



Department
for Education

Childcare Bill: Policy statement

October 2015

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Status

The Childcare Bill is delivering the government's election manifesto commitment to giving families where parents are working an entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare for their three- and four-year olds. The Childcare Bill was introduced to the House of Lords on 1 June 2015. This statement is made available to the House of Lords to aid Peers in their scrutiny of the Childcare Bill ahead of Report stage.

This statement does not seek to provide detailed information on all aspects of childcare policy. This statement has been made available to all members of the House of Lords on 2 October 2015. It will be placed on the Department for Education's website, which is available at: GOV.UK.

Introduction

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.

Aims

Additional free childcare will help families by reducing the cost of childcare and will support parents into work or to work more hours, should they wish to do so. This is in addition to the existing 15 hours of free early education, which is available to all three- and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-olds.

As set out in the government's productivity plan '*Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation*', there are still too many people for whom there are unfair or distorting barriers to work, including women whose high levels of skill are too often underused. The government has set out stretching ambitions to increase employment and doubling the free entitlement to childcare to 30 hours a week for working parents of three- and four-year-olds is a significant contribution to this. There is potentially a huge economic prize from enabling women to play a fuller role in the economy, should they want to.

Progress

The government is making good progress towards full implementation of the new entitlement from September 2017 and early implementation in some areas in September 2016. We have had an overwhelming response to the invitation we issued on 26th August for expressions of interest in being involved with early implementation, with over 1000 local authorities and providers registering their interest, including nurseries, schools and childminders.

We introduced the **Childcare Bill** into Parliament and following helpful debates at Committee stage, this policy statement is made available in advance of Report stage.

The **review into the cost of providing childcare** is underway. Our call for evidence received over 2,000 responses. The Prime Minister has announced that the average funding rate which providers receive for delivering the entitlement will be increased.

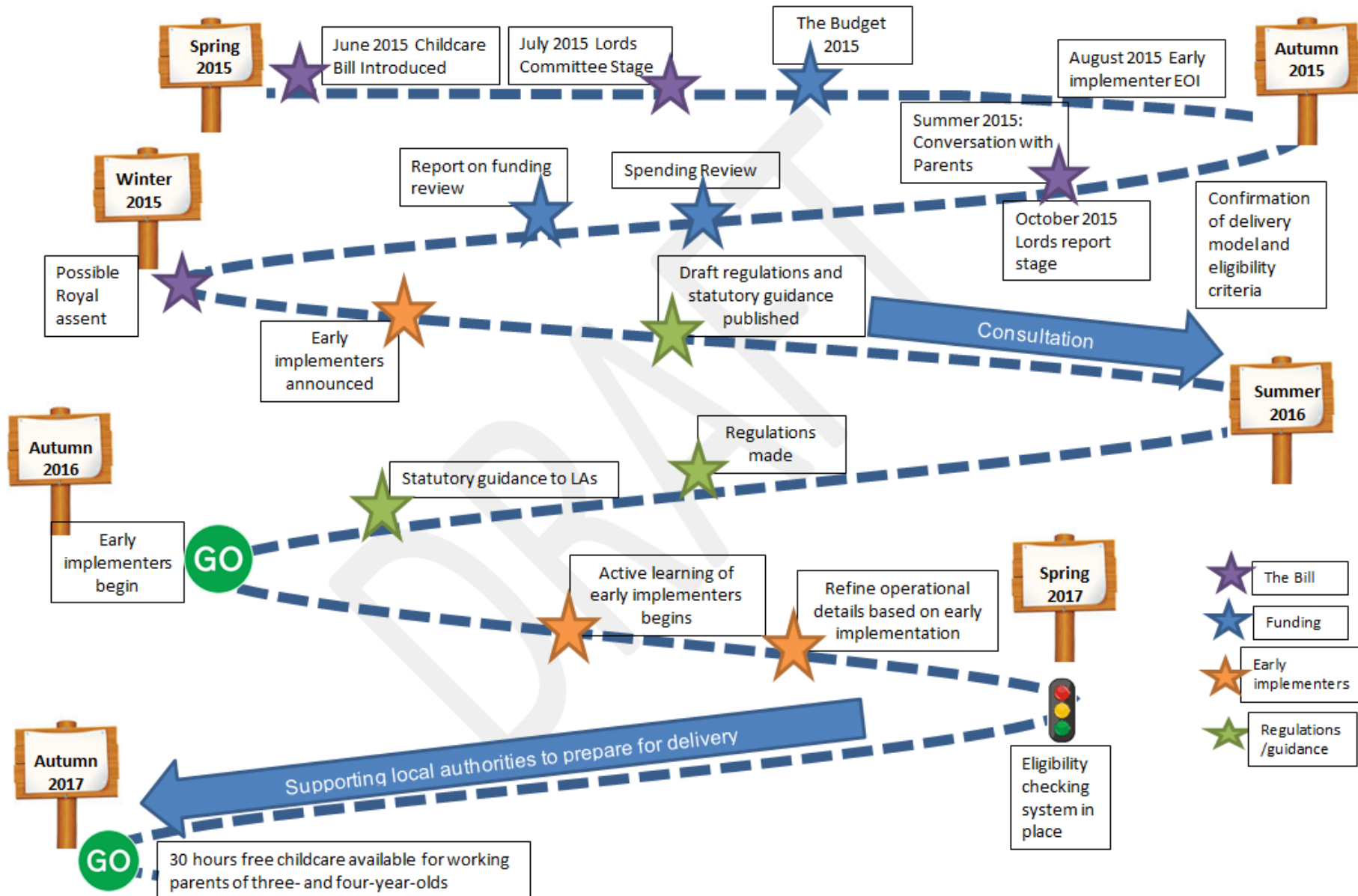
The **consultation with parents, providers and employers** has begun. We have already heard from working parents, employers, representatives from the childcare sector, unions, and nearly 20,000 responses to our public survey.

