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Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead

Achieving for Children (AfC) and Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM)

BUSINESS SUPPORT TOOLS & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

TO SUPPORT PROVIDERS BUSINESS PLANNING

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BUSINESS SUPPORT TOOLS & INFORMATION TO SUPPORT PROVIDERS BUSINESS PLANNING

OVERALL VIEW

From September 2025, working parents of all children over the age of nine months to the age of five will be entitled to 30-hours childcare support.

This will be rolled out in phases as follows:

By September 2025, working parents of all children over the age of nine months to the age of five will be entitled to 30-hours childcare support

This will be rolled out in phases:

From April 2024	From September 2024	From September 2025	September 2026
Eligible working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours childcare support	15-hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents of children from age of 9 months to 3-year-old	Eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare support a week	The government expects that by September 2026, most primary schools will be able to provide access to before and after school care

To help providers plan for the expanded entitlements, we hope that your setting may find some of the business support tools presented and other additional information will be useful and helpful in going forward with the new expanded Early Years Funding Entitlements. More information and support can be found on the Childcare Works website:

<https://childcareworks.org.uk/hub-for-providers/introduction/>

We hope this information may help you in your Finance matters by understanding your finances and financial planning for the future to assist your setting with your occupancy and sustainability by enabling you to:

- Plan and set out the income you want to achieve.
- Control your income and expenditure so you achieve the required income.
- Make informed decisions and develop successful plans for the future.

To achieve the above, it would be useful to have an Action Plan by making sure the plans you have developed achieve the income you want to generate from your business. To do this you need to:

- Plan and set out the income you want to achieve.
- Understand the implications of funding and your plan on your business.
- Revise the cashflow forecast to ensure revenue for your plan achieves the income you require.
- Put in place systems to monitor your income and expenditure so you achieve the required income.

Business Sustainability Health Tool

Shared by Lincolnshire County Council which is designed to support you with understanding your overall business health, and areas you may need to focus on to improve.

[Businesss-sustainability-health-tool-1-1.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

BUSINESS ANALYSES

Two business analyses that are helpful are:

- SWOT (examines both internal and external factors – that is, what's going on inside and outside your organisation)
- PEST (looks at the changes in a business environment and provides an understanding of the "big picture" forces of change that a business is exposed to and the opportunities that they present)

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis

- **Strengths**
Things that are good about the business.
- **Weaknesses**
Things that could let the business down if they are not dealt with.
- **Opportunities**
Things that have potential or could be improved or built upon.
- **Threats**
Risks that could damage the business that need to be prepared for, controlled or reduced.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Occupancy and waiting list Quality and reputation Finances Systems and processes Resources and assets Venue and environment Unique selling point	Occupancy Marketing Systems and processes Environment, resources and assets. Opening hours Fees and finances Parking
Opportunities	Threats
New businesses in the area Housing development Policy changes – new customers Partnerships Increases in birthrate Competitor closures	Increased competition Economical changes Political changes Decreased demand

PEST ANALYSIS

Why use PEST?

- Understand the environment you are working in.
- Reduce risks.
- Identify opportunities.

PEST analysis

Political	Ideas: What is the government saying? What has DfE announced? What is the local authority saying? How is this affecting funding rates, entitlements, policy, ratios, and EYFS? A general election.	Ideas: Has local employment changed? How is cost of living affecting childcare choices of local families? Has there been an increase in the use of TFC or Universal Credit?	Economical
Social	Ideas: Have families changed their work patterns because of Covid-19 or cost of living pressures? Has the birthrate increased or decreased?	Ideas: Do you have a website? Do you use social media in your marketing? Do you use virtual meeting platforms? Do you use electronic payment and communication systems?	Technological

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SUPPLY & DEMAND

DEVELOPING A CHECKLIST SO PROVIDERS CAN CONDUCT THEIR OWN SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

Developing a checklist so providers can conduct their own supply and demand analysis to inform planning

The aim – we want providers to:

