

'30 Hours' Childcare

The extended entitlement to free early years education/ childcare
Stakeholders briefing sheet no. 3 (April 2018)

Introduction

Plenty has happened since the Government's extended free childcare entitlement, '30 Hours' Childcare which started on 1 September 2017.

In Hampshire the take up of the new entitlement has been high. In the spring term 8093 three or four year old children accessed up to 1,140 free hours in group childcare settings; either in term time (30 hours, over 38 weeks) or 'stretched' (up to 22 hours, over 51 weeks).

The scheme is open to one or two parent families who are working and earning on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum/living wage (though less than £100,000 per year each).

Parents who are on zero hours contracts or are self employed, or are on apprenticeships may also be eligible for the extended entitlement.

In a two parent family one parent can be working and the other who has caring responsibilities and receives

a welfare benefit may also be eligible for the entitlement. See further details regarding the [eligibility for the extended offer](#).

A child is eligible to have the 30 free hours from the beginning of the term **after** their 3rd birthday. Terms start on 1 January, 1 April or 1 September.



How to Apply

New parents wanting to apply for 30 Hours childcare from **1 September 2018** should do so **now** using the Government's online childcare service, [Childcare Choices](#). Parents can apply up to 16 weeks before their child turns three.

Parents need to set up a Government Gateway account through the Childcare Choices online portal.

This will enable them to open a 30 Hours account in order to apply for the free childcare

entitlement and receive communications from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) who are responsible for administering the childcare accounts.

Once a parent has completed their online application they will be sent confirmation if they are eligible for 30 hours free childcare. There may be a delay in confirmation if further information is required by HMRC.

New applications must be completed **before the 31 August** to ensure parents have an eligibility code to secure the extended childcare hours from September for their age eligible child.

If the parent **does not** hold an eligibility code before their child is due to start their extended hours, the parent **will not** be able to receive the extended entitlement and will be asked to pay for these hours until the following term.

Childcare
Choices



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk

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Re-confirmation

Parents who have received their extended entitlement in this period **must** ensure that they reconfirm their eligibility to HMRC **now**. Re-confirmation is required every 3 months (12 weeks) to ensure that the family is still eligible for the extended entitlement.

Parents will receive a reminder 4 weeks before the validity end date is due. This will either be an email or SMS text message, and a message will also appear in the parent's online childcare account.

For September 2018, parents need to reconfirm **before 31 August 2018**, or they will not be able to take up the extended hours until 1 January 2019. Their child will however be able to continue to access the universal entitlement of 15 hours.



Tax-Free Childcare

Tax-Free Childcare is available to self-employed parents, and all qualifying

working parents regardless of their employer.

It is a savings scheme to pay for registered childcare for children under the age of 12 and those with disabilities under the age of 17.

For every 80p that the parent (or another relative, friend, etc.) puts into the savings account, the Government will top up with another 20p.

This is equivalent of the tax most people pay - 20% - which gives the scheme its name, 'tax-free'. There is a maximum of £2,000 per child, per year (or £4,000 for a child or young person with a disability).

Parents can apply online through the childcare service which can be accessed via the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

Parents **can not** get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as tax credits, employer supported childcare vouchers or Universal Credit, but it can be used with '30 Hours' childcare.

Contact info

30 Hours Childcare/ Tax-Free Childcare helpline:
Childcare Service Helpline
0300 123 4097
tax-free.childcare@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Update: employer supported childcare vouchers

Working parents can take up to £55 a week of wages as childcare vouchers, without paying tax or National Insurance.



From October 2018, childcare voucher schemes will close to new applicants, but they could get [Tax-Free Childcare](#) instead.

Parents can keep getting vouchers if they have joined a scheme and remain with their employer, or do not take an unpaid career break of longer than a year.

To help decide what scheme is best for their circumstances, parents can use the [Childcare Calculator](#).

Next edition to include: Hampshire Universal Credit roll out

If you no longer want to receive this briefing please email:
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