The cross-government **Childcare Implementation Taskforce** is continuing to drive delivery of the government's childcare schemes, supporting effective joint working across government to deliver: the doubling of free childcare for working parents of three- and

four-year-olds; Tax-Free Childcare to support parents to work if they choose to; and further improvements in the supply of childcare.

Roadmap

Delivering 30 hours free childcare: A Road Map to September 2017



The views of parents and providers

Aims of the consultation

The aims of the government's early engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, particularly with parents and providers, are to:

- gather the views and opinions of parents about:
 - their current childcare options;
 - what drives their choices, particularly on price, flexibility and quality;
 - what using the 30 hours entitlement might look and feel like for them; and
 - how it will enable them to work, or work longer hours.
- engage representatives of all types of early years providers in an initial dialog on quality, capacity, flexibility and specific challenges around the 30 hours offer.

The government will use both of these to help shape the delivery of the 30 hours entitlement.

Who we have heard from so far:

- 750 representatives from the early years sector (including frontline providers) and we are holding a series of regional practitioner events in September and early October (where we expect around 500 attendees). These have been attended by leaders and practitioners from a wide variety of settings;
- 160 working parents through 13 'open policy' employer-events – with more planned for later in the autumn;
- over 19,300 members of general public through an online questionnaire. The majority of respondents were female, in a relationship and currently working over 8 hours a week with an average of 1.6 pre-school children; and
- Union representatives through educational forums.

In addition there have been a series of stakeholder meetings. The government has also held a call for evidence on the funding review supported by a series of round table events.

These are the messages we are hearing from parents:

There are two strands to our work with parents - an online questionnaire and a series of employer events - and we have used social media (via #30hourschildcare) to target and promote both strands.

The results from the online questionnaire are presented in Annex A. The questionnaire consisted of a series of 14 closed questions and was open to general public to complete. The results are indicative as this was not a robust scientific survey but part of our early engagement with parents. There was no sampling frame (which would allow us to ensure that a representative sample had opportunity to complete the questionnaire) and so it is not possible to generalise from these findings to the wider population.

However, in summary:

- around 89% of respondents would take up the additional hours if available now (5% would not and 6% not sure);
- respondents expected to use around 14 hours of the additional entitlement; and
- the most useful factor would be a stretched offer (full-year and covering normal working hours).

Three themes emerged on what influence the choice of childcare:

- convenience (either location or opening hours); and
- quality of staff and provider (either high staff qualifications, Ofsted rating or reputation)
- opportunity for their child to socialise.

Parents reported using a wide range of providers but most popular were day nurseries (45%), relatives (29%), childminders (15%) and playgroup or pre-schools (15%).

Of respondents, 49% said either they or their partner or both had to change their working pattern to cover childcare, while 27% had chosen to change it so they could spend more time with children. Only 10% reported that having children had no impact on their working patterns.

Events have been held at large employers for employees to share their views and experiences. Sessions have been held at Rolls Royce, BT, John Lewis, Legal & General, Deloitte, Carillion, Ernst & Young, Intel, Accenture, Telefonica (O2) and Hewlett-Packard. Parents have praised the impact the additional hours will have, saying they would “improve children’s stability and ability to form close friendships” and would “allow [them] to find more consistent arrangements”. One theme running through these events was the desire for a simpler, more flexible childcare system in the future.

