursery school or nursery unit can you appeal to an Independent Appeal Tribunal. However, the Tribunal's powers are limited. An appeal can only be brought on the grounds that the school's criteria were not applied or were not correctly applied in deciding to refuse a child admission to the school/unit. There is no right of appeal to the Independent Appeal Tribunal against a decision by a private or voluntary provider or where a parent has indicated a preference for a morning part-time place and an afternoon part-time place is offered (or vice versa).

How can I contact the EA? Regional contact details are provided in the table below.

<p>Belfast Region 40 Academy Street, Belfast, BT1 2NQ Tel: 028 9056 4080 / 9056 4084 E-mail: patricia.hughes@eani.org.uk</p>	<p>North Eastern Region County Hall, 182 Galgorm Road, Ballymena, BT42 1HN Tel: 028 2566 2197 E-mail: admissions-ner@eani.org.uk</p>	<p>South Eastern Region Grahambridge Road, Dundonald, BT16 2HS Tel: 028 9056 6568 E-mail: admissions-ser@eani.org.uk</p>
<p>Southern Region 3 Charlemont Place, Armagh, BT61 9AX Tel: 028 3741 0088 / 3741 0085 / 3751 2309 E-mail: admissions-sr@eani.org.uk</p>	<p>Western Region 1 Hospital Road, Omagh, BT79 0AW Tel: 028 8241 1458 E-mail: admissions-wr@eani.org.uk</p>	

These notes are not intended to be a substitute for the Procedure for Admission to Pre-School which can be accessed on the EA website at www.eani.org.uk/admissions

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE 2016/17 SCHOOL YEAR

Before completing this form please read the attached Notes of Guidance and the Procedure for Admissions to Pre-School Education available on the Education Authority website at www.eani.org.uk/admissions

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLACK INK

SECTION A **YOUR CHILD**

Surname* _____ Forename(s)* _____
(*as recorded on birth certificate)

Date of Birth _____ (BIRTH CERTIFICATE SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THIS FORM)

Name(s) of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Child's Home Address _____ Boy Girl
_____ Postcode _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Tel no: Home _____ Mobile _____ Work _____

FOR PRE-SCHOOL USE		
Received by 1st preference provider		
Date <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	Time <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	Initial <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>
Birth Certificate checked & attached		<input type="checkbox"/>
Target Age <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	Underage <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION B **PREFERENCES, SESSIONS, AND REASONS FOR PREFERENCE**

Before nominating preferences you should read the admissions criteria of the pre-school providers you are considering. **Providers cannot be held responsible for refusing your child a place if you do not detail the relevant information on this form or do not attach any documentation requested.** Relevant information **MAY** include: nearest provider to child's home; living in Parish; eldest child; brother(s)/sister(s) are attending or have attended; details of special circumstances (evidence may be required). Where a school provider has both full-time and part-time sessions you may have to list the school twice as a preference. Under SESSION below please record your preferences – tick FT (Full-time) or PT (Part-time). **(NOTE: FT is usually 4½ hours per day, 5 days per week. PT is usually 2½ hours per day, 5 days per week)**

If you do not nominate sufficient preferences there is a possibility your child will not secure a pre-school place.

PREFERENCES State Name of Provider and reasons for preference which relate to Admissions Criteria (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

SESSION (see above) (FT or PT) please tick ✓

FOR EA USE

1 st _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 nd _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 rd _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 th _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 th _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 th _____ Reasons for preference: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> FT	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE READ THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ALL PROVIDERS NAMED OVERLEAF AND LIST BELOW THE DOCUMENTS, IF ANY, WHICH YOU ARE ATTACHING TO THIS FORM.

If you have further preferences please continue on a separate sheet and put the name of your child at the top.

Please tick if further preferences are attached:

Please tick if your child is being assessed for Special Educational Needs

SECTION C **SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE**

If you are claiming priority because of social disadvantage you **MUST** take this form to your local Social Security Office where the information below will be completed. The providers will not be able to give priority unless the box below has been stamped by the Social Security Agency.

Entitled to Income Support Entitled to Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance

Entitled to Employment Support Allowance (*providing the conditions below are met)

NB: **A child from socially disadvantaged circumstances means a child whose parent is in receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance: where an award of Income Support has been 'converted' into an Employment and Support Allowance and the Social Security Agency has confirmed that **the level of benefit remains the same** then the parent should continue to be treated as being in 'socially disadvantaged circumstances'.*

Name of person holding entitlement: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE OFFICIAL STAMP

Certified by _____

Date _____

SECTION D **DECLARATION**

I confirm that:-

- (a) This form is used to list all providers regardless of Education Authority area.
 - (b) **This is the ONLY application form submitted for pre-school education in respect of the child named overleaf.**
- NB: In the event that parents/guardians are discovered to have lodged more than one application form, then the first application lodged will normally be treated as the formal expression of parental preference and all other application forms will not be considered.**
- (c) I have read the published Admissions Criteria of the providers nominated overleaf.
 - (d) I am aware that my child can only avail of **ONE** funded place.
 - (e) The address I have given is the child's home address and **NOT** the address of a child minder/another relative or a business address.
 - (f) I understand that it is my responsibility to provide all relevant information on or attached to this application form.
 - (g) The details I have given on this form are correct. I am aware if a place is awarded on the basis of false or misleading information it will be withdrawn.

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date _____

THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE FIRST PREFERENCE PROVIDER NO LATER THAN

12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2016

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT – The information on this form is required by the Education Authority for the purpose of processing your application. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the Education Authority to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.