



# Exciting Times for Midlothian's Early Learning and Childcare Service

The Scottish Government is committed to expanding the provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for eligible 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 years olds. This expansion will increase the entitlement from 600 hours each year to 1140 hours from August 2020. The expansion prioritises a high quality experience for each child, recognising the significant contribution that universally accessible ELC can make to a child's development.

The Early Learning and Childcare expansion brings with it many exciting opportunities for Midlothian through an investment in our economy and workforce and, most importantly, an investment in children's futures.

Read on through this leaflet to learn more about what expansion means for Midlothian families.



## Funding Follows the Child

To reassure parents and carers that any provider offering the funded ELC hours will be offering high quality early learning and childcare experiences, the government are introducing a National Standard from August 2020. The National Standard identifies conditions that funded providers have to meet in order to offer funded early learning and childcare. This allows parents and carers to make choices with confidence in the quality of the Early Learning and Childcare on offer wherever they choose. It is defined by a 'provider neutral' approach which allows parents and carers to choose providers - regardless of whether they are in the public, private or voluntary sectors - as long as they meet the National Standard, have a place available, and are in/or willing to enter into a contract with the local authority.

As the guarantors of quality, Midlothian Council will work with all of our funded providers to ensure that they continue to meet the terms of the National Standard. The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland will undertake inspections, registrations and investigate complaints to also ensure that all providers continue to deliver high quality ELC.

*'The move towards a Funding Follows the Child approach will represent a significant change for parents and carers, providers, and local authorities'*

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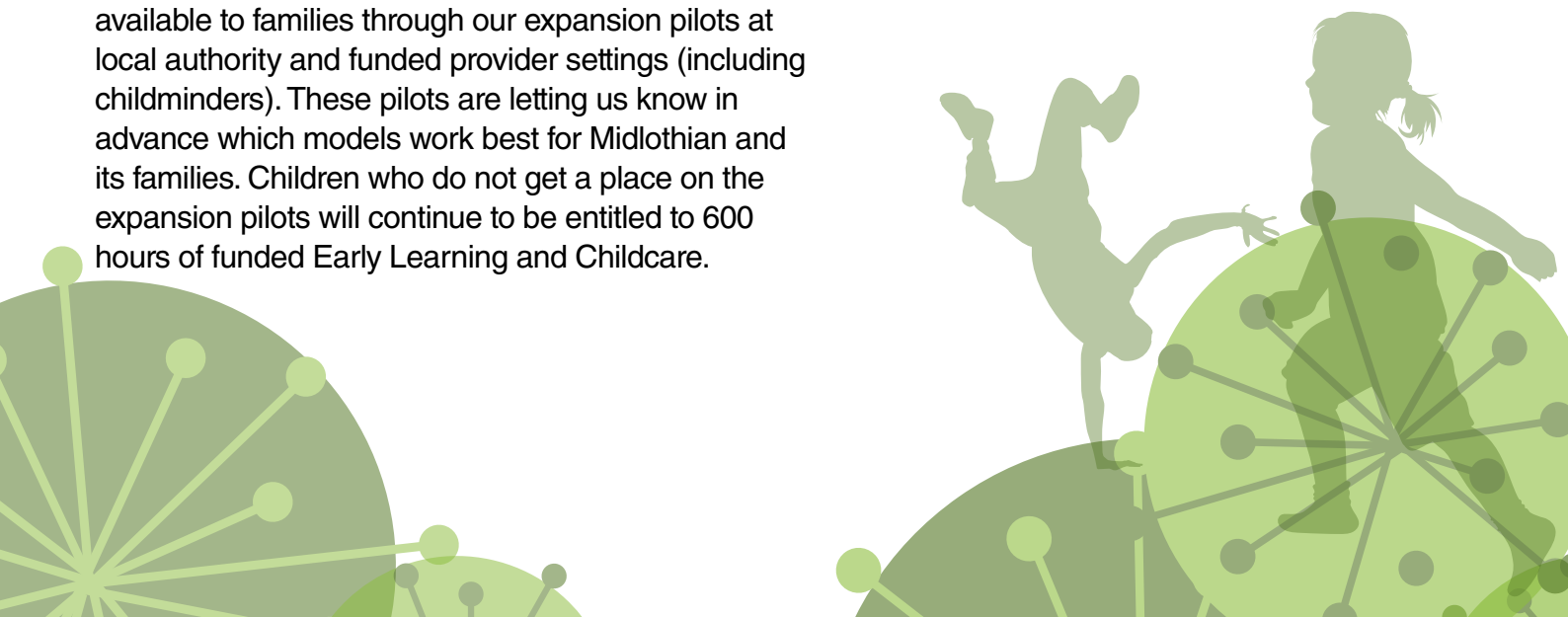
## Celebrating Choice through our Learning Community Model

