

Early Years Entitlements Update – December 2017 Bulletin

Welcome to the December Bulletin, our 8th edition of the Early Years Entitlements Update.

We are near the end of the first term for the 30 hours extended entitlement. We would like to say a huge big **thank you** and **well done** for enabling parents to take up this offer with you. We know HMRC and DfE have been doing a lot of work to ensure that applications for the extended entitlement from the Spring term are processed as quickly as possible.

We would be grateful if you could encourage parents to return any additional information required by HMRC as part of their applications as soon as possible and for parents already accessing additional hours to re-confirm their eligibility when requested by email or text.

1. Communications to parents about applying for 30 hours before 31 December

The Department for Education (DfE) and HMRC are contacting parents who have registered for updates that they should apply **now** (if their child turns 3 before the 31st December 2017) to secure a spring childcare place. The Council has also been issuing a range of social media messages over the last month and further ones will focus on encouraging parents to apply before the Christmas holidays, or it could be too late. Helpful documents for parents can also be found on the Childcare [Glos Families Directory](#) webpage. **We would be grateful for your support in sharing these messages with your parent networks.**

As you know, Local Authorities are required to fund a 30 hours place for a child:

- The term after the child's third birthday **as long as** they have a valid eligibility code that was issued by the deadline date (31st December, 31st March, 31st August).

To take up a place in the 2018 spring term, parents must have received a code and have their child turn three by 31 December 2017.

Please encourage parents to respond quickly to any requests for additional information from HMRC to allow them to process the application before the deadline. Parents experiencing technical difficulties should not delay contacting the HMRC Contact Centre (0300 123 4097) for assistance

2. Reshaping of Education Services

As you may already be aware, the National education policy has been developing rapidly and is set to change further under a new government. Our role as a Local Authority now remains threefold:

- Ensuring that the system works for children and families – that high quality places are available in the right places, that meet the aspirations of families and reflect the continuum of need;
- Championing, supporting and improving outcomes for vulnerable children – those with additional needs (including SEND) or who face particular challenges because of their family circumstances or medical condition;
- School intervention and oversight of maintained schools

To help structure our plans we had a wider conversation about our future role in education, our priorities and how we move forward to address the challenges, critically asking ourselves what does success look like and how will we get there.

Having carefully considered the issues and feedback in detail, we believe our structure needs to be amended to guide and enable the Education Service to work in the new way required to respond to the issues and challenges facing the sector.

We have therefore developed a new structure which includes three service areas under the Head of Education:

- Education Outcomes & Intervention
- Commissioning for Learning
- Services for Children with Additional Needs

We are currently going through the process of filling posts in the new structure which will continue into the New Year.

Also, as part of Reshaping Education, the decision has been made not to renew the current contract with National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) to provide business support and quality improvement support to Early Years settings when it expires on 31st March 2018. Instead, we will be bringing this expertise in-house, with informed and experienced business support continuing to be offered free of charge through the Early Years service. We do not anticipate any changes to the support delivered after March and at the moment existing contacts will remain.

We will keep you updated on the progress and any changes that will affect you such as your key point of contact.

3. Provider agreement

The 2018-19 Gloucestershire Local Provider Agreement will be issued in the New Year for providers delivering and wanting to claim the funded childcare entitlements for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019. The Provider Agreement will be emailed to all providers and available to download via the Glos Families Directory, copies will not be posted to providers. To receive funding for delivering funded childcare from April 2018, providers will need to read, complete and return a signed declaration form before the end of March 2018. Please look out for further details in the New Year.

4. Opening times of HMRC Contact Centre (0300 123 4097) over Christmas and New Year

Friday 22nd December 8am to 8pm
Saturday 23rd December 8am to 4pm
Sunday 24th December 10am to 4pm
Christmas Day 25th December CLOSED
Boxing Day 26th December CLOSED
Wednesday 27th – Friday 29th December 8am to 8pm
Saturday 30th December 8am to 4pm
Sunday 31st December 10am to 4pm
Monday 1st January 2018 CLOSED
Tuesday 2nd – Friday 5th January 2018 8am to 8pm

5. How to access help

▪ HELP FOR PARENTS

If a parent has specific enquiries about their code and eligibility for the extended entitlement, they should contact the **HMRC Contact Centre** on **0300 123 4097**. The Contact Centre is open 08:00 – 20:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 16:00 Saturday and 10:00 – 16:00 Sunday. Only HMRC can issue 30 hour codes to parents.

If a parent has a general query about their code, about the extended free childcare entitlement, wants to know childcare providers in their area etc they should call **Gloucestershire Family Information Service** on **01452 427362**.

Information for parents on the 30 hours offer is available on the **Glos Families Directory** [here](#)

▪ HELP FOR CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Whether you're a childminder, playgroup, day nursery or school, we're here to give you as much **free** support and advice as you need. No question is silly and no problem is too small, we're available to help you with any queries you have about the 30 hours offer or any other query about early years funding or how this can work for you. For further support and advice contact one of the numbers below depending on your query:

Tax free childcare or 30 hours general information

Gloucestershire Family Information Service can help parents and providers make sense of information about childcare entitlements and can help parents find a place for their child/ren. Phone **01452 427362** (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm, answer machine at all other times) or email familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk

2 year old, 3 & 4 year old first 15 hours (universal entitlement) or 30 hours (extended entitlement) funding and the online portal

Any queries about how the funding works, how to input information into the funding portal, guidance on what charges you can make to parents and how to keep this within the terms of the funding agreement etc, please contact the **Nursery Funding Team** (Sue Bodenham, Ben Mumford,

Glynis Russell and Razia Munshi) on **01452 328668** or
free34forms@eygloucestershire.co.uk

Guidance notes on the changes to the Funding Portal can be found in your gmail account.

Business support and advice

If you're unsure you can offer the 30 hours and how to help parents access a place, **Deborah Robinson** from National Day Nurseries Association offers **free** business support and advice to all childcare providers (including schools). Contact Deborah on 07808 529 231 or email deborah.robinson@ndna.org.uk

Schools

If you're from a school setting and would like to understand more about the 30 hours extended childcare entitlement contact **Liz Giles** or **Rebecca Jelf** on **01452 328518** for free information and advice.



6. UNDERSTANDING THE ENTITLEMENTS

Parents can work out which childcare entitlement would suit them best by completing the **Childcare Choices Calculator** (www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator). They will need the following information ready to use the calculator and apply for their childcare entitlement:

- ✓ Parent's name, address and National Insurance number and the same details for their partner (if they have one)
- ✓ Child/ren's date of birth
- ✓ Details on their income
- ✓ Details on any benefits they or their child receives

As a provider, you can keep yourself up to date by regularly visiting the [Childcare Choices](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) website (www.childcarechoices.gov.uk). Look for the below option on the homepage to take you to provider information:

Childcare providers
What you need to know 

This website is **being updated with all the latest advice and information regarding Tax Free Childcare and 30 hours entitlement.**

If you wish to speak to anyone about any aspect of this bulletin please contact the Family Information Service on 01452 427362 or e-mail familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk