

30 Hours Delivery Support Fund

Guidance document

November 2017

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# Background

#### 1a) 30 Hours Free Childcare

On 1st September 2017, 30 hours free childcare[[1]](#footnote-2) for working parents of three- and four-year-olds was rolled out nationally in England, fulfilling the government’s manifesto pledge. This represents a major expansion in the ‘free entitlement’, and builds on the existing, universal 15 hours entitlement for all three- and four-year-olds and the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.

The aim of 30 hours is to make childcare more affordable and to enable parents to work, or to work more hours, if they choose to do so. It is available to families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage, and less than £100,000 per year.

To deliver 30 hours, the Secretary of State for Education has discharged the duty in clause 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 (‘the duty to secure 30 hours of free childcare for working parents’) through all local authorities (LAs) in England. This means that LAs are required to secure childcare provision free of charge to qualifying children.

#### 1b) Progress so far

Prior to the national rollout, 30 hours was delivered early in 12 areas across the country, and as part of this early delivery over 15,000 children benefitted from a place.

Our independent evaluations[[2]](#footnote-3) of early delivery highlighted the positive benefits that the additional hours are having, taking huge pressures off families’ financially, reducing parental stress and allowing them to spend more quality time with their family. Nearly a quarter of mothers (23%) and one in 10 fathers (9%) reported that they had been able to increase their working hours as a result of 30 hours.

30 hours rolled out nationally on 1st September 2017. Demand has been high, and over 216,000 codes were issued to parents for the autumn term. 93%[[3]](#footnote-4) of these codes were validated on behalf of a parent seeking a place.

# The Delivery Support Fund

The successful delivery of 30 hours in the first term means that thousands of families across the country are benefitting from the offer. We know that LAs and providers have invested a significant amount of time and effort to make a success of a national policy change which has many benefits for parents. However, we recognise that this is a major transformation for the market and has been challenging for both LAs and providers.

We are already looking towards delivery in the summer term, when demand will be at its highest as more children turn three and parental awareness increases. We understand that this may bring with it a variety of challenges, as LAs and providers continue to work to ensure there are sufficient places.

To support LAs with the first year of delivery, and to enable them to support their providers to deliver sufficient 30 hours places, the Department for Education (DfE) has established the Delivery Support Fund (DSF). The DfE will make the DSF available to LAs via a bid round. The following definitions will be used throughout this guidance:

* **Bid round** - This is the process through which all LAs can access the DSF.
* **Application form** - Each LA can complete one application form which must include a total funding amount.
* **Project** - Within an application form, LAs may request funding for one project or multiple projects. For example, an LA may wish to apply for funds to support an additional member of staff and funds to support local sufficiency mapping. LAs must provide a breakdown of cost for each project.

Funding will be available as part of this bid round for work that directly benefits 30 hours delivery and will create (directly or indirectly) new 30 hours places for the 2018 summer term.

LAs are strongly advised to work closely with their providers to develop an understanding of the challenges in their local area before submitting an application form. We would encourage LAs to develop high quality application forms, which provide succinct and relevant evidence that they meet the priorities outlined in this guidance.

In deciding which project(s) to submit, LAs should pay close attention to the examples of eligible projects outlined on page 6 of this guidance. We want to ensure that funding is allocated to directly address issues and where it will have the greatest impact. Application forms will be assessed by a panel and they reserve the right to not allocate funding to LAs in their sole and absolute discretion.

# Funding and Eligibility

#### 3a) Available funding

£8,650,000 is available for LAs as part of this bid round. This will be distributed between a maximum of 152 LAs.

The level of funding that is provided to LAs will be scalable depending on their individual need and the quality of the application forms received. This means that different size grants will be provided to different LAs, depending on a) the challenges facing the LA and b) how well an LA has evidenced that its project(s) will enable it to deliver sufficient 30 hours places for the summer term.

There is no minimum or upper limit for grant awards, but we do not expect to award an LA more than £70,000 in total. However, if an LA has clearly demonstrated in its application form why it needs the amount that it has requested and how the project(s) will provide value for money, then we will consider applications which request more than this in total. Projects must support 30 hours delivery and create (directly or indirectly) new 30 hours places for the 2018 summer term.

#### 3b) Eligibility

The primary aim of the bid round is to enable LAs to meet their statutory duty and support providers to successfully deliver 30 hours in the 2018 summer term.

All LAs in England are eligible to apply for funding. There can only be one application form per LA which includes a total funding amount. Throughout their application form, LAs must be able to clearly demonstrate how their project(s) will address challenges in their local area and support the delivery of 30 hours by creating (directly or indirectly) new 30 hours places that would not have otherwise been available.

Within an application form, LAs may request funding for multiple projects that meet local need. If an LA is requesting funding for multiple projects within their application form then they must demonstrate how the combination of work will enable them to address sufficiency challenges.

LAs must also provide a breakdown of the cost for each project. We will only provide funding for the project(s) that the assessment panel decides will provide value for money and support 30 hours delivery. Each project will be considered, and we reserve the right not to fund all of the projects.