In Midlothian, we will operate a learning community model whereby parents can choose from a variety of provisions in a geographic area that have different models of offering the early learning and childcare hours. Parents will be able to choose the provider that best meets their needs as long as they have places available and they meet the terms of the national standard for ELC. We will ensure that each learning community has a mixed economy of ELC providers which offers parents a choice of models. However, parents will not be limited to providers in their learning community and will be free to choose funded providers outside their local area and indeed outwith Midlothian. It is important to remember that children will not be entitled to a particular pattern of attendance or a place at a particular provider but will receive an offer of 1140 hours from 2020. Schools will have robust transition arrangements to support children moving to P1 from different ELC settings. A map of the learning communities is on the back page.

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## Expansion Pilots

The extension to 1140 hours to all eligible children will become an entitlement in August 2020. However, as we move towards this implementation date, an increasing number of extended places will be available to families through our expansion pilots at local authority and funded provider settings (including childminders). These pilots are letting us know in advance which models work best for Midlothian and its families. Children who do not get a place on the expansion pilots will continue to be entitled to 600 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare.



## Delivery Models

We plan to have at least one school ELC setting in each learning community open for 50 weeks of the year from August 2020. Most school settings will operate according to the school term time. For school term time provision, children would be attending for 30 hours per week (for example 6 hours a day, for 5 days a week, during term time).

Funded providers in the private and voluntary sector (e.g. day nurseries, childminders and playgroups) can offer increased flexibility. Many providers are open all year round and may offer different ways of taking up the funding. Funded providers in the private and voluntary sector will often enable parents to pay for additional childcare around their early learning and childcare entitlement. This is a private arrangement between the parent and the provider but will not be a condition of taking up the funded hours. Parents will need to contact funded providers to find out what options will be available as this will vary from provider to provider.

For providers that are open for more weeks than the school term, the models of delivering the funded hours could include:

- **Shorter funded days over more weeks, e.g. 4.5 hours per day (am or pm sessions), 5 days a week for 50 weeks of the year**
- **Longer days but for 2.5 days a week for more weeks, e.g. 9 hour days, 2 days a week and one am/pm session for 50 weeks of the year**

This list is not exhaustive and more options will be available. During the pilot phase, we'll be testing different models of delivery so there may be some variations on available options in a locality depending on the results of these pilots.

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## Free at the point of access

Parents and carers will not have to pay for any part of their child's funded entitlement and will not be asked to make any upfront payment, including a deposit, in respect of the funded hours. This does not include additional charges such as the cost of outings or extra-curricular activities which can be charged to parents and carers if these are clearly detailed in the payment agreement. Families cannot be made to purchase additional hours in order to access the funded entitlement although parents may be presented with the option to do so. We are also committed to providing a free lunchtime meal to children attending a funded ELC session from August 2020.

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## I would like to apply for an ELC place - what do I do next?

For August 2019 starts, parents should have applied for the ELC setting of their choice. The Council will be writing to all parents to explain the possible options at each school setting in relation to expanded hour pilots from August 2019. We are planning to move to a centralised administration process for allocating places and will publicise the details when we change. Until then parents and carers should submit their application to their preferred setting or childminder. If you are yet to apply for an ELC place

1. **Contact the setting in Midlothian that delivers ELC (See Diagram)**
2. **Complete an application form and tell us your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices of setting and pattern of attendance.**
3. **We will consider all applications when we allocate places and we will contact you.**

**Making Midlothian the Best Place to Grow and Learn**





Roslin  
Howgate  
Auchendinny  
Bilston

- Local Authority
- Private Provider
- Midlothian Surestart Family Learning Centre
- Playgroup
- Community Nursery
- Childminder

All settings provide funded 3 and 4 year old places unless otherwise stated.



