

30 hours free early education and childcare Monthly update Issue no. 1 - March 2017

What is 30 hours free early education and childcare?

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours of [free early education](#). From September 2017 there will be an additional 15 hours of free childcare available for families that meet the government's eligibility criteria:-

- Both parents are working or the sole parent in a lone parent family is working
- Each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours on National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (at least £115), and less than £100,000 a year. (Note parents do not have to be working 16 hours)

30 hour web page

A new web page containing information about 30 hours free childcare and links to other useful websites is now available: www.kirklees.gov.uk/30hourschildcare

We will continue to update the web page as more information becomes available.

Statutory Guidance

This week the DfE has published updated [Statutory Guidance](#) for local authorities on the provision of early education and childcare. It sets out what schools, providers and local authorities must do to comply with the law. The DfE has also published a [model agreement](#) outlining the information local authorities should include in their agreements with early years providers.

Both documents come into effect on 1st September 2017.

Kirklees Free Early Education and Care (FEEC) Funding Guidance and Provider Agreement

The Kirklees Agreement and Provider Guides will be updated during the summer term, in consultation with the Kirklees Provider Reference Group¹, to reflect changes in the new statutory guidance.

In the meantime, existing FEEC providers will need to renew the current Kirklees Agreement by 1st April 2017 – an email will be sent when the agreement is published on the Provider Portal.

¹ A time limited task and finish group with provider representation from all sectors of the childcare market to support the council to implement 30 hours free childcare

How do parents apply for 30 hours?

Parents will apply using the national online service www.childcare.tax.service.gov.uk/ which is expected to open in April 2017.

Eligible parents will be given a code which will be valid for 3 months, parents will be asked to re-confirm their eligibility towards the end of the 3 month period. HMRC will send reminders to parents.

If a parent fails to re-confirm their eligibility or a change in circumstances means they are no longer eligible, a grace period will apply. Details regarding the grace periods will be confirmed in the summer term.

How providers will claim FEEC funding

The online provider portal is currently being developed; we expect the system to work as follows:

1. Parents will need to give the provider their 30 hour eligibility code, NI number and child's date of birth.
2. Providers will enter these details in the provider portal.
3. The portal will link to the national checking system and confirm whether the parent/child is eligible, if eligible providers will then be able to claim up to 30 hours.

Expressions of interest (EOI) to expand

Last summer providers were offered the opportunity to express an interest in expanding their provision to meet future demand associated with 30 hours, in one of three categories:

1. Category 1 projects – those at no or low cost (£0 - £3,000)
2. Category 2 projects – those with moderate cost (£3,001 - £20,000)
3. Category 3 projects – those requiring capital (£20,001 +)

In July 2016, all EOIs were analysed against current demand and gap information and site visits were made to some providers who submitted EOI's under category 1 and 2 to check feasibility.

It was concluded there were sufficient feasible non capital solutions to meet future demand in 22 out of 23 wards. Holme Valley North was identified as an area where capital investment may be required and a capital funding application was submitted to the Department for Education in August. The council has now received confirmation that the application has been approved.

Other EOI under category 3 (capital) will therefore not be progressed. Providers can develop their plans without council support if they wish, however, we recommend providers study the latest estimated gaps (dated 31st October 2016) published in the current [Childcare Sufficiency Assessment](#)

Throughout February we contacted the remaining category 1 and 2 expressions of interest in areas where there are estimated to be gaps in provision.

Next steps for the Council

1. Estimated demand and gap analysis will be updated.
2. Invite providers to apply for grant funding in areas where there are gaps in provision (EOI categories 1 and 2 only).
3. Continued communication with providers and schools offering advice about opportunities and risks.
4. Further updates to the web page www.kirklees.gov.uk/30hourschildcare
5. 30 hour and school community hub events (see below)

30 hour and school community hub events

Hubs are partnerships between local organisations and service providers in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Each hub focuses on a geographical area based on school pupil admission area boundaries and is led by the head teacher/s in the partner schools. Hubs also have a designated person who co-ordinates the offer to their children, families and communities.

Although each hub is unique and serves their own community the advantages for childcare providers who get involved include:

- Bringing together local childcare providers to share good practice, improve quality and develop financially sustainable models for a more flexible and responsive 'blended' childcare offer.
- Develop flexible ways of working to benefit the local community and working families to offer 30 hours of free childcare.
- Exchange information, share and pool resources.

Want to know more? We will be holding a number of events in the first few weeks of the summer term. Dates will be sent in the next monthly update before the Easter holidays.

Are you ready for 30 hours?

- Have you considered how 30 hours will work in your setting and what you will offer families?
- Have you carried out your market research? A parent survey template can be found here www.kirklees.gov.uk/30hourschildcare
- Could you work in partnership with other providers to offer 30 hours?
- Visit www.childcareworks.co.uk/resources and download the document 'Getting ready for 30 hours January 2017'

Tax Free Childcare - have you registered?

In addition to 30 hours, Tax-Free Childcare is another new government scheme to help parents with the cost of childcare. The same criteria apply to both schemes and parents can apply through the same online application route as 30 hours.

For every £8 a parent pays into their childcare account, the government will pay an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child per year. Parents can use this money to pay their childcare provider.

Parents can use Tax-Free Childcare alongside the 15 and 30 hours free entitlements. Parents can't use Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as they receive childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits.

To register for the scheme so you can receive payments from the parents' childcare accounts, visit www.childcare.tax.service.gov.uk/