What we've heard from providers:

- Concerns around funding and sustainability;
- How the new offer will fit with the existing offer for two-, three- and four-year-olds;
- Eligibility – who and how this will be assessed;
- Quality – the impact of increasing the offer to 30 hours and ensuring children remain safe and their development is supported; and
- How to create additional places if they are needed.

Eligibility for the extended free childcare entitlement

Definition of qualifying children

The 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.

To meet the principle of designing a system that is simple for working parents, the government's intention is that eligibility for 30 hours free childcare should broadly align with Tax-Free Childcare.

Eligibility for the free entitlement will include households where:

- both parents are working or one parent working in lone parent families, for their children aged three- or four-years-old. This will be defined as earning the equivalent of 8 hours per week on national minimum wage and this can include self-employment;
- both parents are working (as above) and in receipt of tax credits and/ or universal credit;
- both parents are employed but one or both parent is temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity or paternity leave;
- both parents are employed but one or both parent is temporarily away from the workplace on adoption leave;
- both parents are employed but one or both parent is temporarily away from the workplace on statutory sick pay;
- one parent is employed and one parent is has substantial caring responsibilities (based on specific benefits received for caring); or
- one parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated (based on specific benefits).

Parents will remain eligible for the free entitlement if they access tax credits, Universal Credit, Tax-Free Childcare and other childcare schemes to help pay for any additional childcare they need in addition to their free entitlement.

The government believes that including parents who are temporarily away from the workplace will help families to maintain their childcare arrangements, supporting the transition back to work at the end of their parental leave or period of ill health and avoiding disruption to the child. It also avoids disproportionate administrative burdens on small providers of checking and identifying periods of leave (which can be as short as 1-2 weeks) and disruption to their business.

The government believes that ensuring that households where one parent is employed and one parent has substantial caring responsibilities or is disabled or incapacitated are eligible for 30 hours of free childcare will support these households to maintain one parent in employment or enable them to increase their hours of work while continuing to ensure that the other parent is supported with their own needs.

The government intends to amend the Childcare Bill at Report stage to ensure the regulation making power to set out descriptions of qualifying children is sufficient to cover children from the households listed above. Parents or a partner applying for the entitlement will be required to formally declare that the information they have provided in applying for the extended entitlement is true to the best of their knowledge and belief. The government amendments to the Bill at Report stage will allow the Secretary of State to create a scheme to impose financial penalties on persons in connection with false or misleading statements made or provided in connection with a determination of a child's eligibility for the new free entitlement and dishonest conduct in the process of making this determination.

Training and education

The new entitlement is to support parents to take up work or increase their working hours. Parents who are studying will not qualify for the new entitlement, unless they meet the criteria outlined above. Parents who are under the age of 20 and are studying a publicly funded course are also eligible for the Care to Learn Scheme, which provides vital financial support for childcare costs of up to £175 per child per week. For parents over the age of 20, Discretionary Learner Support and Childcare Grants may also be available depending on the nature of the education and training that parents participate in.

Grandparents

The government recognises and values the role families play in providing informal childcare and the formal role that can be taken on when parental responsibility is transferred to a wider family member. Where grandparents or other family members have parental responsibility for a child aged three or four and they meet the eligibility criteria set out above, the child will have access to the extended free entitlement. Childcare as defined in the Childcare Act 2006 does not include informal care provided by grandparents or other family members and the government does not plan to change this.

Support for working parents

For the free entitlement to be most effective it must be restricted to childcare arrangements that enable parents to take up paid work or to continue in paid work.

To align with Tax-Free Childcare, the government intends to introduce a 'main reason test' through regulations that will seek to ensure that parents take up the additional hours of free childcare for the purposes of supporting their employment. This for example could be to cover commuting time, or to pay for childcare in blocks of time or sessions, that puts them in a position to work.

Grace period

The government believes it is right to ensure that there will be a short grace period for families whose circumstances change. This will give parents the opportunity to regain employment and will also give providers certainty that if they offer a place under the new entitlement they will not lose that place immediately if a parent's circumstances change.

Reviews and appeals

The government recognises that where decisions are made about a parent's eligibility for the entitlement, there may be instances where parents are not satisfied with the decision. In these cases it is right that parents are able to appeal. The government intends to amend the Childcare Bill at Report stage to establish an appeals mechanism in secondary legislation.