Joint projects between LAs will also be accepted as part of an application, but these must be submitted by one lead LA. Further information on joint projects can be found on page 8 of this guidance.

We expect all funding to be spent by LAs by 31st August 2018.

#### 3c) Example projects

*Individual projects*

Funding can only be used to support 30 hours delivery and it must contribute to ensuring there are sufficient places in the 2018 summer term.

Examples of the type of work that would be considered for funding are set out below. This list is not exhaustive and is intended to be used as a guide.

* **Additional staffing within the LA to directly support 30 hours delivery**

For example, funding for an additional team member to champion 30 hours and to work more intensively with providers to help them successfully deliver in the summer term.

* **Business sustainability and change support for providers**

For example, funding could be used to set up a contract with an external business sustainability consultant to give providers support and advice to review their business models and explore new delivery models.

* **Supporting children with SEND**

Funding to help improve access and secure sufficient quality 30 hours provision to support children with SEND. This could include increasing and promoting flexible and inclusive provision for children with SEND.

* **Communication to parents**[[4]](#footnote-5)

Funding may be used to improve existing communication to parents about 30 hours to ensure healthy demand and to help parents understand what they are entitled to and how to access 30 hours.

* **Enhancing/supporting partnership arrangements between providers**

Funding to support the development of new and effective partnership arrangements between providers in a local area. For example, funding could be used to set up a partnership hub, bringing together a primary school, nursery and childminder network to create a joint offer that is appealing to parents and meets their needs.

* **Local sufficiency mapping**

Funding to enable LAs to carry out detailed sufficiency mapping exercises to improve their ward level understanding of supply and demand.

* **Systems/IT support**

Funding to support LAs to develop/implement an efficient and effective automated process for checking parent’s eligibility and/or paying providers.

* **Small-scale capital funding**

In some instances, ‘small scale capital’ may be required to support providers with 30 hours delivery. By small scale capital we mean projects that cost less than £10,000. For example, building work to dismantle walls or add additional toilets.

* **Managing the childcare market in the local area**

LAs may request funding for resource to develop and manage its provider market.

* **Supporting childminders to deliver 30 hours**

Funding to support work that is specific to childminders. This could include recruiting new childminders, supporting childminders to offer and deliver 30 hours, and increasing the retention of childminders.

*Projects to share best practice*

We also encourage LAs, where appropriate, to include a project(s) in their application form which seeks to share learning/best practice. We will consider providing funding where an LA can clearly evidence how they will use the money to share their expertise and support other LAs to secure sufficient 30 hours places.

Examples of the type of work that would be considered for funding are set out below. This list is not exhaustive and is intended to be used as a guide.

* **Business sustainability support in clusters**

Funding to support one LA to work with other LAs to provide business sustainability support to providers and share best practice across the region. The LA providing support could employ additional staff to support the cluster model.

* **Sharing best practice on provision for children with SEND**

Funding to support an LA to share learning and best practice, or encourage collaboration in offering 30 hours to children with SEND.

* **Innovation proposals**

Funding for the development of innovative proposals that are focused on sharing best practice with other LAs, and will help a group of LAs to overcome sufficiency challenges.

*Joint projects*

We recognise that the supply and demand picture often spans LA boundaries, and that tackling issues and sharing best practice can be enhanced when projects are run as part of a consortia. Therefore, we welcome joint projects between LAs as part of an application.

To facilitate such bids, we ask that a single LA be nominated as the lead authority and submit the proposed project of behalf of the consortia in their application form.

We have provided specific sections on the application form for joint projects where the lead LA should provide detail of the project and other participating LAs should be named.

Lead LAs will still be able to request funding for projects that will benefit their LA only.

#### 3d) What is not eligible?

#### We want to allocate funding to LAs for a variety of projects as we know that the issues faced by LAs will vary across the country depending on local circumstances. We will not fund anything that has not been mentioned as eligible in this guidance. This includes (but is not limited to):

#### Activities undertaken by an LA which do not directly support 30 hours delivery

#### Large scale capital funding. We do not expect to provide an LA with more than £10,000 in total of capital funding

#### Funding for sustainability grants that an LA would distribute directly to its providers

#### Subsidising core activities such as:

#### Proposals that duplicate existing initiatives or activities

#### Party political activities

#### 3e) Reporting

All successful applicants will need to capture and share evidence on the impact of the funding with Childcare Works when requested. Successful applicants will be expected to complete and return termly Progress Review Forms to Childcare Works, and to complete the DfE’s termly headcount survey.

We will also expect LAs to provide an update on the progress of their project on a monthly basis, through their ongoing engagement with Childcare Works and DfE. We will ask questions about the progress of the LAs project(s) and where appropriate, we will request data on the number of places that have been created (directly or indirectly) as a result of the funded activity.

LAs will be asked to submit a short report in autumn 2018 which will request evidence that the LA has met the project success criteria.

