

# Welcome to pre- primary education!

Information for parents and guardians on applying for pre-primary education for the 2024–2025 school year



# Content

- 3 ..... Welcome to pre-primary education!
- 4 ..... What is pre-primary education?
- 5 ..... Criteria for admission to pre-primary education
- 6 ..... Assigning a pre-primary education place in Asti  
For children in municipal early childhood education
- 8 ..... Enrolling to pre-primary education in Asti  
For children in home care, club activities and other children  
not enrolled in municipal early childhood education
- 10 ..... Important dates
- 12 ..... I want to apply for a pre-primary education placement other  
than the one assigned to my child
- 13 ..... Supplementary early childhood education for pre-primary  
education
- 14 ..... Applying for pre-primary education in a private daycare  
centre
- 15 ..... For the future pre-primary education pupil



# Welcome to pre-primary education!

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

The pre-primary school year is significant in your child's educational journey. Their learning path starts in early childhood education, continues to pre-primary education, and from there to basic education. In fact, your child's pre-primary placement is often close to their future school, and we work with the school during the pre-primary school 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 an extensive network of private pre-primary education providers.

Pre-primary education is compulsory by law. This means your child must participate in pre-primary education on every day of scheduled les-

sons and be present during pre-primary school hours. Your child will become more involved in group activities, develop friendships and practice 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 is your child's pre-primary education discussions (LEOPS) in the autumn and spring. During the year, cooperation is based on a variety of operational practices in which parents and guardians have a say in their child's school year.

**I would like to wish all the children starting pre-primary education and their parents and guardians an exciting and joyful school year 2024–2025!**

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



# What is pre-primary education?

Together with the guardian, we plan actions that are suitable for the child and support their learning and well-being.

We encourage the children to trust their abilities by strengthening their learning and thinking skills.

In pre-primary education, we practice friendship and emotional skills as well as being part of a group together.

Just like in early childhood education, in pre-primary education we learn through play, movement and getting to know our surroundings.

Activities are planned and assessed together with the children.

The group's activities are based on every child's individual needs and interests as well as Helsinki's Curriculum for Pre-primary Education.

**Learning new things is a shared joy!**

# Criteria for admission to pre-primary education



Helsinki is divided into admission areas for pre-primary education, where a pre-primary education placement is assigned both to children enrolled in municipal early childhood education and to children enrolled in pre-primary education. Enrolment in pre-primary education applies only to children who are not attending municipal early childhood education before the start of their pre-primary education, who are participating in club activities, who are on a temporary break from early childhood education or who need round-the-clock care during the pre-primary school year. The enrolment does not apply to you if your child will participate in private pre-primary education.

A child's home address determines which pre-primary education admission area they belong to. They will be assigned a pre-primary education place in a facility that cooperates with the child's future local school. This way, the child already gets to know their future school and classmates during their pre-primary school year.

Children may also be assigned a pre-primary education placement in a different pre-primary education admission area than the one associated with their home address; for language immersion, special needs, or the need for round-the-clock care. For more information on applying for pre-primary education with language immersion and round-the-clock care, please see page 6. A child's pre-primary education can also be arranged in a facility where other pre-primary education is not provided if their support needs make it appropriate for them to continue in their current daycare centre.

You can also apply for a different pre-primary education place than the one assigned to your child. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places in the pre-primary

education facility, those applicants whose future local school is designated as a partner school of that particular facility will be considered first, i.e. those whose learning path will continue. If the applicants are on equal footing regarding their learning path, we will use a lottery if necessary. Children who miss out on a placement in the lottery will be assigned another pre-primary education place in their own admission area.

Secondary admission means that a parent or guardian applies for a pre-primary education place for their child in an admission area other than the one associated with their child's home address. If the pre-primary education facility has space after accepting the children within its own admission area, children may be placed in the vacant pre-primary education places via secondary admission, provided that this does not result in a new group being created in that facility. Parents and guardians are responsible for their child's transport if the pre-primary education place they have applied for is outside their pre-primary education admission area. The exception is those children who receive special needs support in pre-primary education in a facility other than the pre-primary education facility in their admission area.

If you apply for a place in pre-primary education outside the enrolment and application period, your child is assigned a place primarily in the location you have requested or within the admission area associated with the child's home address. If there are no places available within the child's pre-primary education admission area and it is not possible to open new places, your child can be assigned a place within another admission area at a location that is closest to the child's home address and has a pre-primary education place available for them.

