

# Welcome to pre-primary education!

Information for parents and guardians about getting a pre-primary education place





Welcome to pre-primary education brochure  
Tervetuloa esiopetukseen -esite  
Broschyren Välkommen till förskolan  
Добро пожаловать на дошкольное обучение  
Ku soo dhowow waxbarasho-horaadka  
أهلاً وسهلاً في التعليم التمهيدى معلومات لأولياء الأمور عن

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# Welcome to pre-primary education!

Your child will start pre-primary education next autumn. Pre-primary education is about learning through play and exploration, practising social skills and reinforcing your child's self-esteem through positive learning experiences.

The pre-primary education year is a significant period in your child's learning path. The learning path begins with early childhood education and continues to pre-primary education and then to comprehensive school. In fact, your child's pre-primary education place is often close to their future school, and we collaborate with the school during the pre-primary education year. Your child will get to know their future classmates, as the children who attend pre-primary education together will also go on to attend the same school.

Helsinki also has a wide network of private daycare centres that provide pre-primary education.

Pre-primary education is compulsory by law. This means that your child must attend pre-primary education every school day and be present during pre-primary education hours. Your child will become more involved in group activities, develop friendships and practise new skills when they attend pre-primary education regularly.

We carry out pre-primary education in close cooperation with parents and guardians. One form of cooperation are the discussions regarding your child's personal learning plan for pre-primary education (LEOPS) in the autumn and spring. During the year, we will cooperate with guardians in many ways, allowing them to have a say in their child's pre-primary education year.

**I would like to wish all the children starting pre-primary education and their parents and guardians an exciting and joyful pre-primary education year 2026–2027!**

**Miia Kemppe**, Head of Early Childhood Education, Education Division, City of Helsinki



# What and how do children learn in pre-primary education?

Together with the guardian, we will plan the appropriate activities for the child, that support their learning and well-being.

We encourage the child to trust in their own abilities by reinforcing their learning and thinking skills.

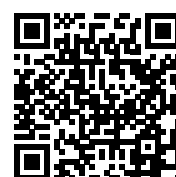
We practise interaction and emotional skills and being part of a group together.

We learn by playing, exercising, exploring and getting to know our surroundings – just as in early childhood education!

Activities are planned and assessed with the children.

The individual needs and interests of each child and the Helsinki curriculum for pre-primary education are in the core of the pre-primary education group's activities.

A video for parents and guardians, Adventure awaits in the pre-school, is available at [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).



**Learning new things together is something to enjoy and to be excited about!**

# How are pre-primary education places assigned?

Helsinki is divided into admission areas for pre-primary education. The child's home address determines which pre-primary education admission area they belong to. Each admission area can have one or more daycare centres that provide pre-primary education. A daycare centre may provide pre-primary education on school premises.

Daycare centres that provide pre-primary education are determined based on pre-primary education admission areas, taking into account population forecasts for the areas and past application rates. One or more comprehensive schools are located in the same area. Every daycare centre that provides pre-primary education has a designated school that it cooperates with.

As a rule, we assign each child a pre-primary education place in the daycare centre that cooperates with the child's future local school. The pre-primary education place is not always in the same daycare centre in which the child has been attending early childhood education. This might be the case if the child has been attending early childhood education in a different admission area than where the child lives.

We will assign your child a pre-primary education place automatically if they are in municipal early childhood education before the start of pre-primary education. In this case, you do not need to do anything before the allocation of the pre-primary education places in February.

If your child is in home care, participates in our club activities or is on a temporary break from early childhood education before the start of pre-primary education, you should enrol them in pre-primary education. When you enrol your child in pre-primary education, we will assign them a place at the same time as other children. The enrolment also applies to children who are in early childhood education in a round-the-clock daycare centre that provides evening and weekend care, and who will need extended hours also during the pre-primary education year.

To apply for pre-primary education in a private daycare centre, contact the manager of the private daycare centre and submit the City of Helsinki's pre-primary education application directly to the private daycare centre you wish to get a place in.

Your child may be assigned a pre-primary education place in an admission area that is not the one associated with their home address if they are in the Swedish-language immersion programme, have special educational needs or require extended hours. Your child's pre-primary education can also be arranged in a group or facility that does not provide pre-primary education to others if your child's support needs make it appropriate for them to stay in their current daycare centre.

If you are not satisfied with the pre-primary education place assigned to your child, you can apply for another pre-primary education place elsewhere. If you do this, you will lose the place you rejected. The pre-primary education places in a daycare centre are always given first to those children whose future local school is the one cooperating with the daycare centre. If there are more applicants than available pre-primary education places, we will assign the places by drawing lots.