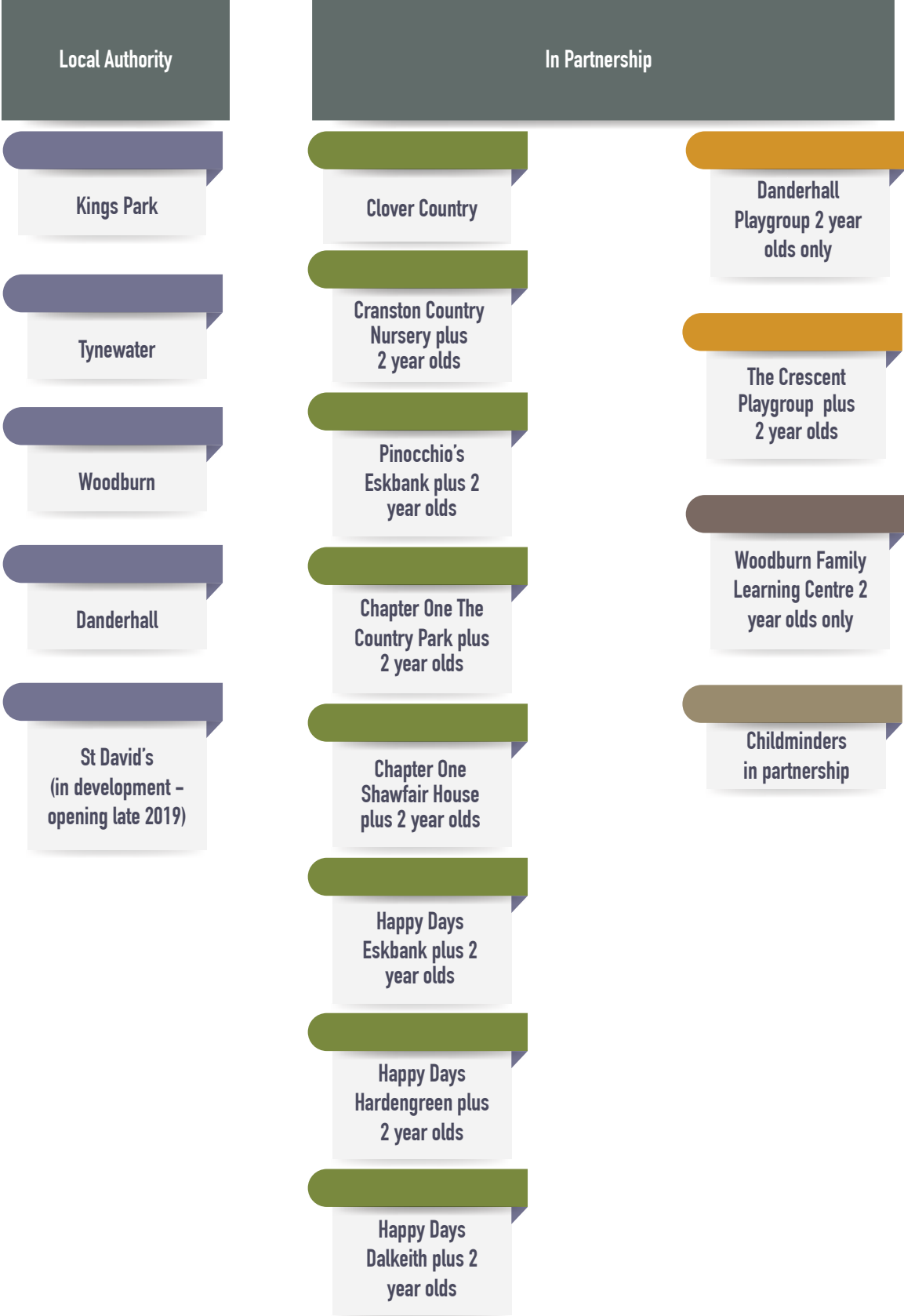
There are other playgroups and childminders in this locality who are not in partnership. If you wish to use a funded place with them, they will have to have a place available, meet the national standard and enter into partnership with the local authority.



**Danderhall  
Pathhead  
Woodburn  
Eskbank**

- Local Authority
- Private Provider
- Midlothian Surestart Family Learning Centre
- Playgroup
- Community Nursery
- Childminder

