

21 September 2016

30 Hour Extended Childcare Entitlement Update

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Author: - Melany McQueen
Tel: - 01992 555874

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update Schools Forum on the progress of Hertfordshire's early implementation of the 30 Hours Extended Childcare Entitlement.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Forum is asked:

- To note the 30 Hours Extended Childcare Entitlement Update.

3. 30 Hours Extended Childcare Entitlement Background

- 3.1 The extended free childcare entitlement for working parents of three and four year-olds will provide eligible parents with a total of 30 hours of free childcare per week, over 38 weeks or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year from September 2017. In total with their universal entitlement to 570 hours of free early education eligible parents will be entitled to 1140 hours per year.

The additional free childcare will help families by reducing the cost of childcare and as a result will support parents into work or to work more hours, should they wish to do so. The government policy is supporting parents into employment.

- 3.2 Hertfordshire County Council's successful proposal to become an early implementer builds upon the high quality mixed economy of early years providers in Hertfordshire. Four areas of Hertfordshire were chosen to reflect the different potential issues we face in Hertfordshire when the entitlement is rolled out country wide in September 2017.

A partnership model of delivery is being explored for the trial with a Childcare Hub in each of the four areas being instrumental in encouraging providers to work in partnership and being a central point for parental queries. Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) were chosen to be the Childcare Hubs for the trial as a way of exploring the changing role of MNSs in the future.

Maintained Nursery Schools pride themselves on being the hub of the community, and the trial seeks to build on existing local relationships.

3.3 The trial is focused on families living within a 2 mile radius of the following 4 Maintained Nursery Schools:

- Kingswood (Watford)
- Batford (Harpenden)
- Rye Park (Hoddesdon)
- Weston Way (Baldock)

All childcare and early education providers within a five mile radius of the Childcare Hubs have been invited to be part of the trial. Currently there are over 90 providers participating across primary schools, nursery schools, day nurseries, preschools and childminders

3.4 The trial has been restricted to these areas as limited funding has been provided for a maximum of 415 places from September 2016 – August 2017. DfE's eligibility data suggests there will be over 9000 families' eligible each year once the entitlement is rolled out.

4. Progress

4.1

- An application process has been devised and potentially eligible families have been contacted;
- A strategic project board has been convened;
- Programmes of business support and workforce development have been developed for providers who are part of the trial;
- Sufficiency of places has been mapped for 2016/17 and for the full roll out in 2017/18;
- Work strand action groups have been established to focus on identified project areas;
- A parental survey has been completed with 2010 respondents.

4.2 To date, 350 applications have been confirmed for children to take the extended childcare entitlement from September 16.

4.3 16 of these children have SEND, Our target as set by DfE was 15.

4.4 There are currently 106 providers across the 4 areas that have engaged with the trial and will be offering the full entitlement by themselves or in partnership with another provider.

- 4.5 So far 82% of parents accessing a trial place from September 2016 have chosen to access their full entitlement of 30 hours from the same provider. Although we are supporting providers to work together to deliver a seamless offer by working together to deliver the whole 30 hours, the vast majority of parents are choosing to access only one provider. Evaluation will be undertaken by CSS and DfE to establish if this pattern is likely to be replicated in the future. If so this will have implications for future service delivery.
- 4.6 A priority over the coming year will be to work with those schools and preschools that are currently unable to offer either the full 30 hours per week, term time or 22 hours all year round. This work will include looking at developing stronger partnership working between providers to enable parents to access the new entitlement in a way which meets their needs as well as ensuring the settings long term sustainability.
- 4.7 As part of the parental survey parents were asked how they would like to access the entitlement. 73% of parents who responded said they would take the entitlement across the year with the remaining 27% preferring a term time only offer.
- 4.8 Take up in the Watford area has been significantly higher than the other trial areas.

5. Capital funding

- 5.1 Local authorities were invited to bid for a capital grant to increase the number of places available.
- 5.2 The total amount of capital funding available was £40m.
- 5.3 Bids had to relate to specific projects and providers had to guarantee that they will contribute 25% of the overall cost
- 5.4 The closing date for applications was 31 August 2016.
- 5.5 Hertfordshire submitted three bids.
- 5.6 The successful applicants will be notified by DfE in December 2016.

6. Future delivery

- 6.1 The learning from the trial will inform how the entitlement will be rolled out from next year.
- 6.2 The new entitlement is the biggest opportunity/challenge for schools and other early year's providers for many years. If the evidence from the trial is translated to the full roll out in September 2017 then we need to be

prepared for a significant number of parents (approx. 7500 out of a possible 21000) who will only choose providers open for a minimum of 30 hours per week and/or are open all year round.

- 6.2 The DfE estimate that 9,315 families in Hertfordshire will be eligible for the extended childcare entitlement out of the cohort of approx. 21000 three and four year olds eligible for free early education.

7. Funding rates

- 7.1 For the trial year (2016/17) providers will be funded at £4.88 for the extended childcare entitlement. Future rates of funding are subject to the outcome of the National Funding Formula consultation. Hourly funding rates for free early education and free childcare will be identical.