



Early Learning and Childcare Fund Guidelines

This grant aid scheme is designed to support:

- ❑ Providers delivering Early Learning and Childcare;
- ❑ Voluntary and private sector organisations registered to provide Day Care and/or Out of School Care;

It is funded and administered by Shetland Islands Council and managed by representatives from Shetland Islands Council and Shetland Preschool Play.

This Grant Aid scheme aims to help maintain, grow, develop and improve the services provided in the Early Learning and Childcare sector.

We would encourage potential applicants to discuss their project with an officer before written applications are submitted. For an informal chat, please see the Contact Details in section 13.

1. We expect all applicants to demonstrate that they –

- ❑ Are registered with the Care Inspectorate;
- ❑ Are working towards / have achieved a Grade 4 or above inspection result;
- ❑ Are committed to long term quality improvement.

2. Who can apply?

You can apply for an Early Learning and Childcare Fund grant if: –

- ❑ You are Shetland based;
- ❑ You are registered by the Care Inspectorate to provide a Day Care of Children Service i.e. you are a Partner Provider, Childminder, Voluntary or Private Sector Organisation delivering Day Care;
- ❑ You have an open constitution or equivalent set of rules which clearly defines your organisation's aims, objectives and procedures*;
- ❑ You have a bank or building society account in the name of your organisation which requires at least 2 signatures on each cheque or withdrawal*;
- ❑ You can enclose your most recent annual accounts which have been certified as true by a person independent of your organisation.

* Exceptions can be made for sole traders or where organisations operate debit cards

3. When should you apply?

Applications can be made to the Early Learning and Childcare Fund at any point during the year, but must be submitted a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the project start date.

Decisions are usually processed within 6 weeks.

Application forms are available on the Shetland Islands Council's website and can be submitted electronically.

Alternatively you can request or collect an application pack from the Grants Unit. Please see the Contact Details in section 13.

4. What can the scheme fund?

We will consider funding: –

- Furniture and equipment;
- Outdoor furniture and equipment;
- Specialised equipment for children with additional support needs;
- Car safety seats – where a vehicle is used to deliver a service;
- Non statutory training;
- Other costs deemed appropriate to support delivery of high quality Early Learning and Childcare provision.

We will not fund: –

- General running costs such as wages, admin costs, energy costs, etc
- Snacks and refreshments;
- Projects that have already taken place;
- Fundraising expenses;
- Legal fees;
- Holidays;
- Items that only benefit an individual e.g. prizes, personal clothing, strips and personal equipment;
- Loan or endowment payments;
- Projects with no long-term sustainability;
- Statutory training – which settings should have in order to be registered as a provider;
- Other costs deemed inappropriate to Early Learning and Childcare provision.

5. How much can we apply for?

Organisations can apply for up to 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of £2,500.

Applicants can submit multiple grant applications but the total awarded will not exceed the above limits per Council financial year.

You should also note that we will not award more than the amount you request in your application. If you are unsure about how much funding you can apply for please contact staff to discuss.

6. What is the application process?

Once you have completed your grant application, attached all the necessary documents and worked through the checklist you are ready to submit your grant application.

Applications can be submitted electronically or by post to the Grants Unit. See the contact details in section 13.

- ❑ On receipt of your application we will check if it is complete and ensure all the necessary information has been enclosed.
- ❑ We will acknowledge receipt of your application **within 5 working days** and let you know what else is required.
- ❑ Your completed application will be assessed and you should be informed of the decision in writing **in no more than 6 weeks** of receiving the completed application.

Applications will be assessed by staff in the Council's Grants Unit. Decision making is the responsibility of the Director of Children's Services, or nominee.

7. What happens if you are successful?

- ❑ Successful applicants will be issued with a grant offer letter and acceptance docquet.
- ❑ Once your organisation has accepted the terms and conditions of the grant and returned the acceptance letter 90% of the grant award will be paid into your organisation's bank account.
- ❑ The remaining 10% of the grant will be paid into your organisation's bank account on receipt of a completed Project Evaluation form and a certification of expenditure form together with project receipts within **12 months** of the date of the grant offer letter.
- ❑ You must comply with grant conditions and use the grant only for the purpose set out in your application form.

8. What happens if you are unsuccessful

We will tell you the main reasons why in a letter **within 6 weeks** of receiving the completed application.

We welcome discussion about all applications.

Following receipt of the explanation you may wish to revise your application and resubmit it.