- Understand the supply and demand in their setting and consider if their offer meets current and potential parental demand.
- Be able to respond to the information to meet changes in demand.
 - Small tweaks - start at 7.30am.
 - Large scale change – reconfigure rooms.
- Understand how the opportunities the extended entitlements and wraparound care could benefit the business. e.g.
 - Fill empty spaces and increase occupancy
 - Diversify - offer new services
 - Expand existing services

SUPPLY AND DEMAND - WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR SETTING

Supply and demand - what is happening in your setting

Now

- Have working habits changed e.g. working from home
- Have take up patterns changed?
- Have different financial arrangements, reduced/ increased the ability to pay?
- Has there been a greater appetite for government funding support e.g. Universal Credit, Tax-Free Childcare?
- What is your current occupancy?
- Do you have a waiting list?

Next

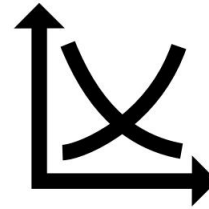
- Will there be a different need for childcare?
- What enquiries are you receiving?
- What are new parents asking for?
- Are they new enquiries or are parents using the additional support to access more?
- Will there be an increased requirement for funded hours only?
- Will more parents use Universal Credit, Tax-Free Childcare to pay for additional hours during rollout?

Break even analysis

Breakeven is the point where a provider:

Does not make a loss

Does not make a profit



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Why breakeven analysis is important

- Enables a provider to understand how much it costs to deliver the different parts of the service e.g. Baby places, pre-school and wrapround care.
- It is a quick way to see if the provider is making a loss or a profit.
- Provides up to date information to inform the review of fee structures and discount policies.
- Understanding breakeven occupancy enable the management to review business performance and act if required.

Helps decision making

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Different ways of collating breakeven

- By sessions
 - Shows how many sessions you need to be paid for to breakeven
- By income
 - Shows how much you need to charge per session or per hour to breakeven

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ILLUSTRATING BREAK EVEN POINTS

Illustrating how to calculate the fees 'breakeven' point

Use your budget to work out what your annual expenditure will be:

$$\text{Total expenditure} \div \text{Number of weeks open (per year)} = \text{Weekly expenditure}$$

The next step is to calculate the maximum sellable hours available each week.

$$\text{Hours per week the setting can offer} \times \text{Number of registered places} = \text{Total number of hours available to be sold each week}$$

Now work out the price you need to charge each hour to break even based on realistic occupancy.

$$\text{Weekly expenditure} \div \text{Total hours likely to be sold each week} = \text{Breakeven hourly rate}$$

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Illustrating occupancy breakeven as a monitoring tool

28 FTE	X	£5.00 per hour	=	£7,000 (breakeven per week)
27 FTE	X	£5.00 per hour	=	£6,750 (£250 loss per week)
32 FTE	X	£5.00 per hour	=	£8,000 (£1,000 surplus per week)

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Illustrating how breakeven can be used to develop fee structures to build reserves

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{28 FTE} \times \text{£5.00 per hour} \times \text{50 hours per week} = \text{£7,000 (breakeven/week)} \\ \text{28 FTE} \times \text{£6.00 per hour} \times \text{50 hours per week} = \text{£8,400 (£1,400 surplus/week)} \end{array}$$

