

Below you will find links to websites with information about financial support for families.

Childcare Choices: Simply provide some information about your circumstances.

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

The Scottish Government's website also highlights help paying for childcare and gives details of tax credits available.

www.mygov.scot/help-paying-for-childcare/other-help/
www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-free-childcare-10-things-parents-should-know

The information in this update is about Midlothian's current plans for expansion. However, as they are dependent on Scottish Govt funding and policy priorities, they may be subject to change.

For further information:



www.midlothian.gov.uk



0131 271 3695



childcare@midlothian.gov.uk



[@midearly](https://twitter.com/midearly)



MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL Early Learning and Childcare

Parent Update

December 17
Issue 4

1 - Give us your views on the 1140 hrs

Welcome to the latest update of how we plan to implement the 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare (EL&C). All three and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-old children in Scotland will be entitled to 1140 hours in 2020.

Research demonstrates that high quality early learning and childcare is of enormous benefit to children's emotional, social, physical and mental development. The transition from 600 hours to 1140 hours will not happen overnight. We will be developing a phased approach to the expansion which will be dependent on Government funding and policy priorities. We want to make sure that parent's views are incorporated into our expansion plans and there is still time to give us your views on how we can make sure the service meets the needs of Midlothian's families. To fill in the survey, which runs until Friday 22nd December, visit:

- www.midlothian.gov.uk/early-learning-survey

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2 – What’s happening now?

We’re running small pilots offering the 1140 hours in some settings so that we can learn what our families need and how together we can make it work.

Pilots are underway at Moorfoot, Cornbank, Mayfield and Mount Esk nurseries.

You can find more details of how staff, parents and children are finding the expanded hours pilots on other pages within this update. Learning from the pilots will inform our expansion plans and we plan to expand places at other settings as we progress towards the entitlement in 2020. These plans will be dependent on future funding announcements and policy priorities from the Scottish Government.

Meanwhile, council led project groups are looking at everything from how our settings can accommodate the increased capacity to making sure settings can recruit and retain the estimated 300 extra staff needed.

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7 – What’s happening nationally and locally?

You can find lots of information about what is happening across Scotland to implement the expanded hours on the Scottish Government’s updated website.

If you visit the early education and care pages at www.beta.gov.scot, you can learn more about the 2017/2018 national action plan.

There are details too about some of the other trials going on across Scotland, funded by the government.

Mayfield Trial

The Mayfield Trial is exploring the blended delivery model between childminders, a nursery school and a third sector provider. The learning from this trial will inform how childminders can be part of our delivery plan.

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6 - Career opportunities

Many more staff, from all walks of life, will be needed in nursery and other early learning and childcare settings (including childminders) by 2020 and beyond.

To help recruit and retain the estimated 300 people we think we will need in Midlothian, we've set up a page on our website with information about local training and job opportunities.

Just visit our Midlothian Council page at ww.midlothian.gov.uk and type 'career opportunities in childcare' in the search bar.

You'll find information on courses offered by Edinburgh College, which has a campus at Eskbank, along with details of how to apply for Modern Apprenticeships.

The Scottish Government has also recently launched a national campaign. 'Shape their worlds. Shape your career' which aims to encourage more school leavers into the profession.

You can find out more here:

www.childcarecareersscotland.scot

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3 - Mount Esk pilots update

Taking part in the Mount Esk Nursery pilot has transformed the lives of Jo Wallace, her partner Lee and their four-year-old daughter, Lexi.



Jo says Lexi is thriving being in nursery from 8.30am to 3pm Monday to Thursdays and 8.30am to 12.30pm on Fridays. Jo says: "We used to have to deal with temper tantrums, lack of sleep and if she was up at night, so was I. I was running on empty. Now though, her behaviour has really improved, she sleeps through the night and she's off the bottle and the pull up pants. She's also writing her name and doing her numbers. In fact, the more hours she's here, the happier she is."

Jo adds: "The extra hours have been great for us."

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4 - Mount Esk



Mount Esk Nursery head teacher John Dagger and his Bonnyrigg staff members are taking part in a pilot project, which has been running since August 2017, offering the expanded hours to 24 families.

The nursery have made some subtle changes to the learning environment and routines. Cosy corners have been created to accommodate children needing a nap throughout the longer school day and new routines have been implemented to cope with arrivals and departures and tooth brushing.

Among the most rewarding aspects of the pilot is being able to observe and build relationships with the children across the longer day.

By 2020, Mount Esk will be accommodating many more children, who will be enjoying the 1140 hours.

John says: "We're looking now at how to do that. We might have an outdoor classroom, we're looking at forest schools and how to have more experiences outwith the school.

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5 - Moorfoot



Evonne Robinson is really enjoying taking part in the pilot project at Moorfoot Nursery.

Her three-year-old son Ayden is "loving" being there and he attends the same hours as the normal school day.

Evonne says the extended hours mean she and her husband don't have to rely so much on her parents for childcare and now don't have to consider cutting their working hours.

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