

30 HOURS OF FREE CHILDCARE



November 2017 • Issue 14

MONTHLY UPDATE

What is 30 Hours of Free Childcare?

The Childcare Act 2016 is delivering the Government's election manifesto commitment to giving families (where parents are working and eligible) an entitlement to 30 Hours of Free Childcare for their three and four year olds.

The national rollout of 30 Hours of Free Childcare commenced on the 1 September 2017.

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Message from the DfE:

30 Hours Spring Term – Reconfirming codes and applying for a 30 Hours of Free Childcare place for the first time.

The deadline for parents/carers to confirm a 30 Hours of Free Childcare place for January 2018 (spring term) is the **31 December 2017**.

As many providers are likely to be closed during the last week of December the DfE and HMRC have advised parents/carers to apply for or renew their existing code(s) as early as possible and have suggested by the **30 November 2017**.

Kent County Council has been promoting this reminder via social media. This includes posts regarding application deadline dates and the need to reconfirm eligibility.

We have provided information on KELSI within our promotional materials area and you can use this on your website or social media to remind parents to apply or reconfirm their eligibility of up to 30 Hours of Free Childcare.

Please click [here](#) for the Facebook post application deadline reminder to parents.

Please click [here](#) for the Facebook post eligibility reconfirmation reminder to parents.

Update from Management Information: Synergy Provider Portal:

The yellow exclamation mark in the Synergy Provider Portal is to highlight a child in the grace period at headcount only – this is a fixed check at the time of submission. To check if a family has reconfirmed their code and is eligible for the 30 Hours of Free Childcare in the spring terms, please refer to the October Audit results. The codes were rechecked on 23 October and are more up to date than the Synergy portal.

If you have existing children showing as ‘in the grace period’ on your October Audit result, you can now go onto the Synergy Eligibility Checker to check **reconfirmed** codes only. It is an on-screen check only to determine if a family is in their grace period before you submit a claim and secure a place for January.

You **must** continue to validate all **new** 30 Hour codes through the KELSI website www.kent.gov.uk/30hourchecker **Failure to validate any new code will result in payment not being made.**

The Synergy Provider Portal has now been opened for the spring estimate. This will close on Tuesday 28 November at 5pm. If you are unsure if a parent is eligible for the spring terms, please leave the hours off your estimate and wait to claim at headcount in January.

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Parents/Carers' Agreements:

Just to remind you that you must have a signed Parental Agreement in place before you make a claim for the Free Early Education (FEE).

The Parental Agreement is a contract between you and the parent/carer that states the agreed conditions, hours and patterns of access to the FEE. The Parental Agreement also authorises you to claim FEE funding on the parent/carer's behalf.

Without this authorisation you cannot claim FEE funding. If you do not have a signed Parental Agreement in place at headcount week you cannot make a FEE claim as you will not have authority from the parent to claim their FEE hours. Please speak to your CSO if you have any questions.

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Audit of codes: December 2017/January 2018:

The Statutory Guidance specifies that local authorities should complete a code audit check on eligibility codes at six fixed points in the year as set out in the table of LA audit dates:

- ~~23 October 2017 – 27 October 2017 (Completed)~~
- 24 December 2017 – 6 January 2018 **(Due)**
- 11 February 2018 – 18 February 2018
- 24 March 2018 – 1 March 2018
- 27 May 2018 – 2 June 2018
- 24 August 2018 – 1 September 2018

The next code audit is due to be completed at the end of December 2017 and will be sent out to you by Management Information.

KELSI Website

The 30 Hours of Free Childcare page on KELSI is designed to provide you with the information you need with ease. Each heading will take you to your desired page.

[30 Hours of Free Childcare:](#)

- Eligibility Criteria
- Childcare Choices
- Statutory Guidance
- Operational Guidance

[Eligibility Checker:](#)

Free Early Education

[Guidance Documents:](#)

- Open Objects Register
- Parent Declaration Form
- Disability Access Fund
- Transition and 30 Hours
- Further Information

[Monthly Updates:](#)

- 30 Hours of Free Childcare News

[District Information:](#)

- June Seminar Slides
- Countywide and District Presentations

[Q and A:](#)

- Provider Q and As

[Promotional Materials:](#)

- Parent Leaflet
- Poster
- Postcard
- Images
- Digital Badges
- Eligibility Code Poster

Information for parents/carers:

At its last meeting the Kent Early Years and Childcare Provider Association suggested that a parent/carer step-by-step guide to explain the process of applying for the 30 Hours of Free Childcare would be useful, to be available on the webpage but also for providers to be able to email to and/or print for parents if they choose. To view please click [here](#).

Parents/carers can also be directed to www.kent.gov.uk/30hours.

30 Hours Providers Working in Partnership:

Kent County Council would like to hear from providers who are working in partnership in order to support families to access up to 30 Hours of Free Childcare.

In order to collate this information we will be sending out an email asking providers to confirm whether they are working in partnership to deliver the 30 Hours of Free Childcare.

THE EDUCATION PEOPLE

In spring 2018 Kent County Council will be launching a new company *The Education People*.

The Education People will deliver a wider range of professional services to help schools and early years settings improve learning, wellbeing and children's development in Kent and beyond.

Threads of Success will continue, brought to you from The Education People.

Please contact them if you have any questions or if you have any ideas for services they could help you with.

Contact: 0345 604 1699

Email: hello@theeducationpeople.org

The 30 Hours of Free Childcare updates will continue to be uploaded onto KELSI the last Friday of each month.

<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>



This will be the last 30 Hours Update of 2017. We hope that you have found the information useful.

The next update will be sent out on the **26 January 2018**. However, if there is any key news or messages before this date we will email this to you.

You can still message the 30 Hours of Free Childcare email address.



If parents encounter any problems with the application process or accessing the childcare account, they should direct their queries to the HMRC Childcare Service Customer Interaction Centre on: 03001234097.

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

30 Hours Email Address

We have an email address for any queries you may have but please speak to your Childcare Sufficiency Officer in the first instance.

30HoursFreeChildcare@Kent.gov.uk



We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and to thank you for your continued support.

