

30 HOURS OF FREE CHILDCARE



June 2017 • Issue 9

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.

30 Hours Project – Nine Weeks Countdown:

We are now into summer and a number of providers will soon be closing for the holidays.

As we move into the remaining nine weeks before the 30 Hours initiative goes live on 1st September, Kent County Council would like to express thanks to all our providers for their comments and feedback, whether they are looking to offer up to 30 Hours or not.

It has been encouraging to hear from so many providers across the county, helping us shape the Government's 30 Hours of Free Childcare offer in Kent.

We continue to look forward to working with you all.

Inside this Issue:

What is 30 Hours of Free Childcare?	P1
30 Hours Project Countdown	P1
The Kent Provider Agreement	P1
Parent Declaration Form	P1
The 'Interim' Eligibility Checking System	P2
Eligibility Codes and August Audit	P2
Ofsted Update	P2
Kent.Gov Website	P2
30 Hours Seminars	P2
30 Hours Email Address	P2
Children's Service Details	P3
KELSI Website	P3
Workforce Development Conference	P3
Childcare Choices	P4
Tax-Free Childcare Update	P4

The Kent Provider Agreement:

This is the final version of the Kent County Council Provider Agreement. The provider agreement is the framework which outlines the mutual commitments on delivering the early education free entitlement.

[Kent Provider Agreement](#)

This agreement provides a formal contract between Kent County Council (KCC) and Kent's childcare providers.

Parent Declaration Form:

This is the latest version of the Parent Declaration Form which providers must get parents to complete and sign for two, three and four year olds before making a claim for funding.

[Parent Declaration Form](#)



Ofsted Update:

We are very pleased to announce that 97.5% of our providers are Good or Outstanding. This is really great news.

.....

Kent.gov website

To access the Kent.gov website please type the following:

“30 Hours of Free Early Education and Childcare” in the search box. The following links and headings will be found on the page:

- **Free Early Education and Childcare Entitlement**
- **Tax-Free Childcare**
- **National benefits and Tax Credits**
- **Childcare Vouchers**
- **Who is eligible for the additional 30 Hours**
- **Providers offering the 30 Hours**
- **Tell us what you think about the 30 Hours**

.....

30 Hours Seminars:

[Link to presentation slides](#)

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 ‘Interim’ Eligibility Checking System:

The interim eligibility system has now gone live. This was presented at the recent 30 Hours seminars.

The only difference is that there will be no immediate response to the check submitted. Providers will still use a firmstep portal on KELSI to submit a check that will come to Management Information (MI). Providers will receive an onscreen response.

The providers will then receive another email from MI with the result once an eligibility check has been completed.

In order to validate a 30 Hours code, providers will need the following information (in addition to having received the signed parent declaration form):

- 30 Hour code (11 digits)
- Details of parent who is registering
- National Insurance Number
- Child’s name and date of birth

[Eligibility Checking System](#)

.....

Eligibility Codes and August audit:

As some early codes may have become ineligible as circumstances for families may have changed, we will be carrying out a pre-audit on the current eligibility codes in August 2017.

We will email the relevant information to providers. Those who are term-time only will need to check for this information at the start of term.

Please be aware not all eligibility codes will now begin with 5000. ECS Change Team has confirmed that some will begin 5001 and some parents may also have a temporary code beginning with 11.

KELSI Website

30 Hours of Free Childcare page on KELSI.

This page is designed to provide you with the information you need with ease. Each of the headings will take you to your desired page.

30 Hours of Free Childcare:

- Eligibility Criteria
- Childcare Choices
- Provider Survey

*** New page added**

*** Eligibility Checker:**

Free Early Education

Guidance Documents:

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

Monthly Updates:

- 30 Hours of Free Childcare News

District Information:

- Countywide and District Presentations

Q and A:

- Provider Q and As

Promotional Materials:

- Parent Leaflet
- Poster
- Postcard
- Images

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>

Childcare service details on Kent Children and Families Information Service (KCFIS) Directory:

We will be moving the current 30 Hours provider list over to Open Objects. The current list will be removed from Kelsi on the 3rd July 2017.

Our current temporary provider list of those intending to offer the 30 Hours of Free Childcare from September will now be moved into our CFIS Directory, where all providers will be required to register or update their details with the Kent Children and Families Information Service (KCFIS) on their Open Objects information system at least three times a year on the 1st January, 1st April and 1st September. This forms part of the Provider Agreement.

This information will be accessed by parents/carers who are looking for childcare, including up to 30 Hours.

If you have any questions please contact kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

To register your details please click here for information. [Childcare Service Directory](#)

Workforce Development Conference:

The Government published their [Early Years Workforce Strategy](#) in March 2017.

The strategy seeks to remove barriers to attracting, retaining and developing the early years workforce.

KCC's Early Years and Childcare Service is planning to hold a 'Workforce' conference to address the key requirements of the strategy.

This will take place in November 2017. We will be sending out more information on the contents and joining arrangements in due course.



Childcare Choices:

The Department for Education and the Treasury website Childcare Choices www.childcarechoices.gov.uk is the 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.

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.

If parents encounter any problems with the application process or accessing the childcare account, they should direct their queries to the childcare services Customer Interaction Centre 0300 123 4097.

Tax-Free Childcare Update - REMINDER

We would like to remind providers they need to sign up online with HMRC to enable them to receive parents' payments through the Tax-Free Childcare System. Once signed up they will appear on the government website 'Childcare Provider Checker'. This allows parents to check whether their childcare provider or school have signed up for Tax-Free Childcare.

Parents will be able to apply for Tax-Free Childcare through the digital childcare service. Working parents of children aged under 12 can use Tax-Free Childcare, through the childcare service account, to pay for registered childcare. The Government will top-up the money that parents pay into the account. For every £8 parents pay in, the Government will add an extra £2. Parents can receive £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 if disabled.

The eligibility criteria for Tax-Free Childcare are broadly aligned with 30 Hours of Free Childcare. The main differences are that Tax-Free Childcare is available for children under 12, and is not available to parents in receipt of tax credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers. Parents in receipt of these can choose, as part of the childcare service application, whether they want to keep these benefits and apply for the extended entitlement only, or leave these and apply for Tax-Free Childcare as well as the extended entitlement.

[Link to the Childcare Tax Calculator](#)

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