



## **Frequently-Asked Questions**

### **When, where and how, can I register my child for the pre-primary program in my area?**

The pre-primary program will be phased in across the province over the next four years. Year one begins September 2017, and will include 50 pre-primary classes at 44 schools across the province.

[Pre-registration](#) will begin immediately.

You may also pre-register your child by downloading the pre-registration form and mailing it in, or pre-register by phone, by calling toll-free 1-833-424-2084.

As Early Childhood Educators are confirmed for each site they will connect with families who have pre-registered to finalize their registration. Pre-primary programs across the province will open by the last week of September, unless locations are ready to begin accepting children sooner.

A list of the locations is available at the Nova Scotia Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) website at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/pre-primary>. Within the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (CCRSB), the locations are as follows:

- New Glasgow Academy
- North River Elementary School
- Shubenacadie District Elementary
- Bible Hill Central Elementary School
- Hilden Elementary School
- Junction Road Elementary School (Springhill)
- West Highlands Elementary School (Amherst)

### **What is the pre-registration process?**

Parents can pre-register their child's intent to attend a pre-primary program in the school within their catchment area.

You can pre-register [online](#), [download](#) and mail in the form, or call toll-free 1-833-424-2084.

**Can I drop off my completed form to my school board office?**

Yes. You may download, print and fill out the form and mail, or deliver, it to your school board office:

Chignecto Central Regional School Board  
Central Office  
60 Lorne Street  
Truro, Nova Scotia, B2N 3K3

**Who is eligible to attend the pre-primary program?**

This is a voluntary program. Parents can choose whether they want to register their children to participate. The pre-primary program is open to all children who are at least four years of age by December 31. Children can only attend for one year.

**Will the program be ready for the first day of school? What is the opening date for all 50 classes?**

CCRSB and EECD are working quickly to have these classes ready for the last week of September. If a school can open sooner, parents will be notified. We first need to ensure we have the right people in place to provide a safe, quality program before the children start.

A program will not open until qualified Early Childhood Educators are hired and we are assured the program can be implemented properly.

**What is the opening date for all 50 classes?**

All 50 classes will open by the last week of September. If a site can open sooner, parents will be notified.

**I have to provide notice to my child care provider that my child is leaving. When should I do that?**

It is recommended that parents wait until they have received confirmation of the pre-primary opening date.

**Can I place my child in a pre-primary program in any school I want?**

Your child would attend the pre-primary program in the school they would plan to attend grade Primary, based on the catchment area for the school and verified by the School Board.

**My child is turning five, but I plan to start him/her in grade Primary at the age of six. Is she/he still eligible?**

Yes. Children who will be five years old by December 31 are still eligible to take part if they are not going into grade Primary.

**Does this mean I can place my child in the pre-primary program for two years, at ages 4 and 5?**

A child may only attend the pre-primary program for one year. That may be at the age of 4 or 5 (by December 31 of the school year). We want to ensure that every child can have a quality early learning experience in the year before they transition into the public-school system.

**Is there a cost?**

No. This is a universal program that is free to Nova Scotians.

**What is the pre-primary program? What can I expect my child to be doing while they are there?**

Pre-Primary Program is a child-centered, play based, developmentally appropriate experience for children the year prior to school entry. This opportunity will facilitate the transition to school and provide experiences to give children the best start to succeed in school and life.

**How does pre-primary differ from day care?**

Pre-primary is a no-cost, universal program for four-year-olds in the province. The program is offered in the school setting and helps children to transition into Primary the following year.

Based on the experience of other jurisdictions, participation in school-based early learning programs is typically high, reaching children and families who might not otherwise be able to access regulated childcare.

**How many children will be in my child's class?**

The maximum number of children in a class will be 24, supported by three staff.

**Will transportation be available like it is for primary children?**

Transportation for children in the pre-primary program will not be available. Parents will be responsible to arrange transportation for their children.

**Will there be before and/or after school care? Who arranges it?**

No. Arranging before and after school care, and any related costs, will be the responsibility of parents.

**What are the operating hours of the program? Is it available all year?**

The Pre-Primary Program is only available during the school year. It will be offered during standard school days and times. It will start and end the same as the school day, and will be closed during all school in-service days, professional development days, storm days, and holidays and over the summer months. If the school isn't open, the Pre-Primary Program will not open.

**Is the program mandatory or voluntary?**

The program is voluntary. Parents choose whether to enroll their child in the program. Pre-primary is not required to enter Primary.

**What will it mean for my child's learning if I keep him out of pre-primary?**

This is a voluntary program and a decision of parents whether they want to enroll their children. We know that children who have a quality early learning experience prior to school entry have an easier transition into the school system and have positive developmental outcomes. This is another option for parents to choose for their child.