Provision for any criminal offences and civil penalties

During Committee Stage questions were raised about the power to enable the government to make provision for criminal offences in regulations. The government's intention is that there will only be one new criminal offence and that this should align with existing offences for schemes involving information sharing. The government intends to amend the Bill at Report stage to clarify this and to make it clear that there will only be a criminal offence for the misuse of data obtained for the purposes of checking eligibility for the new childcare entitlement or if this information is disclosed for improper purposes, which would replicate the offence created under section 13B of the 2006 Childcare Act which is already used for the existing funded entitlements.

The government amendments to the Bill at Report stage will allow the Secretary of State to create a scheme to impose financial penalties on persons in connection with false or misleading statements made or provided in connection with a determination of a child's eligibility for the new free entitlement and dishonest conduct in the process of making this determination. The maximum amount of any penalty would be £3000. A person who receives a financial penalty will be able to appeal to the First-tier tribunal against the imposition of the penalty or the amount of the penalty.

Delivering 30 hours free childcare for working parents of three- and four-year-olds

Delivery principles

The government is clear that any delivery system must make available 30 hours of free childcare to eligible parents of three- and four-year-olds in England. This childcare must be safe and quality. This must also be deliverable for early implementation in September 2016 and full roll-out from September 2017.

The delivery system must support and drive increased parental employment enabling parents to work or to work extra hours, supporting an improvement in the standard of living for parents and children. It must be affordable and provide value for money for government at a sustainable rate for the sector

The government aims to deliver a quality free childcare entitlement according to the following design principles. These principles were agreed by the Childcare Implementation Task Force. The delivery mechanism will:

- be simple and flexible for parents to use;
- interact successfully and work with the existing entitlement and government childcare schemes;
- create capacity cost-effectively and without driving up the cost of childcare;
- be efficient for providers to administer and not add to their costs;
- be at least as cost-effective to administer as the model for delivering the current entitlement and better value for money for government;
- not undermine the successful delivery of the first 15 hours for all three- and four-year-olds;
- be secure and possible to audit;
- ensure that as many existing formal childcare providers as possible are able to take part in delivery of the 30 hours; and
- support innovation.

Local authority led delivery model

The current entitlement to free early education for all three- and four-year-olds and two-year-olds who meet the eligibility criteria, is delivered by a delivery model in which providers are funded directly by government. Local authorities are under a legal duty to make the provision available and work with a wide range of providers in their area to ensure that there are sufficient places available for parents who wish to take up a place for their child.

This model is extremely successful with 99% of four-year-olds and 94% of three-year-olds taking up a place¹. Around 157,000 two-year-olds from the 40% more disadvantaged families are also taking up a place. Local authorities have led these programmes, providing assistance to providers looking to set up or expand their provision, and to improve their quality.

The government will build on this success with the extended free entitlement for working parents and the Secretary of State for Education will discharge the duty in clause 1 of the Childcare Bill ('the duty to secure 30 hours of free childcare for working parents') through all local authorities in England.

The new extended entitlement provides an opportunity to work with local authorities to look at how improvements can be made to how the extended free entitlement is delivered. Considering the design principles set out above, we want to ensure that the system: is simple and flexible for parents to use and is responsive to parents' working patterns; welcomes and incentivises a range of quality providers to deliver the entitlement efficiently; and offers value for money. As the section below on 'preparing for implementation' sets out, the government wishes to encourage new providers into the childcare market and the local authority-led delivery model should support local authorities to commission innovative provider models that deliver affordable places to meet the needs of parents.

We will also look at how we can support local authorities in drawing up agreements between themselves and childcare providers (perhaps by publishing a national model agreement). In addition, we are considering what can be done to smooth out issues around payment arrangements between local authorities and providers.

A full economic impact assessment and new burdens assessment will be carried out in due course.

¹ Provision for children under 5 years of age: January 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provision-for-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2015>

The Childcare Bill

The government intends to amend the Childcare Bill at Report stage to reflect this decision and for the purposes of the discharge of the Secretary of State's duty in clause 1(1) of the Bill.

This includes amendments to:

- enable the Secretary of State to discharge her duty through local authorities (i.e. require local authorities to secure that childcare is available free of charge to those in their area who are eligible for the extended entitlement);
- allow the Secretary of State to issue statutory guidance on the extended entitlement, which local authorities must have regard to
- enable the Secretary of State to intervene in a local authority that is failing to meet its duty to make 30 hours free childcare available; and
- require local authorities to provide take up data on the extended entitlement to the Department for Education.

