

Early education extended entitlement (30 hours)

Many of you have started to contact us with questions regarding the 30hrs childcare and whether **Building Blocks** will be offering this. Over the last 6 months we have attended many briefings from the Department of Education (DFE) and our Local Authority have also been working alongside providers to support the delivery of the extended entitlement.

We are thrilled to let you know that **Building Blocks** will be offering the additional 15hours to our families and the information below should provide you with some clarity on the 30hrs, how you can check your eligibility and then how you can take up your place with us.

Overview

When will the 30hours be rolled out? September 2017.

Is it childcare or early education? All funded provision must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. There is no difference in the education and care standards which must be met for both the universal 15 hour and extended 30 hour entitlements.

How many weeks of the year is 30 hours available for? Working families are entitled to 30 hours in each of the 38 weeks of the academic year. Parents can choose to stretch this offer over up to 52 weeks of the year where this meets their childcare needs, for instance 22 hours a week for 52 weeks, or just under 24 hours for 48 weeks.

Will the 15 hour entitlements continue? All three and four year olds, and the most disadvantaged two-year olds, continue to be entitled to 15 hours early education a week.

Do providers have to offer 30 hours?

No. It is a provider's choice whether they deliver the 30 hours entitlement or not. They can choose to offer some or all of the hours. Parents are free to shop around to find appropriate funded provision.

Who can offer 30 hours?

Day-nurseries, childminders and playgroups that are registered on the Early Years Register, and childminders registered with an Ofsted-registered Childminder Agency can deliver the 30 hours entitlement in full, or work in partnership with other providers to deliver part of it. Schools can also offer 30 hours. Parents will be able to split their entitlement across more than one provider.

Eligibility

Parents of three and four year olds will need to meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare;

- They earn or expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum or Living Wage over the coming three months.
- This equates to £115 a week (or c.£6,000 a year) for each parent over 25 years old or £111.20 a week (or c.£5,700 a year) for each parent between 21 and 24 years old.
- This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on zero hours contract.
- The parent (and their partner where applicable) should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Where one or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or if they are on statutory sick leave.
- Where one parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work.
- Where a parent is in a ‘start-up period’ (i.e. they are newly self-employed) they do not need to demonstrate that they meet the income criteria for 12 months.
- If a non-EEA national, the parent must have recourse to public funds.

A parent will not receive a ‘yes’ decision where:

- Either or both parents have an income of more than £100,000
- The parent is a non-EEA national and subject to immigration control (and has no recourse to public funds)

Checking Eligibility

To check your eligibility visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk and click on ‘**apply now**’ within the 30hrs free childcare section. Alternatively, if your child is not yet eligible but you anticipate they will be soon you can request to be emailed when this will be available to you.

Below is an example of what this will look like;

Congratulations on securing your eligibility code for the extended entitlement to early education for 3 and 4-year-olds (30 hours) for your child.

You have been issued with this code as proof of your eligibility from September 2017 onwards. In order for your child’s place to be confirmed, your chosen childcare provider will need to validate the code that has been issued to you by HMRC.

Building Blocks will then validate your code using an online portal set up by the local authority. Without this code and validation your child WILL NOT be able to claim the extended entitlement.

Please note: parents will be prompted every 3 months to reconfirm the details they entered on their application are still accurate. This is to check they are still eligible. They will be prompted via text message and /or email four weeks before their reconfirmation deadline and again two weeks before the deadline if they still haven't confirmed. IT IS THE PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO RECONFIRM THEIR ELIGIBILITY EVERY 3 MONTHS.

What happens if a parent no longer meets the eligibility criteria to access the extended entitlement?

If a family no longer meets the eligibility criteria, their child will not immediately lose their childcare place for the extended entitlement, as there will be a grace period to give the parents the opportunity to regain employment.

The local authority will complete audit checks to review the validity of eligibility codes for children who qualify for 30 hours free childcare at 6 fixed points in the year. It is the local authority's responsibility to notify a provider where a parent has fallen out of eligibility and inform them of the grace period end date.

The following table sets out when parents are required to reconfirm their eligibility, when the local authority will complete audit checks and, if parents fall out of eligibility during this period, what date the grace period ends.

Date parent receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation:	LA audit date	Grace Period End date
1 January – 10 February	11 February	31 March
11 February – 31 March	1 April	31 August
1 April – 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September – 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	1 January	31 March

If circumstances change during the grace period, parents can reapply again and if eligible they can continue to receive the extended hours. However, once the grace period ends, if a parent still does not meet the eligibility criteria the child will no longer be able to access the extended entitlement, although will still be able to receive the universal 15 hours a week (570 hours a year) of free childcare, for 3 and 4 year olds.

A parent declaration form will be sent to the nursery each term for parents to complete and sign. It is imperative this is signed within the set deadline as funding cannot be claimed without this and extended hours will be lost.

Children are eligible the term after their third birthday as with the universal funding.

Child born between	Can receive free hours from
1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014	September 2017 (Autumn)
1 September to 31 December 2014	January 2018 (Spring)
1 January to 31 March 2015	April 2018 (Summer)
1 April to 31 August 2015	September 2018 (Autumn)

There is a wealth of information and questions and answers on the government website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk _however we have tried to provide you with as much information as possible.

Feel free to contact us in the office if you require any further information.

