

30 hours free early education and childcare

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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

This issue covers

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Who is eligible?

- Both parents, or sole parent in a lone parent family, must be working and expect to earn (on average) at least £120 a week for each parent over 25 years old or £112.80 a week for each parent between 21 and 24 years old. (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage.) Parents do not have to be working 16 hours
- Where one or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or if they are on statutory sick leave
- Where one parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
- Where a parent is in a 'start-up period' (i.e. they are newly self-employed) they do not need to demonstrate that they meet the income criteria for 12 months

Who is NOT eligible?

- Parents cannot claim their 30 hours in addition to a full time reception place in a maintained school or academy
- Either parent has an income of more than £100,000
- Either parent is a non-EEA national and subject to immigration control (and has no recourse to public funds)

30 hours briefing events

Over 450 people attended briefing events held during April and May.

Presentation

Questions and answers from the briefing events will be published in the June bulletin.

What is your offer?

To enable parents to make informed choices about their childcare options, please let us know whether you intend to offer 30 hours free early education and childcare places from September 2017 – this information will be displayed on [childcare search](#). Please note you do not need to offer the full 30 hours – this can be in partnership with another provider. [Click here to log in to the Provider Portal](#). If you are a school and have forgotten your password please send an email to feecteam@kirklees.gov.uk

If you are not currently on the Register to provide free early education and care for 3 and 4 year olds, but would like to be, please send an email to feecteam@kirklees.gov.uk who will then issue you with a user name and password to access the Provider Portal.

Statutory guidance

In March 2017, the DfE published the new Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for local authorities.

Operational guidance for local authorities and providers

In April 2017, the DfE published guidance for local authorities and providers to give more detail about how the free entitlements should be delivered.

How will parents apply for 30 hours?

- Parents **must** apply for the additional free hours through the Government's national online website www.childcare.tax.service.gov.uk/. Only HMRC can decide if a family is eligible so parents must apply for the additional hours through this online application.
 - If parent is eligible they will be issued with an eligibility code which they will take to their provider – the code is valid for 3 months
 - Parents need to re-confirm their eligibility towards the end of the 3 month period. HMRC will send reminders to parents. If parent fails to re-confirm or they are no longer eligible, a grace period will apply
 - Parents **DO NOT** need to apply through the online service if they **only** want to claim the universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds
 - If parents encounter any problems when applying they should contact the Customer Interaction Centre on 0300 123 4097.
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Grace Periods

The grace period enables parents to retain their childcare place for a short period if they become ineligible for 30 hours. The updated statutory guidance¹ outlines the specific grace period cut-off dates.

Date Parent receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation:	LA audit date:	Grace Period End date:
1 Jan – 10 Feb	11 February	31 March
11 Feb – 31 March	1 April	31 August
1 April – 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September – 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	1 January	31 March

Confirming eligibility and claiming funding

- Written consent is required from the parent, a template is now available to download from the website. [30 hours eligibility check consent form](#)
- Providers will need the 30 hour eligibility code, parents NI number and child's date of birth to enter in the online provider portal
- The portal will link to the national checking system and confirm whether the parent/child is eligible, if eligible you will be able to claim up to 30 hours
- The provider **must** validate the code before offering a funded 30 hour place
- Schools will also need to use the provider portal to check eligibility and claim funding for the extended entitlement
- The eligibility check facility on the provider portal should be available in June

Parent Agreement, Provider Agreement and Provider Guides

The new parent agreement and key facts statement will be available to download from the website after the Spring Bank holiday. The provider agreement and provider guides will be published on the website at the end of June. Providers will need to renew the provider agreement via the provider portal before 1 September 2017.

What can providers do to help?

- Encourage parents to apply **after 27 May** so that the grace period runs to 31 December.
- The guidance states² *'If a child is taking up their universal 15 hours entitlement and a parent becomes eligible for 30 hours part-way through the term, the parent can start claiming their additional hours the term following the date on which they received their code. **Parents should be encouraged to apply for the extended entitlement the term before they wish to claim their place.**'*
- Remind parents to bring their eligibility code along with their NI number and child's date of birth, otherwise you will not be able to verify their code and offer a place!

¹

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596460/early_education_and_childcare_statutory_guidance_2017.pdf

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610170/Operational_guidance.pdf

- Remind parents they need to verify their continued eligibility when prompted by HMRC
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Communicating with parents

When communicating with parents we recommend including details of the Kirklees Childcare Search for example: Further options about how parents can access 30 hours free childcare to meet their specific needs can be found here

www.kirklees.gov.uk/childcaresearch

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Information and an application form is now available to download from the website.