**Policy Title** - **EARLY YEARS ADMISSIONS & REVIEW POLICY**

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<td><strong>Lead Officer</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>Anne Kiely</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Designation:</strong></td>
<td>Early Years &amp; Childcare Manager</td>
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<td><strong>Tel:</strong></td>
<td>0131 469 3686</td>
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<td><strong>Lead Officer</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Lead Service Area</strong></td>
<td>Children &amp; Families, Schools &amp; Community Services (Early Years)</td>
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<td><strong>Last Review Date</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Implementation Date</strong></td>
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<td>2 years</td>
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<td><strong>Date Agreed</strong></td>
<td>13 January 2009</td>
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<td><strong>Agreed by</strong></td>
<td>Education, Children and Families Committee</td>
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**Definition:** Policy – A course of action or set of standards adopted by the City of Edinburgh Council. This document may be out of date if printed, the latest version is available on the Council Intranet.
1. **PURPOSE**

The City of Edinburgh Council admits children into all its pre-five establishments and services. This policy is required:

- to secure pre-school education for all eligible children – since April 2002 – all 4 year olds and 3 year olds in the term following their 3rd birthday (Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000)
- to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need and, so far as is consistent with that duty, promote the upbringing of children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to their needs. (Children (Scotland) Act 1995).
- to provide day care for children in need aged 5 and under, who have not yet commenced attendance at school (Children (Scotland) Act 1995).

This Admissions Policy harmonises all policies within a single framework, in accordance with new arrangements for the development and delivery of an integrated Early Years Service through the Children and Families Department. Although the criteria for admission for additionality will be the same regardless of the type of service accessed, the procedures vary according to where the family first presents to receive a pre-school service; at a nursery school/class or at a Child and Family Centre.

2. **SCOPE**

The policy relates to the following specific services:

- Part-time pre-school education for 3 and 4 year olds within local authority provision
- Additional free hours within certain Nursery Schools and Classes
- Child and Family Centre placements
- Day Carer placements
- Outreach Support Services from Child and Family Centres

Whilst applying in the main to services for children aged 0-5 years, it will not exclude older children whose needs have been assessed as requiring support.

Attendance at a particular nursery or nursery class does not guarantee a child’s entry into a specific Primary School.

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3. **DEFINITIONS**

“E.A.L.”: English as an Additional Language teaching service. See details of service in following link [www_egfl.net/ASL/Documents/referralforms_folder/EALleaflet.doc](http://www_egfl.net/ASL/Documents/referralforms_folder/EALleaflet.doc)

“Term” following their 3rd birthday: As per school session dates. Term 1 = Autumn term, Term 2 = Spring term, Term 3 = Summer Term. See term dates in following link [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Learning/Schools/School-term-dates](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Learning/Schools/School-term-dates)

4. **POLICY STATEMENT**

4.1 **UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES**

4.1.1 Consideration will be given in the allocation of places, to the balance of needs of the children within the setting, in accordance with the Local Authority’s Equalities legislation/policy.

4.1.2 The principles underlying the policy apply regardless of the type of service accessed and are as follows:

- Centrality of the views, needs and rights of children and their families.
- Emphasis on prevention and early intervention.
- The universality, accessibility, flexibility and high quality of services.
- Consideration of parental choice as far as possible within available resources.
- Responsiveness to changing levels and location of need.
- Socially inclusive provision for families, incorporating specialist support as appropriate.
- A commitment to the principles of equality of opportunity and social justice and to tackling social exclusion.

4.2 **ADDITIONALITY CRITERIA**

4.2.1. All children have a statutory right to part-time pre-school education from the term following their 3rd birthday and a right to have their welfare protected and promoted.
4.2.2. Decision about the allocation of additional resources and/or additional time to support those rights, will be made when the family/child circumstances fulfil certain criteria.

4.2.3. The criteria listed are in order of priority. They will be used to inform consideration of what will best support the child’s emotional, physical, social and educational development, regardless of the centre where the child will access the service

- Band 1 : Child Protection
- Band 2 : Children in Need
- Band 3 : Support/Family Stress

See Appendix 1 for further detail describing particular circumstances pertaining to each of these criteria.