9. Protection of Vulnerable Groups requirements

If your organisation is applying for grant assistance from this scheme, your group/ organisation will need to decide whether you have anyone (staff or volunteers) involved in 'Regulated Work' with children (and/or protected adults)*. If your organisation has individuals involved in Regulated Work then those individuals will need to apply to become a member of the PVG Scheme, and your group must also have policies and procedures in place that adequately cover child protection and welfare issues.

You will need to decide whether or not your group has individuals involved in 'Regulated Work' with children and young people under the age of 18, and/or 'Regulated Work' with protected adults (from the age of 16, generally, in receipt of specified services)*

If either of these conditions applies to your group, then you will need to ensure that you have in place **all** of the following: a Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedures; a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers; an Equal Opportunities Policy. Templates for these documents are available from the Community Planning & Development Service or at <https://www.childprotectionsketland.com/for-community-groups> and must be approved and signed by committee members of your group. Your organisation must undertake a PVG Scheme Membership check when appointing staff, volunteers or helpers who are doing 'Regulated Work' to make sure they are not barred from working with children/protected adults and as part of checking their suitability for the particular post.

*There are various stages to go through to decide whether someone is doing 'Regulated Work.' The Child Safe Shetland website <https://www.shetland.gov.uk/childsafeshetland> includes links to sources of help in particular a self-assessment tool produced by Disclosure Scotland which will help you work through the various stages. http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/pvg_training/self-assessment/

In case of doubt, you may wish to seek further advice from either the Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS), on 01786 849777, or Disclosure Scotland on 0870 609 6006. Contact details for local support on this subject and more information are available on the Safer Shetland website.

Help is also available from Shetland Preschool Play SCIO, who undertake free checks for volunteers.

10. Data Protection Act 1998 / Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

The information provided by you is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 to allow us to effectively manage the Council's Grant Aid Schemes. The Data Protection Act 2018 gives you the right to know how we will use your data. Further information about how we use your personal data is available from the Grants Unit or the Council's website at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/information-rights/DataProtection.asp>.

Please note that your information, should you be successful, will be stored by the Council for 5 years plus current year before being destroyed. The information for unsuccessful applications will be stored for 1 year plus current year before being destroyed.

Please note the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 gives any person the right to request certain information that we hold. The Council regularly releases information about grant awards and information regarding your application may be made available to the public. Any personal information provided will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

11. Other considerations

- ❑ No applications can be considered for expenditure already incurred, except with prior agreement of the Director of Children's Services;
- ❑ All grant awards are subject to the Shetland Islands Council's approved grant conditions and availability of finance;
- ❑ Any grant assistance not spent within one year will be repaid to Shetland Islands Council unless the Director of Children's Services has agreed otherwise;
- ❑ Applicants with savings, reserves, cash or investments greater than £10,000 may not be considered for grant assistance if they are unable to confirm that these funds are restricted or designated funds for a specific purpose;
- ❑ Grant awards must be acknowledged on all publicity and marketing material;
- ❑ Applicants should seek other sources of funding prior to applying for an Early Learning and Childcare Fund Grant;
- ❑ Your organisation's contact details must be included in the Council's online Shetland Community Directory and you will be responsible for making any changes to your organisation's details as necessary. If you have not joined the Community Directory please contact the Grants Unit for information, or look up the website at www.communitydirectory.shetland.gov.uk

12. Service pledges

In order to improve service delivery of the department's various grant aid schemes we have the following service pledges:

- ❑ The Grants Unit will provide **accurate information** about its grant aid schemes and application procedures;
- ❑ All grant application forms requested will be sent out **within 2 working days**;
- ❑ All grant application forms received will be acknowledged **within 5 working days**;
- ❑ All organisations receive a decision on completed grant application forms **within 6 weeks**;
- ❑ All organisations that have had grant applications rejected will receive a **written explanation** of why it was unsuccessful;
- ❑ All organisations that have had a rejected grant application advised in writing have the **right to appeal** against the decision.

13. Contact details

Staff at the following offices are available to give advice and guidance on your project and with the completion of grant applications. You should contact staff at the earliest opportunity and prior to completing a grant application.

Early Learning and Childcare Team

Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0QD
Tel. (01595) 744000

Email: ELC@shetland.gov.uk

Grants Unit

Solarhus
3 North Ness Business Park
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0LZ
Tel. (01595) 743827 / 743828

Email: Grants.unit@shetland.gov.uk