

FREE childcare



Information for schools

Happy New Year and welcome to our second update on the introduction of 30 hours free childcare for working parents.

It won't be long before September comes around and the offer of 30 hours free childcare for many of our three and four year olds across County Durham will be in place.

The Government's response to the 30 hours consultation was released on 9 November 2016 giving us more guidelines to work to when planning this offer.

There has been a lot of work going on behind the scenes to look at data and numbers. All schools who have a nursery will have a visit booked in by one of the team over the next few weeks. If you have any questions at any time please don't hesitate to contact us at 30hoursfreechildcare@durham.gov.uk

We hope you find this information useful and we look forward to working with you all this year.

4010

Eligible 3 & 4 Year Olds

for **working parents**

of 3 and 4 year olds for 30 hours a week

www.durham.gov.uk/earlyyears

Durham
County Council



Government response to the 30 hours delivery model consultation

The consultation asked respondents for views on:

- increasing flexibility of the free entitlement to better meet the needs of working parents.
- improving access to the free entitlement for disabled children and those with additional needs.
- making the local delivery model more efficient.
- improving parents' access to information about childcare.

This was an online consultation, supplemented by extensive informal consultation and direct engagement. The following summarises the results of this, which were published on 7 November 2016.

Grace period

The government will:

- Set a national grace period to ensure simplicity and clarity for parents and providers, and fair, consistent arrangements for children and families, irrespective of where they live.
- Develop the existing national Eligibility Checking Service (which local authorities already use to check eligibility for Free School Meals, the Pupil Premium and free early learning for two-year-olds) to automatically calculate the grace period, minimising administrative burdens on local authorities and providers.
- Carry out further informal consultation on the length of the grace period, before setting out final decisions in statutory guidance.

Flexibility

- While the free early years entitlement must be provided over no *fewer* than 38 weeks, local authorities are expected to work with childcare providers to enable, as far as possible, parents to 'stretch' their free childcare over the full year where that is what they wish.
- Extend the hours over which the funded hours can be delivered, to between 6am and 8pm (increased from between 7.00am and 7.00pm)
- Limit the number of sites on which children can take up their free entitlement in a single day to two, to avoid the potential negative impact on children of multiple transitions between sites.
- Remove the minimum session length, in response to the view of the majority of consultees, that providers and parents are best placed to

agree the appropriate time but sessions would be no longer than 10 hours.

Special needs

Having considered the responses the government would:

- Introduce, subject to the early years funding consultation, a targeted Disability Access Fund and an SEN Inclusion Fund model.
- Include proposals for improving SEND support in our forthcoming early years workforce strategy.
- Develop best practice guidance to improve the quality of early years sections of Local Offers, which we will include in planned departmental advice on delivery of 30 hours free childcare.
- Publish examples of good practice to support local authorities, with a particular focus on strategic, collaborative and effective systems of SEND support for children in their early years.
- Revise statutory guidance to make clear, and bring together, the responsibilities of local authorities under both the Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3 and Equalities Act 2010.

Reformed local delivery model

Having considered the responses the government would:

- Amend statutory guidance to set a clear expectation that by September 2018 childminders should be paid monthly; and all other providers should be paid monthly unless they request an alternative payment model. This will ensure that cash flow does not prevent smaller providers, including childminders, from offering the extended entitlement.
- Proceed with plans to develop a model agreement template, working closely with providers, local authorities and representative organisations, to bring clarity and consistency to agreements between local authorities and providers.
- Make it clear in statutory guidance that government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible early education and childcare. It is not intended to fund the cost of consumables (such as drinks, meals and nappies) or additional services.

Childcare information to parents:

Having considered the responses the Government will:

- Strengthen the regulations and guidance to make clear that local authorities will be required to update and publish their childcare information on a termly basis.
- Require local authorities to publish the information by electronic means via their websites.
- Make clearer in guidance where local authorities could publish other helpful information for parents beyond the list set out in schedule 1 to the Childcare Act 2006, such as where childcare providers work in partnerships to offer more wraparound services for parents, and stating the outreach activity they undertake to publicise the childcare offer, especially to under-represented groups that are not accessing their entitlements.

Next steps – The consultation will be discussed in the House of Lords and published once debates have been concluded. Further information on the grace period and SEND will be published in early 2017. Case studies of the pilot schemes will also be published and a new workforce strategy will be published in March 2017.

Capital bids

Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in our capital bids to the DfE, However, we have applied for funding from the Local Authority to fund minor works improvements in targeted areas. We will update you on the outcome.

Sustainable businesses

The Department for Education has appointed the Childcare Works consortium (made up of [Mott MacDonald](#), [Hempsall's](#) and [Action for Children](#)) to support local authorities to make sure they have sufficient 30 hours places to meet parental demand. As part of this, Childcare Works will work closely with local authorities and providers to make sure that they have the tools and knowledge to create and maintain sustainable business models. In particular, this will include business sustainability support such as:

- Collecting and sharing examples of good practice through group workshops, online resources and practitioner networks.

