

30 HOURS OF FREE CHILDCARE



March 2017 • Issue 6

MONTHLY UPDATE

What is 30 Hours of Free Childcare?

The Childcare Bill 2015 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.

Parent and Provider Survey Update:

We have had the following responses from the surveys up to the 22nd March 2017:

Parent Survey: 1688

Provider Survey: 699

Once the Survey is closed we will produce a summary.

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Department for Education News:

Statutory Guidance and Model Agreement have been published:

At the beginning of March the Department for Education (DfE) published the new Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for all local authorities, effective from September 2017.

[Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#) and the [Model Agreement](#): Early years provision free of charge and free childcare.

In Kent we have decided to implement the new Model Agreement to be in line with the implementation date of the new Statutory Guidance which is 1st September 2017. Kent County Council's current Provider Agreement will therefore remain in place until 31st August 2017 with the revised Agreement scheduled to be made available early May.

The Statutory Guidance now makes clear the **eligibility criteria (page 2)**, the **dates when a child can access their place (page 3)** and the **grace period (page 3)**.

Eligibility Checking System

All parents will be invited by HMRC to enter details into an online eligibility checking service that will be run by HMRC. We have been told that further detail about this will be made known to the local authority and providers in due course. It is expected that parents will be able to start using the checker from spring 2017 although places will not be funded for additional hours until September 2017. We will send information as soon as we know more.

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

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

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

Register of providers - A key requirement of the Statutory Guidance for local authorities is to provide information regarding persons who intend to provide the extended 30 Hours entitlement.

As an interim measure, to make sure we meet our statutory obligation, we have created a central register of providers who have already stated they are intending to offer the extended childcare with effect from September and will make this available on the Kent.gov website with effect from the beginning of April. In due course this will be added to the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS).

As parents/carers will be able to view this information, we are asking if you would like to be included on this initial register. In the coming weeks your Childcare Sufficiency Officer will be making visits and will seek your permission – if at this stage you do not wish for your service to be included then please make this known to your CSOs during this visit.

We will be formalising our registration and admissions process in the coming weeks and would suggest if parents/carers do make enquiries to take their contact details and signpost them to: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Childcare Choices

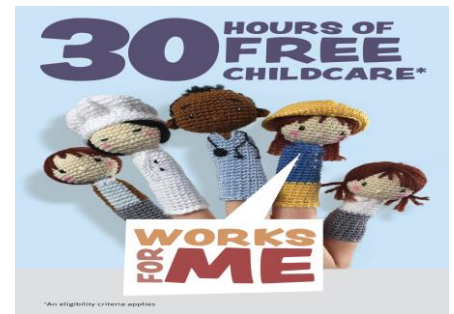


The Department for Education and the Treasury have launched the website Childcare Choices www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. This is a central point for current and upcoming Government childcare offers and support available to parents, including the Tax-Free Childcare scheme and 30 Hours of Free Childcare, the universal 15 free hours, tax credits, Universal Credit and childcare vouchers.

The website has a Childcare Calculator for parents to compare all offers and support available to them and check what works best for their family.

Parents/Carers will be able to use Childcare Choices to register for alerts for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme, which the DfE and Treasury have now confirmed will start from 28th April for parents of the youngest children.

They can also sign up for information about the 30 Hours of Free Childcare for three and four year olds, coming in from September, as well as sign up to email alerts that will notify them when they can apply and provide details of existing Government childcare offers.



Childcare Tax Credits Update

Tax-Free Childcare is being rolled out gradually and will eventually cover all families with children under 12, if they meet the required work and income criteria. There will be an upper income limit per parent of £100,000 to qualify, and a minimum weekly income level per parent equivalent to 16 hours worked at the National Living Wage. Parents will be able to set up an online account where they can bank payments for childcare. For each £8 a parent pays in, the Government will add an additional £2 up to a maximum of £2,000 per year per child. Families of disabled children receive help with their childcare costs to a maximum of £4,000 per year.

The HMRC have advised that they have already written to providers. You can register your details here: <https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/ccp/signup/entrypage>

If you need any assistance please contact your Childcare Sufficiency Officer.

Who will qualify for 30 Hours of Free Childcare?

Eligibility:

Who will qualify for 30 Hours of Free Childcare?

Parents of three and four year olds will need to meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 Hours of Free Childcare:

- They earn or expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum or Living Wage over the coming three months.
- This equates to £120 a week (or c.£6,000 a year) for each parent over 25 years old or £112.80 a week (or c.£5,800 a year) for each parent between 21 and 24 years old.
- This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on zero hours contract.
- The parent (and their partner where applicable) should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- 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.
- If a non-EEA national, the parent must have recourse to public funds.

Who will not qualify?

A parent will not meet the criteria when:

- 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).

What happens if a parent loses eligibility?

- They will receive a "grace period" – this means they will be able to keep their childcare for a short period.
- Once the "grace period" has lapsed, the parent may be entitled to the universal 15 hour entitlement.

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The relevant dates (in relation to the age criterion) are as follows:

- Children born in the period 1st January to 31st March: the start of term beginning on or following 1st April after the child's third birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st April to 31st August: the start of term beginning on or following 1st September after the child's third birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st September to 31st December: the start of term beginning on or following 1st January after the child's third birthday.

The Grace Period:

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

30 Hours Seminars

The Early Years and Childcare Service has now delivered 16 of the 30 Hours of Free Childcare Seminars. The county slides can be found here: [County Slides](#).

The seminar district slides can be found here: [Ashford](#), [Canterbury](#), [Dartford](#), [Dover](#), [Gravesham](#), [Maidstone](#), [Sevenoaks](#), [Shepway](#), [Swale](#), [Thanet](#), [Tonbridge & Malling](#), [Tonbridge Wells](#).

Evaluations of these events suggest you have found these useful. There were approximately **760** delegates (county wide) who attended and we asked you to give a rating for the sessions and these are the results.

Evaluation feedback

6.7% said Outstanding

76 % said Good

5.9% said Requires Improvement

0.4% said Inadequate

11.4% did not complete scoring.

For those who rated Inadequate we would like to contact you directly to discuss any concerns. The frequently asked questions and answers from the seminars can be found here:

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/68379/QA-30-Hours-Free-Childcare.pdf

If you have questions that are specific to you or your setting please contact your Childcare Sufficiency Officer.