# Assigning a pre-primary education place in Asti

## For children in municipal early childhood education

As a parent or guardian of a child in municipal early childhood education, you can accept or reject pre-primary education places in the Asti online service from **14 to 29 February 2024**. In general, these places are automatically assigned to those in municipal early childhood education without the need for any further measures. Children are entitled to a pre-primary education place within the pre-primary education admission area associated with their home address. Pre-primary education places will be assigned based on their current address on **22 January 2024**. You will receive the decisions on approved pre-primary education places by **29 March 2024**.

For more information on the provision of pre-primary education, please visit [hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education).

## Your child is in language immersion in early childhood education

If your child has been in language immersion in early childhood education, they will be assigned a pre-primary education place according to the language immersion path. This will assign them to pre-primary education with language immersion in the same daycare centre they attend for early childhood education. Parents and guardians use the Asti online service to accept pre-primary education places with language immersion.

## Your child has round-the-clock care in early childhood education

If your child is in a daycare centre that provides round-the-clock care and you also need it for your child when their pre-primary education starts, you must register your child for pre-primary education in Asti (please see page 8). If you have not enrolled for pre-primary education and also indicated that your child needs round-the-clock care, we will assign your child to a daycare centre in your admission area that does not provide round-the-clock care. Parents or guardians must confirm the need for round-the-clock care with the daycare centre manager by the end of the enrolment period.

## Your child is on a temporary break from early childhood education

If your child is on a break from early childhood education throughout the period between **22 January and 18 February 2024**, please enrol for pre-primary education via the Asti online service **from 8 to 21 January 2024** (please see page 8). If your child is not enrolled in pre-primary education, you must apply for a placement during the application period **14–29 February 2024**.

# Your child's address changes to another admission area within Helsinki before starting pre-primary education

Pre-primary education places will be assigned based on the address the child has on **22 January 2024**.

If your address changes by **29 February 2024**: you can reject the place assigned to your child and apply for a new place based on the new address.

If your address changes after **29 February 2024**: you can accept the place assigned to your child and apply for a pre-primary education place transfer after the new address comes into effect by submitting a pre-primary education application at [asti.hel.fi](https://asti.hel.fi). We will make decisions on applications received after the deadline from the beginning of May onwards.

# Switching to Finnish or Swedish-language pre-primary education

Pre-primary education places are assigned in Asti according to the language in which the early childhood education is provided or the language indicated at the time of enrolment. If you wish to change to another language, you must reject the pre-primary education place assigned to your child and apply for a new one in Asti. When you apply during the application period, we will always ensure a pre-primary education place in your admission area when you change your pre-primary education language. Please note, that you must apply for a place in either Finnish-language or Swedish-language pre-primary education. The idea is that your child's learning path continues in the same language in basic education.



## Logging in

Open a browser on your computer, tablet or smartphone.

- ▶ Go to [asti.hel.fi](https://asti.hel.fi)
- ▶ Select your preferred language from the top right of the page
- ▶ Press the **Log in button**
- ▶ Authenticate using the authentication method of your choice
- ▶ Select **Continue**
- ▶ Select **Continue to the service**
- ▶ Review your information and proceed to the next step

## Accepting a pre-primary education place

You will see a notice about accepting a pre-primary education place for your child once enrolment is under way. Press the button "**Accept / reject**"

1. Select "**Yes, I accept the assigned place**" or "**No, I do not accept the assigned place**"
2. Press "**Continue to next**"
3. Review your information and press "**Submit**"

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



# Enrolling to pre-primary education in Asti

## For children in home care, club activities and other children not enrolled in municipal early childhood education

### Your child participates in the City of Helsinki's club activities or is in home care

As the parent or guardian of a child in home care or participating in club activities organised by the city, please enrol your child in pre-primary education in the Asti online service between **8 and 21 January 2024**. Pre-primary education places will be assigned based on the child's current address on **22 January 2024**. You will receive the decisions on approved pre-primary education places by **29 March 2024**. Your child will be assigned a place at the same time as those in municipal early childhood education. As a parent or guardian, you can accept or reject a pre-primary education place in the Asti online service from **14 to 29 February 2024**.

### Your child is in early childhood education in a private daycare centre

See page 15 for more information on applying for private pre-primary education.