Preparing for implementation

The childcare sector is healthy, vibrant and growing. Latest figures show there were around 230,000 more childcare places in 2012 than in 2009² (a 12% increase) and the number of providers offering places under the entitlement has continued to increase³. There has been a significant increase in the take up of childcare provision in low and middle income areas.

Introducing the new entitlement to 30 hours free childcare for working parents is a significant delivery task, but is one that the government is confident that central government, local authorities and providers can achieve by working together. The market has demonstrated that it is able to respond to an extension of a free entitlement, through the roll-out of the entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds introduced in the last Parliament. This was supported by changes that we made to reduce bureaucracy and to make it easier for providers, for example childminders and schools, to provide places.

² Early Years and Childcare Provider Survey 2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2013>

³ Provision for children under 5 years of age: January 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provision-for-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2015>

Demand

The actual number of new childcare places that will be needed depends on a number of important factors, including:

1. how many eligible parents take up the new entitlement;
2. the extent to which eligible parents already pay for additional hours of childcare over and above the existing 15 funded hours;
3. how quickly eligible parents choose to make use of all of the additional 15 hours to which they would be entitled; and
4. the level of spare capacity in the system.

Where a four-year-old is attending a school reception class, they will not access the entitlement to 30 hours free childcare in addition. We are gathering more evidence of how many eligible parents are likely to take up the new entitlement, and how many hours they are likely to take up, through the national conversation that is underway with parents, providers and employers.

Capacity in the system

We recognise that while there is natural growth in the childcare system we can, and should, encourage new providers to enter the childcare market or existing providers to expand. Collaborative arrangements across different types of providers and increased flexibility for providers are important elements of this. That is why, for example, under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act childminders will be able to provide childcare on non-domestic premises. The government has already made a substantial investment of capital in early years to support expansion of provision for two-year-olds.

We believe there is some existing capacity in the system to help deliver the new entitlement, and we are continuing to talk to local authorities to increase our understanding and evidence of where there is capacity in the system. We are also considering whether the capacity is in the right location to meet demand and whether it's available at the times working parents will need it.

We know that the majority of working families with three- and four-year-olds already use more than 15 hours of childcare. This means that many children will already be in a place and will not require a new one. Rather, the new extended entitlement will pay for the additional hours parents are already purchasing from an early years setting, helping working families with the cost of childcare.

Early implementation

The government has made clear its intention to roll out the extended free childcare entitlement in certain areas from September 2016 in advance of full implementation from September 2017.

On 26 August, the Department for Education invited local authorities and providers to register their interest in implementing the extended free childcare entitlement from September 2016.

The purpose of early implementation is to: test provider capacity to deliver the entitlement in a way that suits working parents employment patterns and helps more parents to return to work or work more hours; test market innovation and flexibility of provision around sufficiency, use of funding rates and partnership working; and provide the government with early intelligence on how it can refine the system in preparation for full implementation from 2017.

Rural areas

The government has already made changes that help meet the needs of parents in rural areas where childcare options may be more limited. It has encouraged more early years provision in schools, provided significant support for childcare through tax credits, and given entitlements to free early education for the most disadvantaged two-year-olds and for three- and four-year-olds. In selecting areas for early implementation, the Department for Education will be particularly keen to hear from applicants who can operate in rural areas.

Special educational needs and disability

At Committee stage, it was helpfully suggested that early implementation would be an opportunity to consider how to ensure that all eligible children are able to access the 30 hours free childcare. We know that families with disabled children and children with special educational needs can too often experience challenges in accessing childcare. While the legal framework is clear that all eligible children must be able to take up a place under the existing and new entitlement, in practice we are hearing that the system does not always deliver for all children.

In the 'expressions of interest' process the government will seek to encourage innovative approaches to providing flexible childcare for working parents whose children are disabled or have special educational needs.

Early years funding

The government is committed to funding the extension of the entitlement at a level which: ensures choice and flexibility for parents; is sustainable for providers; and is fair to the taxpayer. At the Summer Budget in July, the Chancellor confirmed the revenue cost to the Exchequer of the entitlement. In addition to this figure, the government has committed to an uplift in the average rate that providers receive for the entitlement. Decisions about the size of this rate uplift will be made at the forthcoming Spending Review.

To inform these decisions, the government announced on 15 June that it was conducting a review of the cost of providing childcare. This review is an evidence-based and analytically-driven piece of work, aiming at a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the cost of providing childcare. The work is split into two strands: the first is modelling the impact of different cost drivers on providers to give us a detailed understanding of their costs; and the second is looking at the existing childcare and early years market. The government is publishing the terms of reference for the review alongside this policy statement. The review is being led by an analytical team based at the Department for Education.