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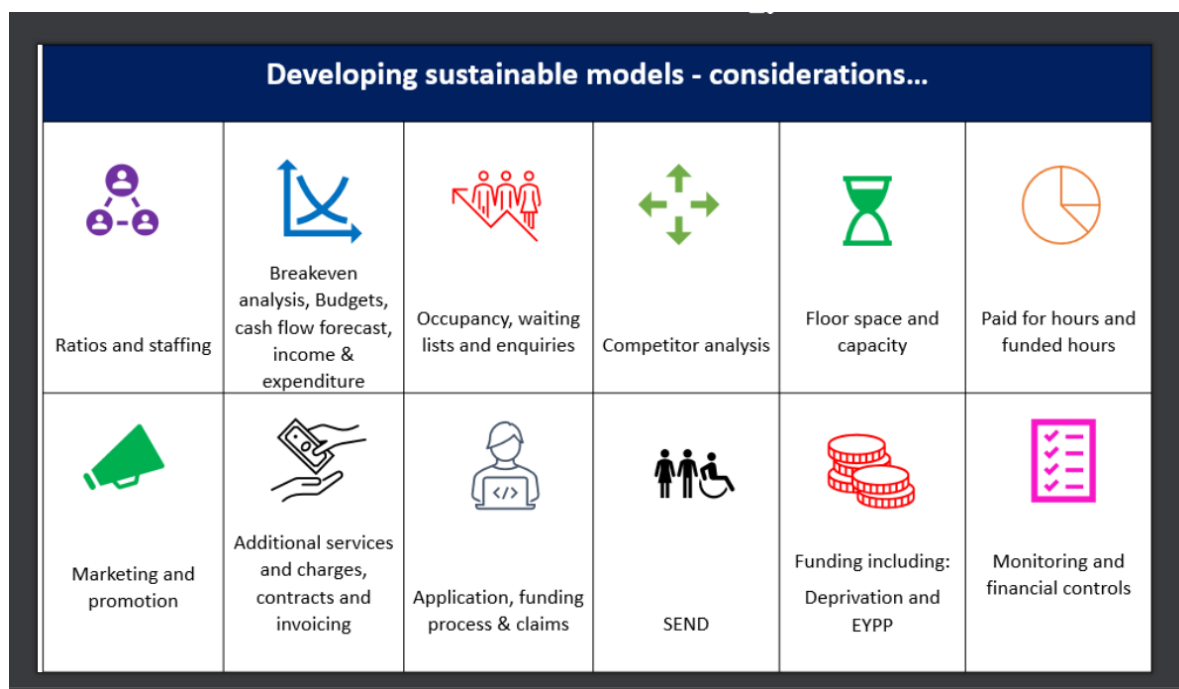
Illustrating how breakeven analysis can inform decisions about offering discounted rates

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Breakeven rate} = \text{£5.00 per hour} \\ \text{Fee structure hourly rate} = \text{£6.00 per hour} \\ \text{10\% discounted rate} = \text{£5.40 per hour} = \text{60p per hour surplus} \times 50 \text{ hrs} \times 50 \text{ weeks} \\ \text{£1,500 per annum surplus} \end{array}$$

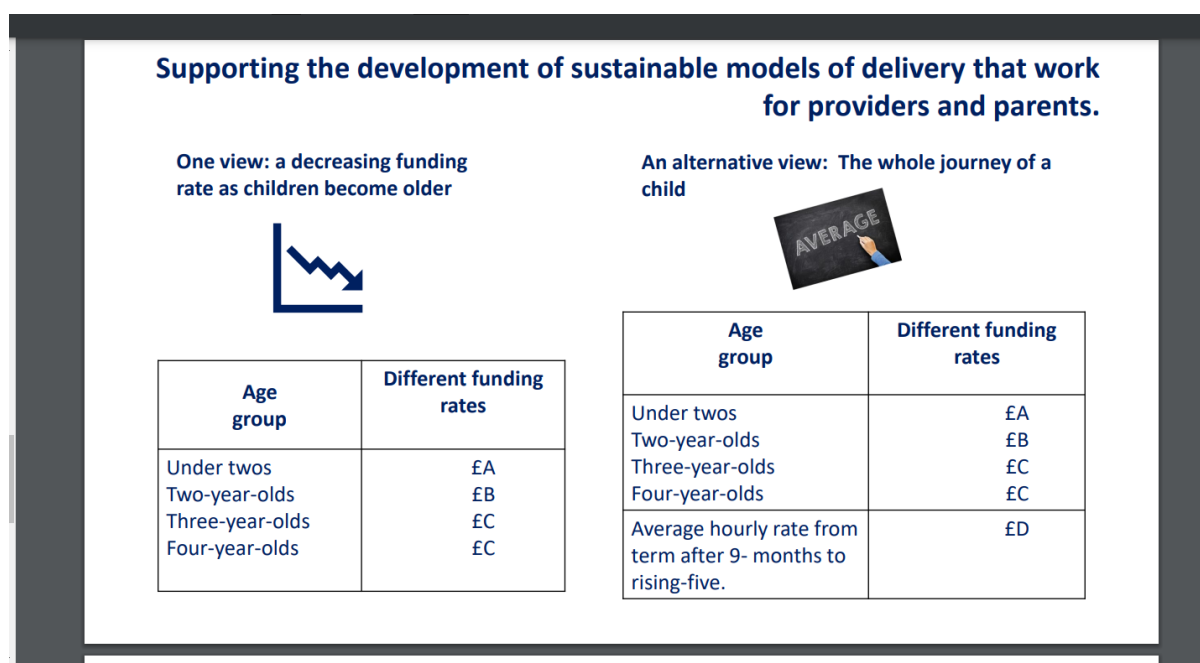
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SUSTAINABLE MODELS OF DELIVERY & REVIEW NORMAL OCCUPANCY

