

Early Years Funding Newsletter

Issue 4

March 2010

Welcome to the fourth Newsletter giving up-to-date information about the Free Entitlement (Nursery Education Grant)

I am writing to provide you with information and an update about three areas of work and changes for the delivery of the Free Entitlement. This is the fourth newsletter and earlier newsletters are on the Wiltshire Council website.

Single Funding Formula

We wrote to you recently to inform you that Wiltshire Council is going forward as a Path finder for the introduction of the Single Funding Formula from April 2010.

Details of this change can be found on the Wiltshire Council website and were also set out in our consultation documents sent out in October 2009 to which you may have responded. In summary the impact for April will be:

- A) All settings including the eleven Maintained Nurseries will join the scheme in April 2010.
- B) All settings will be paid for Free Early Education Entitlement on the basis of how many children attend their settings. (This change affects Maintained Nurseries only)
- C) The rate paid will be made up of a base rate (dependant on the size of the 3 and 4 year old group and dependant on the type of setting). There will additionally be a payment for deprivation and this will be linked to individual children in the setting. This is derived from their post codes but children will not be individually named or identified to you. This is similar to the scheme we already run in schools. Some small settings will also receive a payment for rurality.

The rurality/sustainability supplement is intended to enable small settings, where there is no alternative provision, to retain a degree of stability. Where applicable, a setting's hourly rate will be increased by an amount per hour where in the previous financial year they had fewer than 9 children in attendance and there was no other provider within a 2 mile radius. Please note that this supplement is not available to childminders as their hourly rate already reflects the small size of their settings.

- D) There are also changes to the timings of the way we will pay you and these are detailed in the accompanying statement of financial information.

2 Year old Funding

Since September 2009 we have been part of a pilot scheme to offer up to 10 hours Free Entitlement to 90 of our most disadvantaged 2 year olds in Wiltshire.

40 settings are now delivering this offer in our most deprived areas and have 90 children accessing the offer.

This pilot continues after April 2010 until at least March 2011. The offer links to the Children Centres and families are offered family support through the scheme.

The project co-ordinator is Lucy-Anne Bryant lucyanne.bryant@wiltshire.gov.uk from the childcare team.

Code of Practice

The new code of practice for Free Entitlement has been out for consultation from the Department of Children Schools and Families. This sets out the government expectations for the scheme and firmly links sufficiency of childcare places to quality provision.

Alongside this Wiltshire Council will be working with the Early Years Reference Group to set out local agreements, we will consult with you on these. This will replace the 'Admin Guide'.

Flexible Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds

The second major change to the Free Entitlement is the introduction of the 15 hour Flexible offer.

The 15 hour offer was given to 25% of our children in September 2009 and this is being extended to every child in September 2010. Settings will offer 15 hours during the times they are open and lunch times will be included in that time.

Parents are able to take up 10 hours in one day (Where their setting is open for 10 hours) and the full 15 over 3 days minimum. Some settings will continue to be open mornings only and will offer the full 15 hours over the 5 mornings, 5 mornings x3 hours.

The Families Information Service have leaflets for settings that further explain this offer in more detail.

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Briefing Sessions

Bright Horizons have arranged briefing sessions on these initiatives to be held at their next EYP briefing events later in March. Many of you have signed up to go on these, our plan is to have further stand alone events in early May to meet with you and talk through the changes.

Monday 10 May 4-6pm The Pembroke Arms, Salisbury
Wednesday 12 May 4-6pm Wiltshire Golf & Country Club, Wootton Bassett
Friday 14 May 2-4pm Corn Exchange, Devizes
Tuesday 18 May 4-6pm Bradley Road Council Offices, Trowbridge

To book email karen.bird@wiltshire.gov.uk or phone 01225 785667

The childcare teams will also be talking to you about how to plan for the Flexible Entitlement in your setting over the next few weeks and months.

The Finance and Admin team will deal with any queries you have with regard to the Single Funding Formula

Please be aware:

Single Funding Formula – April 2010

100% of Settings 15 hours Flexible Entitlement – September 2010