

Early Years Capital Fund

Kent County Council has been invited to take part in the bidding round for Capital Funding to provide 30 hours free childcare for working parents and as such has received the following information from the Department for Education.

Applications open for local authority capital bidding round

Capital funding is being made available through a local authority bidding process to support the delivery of the government commitment to provide 30 hours free childcare for working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds from September 2017.

The number one priority of this fund is to target areas within local authorities most in need of capital funding to deliver 30 hours places by September 2017.

On 3 April 2016 the Department for Education called for an expression of interest (EOI) from local authorities who want to work with local childcare providers to bid for capital funding to expand childcare provision in their area (including schools that currently offer, or plan to offer, provision for 3- and 4-year-olds).

Only local authorities that submitted a completed EOI form are eligible to take part in the full bidding process. Kent County Council completed this form with the support we received from more than 240 providers responses.

Local authorities must make applications setting out individual projects in their area by **31 August 2016**. Decisions on successful bids will be completed by autumn 2016. Successful bidders will be notified by December 2016. Successful individual project bids will receive their grant award within financial year 2016-17.

Action

The full application is designed for local authorities to complete in partnership with providers, by following the *Early Years Capital Fund: Information for Applicants*.

The application comprises of three forms:

1. **Part A** is to provide an overview of the projects that are being bid for, as well as contact details for the relevant local authority bid coordinator and project lead involved. This is to be submitted once by the local authority
2. **Part B** is for individual project level bids. Please note that clearly evidencing sufficiency need within the local authority is the priority criteria for this part of the application assessment process. One is to be submitted per project by the local authority up to the 'project limit' permitted
3. **Appendix A** is for individual project level bids and supports the assessment of the Value for Money criteria. One is to be submitted per project by the local authority

Project proposals – things to consider

Local authorities will be set a limit on the number of projects they can submit, for Kent County Council this is a maximum of **6 projects**. We are emphasising that local authorities should consider selecting high quality bids that clearly address a local sufficiency need for 30 hours places and require capital funding.

There will be initial pass/fail qualifying tests applied to all projects bids.

Pass/Fail Qualifying Tests: bids will initially be assessed for:

- track record with Ofsted/ Independent Schools Inspectorate
- clear evidence that the project will be completed by the end of August 2017
- total cost of project is below £1 million (including alternative sources of funding)
- **a minimum of 25% of the total project cost is obtained through alternative sources of funding**

In addition to sufficiency need, individual project bids will be scored on outcomes and value for money. Details on these criteria are set out in the *Early Years Capital Fund: Information for Applicants*.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-capital-funding-application-round>