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE MODELS OF DELIVERY & REVIEW NORMAL OCCUPANCY



SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE MODELS OF DELIVERY THAT WORKS FOR PROVIDERS AND PARENTS – A



Supporting the development of sustainable models of delivery that work for providers and parents.

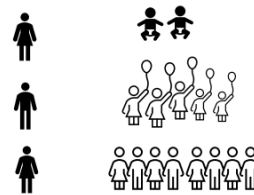
An hourly rate

$$1 \times \pounds$$

An hourly rate plus supplements

$$1 \times \pounds + \pounds$$

Income based on ratio



REVIEW NORMAL OCCUPANCY

Review normal occupancy

Calculate usual or typical occupancy. This is the normal occupancy achieved across a week, term, or year

Actual number of hours sold

Number of children on roll x
number of hours used each year)



Maximum capacity of the setting

Hours per week the setting can sell x number of
registered places = Total number of hours
available to be sold each week x Number of
weeks open



**Normal
occupancy
percentage for
the year**

You can find out more [here](#)

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SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

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Supply and demand - what is happening in your setting

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Break even analysis

- Enables providers to understand how much it costs to deliver the different parts of the service.
- It is a quick way to see if the business is making a loss or a profit.
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- Understanding breakeven occupancy enable the management to review business performance and act if required.

Profit and loss

- Profit and loss – summary of income and expenditure.
- Reflect on the past and what has happened.
- Identify trends and highlights potential actions.

Income and expenditure

Income

- Parent fees
- Government funding
- Grants
- Rebates

Expenditure

- Staff team
- Venue
- Resources and activities
- Marketing and promotion
- Operational costs

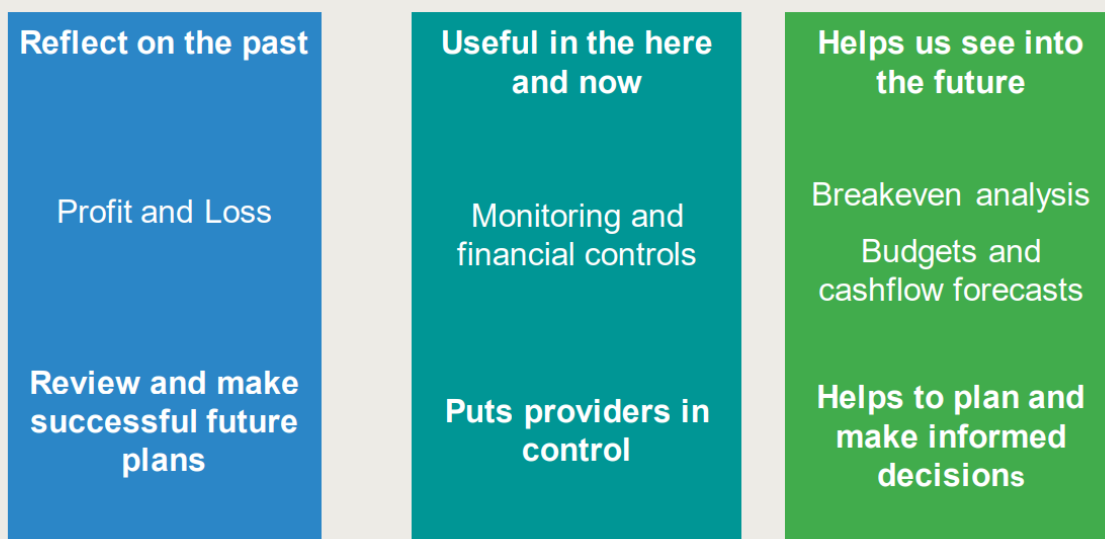
Cashflow forecast

- Illustrates when money is received or paid out
- Shows if there are enough funds to cover expenditure
- Reflects what happens in the bank account
- Is a projection – uses the same figures as the budget

