

DIRECTORS' REPORT SPRING TERM 2019	ITEM NO 23	FOR INFORMATION	ATTENTION OF: All governors
TITLE	Family Information Service		
SUMMARY	Information for staff within schools and children's services about the support offered by the Family Information Service (FIS) regarding free early years childcare for two, three and four-year-olds, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the information available online for families.		
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Family Information Service (FIS) - Free Early Years Childcare

The Family Information Service (FIS) provides information and advice for children, young people and their families living in the Ealing borough on a wide range of topics, including local childcare, activities, family support; and free early years education for two, three and four-year-olds.

Free childcare for two-year-olds

Our officers can help families find out if their two-year-old child is eligible for 15 hours a week of free childcare by asking a few questions and completing an online application form with them over the telephone. Following this check, if a family receives a result of, 'not eligible' the officers can then talk through the additional criteria with them to learn whether they meet one of these and explain what the family needs to do next to confirm their eligibility. Alternatively, if a family does not meet any of the additional criteria, the FIS can inform them of other local services available, of which they can access until their child is eligible for a free universal childcare place (the term after they turn three-years-old). However, if a child is eligible, the parent/carers will receive an eligibility letter to take with them to their chosen childcare provider to access a free place. Online eligibility checker www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

15 hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds

As well as free childcare for two-year-olds, our officers can provide information and advice about free childcare for all three and four-year olds for 15 hours a week; including how the free entitlement works and when their child can access a free place. The FIS can also explain the process for when a child goes from nursery to starting school; including how they can apply for a school place, and where they can obtain more information.

30 hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds

In addition to this, the FIS can help families understand the extra 15 hours a week free childcare for three and four-year-olds of working parents (30 hours childcare), including the eligibility criteria families must meet to qualify and how they can retrieve their code to access the full 30 hours. The FIS can also explain how and when families need to re-confirm their eligibility codes to help ensure their child's place continues to the next term.

The FIS can answer any questions or queries about free childcare for two, three and four-year-olds and can offer further support by helping to match a family's needs to Ofsted registered childcare in their area. They can also provide a list of nurseries, playgroups and childminders who offer free childcare places and a list of possible questions for families to ask when making their enquiries, to help them decide whether a childcare provider is the right one for them.

Family Information Service (FIS) SEND Officer

The FIS has a dedicated special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) officer (details below) who provides information, advice and support for families who have a child or young person with an additional need or disability. A brokerage service is also available to families who are experiencing challenges in accessing services that meet the needs of their child.

Izra Bernard – SEND Family Information Service Officer

Telephone: 020 8825 5588

Email: bernardi@ealing.gov.uk

Directory: www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk Local offer: www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk

Ealing family's directory

The FIS has an online directory www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk that families can access to learn everything Ealing has to offer children and young people living in the Ealing borough including local childcare provision, children's centres, out of school activities, sports and leisure facilities, youth clubs, libraries and family support. Our officers can help families navigate their way through this website to ensure they quickly find the information they need and provide information to families via other means, such as post or email, if required.

To ensure the directory displays the most current information, the FIS relies on services to update them regularly and inform them if anything changes about the provision they offer. This helps to ensure all childcare facilities, including those within schools, are fully publicised to the local community and represents a true reflection of the current service on offer, empowering families to quickly access the information they need.

To tell us about a new service you offer, or update information about your current service, contact the Family Information Service on 020 8825 5588 or email children@ealing.gov.uk

Facebook

Another way families can obtain information on the services and activities available to them is by accessing our Facebook pages. These includes,

Family Information Service page: <https://www.facebook.com/EalingFIS/> which offers local and national information for families living in the Ealing borough; and

Enable Ealing Families: <https://www.facebook.com/enableealingfamilies/> which provides useful information for children and young people with an additional need and/or disability.