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Chichester
Nursery School

Explaining the 30 Hours Free Entitlement

- Who is eligible?
- How do I apply?
- What happens if I lose eligibility?
- How will the 30 hours free entitlement be offered in the Nursery School?
- How will places be allocated?
- What do I need to do now?
- Continuation of the 15 hour universal offer
- Useful websites

Introduction

Currently, all three and four-year-old children receive up to 15 hours free early education a week, generally over 38 weeks of the year, starting the term after they become 3.

From September 2017, as part of the Childcare Act 2016, the government will increase this free entitlement to 30 hours a week for eligible parents.

We plan to offer the 30 hours Free Entitlement in two different ways:

- 30 hours over 38 weeks – this matches the School's terms

or

- 15 hours all year round (except for our closure weeks at the end of August and over the Christmas/New Year period)

We will explain more about how exactly these hours can be taken up later in this leaflet.

Who is eligible?

You will qualify if:

1. Both parents are working (or sole parent in a lone-parent family) and each parent earns, or expects to earn:
 - A weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage (NMW) if aged under 25 or National Living Wage (NLW) if aged over 25

- Less than £100,000 per year
2. Both parents are employed but one or both parents is temporarily on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave or statutory sick pay
 3. One parent meets the eligibility criteria and the other parent is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capacity to work
 4. Where a parent does not meet the income criteria because they are in the first 12 months of a start-up period (i.e. they are newly self-employed)
 5. If a parent is a non EEA national, but has recourse to public funds

You do not need to actually work 16 hours per week, but your earnings must equal at least 16 hours work at National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage.

This is equal to a minimum income of £120 per week (£6,000 per year) for parents over 25 years or £112.80 per week (£5,800 per year) for parents aged between 21-24 years.

This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on a zero hours contract.

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

As a foster carer, you are only eligible for the extended entitlement for your own children if you meet the criteria. You are not eligible for children that you foster.

Parents can check whether they are eligible for the 30 hours free entitlement through:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk> or by using the Childcare Calculator at <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>. Those who could be eligible for 30 hours and/or tax free childcare will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply (see below for further details).

How do I apply?

You can apply for both the 30 hours and tax free childcare through the Childcare Choices website (see details above). We would recommend that parents who have asked for a 30 hour place for their child in September apply now.

At the start of the process, parents will be asked to create a Government Gateway account if they don't already have one.

As part of the application process, parents will be asked to enter personal details including their name, address and National Insurance number and the same details for their partner (if they have one).

They will also be asked whether they expect to meet the income requirements over the coming 3 months and whether they are in receipt of any relevant benefits.

If parents encounter any problems with the application process or accessing their childcare account, they should direct their queries to the childcare service Customer Interaction Centre on 0300 123 4097.

At the end of the application process, parents will have a childcare service account. Parents will receive messages regarding their eligibility in the “secure messages” section of their account.

If parents are eligible for 30 hours, they will be given an 11 digit “eligibility code”, which they will need to bring to Nursery along with their National Insurance number and their child’s date of birth.

Parents will be prompted through their Childcare Service Account to reconfirm every three months that the details they entered on their application are still accurate. This is to check that they are still eligible.

What happens if I lose eligibility?

For parents who cease to be eligible for 30 hours funding there will be a “grace period” which means that they can keep their 30 hours funding for a short time.

Once the “grace period” has lapsed, the parent will revert to being eligible for the universal 15 hours entitlement. Please see the “Continuation of the Universal 15 hour offer” section at the end of this booklet.

How will the 30 hours be offered?

We will offer the 30 hours free entitlement in two ways:

30 hours a week during school term times

Children taking this option will attend Nursery School daily from 9.00 – 12.00 and 12.45 – 3.45. A lunch place will be reserved for them and a cooked lunch served, for which there will be a charge (£7 per day). Alternatively parents can

collect their child at 12.00 and return them for the afternoon session at 12.45. Parents who do not wish their child to have lunch at Nursery need to inform us at the earliest opportunity and be aware that a lunch session may not be available at a later date if they change their mind.

or

15 hours all year round (except for our closure weeks at the end of August and over the Christmas/New Year period). A choice of places is available for these children as follows:

Morning or A place

9.00 -12.00 Monday to Friday

Afternoon or B place

12.45 – 3.45 Monday to Friday

Split week or C place

9.00 – 3.45 Monday* and Tuesday*

9.00 – 12.00 Wednesday

Split week or D place

12.45 -3.45 Wednesday

9.00 – 3.45 Thursday* and Friday*

Parents who take the 15 hours all year round option will have some residual time left over to use at another setting of their choice.

Lunch will be reserved for your child on the days indicated with an * for which there is a charge (£7 per day).

Alternatively parents can collect their child at 12.00 and return them for the afternoon session at 12.45. Parents who do not wish their child to have lunch at Nursery need to inform us at the earliest opportunity and be aware that a lunch session may not be available at a later date if they change their mind.

Wednesday lunch places will be allocated on a first come first served basis with 15 hours all year round children given priority.

How will places be allocated?

Morning A places and Afternoon B places will be allocated up to a year ahead. Split week C and D places and 30 hour term time only places will be allocated on a termly basis.

Please see our Admissions Policy for a full explanation of how and when our places are allocated. Some places are particularly popular, this includes lunch places, but we operate a waiting list system if you are unable to secure the place of your choice when your child first starts with us.

What do I need to do now?

Nursery School children

If your child is already in Nursery School, and will still be with us in September, you should have received a letter asking if you believe you will be entitled to the 30 hours and whether you would like to take it up. If you have not yet received a letter, or replied to it, please speak to

either Jenny or Ruth and they will be able to discuss the options with you further.

Up to 3s' children

If your child is in the Up to 3s' Nursery at the moment but moving through to Nursery School over the course of the Summer term or at any time during the next academic year, you should also have received a letter. This will have asked you if you believe you will be eligible for 30 hours funding the term after your child becomes 3 and whether you intend to take it up. If you have not yet received a letter, or replied to it, please speak to either Jenny or Ruth and they will be able to discuss the options with you further.

Continuation of the universal 15 hour offer

Children who are not eligible for the 30 hours, or have lost eligibility due to a change in parental circumstances, are still entitled to 15 hours per week, term time only.

This will be offered in the following ways:

Morning or A place

9.00 -12.00 Monday to Friday

Afternoon or B place

12.45 – 3.45 Monday to Friday

C and D, beginning and end of the week places, will not normally be available for these children.

Useful websites

More information can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/30-hours-free-childcare-eligibility>

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

If you have any queries about anything in this booklet, please catch us for a chat.