Monitoring and financial controls

- Monitoring – ensure income and expenditure match plans
- Controls – ensure money is spent and earned as intended
- Ensure changes can be made if required

How it all fits together



GOVERNMENT CHILDCARE SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

With significant changes coming to 15- and 30-hours childcare support, the government will be expanding the Working Parents Entitlement to 2-year-olds in April 2024 and 9 months plus in September 2024 for 15 hours per week and then from September 2025, 30 hours per week for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months plus. To access funding, children will have to be age eligible (funding will commence the term **after** they become age eligible).

To help providers and families, Child Care Choices has new resources to communicate about the childcare support expansion.

The Childcare Choices campaign: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> raises awareness and understanding of the government childcare support for parents to help them with the costs of childcare and drives them to the website to check the support they might be eligible for. The refreshed toolkit includes key information about the existing and upcoming childcare support, as well as a wide range of new digital and ready to print resources for you to use across your channels, including posters, leaflets, and social media graphics. The leaflet will soon be translated into 11 different languages which will be hosted.

The Childcare Choices website has now been updated to allow parents to find out what they will be eligible for and when to apply. They will also be able to sign up to a newsletter which will give them further information as the expansion is rolled out.

TAX-FREE CHILDCARE SCHEME

One of the options for additional childcare support is the Tax Free Childcare Scheme. Eligible parents who sign up for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme open an online childcare account which they use to pay you directly for childcare. Payments work just as they do through an online bank account. Each payment is accompanied by a reference number for each child so you can identify their payments.

For providers who have not signed up for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme, if you're an approved or registered childcare provider, you can sign up to get a childcare provider account. This allows you to set up your bank account details and receive payments from parents who use Tax-Free Childcare. After you sign up, you'll get a childcare provider account which you can use to keep your details up to date, allowing parents who use Tax-Free Childcare to pay you.

Financial support is not limited to just nurseries and childminders. Depending on eligibility criteria, this support could also be used for breakfast clubs; after-school clubs; activity clubs; holiday clubs; and play schemes.

For more details, kindly log into the following link: Information for Childcare Providers
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/guidance-and-resources/information-childcare-providers>

You can log into the following Childcare Choices link where you can find a range of communications tools to help you promote 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare which includes useful email templates, leaflets, posters and social media content.

By joining up to the Tax-Free Childcare scheme, this would support working families with their childcare costs by enabling them to buy additional childcare and education hours which in turn could support your business.

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/guidance-and-resources>

Please note: should you and/or parents have any queries about the Government Childcare Support for Parents, please refer to the links above.

ILLUSTRATING WHAT TAX-FREE CHILDCARE CAN BE USED FOR

Illustrating what Tax-Free Childcare can be used for

- Families can use Tax-Free Childcare to pay for any approved childcare including holiday clubs, breakfast and after school clubs, child minders and nurseries.
- It can also be used for nursery deposits, retainers (for holiday periods) and childcare payments in advance and extras, such as lunches or trips, if/when these are included as part of the overall childcare costs charged by the childcare provider.
- Tax-Free Childcare can't be used for any part a child's compulsory education costs. This includes school lunches, private lessons during school time, such as private music lessons, school uniform, costs for school trips within the normal school day.

