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for Education

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Email enquiry form:

[www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus)

**6<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

Dear colleague,

Thank you again for all your hard work over the last term to encourage parents to apply in good time for 30 hours.

### **30 hours free childcare – applications for summer term**

This term, we're encouraging parents who want to take up a 30 hours place in the summer term to apply **now** - and no later than **the end of February, to get their code in good time**. HMRC sometimes needs more information from the parent to check whether they're eligible, so parents should allow time for this to ensure that a valid code is received well ahead of the termly deadline (31 March).

### **Tax-Free Childcare**

Parents may save up to £2000 per child, per year using Tax-Free Childcare - to go towards everything from childminders and nurseries to breakfast/after-school and holiday club charges. Parents using 30 hours can also use Tax-Free Childcare to save money on additional childcare costs.

We'd be grateful for your help promoting the scheme to local parents and childcare providers, so more parents can benefit from this support with childcare costs. A toolkit is available to help with promotional messages: [communications toolkit](#).

Parents can find more information on: [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk).

### **Reconfirmation**

Please continue to remind parents who already have a 30 hours code and/or Tax-Free Childcare to reconfirm their eligibility every 3 months.

### **Communications Tools**

To support parents and childcare providers to understand the different government childcare schemes and how they interact, cross-government colleagues have developed and published an [infographic](#) to simplify the full childcare offer. Please feel free to download it and share through your local channels.

You can find all of our promotional messages in the social media folder of the [communications toolkit](#).

Below we have set out the promotional messages we would like you to use for the summer term.

There will be another asset available for use after the end of February, encouraging parents to apply before the April term if they have not already done so.

Phase	Graphic	Supporting Message
1	Get your 30 hours code in good time for next term: apply by 28 February. <a href="http://childcarechoices.gov.uk">childcarechoices.gov.uk</a>	Apply now to get your #30 hours code for April – check you're eligible at <a href="http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk">www.childcarechoices.gov.uk</a>
1	Apply for a 30 hours code in good time. Do it before the end of February. <a href="http://childcarechoices.gov.uk">childcarechoices.gov.uk</a>	You may need to supply further information for your #30hours application. Apply now to get your code.  <a href="http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk">www.childcarechoices.gov.uk</a>
1	To keep your 30 hours place check your details are up to date every 3 months. <a href="http://gov.uk/childcareaccount">gov.uk/childcareaccount</a>	Parents, make sure your details are up to date. You need to do this every three months <a href="http://www.gov.uk/childcareaccount">#30hours</a>
1	To keep Tax-Free Childcare check your details are up to date every 3 months. <a href="http://gov.uk/childcareaccount">gov.uk/childcareaccount</a>	Parents, make sure your details are up to date. You need to do this every three months <a href="http://www.gov.uk/childcareaccount">#taxfreechildcare</a>
1	Log in to your childcare account every 3 months to check your details are up to date.	Parents, to keep your #30hours place next term, make sure your details are up to date <a href="http://www.gov.uk/childcareaccount">www.gov.uk/childcareaccount</a>
2	<b>[Available for use on Childcare Choices on or after 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019]</b>  Last chance to apply for your 30 hours code for April term.	If you want #30hours in April, you must get your code by the 31 <sup>st</sup> March.  <a href="http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk">www.childcarechoices.gov.uk</a>

## Validity start dates of codes

Please be aware that if a parent reconfirms late i.e. after their code's 'validity end date' then the 'validity start date' will change to the date of the successful reconfirmation. This is required to show that there was a gap in eligibility. Local Authorities (LAs) can use the '30 Hour Event Listing Report' on ECS to check the history of a 30 hours code, to see if a child could be in a grace period and therefore potentially eligible for a following term.

### Example

A child is in a place in the spring term, and has a reconfirmation date of 7 March, and grace period end date of 31 August.

- Parent reconfirms late, e.g. on 8 April. The start date will now change to 8 April, and therefore your system may flag that this parent is not eligible for a 30 hours place in the summer term.
- However, using the '30 Hour Event Listing Report' on ECS, you will be able to see the previous events relating to the code, which will flag that the parent is in their grace period which covers them till the end of August, and is therefore eligible to continue their 30 hours place in the summer term.

If a parent has fallen out of their eligibility, it is important for LAs to prompt providers to notify parents in good time, as part of the code audit process,- ideally within five working days.

## 30 hours - Fostering Parallel Process

Over the next few months we are looking at how the parallel process for foster parents has been worked for LAs. We would be grateful if you could email any views, particularly on what is working well or issues you have come across, to the [EARLYYEARS.ENTITLEMENTS@education.gov.uk](mailto:EARLYYEARS.ENTITLEMENTS@education.gov.uk) inbox. We will also be approaching a few authorities directly to get a more detailed response.

## EU Exit

As you will be aware, the UK will be leaving the EU on 29 March 2019. This does not impact the availability of 30 hours or Tax- Free Childcare for EEA nationals who meet the current eligibility criteria. Any future changes will be in line with the future immigration system, and will depend on our future agreements with the European Union. We will continue to work with the Home Office, HMRC and DWP on when any future changes will take effect, and will keep you updated as necessary. Any changes will be reflected in HMRC eligibility checking systems and we do not envisage any changes to LA systems being required.

## HMRC Q&A from November Progress Share (PS) Meetings

At the last round of Progress Share (PS) meetings, HMRC took away a number of questions and attached is a comprehensive response including an Annex zip file of communications that go out to parents. HMRC will also be at the next round of PS meetings (commencing in February) so there will be another chance to ask further questions. In the meantime, the Department continues to work closely with HMRC to ensure you receive the latest updates.

## 2 year old social media infographic

Whilst at the PS meetings, there were also a number of local authority colleagues who asked whether it would be possible to create a 2 year old's social media asset. We are delighted to inform you that we have worked with HMRC to design one. You can find this in the social media folder of the [communications toolkit](#) on the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

We are also working on another promotional asset to support parents in applying for 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare. We are hoping to raise awareness of both offers and promote the positive benefits to families lives, particularly for disadvantaged families. You can find out more about the asset in the next newsletter.

### **Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

The following was sent by the ESFA to LA finance contacts on 14 January 2019. As well as explaining the allocations methodology it contains important messages about how any surplus funding should be used:

*“In July 2018, we notified you that we would base final 2017-18 allocations for the Disability Access Fund (DAF) on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) data (adjusted for children in reception). This was because using the January 2018 census data would have under-funded authorities and we also wanted to maximise funding reaching the front line for DAF purposes.*

*We can confirm that we will continue with this approach for final 2018-19 DAF allocations and for future years.*

*We are keen to see all eligible children benefit from DAF. Therefore, we would encourage authorities to make every effort to maximise awareness of DAF and to ensure that these children are identified and funded accordingly.*

*However, it still may be the case that authorities receive more DAF funding from government than they distributed. In such circumstances, as with last year, we expect authorities to spend any additional funding over and above DAF actually paid out in 2018-19 on services in line with the principles and aims of DAF.”*

You may find the following link helpful, and may wish to point providers and parents to this information: <https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding>

If you would like to discuss this further, please get in touch with:  
[Patrick.Cole@education.gov.uk](mailto:Patrick.Cole@education.gov.uk).

**Please look out for the next newsletter at the end of February as we get closer to the summer term deadline.**

Yours sincerely,

Helen Waite

Deputy Director,

Entitlements, Pupil Premium and Food.

Department for Education