Secondary admission means that you apply for a pre-primary education place for your child in an admission area other than the one associated with your child's home address. Your child can be granted a pre-primary education place in the location you applied for if there are free places in the pre-primary education group. As a parent or guardian, you are responsible for your child's transport if you have applied for a pre-primary education place for them outside their pre-primary education admission area. An exception to this rule are children who receive child-specific support in pre-primary education at a pre-primary education place outside their own admission area.

# If your child is in municipal early childhood education

Your child will automatically receive a place in municipal pre-primary education if they are attending municipal early childhood education. We will notify you of the place in the Asti online service. We will assign your child's pre-primary education place in their pre-primary education admission area based on their address on **22 January 2026**.



## Important dates

### 13 February 2026

**Your child's pre-primary education place for 2026–2027 will be published in the Asti online service.** Every child attending the City of Helsinki's municipal early childhood education is assigned a pre-primary education place. As a parent or guardian, you do not need to do anything before this.

### 13–27 February 2026

**Accept or reject the assigned pre-primary education place in Asti.** If you reject the assigned place, you must fill in a pre-primary education application and apply for another pre-primary education place for your child during the period of 13–27 February 2026.

### By the end of March 2026

**You will receive a pre-primary education decision about your child's pre-primary education place.** No new decision is issued for supplementary early childhood education, unless the location changes.

### May 2026

**Your child's pre-primary school will inform you of procedures related to start of pre-primary school and orientation days.**

### 12 August 2026

**Pre-primary education begins.**

## If your child is in the Swedish-language immersion programme in early childhood education

Children who are in the Swedish-language immersion programme are assigned a pre-primary education place according to their language immersion path. For more information, please contact your child's current daycare centre. As a parent or guardian, you must accept the pre-primary education place in Swedish-language immersion in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**.

## If your child needs extended hours in pre-primary education

If your child needs care with extended hours in the evenings or weekends during the pre-primary education year, enrol them in pre-primary education in Asti between **7 and 21 January 2026**. In this case, we will assign your child a pre-primary education place in a round-the-clock daycare centre in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**.

If you do not inform us of your child's need for extended hours in pre-primary education, we will assign them a place in a regular day-time daycare centre within the admission area based on their home address.

You must verify the need for extended hours in pre-primary education to the daycare centre manager with a shift work certificate provided by your employer by **21 January 2026**.

Pre-primary education with extended hours is provided based on children's attendance times on weekdays between 8.00 and 16.00. The round-the-clock daycare centre will give you more information about the pre-primary education times.

## If your child or family has a non-disclosure for personal safety reasons

A non-disclosure for personal safety reasons is an exceptional measure that restricts the disclosure of your address data from the Finnish Population Information System. We cannot automatically assign a pre-primary education place for your child in Asti because the non-disclosure protects the child's home address information. If you have a non-disclosure in place, send the enrolment form via secure email to Service Guidance for Early Childhood Education and Pre-primary Education, and we will assign your child a pre-primary education place by secure email on **13 February 2026**. You must accept or reject the assigned place by replying to the email between **13 and 27 February 2026**. Find the detailed instructions, enrolment form and link for sending the secure email at [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

## If your child's home address changes to another admission area within Helsinki before the start of pre-primary education

**Your address changes between 22 January and 27 February 2026:** reject the pre-primary education place assigned to your child and apply for a place according to your new address in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**.

**Your address changes after 27 February 2026:** If you know the new address by **27 February 2026**, reject the pre-primary education place assigned to your child and apply for a place according to your new address in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**.



Enrol in,  
accept a place or  
apply to pre-primary  
education at  
[asti.hel.fi](https://asti.hel.fi)



If you do not know the new address by **27 February 2026**, accept the place assigned to your child and apply for a new pre-primary education place once you know the new address. You can also apply for a place after **27 February 2026**. We will start making decisions on applications received after **27 February 2026** at the beginning of April. For more detailed information on applying for pre-primary education after 27 February 2026, please visit [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

## If you want to switch to pre-primary education in Finnish or Swedish

We will assign pre-primary education places in Asti according to the language in which the child has attended early childhood education or the language you indicated at the time of enrolment. If you want to switch from Finnish-language early childhood education to Swedish-language pre-primary education or vice versa, reject the pre-primary education place assigned to your child and apply for a new place in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**. Please note that you can only apply for a place in pre-primary education in either Finnish or Swedish. The idea is that your child's learning path will continue in primary education in the language used in pre-primary education.

# If your child is not in municipal early childhood education

If your child is attending the City of Helsinki's club activities, in home care, on a temporary break from early childhood education or in early childhood education in a private daycare centre, and you want a pre-primary education place in a municipal daycare centre, you must enrol your child in pre-primary education. By enrolling your child in pre-primary education, you ensure that your child is assigned a pre-primary education place at the same time as other children beginning pre-primary education. When you enrol your child, all you must do after enrolment is to accept the pre-primary education place between **13 and 27 February 2026**.



