

## **Key messages from DfE to LAs and providers**

### **Guaranteed first term funding for those parents who have fallen out of eligibility**

- Parents who apply for 30 hours free childcare will need to reconfirm that they still meet the eligibility criteria every three months. This means that those parents who have already applied for 30 hours free childcare may need to reconfirm before September 2017.
- The DfE expect that the vast majority of parents will remain eligible, however there are likely to be some who will lose eligibility.
- Those parents who do lose eligibility before September should still start taking up their childcare in September for one term only.
- This is intended to give providers certainty and stability for planning and allocating their childcare places.
- If parents do become eligible during the Autumn term, the provider could continue offering a place from January 2018.
- This will not be repeated for subsequent terms, as this is intended to provide certainty for providers and parents for this important first term of 30 hours delivery.

### **Four year olds**

- Eligible parents of 4 year-olds will be able to apply for 30 hours free childcare and Tax-Free Childcare through the Childcare Service from the end of this week (14 July). DfE will provide further information on the application process shortly.
- DfE would like to highlight that only parents of 4 year-olds, who will not be attending reception in a state-funded school in September, should apply for 30 hours free childcare. Parents who have already completed a childcare service application for their 4 year-old (because they have been able to access the service due to having a younger child), need not apply again.

### **In term starts are not funded for 30hrs extended entitlement**

Statutory Guidance states that:

A1.3 “Local authorities must ensure that the child has a place no later than the beginning of the term following the child or parent meeting the eligibility criteria.”

A1.9 Three- and four-year-olds of working parents (extended entitlement)

A child will be entitled to the additional free hours from the term after both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) the child has attained the age of three;
- (2) the child’s parent has a current positive determination of eligibility from HMRC.

Therefore parents must receive their eligibility code at the latest the day before the start of term to be eligible for the term:

**Parents must have received their 30hr eligibility codes from HMRC by:**

**31 August - to be eligible for the Autumn term**

**31 December - to be eligible for the Spring term**

**31 March - to be eligible for the Summer term**

## Key messages from Ealing Council to providers

### Lunch time charging

- The Operational guidance states that, (key words underlined)  
*“Children should be able to take up their free hours as part continuous provision and providers should avoid artificial breaks in the day wherever possible. For example, the lunchtime hour/session should form part of the free provision where the child is attending a morning and afternoon session.”*
- We have sought clarification from the DfE. The conclusion of the discussion was that LAs should encourage providers to explore models that will allow this continuous provision, but if it is not possible, that providers would be allowed to charge for the lunchtime period.
- Ealing Statement (which will be integrated into our Provider Agreements)  
*“As set out in operational guidance, children should be able to take up their free hours as part of a continuous provision and providers should avoid artificial breaks in the day wherever possible.  
If it is not possible to offer provision across the lunchtime period without a charge, we recommend that lunchtime charges should not exceed the actual cost of providing staffing and any associated and reasonable costs, divided equally by the number of children participating.”*

### Validating 30 hour eligibility codes

- The Ealing online portal to validate 30hr eligibility codes is now operational and should be used as quickly as possible when a parent presents a code for validation.
- If there are validation queries, providers should contact Ealing FIS on 020 8825 5588.
- Providers who are not operational during the summer holidays should provide parents with details on the dates in this holiday period in which staff are available to validate the codes.

### Online information, guidance and publicity materials for providers

- We have a comprehensive selection of guidance, information, publicity and templates available for providers at our EGFL page, which you may find useful.

<https://www.egfl.org.uk/topics/early-years/30-hours-childcare-programme>

### Key messages providers should give to parents

1. Urge parents to apply as soon as possible if they are seeking a place in September. **Parents must have received their eligibility code by 31 August to secure a place in the Autumn Term.**
2. You should direct parents to Childcare Choices and the Childcare Calculator to learn more about which offers might be best for them, whether they're likely to be eligible, and to apply for 30hrs Extended Entitlement & Tax Free Childcare.  
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
3. If parents prefer to apply by telephone or encounter any problems, you should direct their queries to the Childcare Service Customer Interaction Centre Tel: **0300 123 4097**