**All settings provide funded 3 and 4 year old places unless otherwise stated.**



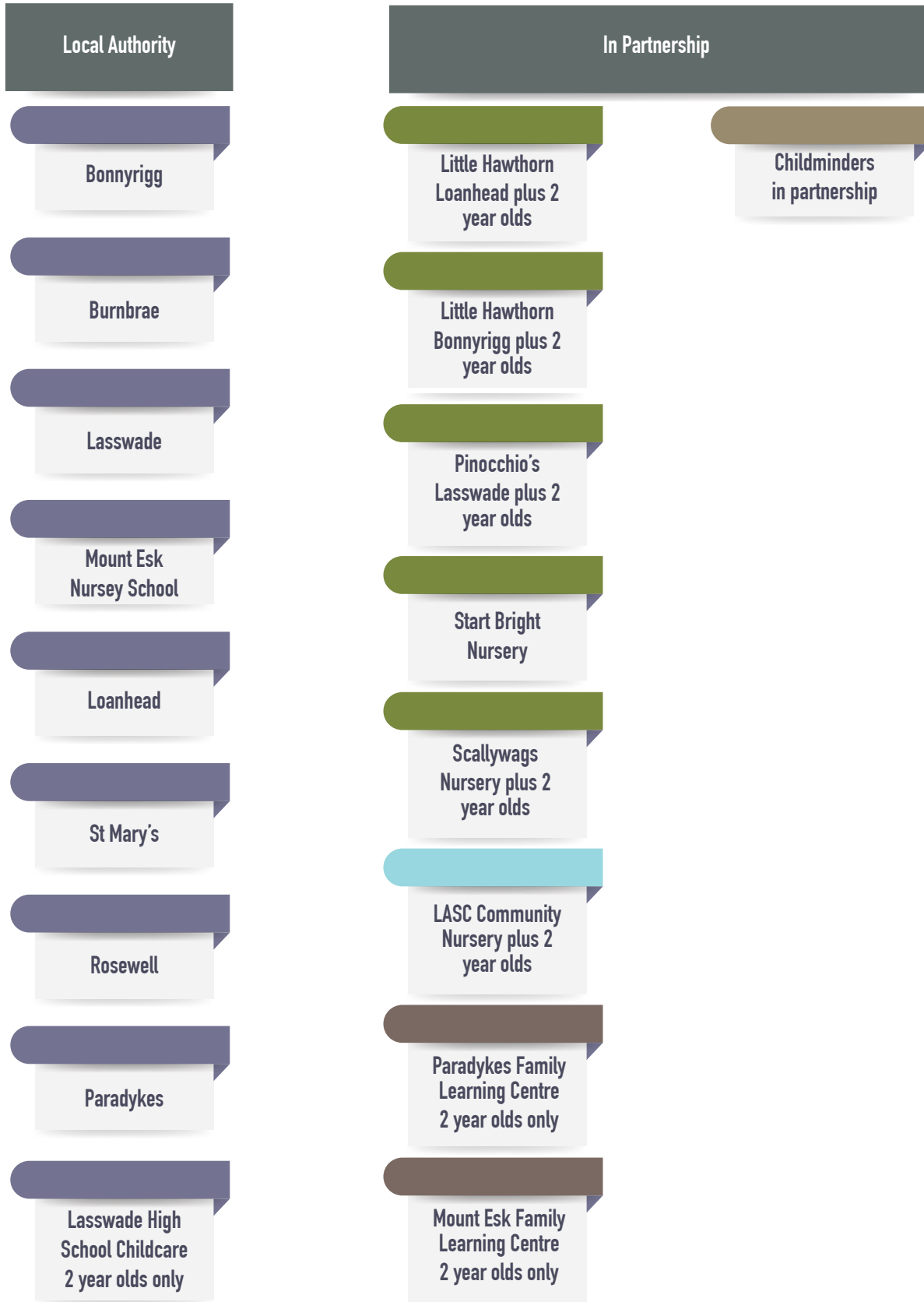
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**Loanhead  
Bonnyrigg  
Rosewell**

- Local Authority
- Private Provider
- Midlothian Surestart Family Learning Centre
- Playgroup
- Community Nursery
- Childminder

**All settings provide funded 3 and 4 year old places unless otherwise stated.**



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**Newtongrange  
Mayfield/  
Easthouses**      **Gorebridge  
Middleton/  
Temple**