4.3 PROCEDURES FOR ALLOCATION OF PLACES

The criteria for allocation of places and for providing additional services apply across all Children and Family Services. However, different procedures will apply depending on whether the child first presents at a Child and Family Centre or a nursery school/class. The processes are represented in the attached diagram. (Appendix 2)

4.3.1 Nursery Schools and Classes (Part time placements)

Nursery Schools and Classes provide access, under the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000, to part-time pre-school education for 3 and 4 year olds. The entitlement is to 475 hours per year for all children from the term following their 3rd birthday; please refer to dates of eligibility (Appendix 4)

A part-time place is usually configured on 12 hours 55 minutes over 5 days per week. More flexible arrangements can be applied by head teachers where possible, depending on pressure caused by demand for places and staffing resources being available (e.g 12 hours 55 minutes over 2 ½ days or 2-3 sessions (min) either AM or PM). Nursery schools and classes will be expected to accommodate parents’ wishes as far as possible, but must also comply with the ratio requirements of the Care Commission.

The allocation of part-time places to children resident in the City of Edinburgh will be made in the following order of priority:

- Children with additional support needs
- Children accessing a retained year (i.e children of statutory school age who are assessed as requiring another year of pre-school education)
- Children with deferred entry to Primary School .(i.e. children who could go to school but have applied for and been granted a deferred year at nursery). Where the deferral has not been granted there is no requirement for the child to start school but there is no obligation to provide another year at nursery.
- Children in their pre-school year in order of their birth date, oldest first.
- Children who have reached their 3rd birthday and are born within the dates of eligibility, in order of their birth date, oldest first. (Appendix 4)
- Children who have reached their 3rd birthday and are not yet eligible based on the dates contained in Appendix 4 but who have been assessed as meeting the criteria in section 4.2.

Where vacancies exist, after places have been allocated to Edinburgh children, places may be allocated to children who are resident outwith the City of Edinburgh in the order of priority used for Edinburgh children.

4.3.2 Nursery School/Classes (Free Additional Hours)

Any decisions about free additional hours in a nursery school or class (over and above the entitlement of 475 hours per year), will be recommended by the Head of Establishment and approved by the cluster early years admissions group. The amount of free additional hours may vary in accordance with the needs of the child and supporting evidence given. This decision will be taken in consultation with the child’s parent/carer and must also include two written assessments as supporting evidence from any other professional involved with the family (i.e. Health Visitor, Social Worker, Educational Psychologist, other appropriate professional), see pro forma given in Appendix 5. In the case of a child who has already spent time in the nursery setting, one piece of supporting evidence can be provided by the nursery.

An admissions group based in each of the school cluster areas will allocate any agreed free additional hours within the cluster in response to assessment of the child and family needs as shown in Appendix 6. The allocation will be determined and prioritised in accordance with the criteria specified in section 4.2 and appendix 1 of this policy.

Admissions groups will be configured from within the school cluster areas and include representation from all Nursery School/Classes who have been allocated free additional hours. Other members will include local Health Visitor/s and Child and Family Centre representation. Admission Groups may also invite other relevant professionals if felt necessary, i.e Educational Psychologist, E.A.L teaching service.

The admissions group should happen with appropriate frequency to deal with the numbers of children requesting additional hours, i.e. linked to termly admissions.

Decisions to allocate additional hours to children on an emergency basis may be taken by the Head of Establishment. These decisions will relate to a child’s safety, any emergency situation which has adverse effect on the family or the prevention of a child from being looked after or accommodated by the local authority. This decision will be reported back to the first available admission group.

The decision for allocation of additional hours will be recorded on a proforma (Appendix 3). Details of this decision will then be communicated to parents/carers
in writing, along with the reasons for the decision, and also a statement about the need to review their allocation of additional hours within the current term.

Parents have the right to appeal admission decisions made. This process is outlined in the document entitled Allocation of Pre School Places - Appeals Process.

The allocation of free additional hours will not normally continue beyond the term in which they are granted, without a review of the child’s needs/circumstances. This review will involve those professionals in contact with the child/family and the parent/carer. The continuing needs of the child/family will be considered alongside the priorities being considered by the Head of Establishment in consultation with the appropriate other professionals involved with the child, for the coming term.

4.4 Selling of Additional Hours

For guidance in selling any additional hours please refer to the guidance on ‘Selling additional hours’ in nursery schools/classes (Appendix 7).