- Training providers in business remodeling, business planning and working flexibly and sustainably.
- Running progress reviews with local authorities to identify specific business support needs, examine developments and identify actions.

For more information on Childcare Works, please contact 30hoursfreechildcare@durham.gov.uk

Schools – what you need to be doing in preparation for the 30 hours offer:

As a school, you will either offer early education term-time only or all year round. Before you start to plan for working in partnership with other providers you might want to consider a number of issues:

- **Demand for the Extended Free Entitlement** – what are your existing and future parents likely to want by way of provision?
- **Impact on your school budget and the number of places available** - undertake financial modelling to reach a firm conclusion about the likely impact on the school budget of the reductions in numbers in order to inform your decision-making.
- **Physical space available** – review how much space you use, how you use it and what might be available (including outdoor space) to explore options for expansion. Consider whether you would want to facilitate use of your space by another provider – this could be as part of an extended day and/or during holidays and for which you might be able to charge.

Partnership options – these could include, for example:

- The school could directly deliver an extended day and/or all-year-round-offer. This might not increase the number of children that the nursery could accommodate, but could increase the school's potential income through selling additional hours.
- The school could enter into a partnership with a local private, voluntary or independent (PVI) provider and/or childminder(s) to share the funded hours for children. A partnership agreement could be used to ensure the transition to the school is guaranteed.

- The school could enter into a partnership agreement with a local PVI provider and/or childminder(s). The school would be the sole provider of sessions for children who are entitled to the universal offer (15 hours a week, TTO), and accommodate a number of children who are entitled to the new offer. The other providers would deliver additional places, including extended places, to children who are entitled to the new offer, and assist with transition to the school's reception class.

We want to work in partnership, what do we do?

Having decided that a partnership approach is a serious option, you need to find out whether or not there is an existing partnership you could join or whether you could form one. The local authority will support partnership arrangements. To find out more please attend one of our partnership cluster meetings.

These will give you the opportunity to discuss the arrangements to offer the 30 hours and encourage partnerships between schools, settings and childminders. We have arranged these meetings (below) in Children's Centre Hub areas. Please the cluster event within which your school is located. You can book a place by emailing: 30hoursfreechildcare@durham.gov.uk

A member of our team will be contacting you over the next few weeks to arrange a visit to discuss your individual requirements.

Hub Area	Date	Time	Venue
Chester le Street	Tues 24 Jan 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	Com Rm 2, Co Hall
Durham	Wed 25 Jan 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	DLC, Spennymoor
Stanley	Tues 31 Jan 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	Stanley Ed Centre
Consett	Thur 2 Feb 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	Stanley Ed Centre
Bishop Auckland	Wed 8 Feb 2017	4.15 – 6.15pm	DLC, Spennymoor
Barnard Castle	Tues 14 Feb 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	TCR – Barnard Castle
Ferryhill	Thur 16 Feb 2017	4.15 – 6.15pm	DLC, Spennymoor
Newton Aycliffe	Thur 23 Feb 2017	4.15 – 6.15pm	DLC, Spennymoor
Peterlee	Tues 28 Feb 2017	2.00 – 4.00pm	Glebe Centre, Murton
Seaham/Easington	Thur 2 Mar 2017	4.00 – 6.00pm	Glebe Centre, Murton

Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) consultation.

We have now received the government response to the Early Years National Funding Formula.

Proposals included:

- Additional £300m per year funding to uplift rates paid to providers for funded two, three and four year olds
- Universal base rate for all types of providers by 2019/20- **same base rate for any provider across the sector.**
- Limit on the amount of funding that can be retained centrally by LAs (7% in 17/18 and 5% in 18/19)
- Limit on the amount of supplements to base rate (10% of base rate). At present the supplements are additional funding for quality and disadvantage.

The government is to direct the kind of supplements that can be given- the consultation suggested Deprivation and Rurality/Sparsity and have proposed other metrics Flexibility, Efficiency, Delivery of additional 15 hours.

- Majority of providers will see an increase in their funding rate but there is a recognition of the impact that this would have on nursery schools and the additional costs they have over and above other providers – so supplementary funding for nursery schools for two years.
- Early Years National Funding Formula needs to be in place by 2019/20 – expectation that the LA we consult with providers over the subsidies in addition to the base rate. The Finance team will be pulling together a working party to discuss proposals in terms of our LA finding.

The Early Years Funding Team will be consulting all providers on the proposed new funding formula shortly.

30 hours steering group

The first meeting of the 30 hours steering group took place in December – the group will be focusing on key elements of the 30 hours offer including delivery, developing partnerships and marketing. The next meeting is due to take place on the 18 January. We will keep you informed of the outcomes of these meetings.

Future communications

We will keep you up to date with any developments on the 30 hours extended offer through regular information updates.

A list of FAQ's is currently being compiled and will be available on www.durham.gov.uk/earlyyears

We value your feedback and welcome suggestions of what you would like to see in future updates. You can email your comments to 30hoursfreechildcare@durham.gov.uk

If you would like further information about the 30 hours or to speak to a member of staff, please contact:

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