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ILLUSTRATING HOW TFC AND OTHER CHILDCARE SUPPORT WORK TOGETHER AND HOW IT FITS INTO FINANCIAL PLANNING

Illustrating how TFC and other childcare support work together and how it fits into financial planning

With...	Tax-Free Childcare	15 hours	30 hours	Tax credits	Universal Credit	Childcare vouchers
Tax-Free Childcare		✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
15 hours	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
30 hours	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Tax credits	✗	✓	✓		✗	✓
Universal Credit	✗	✓	✓	✗		✓
Childcare vouchers	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	


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ILLUSTRATING THE VALUE OF TFC TO PROVIDERS AND PARENTS

Illustrating the value of TFC to providers and parents

Case study 1

How Tax-Free Childcare helps working families




Beth and Robert are self-employed and make a joint profit of £64,000 a year. They have two children and annual childcare costs of £18,000.

They can claim £300 per month through Tax-Free Childcare

= saving of £3,600 a year

Case study 2


How Tax-Free Childcare helps working families



Linda and Gary have a joint income of £120,000 a year. Their annual childcare bill for three children is £21,000.

They can claim £350 a month through Tax-Free Childcare

= saving of £4,200 per year

Employers For Childcare employersforchildcare.org 

Working For Parents

SIGNPOSTING

Below are some links that may be useful in helping with your business and financial planning and to signpost parents should they need it.

- **CHILDCARE WORKS**

The HUB is a bank of resources available to Local Authorities and childcare providers implementing the childcare expansion programme. Here you will find a comprehensive library of the resources developed to support the roll-out of the early years and wraparound childcare expansion project.

Where to go to find out more

Childcare Works HUB for providers

Visit the site <https://childcareworks.org.uk/>

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<https://childcareworks.org.uk/hub-for-providers/introduction/>

- **BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY HEALTH TOOL**

Shared by Lincolnshire County Council has which is designed to support you with understanding your overall business health, and areas you may need to focus on to improve.

[Businesss-sustainability-health-tool-1-1.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

- **NDNA**

<https://ndna.org.uk/product/effective-financial-planning-and-management/>

- **PACEY**

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/business/>

- **FOUNDATION YEARS**

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/2021/01/hempsalls-business-map-for-early-years-providers/>

- **EARLY YEARS ALLIANCE**

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/>

- **EMPLOYERS FOR CHILDCARE**

Employers For Childcare comprises a Social Enterprise and a registered charity. As a charity, our aim is to make it easier for parents with dependent children to get into work and to stay in work. We address childcare as a labour market and economic issue, as well as a social one.

<https://www.employersforchildcare.org/parents/>

CLARIFYING POLICY ON CHARGING BY PROVIDERS

Statutory guidance: Early education and childcare (applies from 1 April 2024) - Updated 1 January 2024

[Early education and childcare \(applies from 1 April 2024\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

A few LAs have been in touch to ask about instances of providers charging parents extra for their government-funded hours and whether these are allowed within the statutory guidance. We have set out the below to help explain the current policy on charging.

Local authorities should work with providers and parents to ensure that all parents, including disadvantaged families, have fair access to a free place, which must be delivered completely free of charge. This is set out in paragraph **A1.30** of the current statutory guidance and **A1.33** of the updated statutory guidance applicable from 1 April 2024.

What is allowed – consumables and additions:

- Paragraph A1.30 of the statutory guidance is clear that government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional services. Providers can charge for meals and snacks as part of a free entitlement place and they can also charge for consumables, such as nappies or sun cream, and for additional services such as trips and specialist tuition.
- If a parent is unable to pay for consumables or if a parent wishes to provide their own, then the parent and provider can discuss alternative options. This could include allowing parents to supply their own meals or nappies or waiving or reducing the cost of meals and snacks.
- As set out in paragraph A1.33 of the guidance, such charges for consumables or additional services should not be made a condition of accessing a free place.

What is not allowed:

- Local authorities should ensure that providers do not charge parents “top-up” fees (any difference between a provider’s normal charge to parents and the funding they receive from the local authority to deliver free places).
- Core costs of running a business that delivers government-funded childcare are not consumables used by the child or additional services provided to the child. These include, but are not limited to, insurance, Ofsted registration, maintenance, business rates, training costs, rent and energy bills. These are core costs of running a business and we expect these to be covered by government funding and that parents should not be charged.