4.4.1 In exceptional circumstances where free additional hours cannot be filled by children who are assessed as requiring this resource or children on the waiting list who will be eligible during the academic year for a part time placement, additional hours may be purchased by parents/carers.

4.4.2 There can be no guarantee that the arrangements for the purchase of additional hours for any child will carry forward into the next academic term. They should be reviewed termly and this should be made clear to the parent/carer at the time of purchase.

4.5 Child and Family Centres and Day Carer Services

4.5.1 Child and Family Centres and Day carer services safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need consistent with the duties under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

4.5.2 An Admissions Group based in each Child and Family Centre will allocate the resources detailed at 2 in response to assessments of child and family needs. The allocation will be determined and prioritised in accordance with the criteria specified in Section 4.2 and Appendix 1 of this policy.

4.5.3 Admissions Groups will be configured locally, and will be constituted from local service providers on a multi-disciplinary basis.

4.5.4 Admission Groups must be convened in such a way as to be inclusive of parents/carers, and supportive of their participation if that is what they wish.

4.5.5 Admissions Groups should happen with appropriate frequency to deal with the numbers of children coming into the service.
4.5.6 The functions of the Admissions Group will include the requisition of information and assessments of the needs of children/families in order to make decisions and recommendations about the allocation/prioritisation of the following resources:

- Places within Child and Family Centres and with Day Carers.
- The allocation of outreach services from Child and Family Centres.
- Recommendations related to wider child and family support needs. This could include a recommendation for a place in the local nursery school/class.

4.5.7 Assessments will take the form of information being given directly by parents/carers and also information from at least two of the following sources.

- Health Visitors
- Staff within Establishments
- Social Workers
- Educational Psychologists
- Community Paediatricians
- Health Specialists
- The voluntary/independent sector

The information provided for assessment will be made available to parents/carers prior to the Admissions Group meeting.

4.5.8 Decisions to admit children on an emergency basis or allocate resources may be taken at the discretion of the Head of Establishment or Senior Staff within the Resource Team. These decisions will relate to a child’s safety, the prevention of a child from being looked after and accommodated by the Local Authority or any emergency situation which may have an adverse effect on the family. The longer term decision will be made by the first available Admission Group.

4.5.9 Places will be configured flexibly in order to respond to the differing needs of children and families who receive services within establishments or with Day Carers or receiving outreach services.

4.5.10 When allocating resources, the Admissions Group will identify the appropriate time for the first review to be undertaken and those who should be involved in review meetings. Subsequent review times will be identified by participants but can be called at any time by those involved including parents/carers.

4.5.11 Decisions will be recorded on a proforma (Appendix 3) and communicated formally to parents/carers.

4.5.12 Parents/carers will have the opportunity to appeal decisions made by the Admissions Group using the formal appeals process.

4.5.13 Reviews of the child/parent/carer needs will take place at least every 6 months or as often as the professionals involved deem necessary.

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4.5.14 Admissions Groups, through the review process, have responsibility to decide when a child may be ready to transfer to mainstream nursery. Headteachers should be involved in these decisions through attendance at appropriate admission group meetings and in planning for the transition, according to the procedure laid out in Appendix 2.

4.5.15 An Individual transition plan should be established and agreed for each child and the Head Teacher or appropriate staff of the receiving centre should be involved in the development of this.

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

   Anne Kiely : Early Years and Childcare Manager
   Jane Ramage : Early Years and Childcare Manager
   Jane Rough : Early Years and Childcare Manager

6. **LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

   Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000
   Children (Scotland) Act 1995

7. **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

   Appendix 1 – Criteria for free additional hours in nursery
   Appendix 2 – Process of allocation of nursery place
   Appendix 3 – Record of Admissions Decision
   Appendix 4 – Children’s Eligibility : Session 2009-2010
   Appendix 5 – Free Additional Hours – Supporting Evidence from Professionals
   Appendix 6 - Admissions Group procedures and terms of reference
   Appendix 7 – Guidance on selling additional hours
Early Years Admission Policy

Criteria for free additional hours in nursery

The primary aim of free additional hours is to improve outcomes for individual children where these have been put in jeopardy due to a particular or a combination of circumstances.

To allocate additional hours may not always be in the best interests of the child even if the child has additional needs as outlined below.

Even if any of the criteria for additional needs, as listed below are met, the decision to offer free additional hours should be based on whether it would of significant benefit to the wellbeing and/or learning and development of the child at that time.

