

30 HOURS OF FREE CHILDCARE



February 2018 • Issue 16

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.

Message from the DfE – Ministerial Appointment confirmed:

Nahim Zahawi MP has been confirmed as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families. The DfE has forwarded a link to share with you [a message from Minister Zahawi](#).

Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for all local authorities:

The DfE has said it is planning to review/update the current Statutory Guidance and will look to issue changes in July 2018. The Kent Provider Agreement expires on 31 March 2018 so it is our intention to continue with the current agreement until **31 August 2018** at the earliest.

Providers need do nothing at this stage as current Provider Declarations will remain in force. If you are currently not offering 30 Hours but wish to do so please contact Management Information to have your Declaration amended.

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Free Early Year Entitlement - Base rate:

Kent County Council are increasing the base rate of funding for all 3 and 4 year olds from **£3.96** to **£4.00** per hour from **1 April 2018**.

We are doing this at a time when the funding the Council receives from the Government remains frozen at last year's rate of £4.48 per hour.

The Council believes this increase is affordable through a combination of increased take up of the 30 Hours alongside a reduction to the amount the Council is allowed to retain to fund its statutory duties.

We are committed to ensuring that the maximum amount of funding the Council receives for Early Years is passed onto providers and we will review this position regularly.

Applying/Re-confirmation of 30 Hours of Free Childcare codes for the summer term 2018:

The summer term runs from 1 April 2018 to 31 August 2018.

The deadline to apply for or revalidate is the 31 March 2018.

Any parents/carers who do not take up a summer place will need to wait until September 2018 to take up 30 Hours.

We are encouraging parents/carers who want to take up a 30 Hours place in the summer term to apply now to get their code in good time. HMRC sometimes needs more information from the parent to check whether they're eligible, so parents/carers should allow time for this.

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

The early 30 Hours codes for two year olds have led to some confusion. Please be aware when you accept an eligibility code from parents/carers that the child falls into either the three or four year old date of birth range for the relevant term.

Changes with the Childcare Voucher scheme in 2018 Reminder:

The new Tax-Free Childcare scheme started to be rolled out to eligible families during 2017.

The Childcare Voucher scheme is expected to close to new entrants on the **5 April 2018** meaning that only parents/carers who are part of the scheme at that time will be able to continue using Childcare Vouchers. If parents/carers are not currently claiming help with childcare costs they have until **5 April 2018** to decide which scheme is best for them.

Childcare providers:

To sign up and receive payments from Tax-Free Childcare if you're an approved or registered childcare provider you can sign up to receive payments from parents who use the Tax-Free Childcare scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/childcare-provider-tax-free-scheme>

Evaluation of the first year of the national rollout of 30 Hours of Free Childcare:

The evaluation being undertaken on behalf of the DfE has commenced. We would encourage as many providers (if contacted) to take part so you can express your views. You will not be obligated to take part if you are invited to do so and your participation will remain anonymous.

The findings will be published in August 2018.

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

30 Hour audit of codes-

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The statutory guidance specifies that local authorities should complete an 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	(Completed)
11 February 2018	18 February 2018	(Completed)
24 March 2018	1 March 2018	
27 May 2018	2 June 2018	
24 August 2018	1 September 2018	

This was completed on the 19 February 2018 and information was sent to providers. The next audit is due to be completed in March 2018 and the results will be sent out to you by Management Information.



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 0300 123 4097.

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

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>

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