WORKING PARENTS ENTITLEMENTS CODES - UPDATE FOR PARENTS ON PARENTAL LEAVE

Message for DfE: A couple of LAs have raised issues regarding parental leave, so we wanted to provide the following update, please share this information with providers where relevant:

Applications for eligible working parents of children who will be 9 months and older by 31st August have now opened, and thousands of parents are successfully receiving their codes.

As previously communicated, for parents on parental leave who are applying for the child who is the reason for the leave, or for parents starting a new job, the following applies:

- If a parent is planning to start work or return to work from parental leave before 30 September they can apply for the working parent entitlement now, to take up a place from the September term. They need to apply online, and they will then receive a letter in the post within 1 to 2 weeks so they can access their childcare entitlement.

- If a parent is planning to start or return to work from parental leave between 1 October and 31 January, they'll be able to apply from 1 September to take up a place from the January term.

From 1st October, the below dates will apply:

Date of starting or returning to work	When you can apply from	When you can access your entitlement from
1 October to 31 January	1 September to 31 December	1 January
1 February to 30 April	1 January to 31 March	1 April
1 May to 30 September	1 April to 31 August	1 September

If a parent is applying for childcare for an older child, who is not the reason for their parental leave, they can apply regardless of their return to work date.

ELIGIBILITY CODES & CHILDCARE WHEN A CHILD BECOMES 3-YEARS-OLD

Message for DfE: Childcare when a child becomes 3-years-old

We have been made aware of the large number of questions from parents of 2-year-olds about what happens when their child turns 3.

Children are able to access the universal 15 hours from the term after the child's third birthday through to when they start school.

If the child is accessing the 15 hours entitlement for working parents of 2-year-olds and the parent remains eligible, the parent will automatically be moved onto 30 hours (Universal 15 hours + 15 hours for working parents) from the term after the child turns 3. They just need to keep reconfirming their code as normal and it will become usable to claim 30 hours (**the actual code remains the same**).

If the child is accessing the early education and childcare entitlement for families of 2-year-olds who receive certain benefits through their local authority, then they will be able to access the universal entitlement from the term after the child turns 3, which means in practice that they will continue to receive 15 hours of childcare.

NEW DIGITAL SERVICE TO CHECK EARLY YEARS QUALIFICATIONS

In January 2025, the DfE announced the **Check an Early Years Qualification (CEYQ) service** to help Early Years (EY) managers verify whether qualifications meet ratio requirements. Following final testing, the DfE are pleased to announce that this free service is now live on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk).

CEYQ service allows managers to check staff qualifications quickly and easily by entering key details such as the qualification name, awarding organisation, and course start date. A clear outcome is provided, which can be printed for records. This tool saves managers valuable time during recruitment and HR processes, ensuring they have appropriately qualified staff in place ahead of the expansion of funded childcare entitlements in September 2025.

CEYQ is currently available for **EY managers only**. Practitioners should continue using the [Early Years Qualifications List \(EYQL\)](#) to check their qualifications and, if further clarification is needed, can contact Ecctis: <https://www.ecctis.com/>

Any questions, please submit a query via the following link, FAO Early Years Qualifications Unit.

<https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe>

EXPERIENCE-BASED ROUTE FOR EARLY YEARS STAFF

This guidance outlines the recommended approach for early years providers who are interested in carrying out the experience-based route for staff in their setting.

This route allows for suitable and experienced staff, who do not hold full and relevant qualifications, to be included in the staff:child ratios at level 3 following a period of supervised practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/experience-based-route-for-early-years-staff>

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Staff who have successfully completed the experience-based route are able to be included in the staff:child ratios at level 3 without holding a full and relevant qualification.**
- **If successfully completed, that this route will only be a status and not a certified qualification.**

RBWM AFC EARLY YEARS CONTACT DETAILS				
Name	Telephone Number	Email Address	Job Title	Contact For -
Clive Haines	07825 862200	clive.haines@achievingforchildren.org.uk	Deputy Director for Education	Safeguarding General Support
Justine Louka	07765 290345	Justine.Louka@achievingforchildren.org.uk	Early Years Service Manager	Early Years Queries
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