No free additional hours will be allocated simply because a child meets any one of these criteria. Two written assessments from other professionals (i.e. Health Visitor, Social Worker, Educational Psychologist, any other health professionals, etc) involved with the child will be required as supporting evidence prior to the allocation of additional hours.

The criteria bands are listed in order of priority.

Band 1

- Any child considered at risk of abuse, on the Child Protection Register or to prevent a child being looked after and accommodated.

Band 2

- Children assessed as requiring more than part time provision because they display significant additional support needs.
  a. The child has an identified single or combination of factors that will have a significant adverse effect on their learning/developmental progress or their mental health and well being.
  b. Children where any single or combination of the following circumstances has had or threatens to have a significant adverse effect on their mental health and wellbeing and/or on their learning/developmental progress.
  a. mental health and wellbeing of parents
  b. physical/learning disability of parents/carer
  c. children living in circumstances where the parent or child has experienced crisis, trauma or severe stress.

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Band 3

- Children whose wellbeing and/or learning and development have been adversely affected by a combination of the following.

  a. severe financial stress in the household
  b. social isolation
  c. other dependant children with difficulties/disabilities in the household.
  d. Three or more children under 5 years in the household.
  e. Multiple births, i.e. twins, triplets in the family

- A child for whom English is an additional language, not the language of the home and where this is causing significant communication difficulties for the child in nursery.

- Very young parents (aged 18 years and under) who require support to allow them to return to secondary education.
Process of allocation of nursery place

Part time, free additional hours or purchase of additional hours.

- Child 3-5 eligible for pre-school education
- Discussion with parents about nature of place required
- Purchase of additional hours
- Free Additional Hours requested
- Nursery staff decides
- Nursery gathers supporting evidence & make recommendation
- See Policy on Selling Additional Hours
- Admission group for authorisation
- Info sent to central team and recorded
- Nursery gathers supporting evidence & make recommendation
- Nursery staff decides
- PT placement

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## Record of Admissions Decision

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<td>Address</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Parent/carer</td>
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<th>Who by</th>
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<th>Date of Headteacher/Health visitor discussion:</th>
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Decision taken (please confirm criteria band and list reasons for additional hours)

Decision passed on to Parent/carer
Date…………………………

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### Session 2009-2010

#### Children’s Eligibility

### PRE-SCHOOL YEAR

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<td>01.03.06 – 28.02.07</td>
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### ANTE-PRE-SCHOOL YEAR

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<td>August 2009 (Autumn Term)</td>
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<td>1 September 2006 – 31 December 2006</td>
<td>January 2010 (Spring Term)</td>
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<td>1 January 2007 – 28 February 2007</td>
<td>April 2010 (Spring Term)</td>
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### DEFERRALS

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### DEFERRED ENTRY CHILDREN – OUT OF AUTHORITY

Note that for children who do not live within the City of Edinburgh Council area:

- Those born in **January or February 2005** will be funded by the City of Edinburgh Council
- Those born between **the start of the Autumn Term and 31 December 2004** may be funded by their own authorities

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**PRO FORMA**
Free Additional Hours

**Supporting Evidence from Professionals**

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<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
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</table>

1. Please describe your knowledge of the child and family and what factors indicate to you that free additional hours in nursery may be required.

2. Please indicate your involvement with the child and your proposed input.

3. Please attach any additional reports you feel would support this recommendation.

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Admissions Group – Free additional hours

Application in to 1st choice school, including for free additional hours

Part time place allocated according to Admissions Policy criteria & procedure

Face to face interview with parents to establish reasons for request & key agencies involved. Initial screening.

School gathers together supporting evidence from relevant agencies for Admissions Group using standard evidence pro-forma

Admissions Group meets, considers evidence & makes decision on allocation

Parents & professionals informed of decision

Parents right of appeal

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Terms of reference of Admission Group.

- Matching child’s profile against policy criteria.
- Considering needs of child & how best to meet them.
- Considering capacity in the cluster to support that.
- Making offer based on suitability, need & capacity.

In addition Admission groups would aspire to consider appropriate arrangements for the effective co-ordination of any other support required to meet the needs of the child.

Admission Group core membership

- Headteachers of cluster schools with full time places.
- Managers of Child & Family Centres in clusters.
- Named Health Visitor for each school.

