# Appendix 1

# TEST GROUP DECISION, TEMPLATE

Decision

Register number and date

The municipality confirms that XX (name and personal identity code of the child) belongs to the *test* *group* of the two-year pre-primary education trial in accordance with section 5, subsection 4 of the Act on the Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial (1046/2020). The test group was formed by random sampling and by decisions made by the Ministry of Education and Culture, in accordance with the Act. The municipality did not exercise its discretionary power in this matter.

**Grounds**

The Ministry of Education and Culture selects the municipalities or joint municipalities for the trial (*pilot municipality*) using the stratified randomisation method (section 4 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial). The pilot municipalities’ task is to organise two-year pre-primary education in selected sites (section 5 of the Act). The pilot municipalities were chosen based on decision VN/583/2021.

The *target group* of the trial that will be launched in 2021 will include those children living in the pilot municipalities who were born in 2016 (section 4 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial).

Using the stratified randomisation method, the Ministry of Education and Culture selects from the sites that organise pre-primary education in the pilot municipalities the ones where the pilot municipality must organise two-year pre-primary education (pilot sites) (section 5 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial). The pilot sites were chosen based on decision VN/7615/2021. The sites that meet the requirements set in the Act, such as that a child can participate in both pre-primary education and the supplementary early childhood education and care in the same site, have been chosen as the sites that will organise the trial activities in your municipality.

Those children in the target group who are in early childhood education and care in a pilot site or who are not in early childhood education and care in a pilot site but who live in the pilot site’s catchment area form the *test group*.Children who belong to the target group but not to the test group form the *control group*. (Section 5 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial.)

Under section 5 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial, the Ministry of Education and Culture must publish the programming commands used for the sampling, as defined in sections 4 and 5 of the Act, before the trial is launched, and make decisions on the pilot municipalities, pilot sites and pilot site catchment areas. Before the trial starts, the pilot municipalities must choose the children for the test groups and control groups.

**Participation in the test group and applying for two-year pre-primary education organised at a pilot site**

The parents, custodians or other legal representatives of a child who belongs to the test group must ensure that the child participates in the two-year pre-primary education organised at a pilot site, or in other activities that fulfil the objectives of the two-year pre-primary education programme (section 6 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial).

Since your child belongs to the trial’s test group, you may apply for your child to participate the two-year pre-primary education organised at a pilot site. Alternatively, you can choose to achieve the objectives of the two-year pre-primary education programme by other means, such as participation in early childhood education or at home.

We are offering your child the opportunity to participate in two-year pre-primary education at the pilot site of... (add the correct site for the child and its address from the ministry’s test group list). The offer applies only to this site. The second year of your child's pre-primary education is likely to be organised at the YY site (information from the municipality specified as accurately as possible, if such plans exist).

The two-year pre-primary education programme is free of charge. The purpose of the trial is to make education more equitable, improve the quality of pre-primary education and make it more effective, make the transitions between early childhood education and care and pre-primary as well as primary education clearer, examine the service choices that families make, and obtain information on how the two-year pre-primary education programme affects the conditions for children to develop and learn, their social skills and the formation of healthy self-esteem. The two-year pre-primary education trial has its own curriculum. You can read more about the trial in the attached brochure.

Your child can apply to participate in the trial... (add here your municipality’s instructions on the application procedure).

**Register for the trial**

Under section 9 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial, the following data related to the trial set-up and participation in the trial’s test group will be entered in the register for the trial managed by the Finnish National Agency for Education:

*1) name;*

*2) personal identity code;*

*3) national learner ID as defined in the Act on the National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees (884/2017);*

*4) the pre-primary education site area where the child lives in autumn 2020 or 2021;*

*5) the provider of early childhood education and care and the site that the child will attend for early childhood education and care in autumn 2020 or 2021;*

*6) the child’s participation in the test group or control group;*

*7) the child’s participation in the two-year pre-primary education programme or other activities that achieve the pre-primary education objectives;*

*8) the pre-primary education provider and site where the child will participate in the two-year pre-primary education programme;*

*9) information about ending the child’s participation in the two-year pre-primary education programme.*

Even if you choose for your child to achieve the objectives of the two-year pre-primary education programme in a manner other than by participating in two-year pre-primary education at a pilot site, your child will still be included in the trial’s test group, pursuant to the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial. Under the Act, parents and other custodians cannot prohibit these details from being entered in the register for the trial.

**Follow-up study for the trial**

Your child also belongs to the follow-up study related to the trial. Section 10 of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial includes provisions on the follow-up study:

*The realisation of the two-year pre-primary education trial’s objective is examined by monitoring and assessing the trial’s implementation, target group, pedagogical and action-based practices of the trial, and the trial’s core curriculum as well as local curricula. The pilot municipalities must participate in evaluating their activities externally.*

*The party performing the follow-up and evaluation has the right of access to personal data of the target group that are necessary for the follow-up and evaluation, free of charge and notwithstanding secrecy provisions. The personal data in question relate to the decisions and plans for early childhood education and care or teaching as well as the ways in which early childhood education and care or teaching is organised.*

*The party monitoring and evaluating the trial can perform assessments on the target group’s children that are necessary for examining the realisation of the trial’s objective. The assessments monitor the conditions for children to develop and learn, their social skills and the formation of healthy self-esteem.*

*An interim report will be drawn up for the Government and Parliament on the follow-up and evaluation by the end of February 2023, and a final report will be published in 2025.*

*The Ministry of Education and Culture is the controller of the personal data related to the follow-up and evaluation material. The follow-up and evaluation material are stored until the final report is published.*

The researchers conducting the follow-up study will be in touch with you later to tell you more about the study.

The test group was formed by random sampling and by decisions made by the Ministry of Education and Culture, in accordance with the Act. The municipality did not exercise its discretionary power in this matter. For this reason, the municipality cannot review the decision made on the basis of the Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial and decisions by the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding your child’s participation in the test group.

For more information: the municipality’s contact person and contact details

Decision-maker

Presenting officer

Appendix 1: Brochure about the trial

Appendix 2: Instructions on how to apply