

## **Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) for 3 and 4 year olds**

### **Solihull Local Authority**

*Delivery models:*

#### ***1,140 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks.....***

The free early years entitlements must be provided over no fewer than 38 weeks, local authorities are expected to work with childcare providers to enable, as far as possible, parents to 'stretch' their free childcare over the full year where that is what they wish. Parents may want to 'stretch' the entitlement over more than 38 weeks per year. We propose to mirror provisions in the existing statutory guidance so that both the first and second 15 hours can be taken over no less than 38 weeks and stretched over a full year, where there is parental demand. The government will clarify in statutory guidance that, while the free early years entitlements must be provided over no *fewer* than 38 weeks, local authorities should work with childcare providers to enable, as far as possible, parents to 'stretch' their free childcare over the full year where that is what they wish. We know that many parents want a 'stretched' offer over the year and to access childcare during the school holidays. The government recognises that it can be more challenging for sessional providers to offer this flexible provision. **The new entitlement provides an opportunity for all providers - including sessional providers such as playgroups, community pack-away settings, before and after school clubs - to work together in partnership with schools and PVI settings to deliver the childcare that parents want - seamless blended offers of care across the full day.**

#### ***Maximum session lengths between 6am and 8pm***

The hours over which the funded hours can be delivered will be extended to between 6am and 8pm (increased from between 7am and 7pm). We know that a large number of parents need access to childcare in the early morning or later into the evening to cover shift patterns. This is why we proposed to extend the hours over which funded provision can be taken from the current framework (7am-7pm) to 6am-8pm, to allow parents to drop off their children earlier in the day and collect them later in the evening. There would continue to be a maximum of 10 hours of funded provision in one day. We will set out in statutory guidance that there will be no minimum session length for funded provision, although Ofsted registration requirements will still apply where relevant. The government intends to **remove the minimum session length for delivery of the existing entitlement and the extended entitlement.** Having no minimum session length will allow parents the flexibility to use wraparound provision, such as breakfast and after-school clubs, for short periods to meet their working needs. We expect local authorities to ensure that the minimum session length is reasonable and does not compromise the quality of provision for the child. *{The draft LA statutory guidance suggests there should be a maximum of 3 providers and FEEE should be available at weekends.}*

#### ***Partnership working between providers***

The government is happy for as many providers as possible to deliver the programme. Indeed we want to encourage a mixed market so there is maximum choice for parents about where to take up the extended entitlement. However, we intend to **restrict parents to splitting their entitlement across a maximum of 2 sites in one day**, which will limit the number of transitions for children in one day and protect the wellbeing of the child. This approach will allow parents to use a different combination of providers at different points in the year, reflecting the fact that childcare needs may change between term-time and the school holidays. It will also address concerns from respondents about the number of transitions for children. We expect parents to determine what is in the best interest of their child. The government will make clear in guidance that **children will not be able to access more than ten hours of funded provision in one day**, to protect children's wellbeing.

There is clear support for partnership working between different types of providers. It is a way for those who cannot expand their own services to offer extended and more flexible childcare. The government wants to encourage providers to establish partnerships. This allows for different types of provision on one site, eg a breakfast club, nursery class, and an afterschool club – but means that a child isn't moving between lots of different sites in a day. By setting the limit over one day, this approach allows parents to use a different combination of providers at different points in the year, for example to use a holiday club during the school holidays. *{Better information for parents would help them understand what is on offer in the area.}*

## **Funding**

Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible early education and childcare. It is not intended to fund the cost of consumables (such as drinks, meals and nappies) or additional services. Providers are already free to charge parents for such discretionary items provided they are not compulsory. So, for example, **paying for additional services must not be a condition of taking up a free publicly-funded place**. The government is clear that the entitlements should be completely free and that parents should not be asked to pay any fee as a condition of taking up their child's place. However, we will make clear that providers can already charge parents for trips and for consumables such as nappies and sun cream, and that this will continue to be the case under the extended entitlement. ***{Funding will be the same for both the 3 and 4 year old universal offer and the FEEE. The early years single funding formula (EYSFF) - sets the funding rates for all types of provider}***

The government recognises that for the extended entitlement to genuinely support parents (back) into work, it must fit around a variety of working patterns. This is why they are developing an **online application and eligibility checking system** that accommodates households with fluctuating incomes, such as seasonal workers, those on zero hour contracts and the self-employed. When applying for the extended entitlement, parents will need to declare that they expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours a week at National Minimum Wage / National Living Wage over the coming 3 months. This will allow parents who are taking up employment for the first time to qualify.

***It is worth noting that a parent who wants an all-day (8am-6pm) and all year round (50 weeks per annum) offer for their child requires 2,500 hours of early education. 1,140 of these hours will be funded from September 2017 but that leaves 1,360 hours that will be purchased and can be charged at a market rate, thereby generating a considerable level of income for a provider.*** Family Childcare Trust FAQ

## **Model agreement**

**The government will proceed with plans to include a 'model agreement' in statutory guidance** which will be published in early 2017. It is our intention to create a model agreement template which balances the need for flexibility with a drive for more consistency. There will be common themes that we will be encouraging all local authorities to adopt but also elements that local areas will be able to amend to reflect local circumstances.

## **Quality**

The government is clear that there is **no difference between the first and second 15 hours**. **Providers will be required to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage and maintain the same ratios**. We will ensure this is clear in the amended statutory guidance. High-quality early years provision can make a real difference, particularly for the most disadvantaged children, who can often be 19 months behind their peers in their learning by the time they start school. All 3 and 4 year old children and the least advantaged two year olds can already access 15 hours a week of high-quality early education to prepare them for school and improve their life chances. Building on this, the Early Years Pupil Premium provides additional money for three- and four-year-olds from the lowest income families. ***{The draft LA statutory guidance suggests that, where possible, universal and extended entitlement should be in Ofsted rated good and outstanding provision and where requirements are 'met'}***

LA register of providers will include those who are registered and eligible to provide the first universal entitlement and those registered to provide the extended entitlement.

Adapted from the DfE document '30 hour free childcare entitlement: delivery model :Government consultation response November 2016'

We await the LA statutory guidance. A draft March 2016 version is available 'Early education and childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities'

*{Additional comments by Solihull Early Years and Education Improvement Service - January 2017}*

[www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/30-hours](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/30-hours)