Early years providers of all types have engaged positively and constructively with the review. Our call for evidence, which ran from 10 June to 10 August, received over 2,000 responses. We have conducted a preliminary analysis of these responses, which we have published alongside this policy statement. The government is also conducting a series of roundtable events, which have engaged with a range of providers, academics and provider groups. The call for evidence and the roundtables together have provided a wealth of valuable evidence, which is informing the work of the analytical strands.

Alongside the review, the government is considering as part of the Spending Review how we allocate funding for early years fairly across the country. We are aware that there are historical inconsistencies and inefficiencies with the current funding system for three- and four-year-olds. We want a funding system that is simple, transparent and maximises funding reaching the front line. The Minister for Childcare committed on 16 July to making schools and early education funding fairer and we will put forward proposals in due course.

Quality childcare for all children

Children are receiving a good early education

The current entitlement ensures that three- and four-year-olds can access 15 hours a week⁴ of quality early education, free of charge, to prepare them for school and improve their life chances.

It is the quality of provision that really makes the difference – cognitive benefits of childcare disappear by age ten if a setting is low quality⁵, while children attending high quality provision for two or three years before school have a seven to eight month developmental advantage in literacy compared to their peers. Evidence tells us that between five sessions or around 15 hours a week of quality early education are needed for children to gain these benefits.

This government policy is working, and the early years sector is delivering quality early education for children and families. For example:

- 94% of three- and 99% of four-year-olds are taking up the current free entitlement;
- the qualifications of early years staff have continuously improved - in June 2015, NDNA reported that 88% of settings it surveyed employed a graduate, up from 80% in 2015⁶, and 87% of staff have a level 3 (A-level equivalent) qualification⁷;
- 85% of providers delivering the entitlement are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted⁸; and
- the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) results for 2013-14 showed an 8 percentage point increase in the number of children reaching a good level of development by the age of five, with a similar rise for disadvantaged children⁹.

⁴ 570 hours per year usually taken by families as around 15 hrs a week over 38 weeks

⁵ EPPSE: ***Influences on Children's Attainment and Progress in Key Stage 2: Cognitive Outcomes in Year 5 Summary Report (2007:15)***

⁶ NDNA Workforce Survey 2015

⁷ Early Years and Childcare Provider Survey 2013

⁸ *The report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2015, Early years*

⁹ SFR: *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results in England, 2013/14*

The new extended entitlement

The new entitlement for working parents will help families by reducing the cost of childcare and supporting parents to work. The government is also clear that these additional hours of childcare need to be quality. All childcare must be delivered in a way that makes a contribution to a child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, without placing inappropriate strain on young children who might be spending a significant part of their day in childcare. We know that parents want their children to learn, but also to play and have fun, and to be able to relax and rest when they need to. This is what good childcare providers deliver: supporting children to learn socialise and develop through their play, and being attentive to their welfare.

The government believes that the extended entitlement needs to supplement and complement the current early education entitlement. It will need to provide positive and stimulating experiences for children, and staff will need to have the right skills and knowledge to deliver this care. We are clear that the extended entitlement hours must be safe and secure, and must never be a detrimental experience for children. The current regulatory system sets out welfare and safeguarding requirements that are designed to ensure a wide range of childcare providers deliver this kind of quality provision, and delivery is regulated and inspected by Ofsted.

The new entitlement will of course remove a major barrier to employment for workless families and enable those parents in employment to extend their working hours should they choose to do so. Children in households with higher income levels are much more likely to have positive educational outcomes than children in low income families. Increasing household income for children in receipt of free school meals (FSM) could significantly reduce the gap in Key Stage 2 outcomes between FSM and non-FSM children¹⁰.

The quality of the early years workforce

We know that the quality of early years provision is central to ensuring benefits to children and that good quality childcare can be found across all types of settings. The main driver of quality in a setting is its workforce. Alongside convenience, the quality of staff in the setting is a key factor that informs parents' choices about childcare.

¹⁰ *Does money affect children's outcomes?* Joseph Rowntree Foundation, October 2013

By improving the quality of those entering the workforce, parents can have confidence in the people supporting the learning of our youngest children. In recent years, pay across the sector has risen reflecting the rise in qualification levels among the early years workforce. We expect qualification levels to continue to increase following introduction of Early Years Educator qualification criteria and early years initial teacher training.