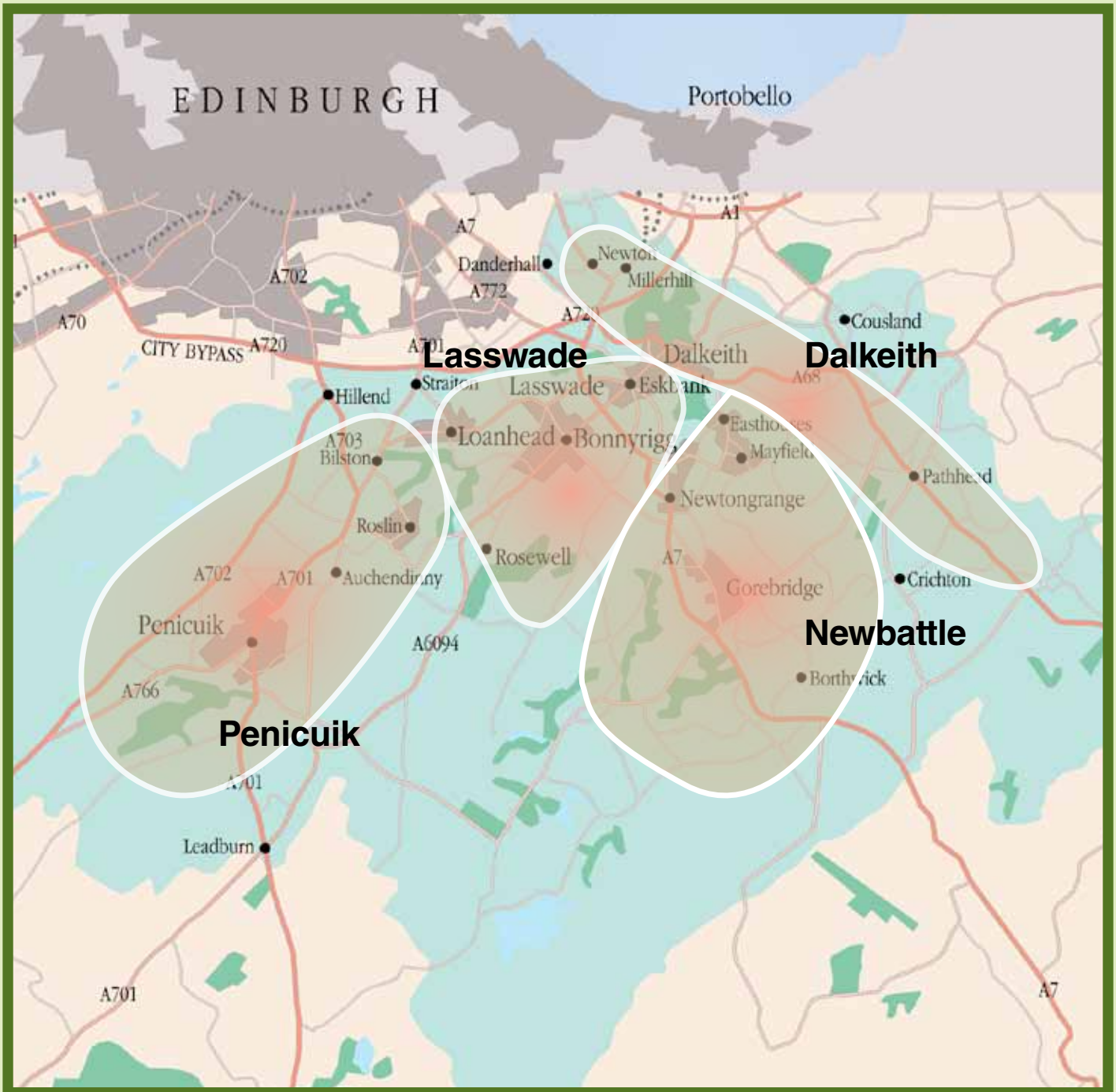
- Local Authority
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**All settings provide funded 3 and 4 year old places unless otherwise stated.**

Local Authority	In Partnership	
Gorebridge	Newbyres Nursery plus 2 year olds	Arniston Playgroup 2 year olds only
Newtongrange	Wizkidz Nursery plus 2 year olds	
Lawfield	Temple Nursery and Playgroup plus 2 year olds	Childminders in partnership
Mayfield Nursey School	Newbattle Community Nursery plus 2 year olds	
Moorfoot	Hawthorn Family Learning Centre 2 year olds only	
St Andrew's	Mayfield Family Learning Centre 2 year olds only	
Gore Glen	Gorebridge Family Learning Centre 2 year olds only	
Stobhill		
Vogrie Outdoor Nursery (proposed opening Sept 2019)		

There are other playgroups and childminders in this locality who are not in partnership. If you wish to use a funded place with them, they will have to have a place available, meet the national standard and enter into partnership with the local authority.

## Midlothian's Learning Communities



### Contact:

**Call:** 0131 271 3754

**Email:** [childcareinformationteam@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:childcareinformationteam@midlothian.gov.uk)

[www.midlothian.gov.uk/early-learning](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/early-learning)