**Once registered, must my child attend every day?**

Regular attendance is recommended; however, how often a child attends the program is a parent's decision.

**Must I notify the school each time I choose not to bring my child?**

It is always helpful for educators to know if your child will not be attending. Regular communication with the Early Childhood Educators will be encouraged and supported.

**Do I need to buy supplies for my child?**

No. Each pre-primary program will receive supplies, materials and resources as part of the program.

**Will my child be fed in the Pre-Primary program?**

Children attending the pre-primary program will have access to two snacks throughout the day. One in the morning as children arrive, and one in the afternoon. Parents will be responsible for sending a lunch with their child.

Food offered in the Pre-primary Program will be guided by the Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings as per the Day Care Regulations, as well as Canada’s Food Guide.

**Will my child go outside to play and should I be concerned they will be on the playground with older children?**

Your child will be going outside to play and is an integral part of the Early Learning Curriculum that will be followed in the pre-primary program. Keeping young children safe is a priority and every effort will be made to ensure the outdoor play space is age appropriate and user-friendly for this age group.

**Are there foods I can’t send with my child to school?**

If the school has a policy for excluded foods due to allergies and/or food sensitivities, the pre-primary program will follow the same policy. Please check with the school for these food exclusions.

**Do I need to provide extra clothes?**

It is a good idea to pack an extra pair of pants and socks for your child, as bathroom accidents and other messy spills are common at this age and outdoor play will be an important part of your child’s day.

**Should I send toys and other play items with my child to the program?**

Toys and other resources will be provided by the program. If children want to bring toys from home, we would encourage a discussion with the Early Childhood Educator.

**Will there be homework?**

Homework is not part of the Early Learning Curriculum. There will be opportunities for educators and families to share what activities and learning children are engaged in, and how their interests can be supported in the program and at home.

**Will my child get a report card?**

Your child will not receive a report card at the end of the year. There will be opportunities for you to meet with the Early Childhood Educator to discuss your child's development throughout the year.

**Why isn't this program available to everyone in the province? There isn't one in my area.**

This is the first year, of a four-year rollout. We are starting with areas that have the greatest need and where space is available in a school. Over the next four years, we will continue to roll out more pre-primary classes in more communities with a goal of having universal access.

**How many pre-primary sites will there be after the four years?**

We will open more than 250 pre-primary classes over the next four years.

**I live in the Halifax Regional School Board where overcrowding in schools is an issue. Will this program eventually come to my area when there isn't space in the school?**

We evaluated all sites across the province looking for locations that met one or more criteria including, and the availability of space within the school to offer the program. As we continue to rollout more locations each year, we will look at alternative arrangements for those areas that have a lack or limited space in schools to run the program.

**Who will be teaching and looking after my child? Are these teachers?**

The pre-primary programs will be staffed by Early Childhood Educators (ECE) who have the background and expertise to support early childhood learning and development.

**What if I have an issue or concern? Who do I talk to? The school? The principal? The ECE?**

Parents should address any issues or concerns about their child's learning directly with the Early Childhood Educator. Each pre-primary program will have a Lead Early Childhood Educator who will be responsible for working with parents.

**There is an Early Years Centre in my area. Is this replacing that?**

The Early Years Centre will remain in place. We will transition the Early Learning Program within the Centre into a pre-primary program.

**Will there be a French pre-primary program for children who go to a school under the jurisdiction of Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP)?**

CSAP currently provides a four-year-old program that will continue, so that children can have access to French early learning programming. We plan to work with CSAP to discuss the inclusion of these programs within pre-primary program as part of our ongoing rollout.

**My child has a special need. How will you support my child to take part in the pre-primary program?**

The Pre-Primary Program is an inclusive program open to all children who are eligible. Children with special needs will continue to have access to the same services and supports they would receive at home or in a community based program when they are in the Pre-Primary Program.

**Does this mean extra staff outside the early childhood educators?**

If additional staff are needed to ensure a quality, inclusive early learning experience for all children, this will be addressed.

**My child has autism and will be receiving EIBI. Must I delay their entry into pre-primary?**

No. The EIBI program provides treatment to eligible children in their natural settings. This will include the pre-primary program.

**My child has a condition that requires medication to be administered. Will the ECE make sure my child takes their medication and assist in administering it?**

The program will work with families to ensure the needs of their child is met. Individual cases will be discussed when children are enrolled in the program.

**My child has a life-threatening allergy. Will my child be safe at school?**

If your child has a life-threatening allergy, it's important that you notify the ECE lead the first day. If necessary, ECE's will be trained in the use of an epipen. The pre-primary program will be subject to the health and safety policies and regulations of the school.