If you want a place for your child in municipal pre-primary education, please enrol for pre-primary education via the Asti online service from **8 to 21 January 2024**. Your child will be assigned a place at the same time as those in municipal early childhood education. As a parent or guardian, you can accept or reject a pre-primary education place in the Asti online service from **14 to 29 February 2024**.

### Your child's home address is in Helsinki, but they attend early childhood education in another municipality

If your child's home address is in Helsinki, but they currently attend early childhood education in another municipality, please enrol for pre-primary education using the Asti online service between **8 and 21 January 2024**. Your child will be assigned a place at the same time as those already in municipal early childhood education. As a parent or guardian, you can accept or reject a pre-primary education place using the Asti online service between **14 and 29 February 2024**.



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



# Important dates



## If your child is already enrolled in early childhood education in the City of Helsinki

**14 February  
2024**

**You can view the assigned pre-primary education places on Asti.** Pre-primary education places are assigned to everyone enrolled in early childhood education in the City of Helsinki. As a parent or guardian, you do not have to do anything before this.

**14–29 February  
2024**

**Accept or reject an assigned pre-primary education place in the Asti online service.**

If you reject a place, you must fill in a pre-primary education application form and apply for another place for your child between 14 and 29 February **2024**.

**By 29 March  
2024**

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

You will not receive a new decision on supplementary early childhood education, but it will continue at the pre-primary education facility.

**May 2024**

**The pre-primary education facility will inform you about the procedures for starting and orientation.**

**8 August 2024**

**Pre-primary education begins.**

You can report any changes to your needs for supplementary early childhood education directly to the daycare centre.





## If you want a place for your child in municipal pre-primary education and your child is in home care, involved in club activities or enrolled in private early childhood education

**8–21 January  
2024**

**Enrol for pre-primary education via the Asti online service.** At the same time, please indicate your need for supplementary early childhood education.

**14 February  
2024**

**You can view the assigned pre-primary education places on Asti.**

**14–29 February  
2024**

**Accept or reject an assigned pre-primary education place in the Asti online service.** If you reject a place, you must fill in the pre-primary education application form during the application period **14–29 February 2024**.

**By 29 March  
2024**

**You will receive a decision on your child's pre-primary education place.** If you indicated a need for supplementary early childhood education, you will also receive an early childhood education decision.

**May 2024**

**The pre-primary education facility will inform you about the procedures for starting and orientation.**

**8 August 2024**

**Pre-primary education begins.** If you have indicated an earlier start date for your child's early education needs, they will attend daycare before that date.

### **Please note!**

If you are applying for private pre-primary education, please send the application form directly to the chosen daycare centre.

**The application period for private pre-primary education is 8–21 January 2024.**

# I want to apply for a pre-primary education placement other than the one assigned to my child

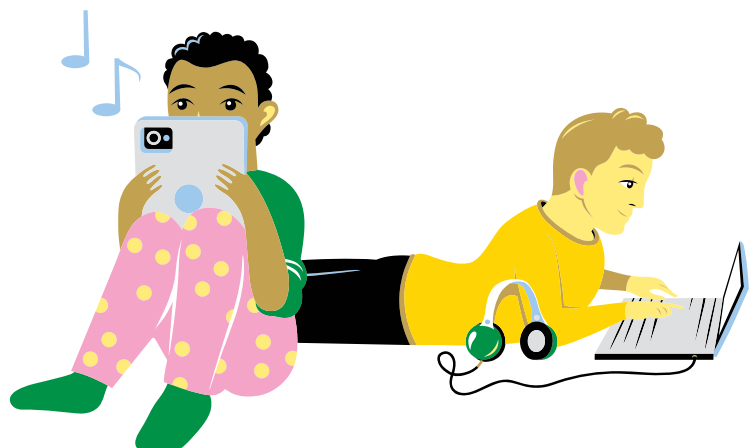
If you do not accept the pre-primary place assigned to your child, that place will become available to another applicant. In this case, you should apply for a new place from **14 to 29 February 2024** on the Asti online service.

Your child can be admitted to the pre-primary education place of your choice if there are places available. You will be notified of the place in the pre-primary education decision and you no longer can accept or reject it in the Asti online service. If there are no open places in the facility you applied for, your child will be assigned a pre-primary education place from the available places in your admission area. This place may be different from the place that you were previously assigned from your admission area.

