



15th May 2017

Dear parents/carers

30 Hours free childcare for eligible 3 & 4 year olds

The government is doubling the entitlement to 30 hours a week (for up to 38 weeks a year) from September 2017. This will have a significant and positive impact on families and help make childcare more affordable. The additional hours will be available to working families that meet the criteria.

Eligibility

In order to qualify, both parents must be working (or sole parent in a lone-parent family) and each parent earns on average:

- a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage if aged under 25 or National Living Wage if aged over 25
- less than £100,000 per year

You could still be eligible if you meet one of the following:

- both parents are working (as above) and in receipt of tax credits and/or universal credit
- one or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave
- one or both parents are in receipt of statutory sick pay
- one or both parents is employed and one parent is in receipt of carers allowance (or receives the carer element of Universal Credit)
- one parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated (based on specific benefits).

You do not need to work 16 hours per week, but your earnings must equal at least 16 hours work at national minimum wage/living wage. This equates to a minimum income for a parent/carer over the age of 25 of £115.20 a week or for 21-24 year olds of £107.20 a week.

A parent will be eligible if they expect to earn this amount over the coming three months.

Parent means a person who has parental responsibility of the child. In cases where a parent has remarried or is living with a new partner, the 'step-parent' must also meet the earning threshold.

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Foster carers are only eligible for the extended entitlement for their own children, if they meet the criteria.

How do I apply?

The additional hours will be available from September 2017. You can apply through HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

If eligible, HMRC will issue a voucher code for you to take to the childcare provider.

For more information or to apply, please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Sarah Evans
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