We may also ask you to:

* Contribute case studies to the Department for Education
* Attend local and national learning events to share updates

# Application process

#### 4a) How to apply

The bid round will be open from Friday 17th November 2017 and will close at 23:59pm on Friday 15th December 2017. Key dates and deadlines for the application process are set out in the table below.

| **Milestones** | **Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| Bid round for the Delivery Support Fund opens | 17th November 2017 |
| Bid round for the Delivery Support Fund closes | 15th December 2017 |
| Assessment of applications | January 2018 |
| Decisions on applications announced | February 2018 |
| Funding distributed to LAs | March 2018 |
| Funding spent by LAs | By 31st August 2018 |

#### 4b) Queries

Please check the FAQs document which has been issued alongside this guidance form. If the FAQs document does not answer your query about your application form, please contact [30HrsDelivery.SupportFund@education.gov.uk](mailto:30HrsDelivery.SupportFund@education.gov.uk)

We will endeavour to respond to all queries within 3 working days.

#### 4c) Submitting your application

Please email a single Word or PDF version of your completed application form to [30HrsDelivery.SupportFund@education.gov.uk](mailto:30HrsDelivery.SupportFund@education.gov.uk) by 23:59pm on Friday 15th December 2017.

Your LA name and the words ’30 Hours Delivery Support Fund’ should be included in the email “subject” field when submitting your application.

Once submitted, you will receive an automatic email response informing you that your application has been received.

#### 4d) Application form

Application forms should be succinct and must be within the word limit provided for each section. You will be asked to provide the following information:

#### Breakdown of costs

#### Evidence of local delivery needs (max 500 words)

#### Summary of your proposal (max 500 words)

#### Delivery plan (max 500 words)

#### Additional information (max 250 words)

#### Further information on a joint project - where applicable (max 800 words)

# Assessing the Application

#### 5a) How will we assess your application form?

Your application form must clearly demonstrate the challenges that you are facing in securing sufficient 30 hours places, or the expertise/best practice that you will share with other LAs to help them overcome their own challenges.

It should be a well-costed and evidence based proposal with clear plans on how an LAs project will help them overcome the challenges they are facing, and enable them to support 30 hours delivery and create (directly or indirectly) new 30 hours places for the summer term.

Where possible in an LAs application form, they should provide evidence of their local sufficiency picture and how they expect this to change by the 2018 summer term as a result of the work proposed.

#### 5b) The assessment panel

Funding decisions for the DSF will be made by an assessment panel that will include: DfE 30 hours policy officials, DfE finance officials and Childcare Works representatives.

All applications will be assessed alongside DfE’s latest data on 30 hours demand, intelligence from the Progress Review Forms and other local intelligence from LAs engagement with Childcare Works.

#### 5c) Scoring criteria

#### We will consider the following areas when assessing your application:

1. **Evidence of local delivery needs**
   1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated its understanding of local demand and how they expect this to increase by the 2018 summer term.

*(Please note: if an LA is applying for funding to support with sufficiency mapping then this will be taken into account).*

* 1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated the barriers/challenges they are facing (that relate to its application) in securing sufficient places for the 2018 summer term.

**OR**

* 1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated the expertise and experience that they will share to support other LAs to secure sufficient places for the 2018 summer term.

1. **Summary of the proposal** 
   1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated how their proposed project(s) will effectively address the challenges they face, and how it will help them to secure sufficient places for the 2018 summer term.

**OR**

* 1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated how they will use their expertise and experience to support 30 hours delivery in other local areas, and help other LAs to secure sufficient places for the 2018 summer term.

1. **Delivery plan** 
   1. The extent to which an LA has demonstrated that their project(s) are well costed, and that they will have the necessary skills and resources required to successfully deliver their work.

*(This is applicable for all LAs, whether they are requesting funding to address local need, or to share expertise and experience).*

# Next steps

#### 6a) What happens if your application is successful?

We will inform you via email if your application is successful or not after the assessment panel. We expect this to be done in February 2018.

If your application is successful an award letter will be sent directly to the LA, together with an acceptance form. At this time, we will also send a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) setting out the expectations for spending the funding.

The acceptance form and the MoU must be signed by the Director of Children’s Services or equivalent in the organisation. This will demonstrate that they agree to the requirements of the funding.

#### 6b) Drawing of funding

#### We will make one payment to LAs with the full amount of funding through a Section 31 grant.

All revenue and capital grants will be subject to standard Section 31 Grant Determination Letters.

#### We expect funding decisions to be made by the assessment panel in January, with funding distributed in March 2018.

#### The total funding award must be distributed to LAs by 31st March 2018.



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1. 30 hours free childcare will be referred to as ‘30 hours’ throughout this guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-rollout-of-30-hours-free-childcare-evaluation>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/30-hours-free-childcare-early-implementation-evaluation> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. As of 6th November 2017, 93% of codes had been validated via the Eligibility Checking System (ECS). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. All funding that is used for communications activity is within scope of the government’s Efficiency Controls, and will be subject to approval. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)