## Important dates

### 7–21 January 2026

**Apply for a pre-primary education place at a private daycare centre.**

Some private daycare centres also offer pre-primary education. Find the daycare centres at [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education). Apply for a pre-primary education place at a private daycare centre by contacting the daycare centre manager and submitting a pre-primary education application directly to the daycare centre.

### 7–21 January 2026

**Or enrol your child in municipal pre-primary education in the Asti online service.**

If you want a pre-primary education place at a municipal daycare centre for your child, enrol your child in pre-primary education in Asti. **You can view the pre-primary education place assigned to your child in Asti during the period of 13–27 February 2026, and you must either accept or reject the assigned place during this period.**

### By the end of March 2026

**You will receive a pre-primary education decision about your child's pre-primary education place.**

No new decision is issued for supplementary early childhood education, unless the location changes.

### Before the start of pre-primary education

**The pre-primary education unit will inform you of procedures related to starting and familiarisation.**

### 12 August 2026

**Pre-primary education begins.**

## If your child is attending club activities provided by the City of Helsinki

We do not automatically assign pre-primary education places to children attending club activities provided by the City of Helsinki. If you want your child to have a pre-primary education place in a municipal daycare centre, enrol your child for pre-primary education in Asti between **7 and 21 January 2026**.

## If your child is on a temporary break from early childhood education

If your child is on a temporary break from early childhood education between **22 January and 27 February 2026**, enrol them in pre-primary education in Asti between **7 and 21 January 2026**. When you enrol your child in pre-primary education, we will assign them a place at the same time as other children. If you do not enrol your child in pre-primary education, apply for a place in Asti between **13 and 27 February 2026**. In this case, your child will receive a place in the pre-primary education unit of your choice if there are places available. Otherwise, your child will receive a pre-primary education place at the nearest available pre-primary education school in their admission area.



## If your child's home address is in Helsinki, but they are attending early childhood education in another city

Every child in Helsinki has the right to a pre-primary education place in their own admission area. If your child's home address is in Helsinki, but they are currently attending early childhood education in another city (such as Espoo or Vantaa), enrol them in pre-primary education in Asti between **7 and 21 January 2026**.

## If your child's current home address is in another city or abroad

If your child does not have a home address registered in Helsinki by **22 January 2026**, but your plan is for them to start pre-primary education in Helsinki in August, see [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

## If your child is in a private daycare centre

You can apply for pre-primary education in a private daycare centre by contacting the manager of the private daycare centre and submitting the City of Helsinki's pre-primary education application directly to the desired daycare centre. For more information, see page 13.

If you would like your child to have a place in a municipal pre-primary school, you must enrol your child for pre-primary education in Asti between **7 and 21 January 2026**.



# I want to apply for a pre-primary education place elsewhere

If you are not satisfied with the pre-primary education place assigned to your child, you can reject the place and apply for a new one on the Asti online service between **13 and 27 February 2026**. If you do this, you will lose the place you rejected. Your child can get a pre-primary education place in the daycare centre you apply for if there are places available. You will receive information about the new pre-primary education place in the pre-primary decision by the end of March 2026. You cannot accept or reject the new place in Asti. If there are no places available in the daycare centre you applied for, we will assign your child a pre-primary education place in a daycare centre with places available in the admission area according to your child's home address. In this case, the new pre-primary education place may also be a place other than the one originally assigned to the child.

If you accept the pre-primary education place assigned to your child but then apply for another pre-primary education place, we will process your application according to a different schedule. We will first process the applications of children who do not yet have a pre-primary education place in their own admission area. The rest of the applications will be processed after this. Your child can be admitted to the pre-primary education place you applied for if there are places available. Decisions on the pre-primary education applications submitted during the application period will be made by the end of March 2026.

Enrol in,  
accept a place or  
apply to pre-primary  
education at  
[asti.hel.fi](https://asti.hel.fi)



# Supplementary early childhood education

As the days in pre-primary school are only four hours long, your child might need care at a day-care centre either before or after pre-primary school. This is what we call 'supplementary early childhood education'. A fee is charged for supplementary early childhood education. Supplementary early childhood education is provided in the same facility and group that your child attends for pre-primary education.

Pre-primary education is provided for four hours per day, generally between 8.30 and 13.30. For children who need evening or weekend care, pre-primary education can be arranged between 8.00 and 16.00 based on the children's attendance times. Every child must attend pre-primary education during this period.

If your child has attended municipal early childhood education before pre-primary education, you do not need to enrol separately for supplementary early childhood education. For any changes in the hours of early childhood education, contact the daycare centre manager after you have accepted the pre-primary education place.

If your child is in municipal early childhood education and moves to another daycare centre for pre-primary education, early childhood education will continue at the new location.