We want the sector to continue to attract highly qualified staff with a strong aptitude for working with young children and the right mix of knowledge and skills to deliver good quality childcare. We have recently taken steps to improve the process for those training to become Early Years Educators and Early Years Teachers, and these have been widely welcomed. In 2016, the government will review progression routes within the sector to determine what more can be done to enable good quality staff to maximise their potential and forge a successful career within early years. This will build on existing investments in staff training and development through the current Voluntary and Community Sector grants programme and the Teaching Schools grant, which has brought high performing schools and PVI providers together to share good practice and improve transition into school for young children.

We are also introducing measures to significantly increase the number of staff with paediatric first aid training. Later this year, we will be consulting on a new requirement that newly qualified level 2 and level 3 staff must hold a paediatric first aid certificate in order to count in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) ratios. And we will be launching a new voluntary quality assurance mark to recognise those nurseries who have trained all their staff in first aid.

Inspection and regulation

Ofsted has started to inspect against a new Common Inspection Framework, which is bringing more consistency to its inspection approach across early years providers and schools, and increases the focus on children's outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning in the early years. While it is too early to assess how much this will decrease the bureaucratic burden on providers, initial responses have been positive, with the changes being welcomed by the sector for providing clarity and improving consistency of inspections. The new handbooks are shorter and more user friendly and, if they prove less onerous to the workforce, should allow providers to spend more time with the children in their care.

The government is keen to ensure that childcare providers are able to spend their time doing the things that matter most to ensure that children are well cared for. Early Years practitioners should not need to spend time away from interacting with children doing excessive paperwork. This expectation is already set out in the EYFS

statutory framework. However, the government continues to seek views from the early years sector to try to understand what burdens exist in the current system and what else can be done to limit unnecessary regulations and requirements.

Conclusion

This government recognises that childcare is the issue facing many working parents. The Childcare Bill will have a significant, positive impact the choices for families to take up work or to increase their hours at work. The government would welcome further discussions with Peers ahead of Report stage and through the consultation on draft regulations, in order to help ensure that we arrive at the simplest and most efficient way to deliver the additional 15 hours of free childcare to working families.

Annex A: Responses to the on-line questionnaire of parents.¹¹

Q1: Are you male or female?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	7.9%	1,520
Female	91.4%	17,598
Prefer not to say	0.7%	133
<i>answered question</i>		19,251

Q2: How many children aged 5 and under do you have responsibility for?

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Count
Number of Children	1.55	19,342
<i>answered question</i>		19,342

Q3: How would you describe yourself?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Single	9.5%	1,834
In a relationship (including married and co-habiting)	88.7%	17,057
Prefer not to Say	1.8%	337
<i>answered question</i>		19,228

¹¹ Generally these results are indicative rather than robust, and they contribute to a range of evidence being used to inform thinking in this policy area. This is due to the methodology (lack of a sampling frame) we are unable to say how accurate these results are in terms of generalising to any population.

Q4: Can you tell us a bit about what you do?

Answer Options Choose the answer that best describes your situation.	Response Percent	Response Count
Working full-time (30+ hours per week), including self-employed	42.6%	8198
Working part-time (16-29 hours per week), including self-employed	29.6%	5,697
Working part-time (8-15 hours per week), including self-employed	4.0%	761
Working part-time (1-7 hours per week), including self-employed	1.0%	201
Studying (including on a Government training scheme)	1.9%	367
Unemployed and looking for work	2.1%	405
Looking after the home or family	8.2%	1,585
Not working due to long term sickness or disability	0.6%	120
Maternity or paternity leave	9.0%	1,741
Other	0.9%	169
<i>answered question</i>		19,244

Q5: If you have a partner, can you tell us a bit about what they do?

Answer Options Choose the answer that best describes their situation.	Response Percent	Response Count
No current partner	8.9%	1,694
Working full-time (30+ hours per week), including self-employed	79.5%	15,194
Working part-time (16-29 hours per week), including self-employed	4.8%	921
Working part-time (8-15 hours per week), including self-employed	1.0%	182
Working part-time (1-7 hours per week), including self-employed	0.4%	72
Studying (including on a Government training scheme)	0.6%	124
Unemployed and looking for work	0.9%	164
Looking after the home or family	1.9%	368
Not working due to long term sickness or disability	0.6%	115

Maternity or paternity leave	0.8%	146
Other	0.7%	143
answered question		19,123

Q6: Thinking about your children aged 5 and under, which of the following types of childcare do you currently use?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Please choose all that apply.		
Maintained nursery school	10.4%	1,795
Nursery class attached to a maintained primary or infants' school	9.7%	1,674
Reception class at a maintained primary or infants' school	12.5%	2,158
An independent school	1.6%	274
Special day school, unit or nursery for children with special educational needs	0.5%	81
Day nursery	44.8%	7,722
Playgroup or pre-school	14.9%	2,570
Childminder	15.4%	2,655
Nanny or au pair	2.1%	359
A relative	28.7%	4,946
A friend or neighbour (including a friend or neighbour who picks up my child / children from other provision)	4.0%	688
I don't use any of these types of childcare	8.1%	1,397
answered question		17,238

Q7: Considering your childcare arrangements in a typical week - how many hours of each type do you use?

