

## **Extended entitlement (30 hrs initiative)**

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This new entitlement to 30 hours' free childcare is intended to support working parents with the cost of childcare and enable them, where they wish, to return to work or to work additional hours. The additional 15 hours will be available to families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW), and less than £100,000 per year. Working will include employed and self-employed persons. Parents do not necessarily need to actually work 16 hours a week, but rather their earnings must reflect at least 16 hours of work at NMW or NLW. This means you must be earning currently at least £125 a week each.

Even if you are on a zero hour contract you can apply for a place as long as you expect to be earning at least £120 a week. A working parent can be employed or self-employed.

You are also eligible if both parents are employed but in one of the following circumstances:

- one or both parents is temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave or statutory sick pay
- the parent is employed and the other parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring
- one parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits

HMRC determines if a parent is eligible not the Council.

You do not have to take the full entitlement even if you are eligible and can do any number of hours in between, e.g. 12hrs, or 17.5 hrs, or even 29 hrs!

The entitlement can be shared between different providers (in the same way as NEF can be shared now).

The process will be initiated by parents who will log-on to website (possibly through HMRC), enter their personal details and if successful, will be given a code to pass on to the childcare provider. The childcare provider will enter the code onto a similar website

There will be a grace period for parents who become ineligible for the extended hours, to find alternative employment before the childcare place will be withdrawn.

Parents will need to confirm that they are still eligible by completing a self-declaration, at pre-determined dates set by the Government. We believe this will be completed on-line and at three monthly intervals.

This scheme is new and areas are still to be finalised. If you think you may qualify please see Jane Courtney in confidence for full details.