If you accept the pre-primary education place assigned to your child but then apply for another place, your application will be processed following a different schedule. First, we will process the applications of children who do not yet have a place in pre-primary education within their own admission area. Then, we process other applications. Your child can be admitted to the pre-primary education place you applied for if there are places available. If there are no places available in the facility you have applied for, your child may also be assigned a place in another facility. This place may not be the same as the one originally assigned to your child if there have been other applicants to that facility.

Please note, that you must apply for a place in either Finnish-language or Swedish-language pre-primary education. The idea is that your child's learning path continues in the same language in basic education.

We will decide on applications for pre-primary education submitted during the application period by **29 March 2024**.



# Supplementary early childhood education for pre-primary education

Pre-primary education is provided for four hours a day, generally between 8.30 and 13.30. In round-the-clock care, pre-primary education can be provided from 8.00 to 16.00 if necessary, according to the children's need for round-the-clock care. Every child must attend pre-primary education during this period. If a child is in daycare before or after this time, this is called supplementary early childhood education for pre-primary education.

**Supplementary early childhood education is provided in the same facility and in the same group that the child attends for pre-primary education.** If your child has attended municipal early childhood education before pre-primary education, you do not need to register separately for supplementary early childhood education. For changes in the scope and schedule of early childhood education, you can contact the director of the pre-primary education facility after you have accepted your pre-primary education place.

You can see the current scope from your child's placement information on the front page of the Asti online service. If your child is in municipal early childhood education and moves to a new pre-primary education facility, their early childhood education will continue in the new pre-primary education facility as of **29 July 2024**.

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. We will make a decision on pre-primary education and supplementary early childhood education based on the scope 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 early childhood education for my child before the beginning of August

If your child needs early childhood education before **29 July 2024** and is not yet enrolled in early childhood education provided by the city, you must separately apply for it using the early childhood education application in the Asti online service.

## I need a change to my previously stated need for early childhood education

For changes to your child's daily care schedule, you can contact the daycare centre manager after receiving the pre-primary education decision.



# Applying for pre-primary education in a private daycare centre

In Helsinki, private daycare centres also provide pre-primary education. Private service providers offer a wide range of options: for example, your child can attend pre-primary education in a foreign language or in a setting that emphasises Montessori or Steiner pedagogy or religious instruction.

You can apply for pre-primary education in a private daycare centre by submitting the City of Helsinki's paper application directly to your preferred private daycare centre. You can find private daycare centres that provide pre-primary education and the application form at [hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education)

The application period for pre-primary education in private daycare centres is **8–21 January 2024**. Decisions on private pre-primary education will be mailed to parents and guardians in February 2024.

Pre-primary education in private daycare centres is free for parents and guardians (four hours per day). However, the private 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 private daycare allowance from Kela for supplementary early childhood education. More information is available on Kela's website at [kela.fi/private-day-care-allowance](https://kela.fi/private-day-care-allowance) and the City of Helsinki's website at [hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education).



## Application period 8–21 January 2024

You can apply for private pre-primary education using the City of Helsinki's application form. You submit the paper form to the private daycare centre to which you are applying for a pre-primary education place.

The form is available at:  
[hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education)

# For the future pre-primary education pupil



Colour with the correct colours according to the numbers.



# Helsinki

## **In matters related to applying, please contact:**

Early education and pre-primary education services  
varepalveluohjaus@hel.fi  
Tel.: +358 9 310 80488 on weekdays, 9.00–15.00

## **In other matters related to pre-primary education, please contact:**

The advisory services of the Education Division  
koulutusneuvonta@hel.fi  
Tel.: +358 9 310 44986 on weekdays, 10.00–12.00 and 13.00–15.00  
Työpajankatu 8, 00580 Helsinki  
PO Box 51300, 00099 City of Helsinki

## **Asti advisory services**

User guidance, tel.: +358 9 310 88800 on weekdays, 8.00–18.00

## Follow us:

-  #HelsinkiOppii
-  @HelsinkiOppii
-  #HelsinkiOppii
-  Kasvatus ja koulutus
-  Kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen toimiala  
City of Helsinki

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

**Publisher:** City of Helsinki's Education Division  
**Photographs:** Jefunne Gimpel, Maija Astikainen  
**Illustrator:** Riku Ounaslehto  
**Printed by** Grano Oy, 12/2023

**Information** in this guide was revised in December 2023. We reserve the right to make changes.  
**For up-to-date information**, see [hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education](https://hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/pre-primary-education).