If your child is not yet enrolled in early childhood education provided by the City of Helsinki, you must indicate your need for supplementary early childhood education when enrolling for pre-primary education. We will make a decision on pre-primary education and supplementary early childhood education based on the hours that you have chosen at the time of enrolment. You will receive a decision on early childhood education along with your pre-primary education decision.

## I need care for my child before the beginning of August

If your child needs early childhood education before the start of pre-primary education and is not yet enrolled in municipal early childhood education, you must apply for it separately by submitting an early childhood education application in Asti. Apply for a place in early childhood education no later than four months before the need for early childhood education. For more information on how to apply, visit [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

## If need to change my previously stated need for early childhood education

In case of changes related to your child's daily need for early childhood education, you can contact the daycare centre manager after receiving the pre-primary education decision.



# Pre-primary education in a private daycare centre

In Helsinki, private daycare centres also provide pre-primary education. The pre-primary education provided by private daycare centres is the same kind of Finnish-language pre-primary education as that provided by municipal pre-primary schools. In addition to this, some private daycare centres offer pre-primary education in different languages or based on Montessori or Steiner pedagogy or religious and ethics education.

You can apply for a pre-primary education place at a private daycare centre by contacting the daycare centre manager and submitting a pre-primary education application directly to the private daycare centre. Find a list of the private daycare centres that provide pre-primary education and the application form at [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

The application period for pre-primary education in private daycare centres is from 7 to 21 January 2026. Decisions on private pre-primary education will be sent to parents and guardians in February 2026.

Pre-primary education in private daycare centres is free for the parents and guardians (four hours per day). However, the private service provider determines the fee for any supplementary early childhood education they provide before and after the pre-primary education.

Parents and guardians can apply for a private daycare allowance from Kela for supplementary early childhood education. More information is available on Kela's website at <https://www.kela.fi/private-day-care-allowance> and the City of Helsinki's website at [hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education).

Please note that your child can only have one pre-primary education decision at a time, and a new decision will replace the previous decision. If you have enrolled your child in pre-primary education in a municipal daycare centre and accept the pre-primary education place assigned to them, any previous decision for private pre-primary education for the child will no longer be valid. A previously issued decision for private pre-primary education will remain valid if you reject the assigned pre-primary education place in a municipal daycare centre.



# Child support and student welfare in pre-primary education

When your child moves from early childhood education to pre-primary education, we will assess their need for support and provide the necessary support. Support will primarily be organised as group-specific support. Depending on your child's need for support, they can also participate in pre-primary education in an admission area other than the one associated with your home address, or in a group or facility that does not provide pre-primary education to others.

If your child has not been in early childhood education before the start of pre-primary education, you must inform us of your child's need for support or medication when you enrol them.

Children who are in pre-primary education are entitled to pre-primary education student welfare services, such as the social worker's and psychologist's services. Student welfare is primarily implemented proactively and so that it supports the entire pre-primary education unit. Children also have the opportunity for individual student welfare.



## Pre-primary education in Finnish Sign Language

Daycare Taneli in Pitäjänmäki offers pre-primary education in Finnish Sign Language. If your child is in early childhood education in Finnish Sign Language at Daycare Taneli, they can be assigned a pre-primary education place there, depending on their need for support.

If your child is not in early childhood education in Finnish Sign language, but you would like to get a place for them in pre-primary education in Finnish Sign Language, notify us of your child's need for support when you enrol them in pre-primary education either by calling Service Guidance for Early Childhood Education and Pre-primary Education on +358 9 310 804 88 or by email at [varepalveluohjaus@hel.fi](mailto:varepalveluohjaus@hel.fi).



# For the new pre-primary education pupil



Colour with the correct colours according to the numbers.



**Enquiries on getting a pre-primary education place:**

Service Guidance for Early Childhood Education and Pre-primary Education  
varepalveluohjaus@hel.fi

Tel. +358 9 310 804 88 Mon–Wed 9.00–12.00, Thu 9.00–11.00, Fri 9.00–12.00.

Phone service in Swedish: Tue 9.00–12.00.

**Other enquiries on pre-primary education:**

Advisory Services, Education Division koulutusneuvonta@hel.fi

Tel. +358 9 310 449 86, Mon–Fri at 10.00–12.00 and 13.00–15.00

Työpajankatu 8, 00580 Helsinki

PO Box 58300, 00099 City of Helsinki

**Technical user guidance of Asti:**

Helsinki Digital Support

Tel. +358 9 310 100 11 Mon–Fri 9.00–12.00.

**Helsinki-info**

Tel. +358 9 310 111 11 Mon–Thu 9.00–16.00 and Fri 10.00–15.00.

[hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education)

## Seuraa meitä:



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Helsingin kasvatus ja koulutus



Kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen  
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[hel.fi/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/pre-primary-education)

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