Additional invited Admission Group members (if felt appropriate and relevant to the needs of the child) : e.g

- Early Years Educational Psychologist
- E.A.L teaching staff
- Support Co-ordinators

Admission Group organisation

To be organised on a school cluster model but, depending on the volume of the places to be allocated, clusters may be brought together into 1 panel.

Frequency & timing of meetings

Based on experience of PAG system –

1 x 2.5hr panel for every 20 submissions.

Admission Groups to be held –

- May/June for Autumn term with mop up panel in September.
- End November for Spring term.
- Mid March for Summer term.

In addition, the Admission Group can be asked to approve retrospectively places allocated on an emergency basis in between standing meetings. These places would be allocated by the schools themselves after gathering evidence in the usual manner.
SELLING ADDITIONAL HOURS

N.B. Please read in association with Early Years Admissions and Review Policy.

Principles

1. Nursery schools and classes are allocated staffing resources each year based on the number of part time and free full time allocations for vulnerable children and this will form the core nursery budget.

2. In the event of there being spare capacity within existing resources, parents may buy additional hours to support their work or training.

3. The employment of additional staff in order to sell further additional hours or extended care must be financially self sustaining and viable. The ongoing monitoring of budgets is essential.

4. There can be no guarantee that the arrangements for the purchase of additional hours for any child will carry forward into the next academic term. They should be reviewed termly and this should be made clear to the parent / carer at the time of purchase.

5. If there is sufficient demand and capacity within the nursery, parents themselves could ask the Head Teacher to consider the selling of additional hours if this has not been an option previously open to them.

6. The Head Teacher could consider providing a range of services depending on an assessed need e.g, lunchtime cover, additional nursery sessions, wraparound at the beginning or end of the core nursery time, term time or 50 week service, service for young children.

7. The high standard of education and care should be maintained. The national care standards and child at the centre 2 would provide the framework of a good service. Staff would need to comply with the registration requirements with the Scottish Social Services Council. See appendix I for staffing structure.

8. Priority should be given to parents / carers who wish to buy additional hours who are:-
   - Parent/ carer in a low income household requiring childcare for work or education/training.
   - Taking first steps into training and employment
   - In work
   - In education or training

   These places will be allocated on a ‘first come’ basis, and specific patterns of placement will be dependent on availability.

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9. If eligible, parents or carer should be encouraged to take up Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit (Inland Revenue Tax Credit Helpline 0845 300 3900) and/or seek support from the Working for Families service in Edinburgh (Freephone 0800 432 0044)

Selling additional hours within existing staffing resource

10. In exceptional circumstances places intended to be allocated to those who qualify for free additional hours may be purchased by parents and carers if:

   a) The additional hours cannot be filled by children who are assessed as requiring this resource.
   b) All eligible for pre-school children on a waiting list, either in your nursery or one in your area have been allocated a nursery place

Selling additional hours which require the employment of additional staff members and additional resources

11. The proposed selling of additional hours beyond the resource available for free allocation of places should be discussed initially with the Early Years and Childcare Service Managers and with Finance to identify the potential for achieving minimum income targets

12. This discussion, and that relating to the development of extended care, will include the consideration of demographic and policy information held by the Children and Families Department, taking into account knowledge of other services available locally and the known demand for childcare from parents/carers.

13. The ongoing viability of the service should be monitored by the Head Teacher and EY&CC Manager and the continuation of the service will be dependant on the agreed income target being met.

14. Parents should agree the number and days of the sessions with the Head Teacher to suit their needs at the outset of taking up the place. Parents may request changes. Head Teachers will seek to accommodate such requests where possible and appropriate. In certain circumstances, due to supply and demand factors it may not be possible to fulfil specific requests.

Fees

15. Fees for the provision of additional hours are set on annual basis through the Council budget setting process.

16. Places should be offered on a sessional basis (i.e. breakfast club, additional session, lunch time, after school club), part sessions should not normally be offered.

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17. Children should be brought and collected within the agreed session times. Parents who fail to collect a child promptly at the end of the session may be charged for an additional session.

18. Methods of payment and current terms and conditions related to the selling of additional hours in nursery schools and classes remain as found in the City of Edinburgh Council’s paper 'Selling Additional Hours Guidelines' issued in 2006. Further details will be available from Head Teachers in Nursery Schools and Classes.