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Count
Please answer this question for your oldest child under 5		
Free hours at a provider (for example a day nursery or school)	10.41	13,176
Additional hours at a provider that I pay for	18.80	13,306
Additional hours when someone else looks after them although I don't pay them (such as relative or friend)	9.89	10,397
<i>answered question</i>		15,948

Q8: Would you use more childcare hours if you had more financial support (such as tax credits or the planned additional funded hours for working parents of 3 & 4 year olds?)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	60.5%	9,840
Yes – but only if I needed it due to finding more work/increasing my hours	22.9%	3,726
No	13.0%	2,118
Don't know	3.6%	593
<i>answered question</i>		16,277

Q9: Which of these statements best describes the impact that having children has had on your working patterns?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I chose to change my working pattern because I wanted to spend more time with my child / children	21.4%	3,470
My partner chose to change their working pattern because they wanted to spend more time with our child / children	1.9%	304
My partner and I both chose to change our working patterns because we both wanted to spend more time with our child / children	4.3%	701
I have had to change my working pattern in order to cover our childcare needs	28.9%	4,691

My partner has had to change their working pattern in order to cover our childcare needs	3.6%	592
We have both had to change our working patterns in order to cover our childcare needs	15.6%	2,541
I have had to give up working in order to cover our childcare needs	7.7%	1,253
My partner has had to give up working in order to cover our childcare needs	1.7%	278
We have not changed our working patterns	10.0%	1,628
I am not currently working	4.8%	782
answered question		16,240

Q10: High quality childcare and early years education for pre-school children must always be a safe, caring and fun place for your child. Considering the childcare your child attends, what other factors influenced your choice?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Please choose up to three options		
Ofsted rating	41.2%	6,760
Highly qualified staff	28.9%	4,730
High staff to child ratios	15.0%	2,467
Price	27.4%	4,491
It was close to either my work or home	44.7%	7,326
Helping your child get ready to start reception at school	16.5%	2,700
Opening hours suited my needs	28.0%	4,588
I have other children at the provider	4.2%	683
Opportunity for my child to socialise with other children	32.4%	5,320
They offered right kind of specialist support for the needs of my child	2.3%	371
I wanted my child to start learning to read, write and do maths	4.6%	759
The quality of food and drink provided	3.2%	523
The reputation of the provider	23.4%	3,835
I specifically wanted my child to go to this type of provider (for example a school or childminder)	9.2%	1,516

<i>answered question</i>	16,395
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Q11: From September 2017, working parents of 3- and 4-year olds will be eligible for an additional 15 hours free childcare (on top of their existing entitlement). If this extra 15 hours was available now, and you were eligible for it would, you take it up?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	89.4%	14,154
No	4.9%	774
Not sure	5.8%	911
<i>answered question</i>		15,839

Q12: If you did take up the additional hours, how many do you think you would use

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Count
Enter number between 0-15	13.84	15,035
<i>answered question</i>		15,035

Q13: In taking up such an offer, which of the options listed would be most useful to you?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Please select the two most important options for you.		
I would like the hours to fit with the normal school day and be taken during term time	24.4%	3,873
I would like the hours to cover my working day (normally 9-5)	47.1%	7,489
I would like the hours to cover my working pattern that includes shifts or weekends	12.5%	1,984
I would like to take the hours only on specific days of the week	12.8%	2,030
I can take the hours across the full year - not term time only	44.5%	7,074
I want to be able split the hours and use them with different providers (such as a combination of local school nursery and childminder)	15.6%	2,486
<i>answered question</i>		15,885

Q14: Would having more free childcare enable you to return to work or increase your hours?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	80.7%	12,671
No	17.3%	2,712
I don't think there is sufficient work locally	2.1%	326
<i>answered question</i>		15,709

Annex B: Accessible Roadmap to September 2017

Timing	Type of milestone	Milestone
Spring 2015	The Bill	June 2015- Childcare Bill Introduced
	The Bill	July 2015 Lords Committee Stage
	Funding	The Budget 2015
	Early implementation	August 2015 Early implementer EOI
Autumn 2015	-	Confirmation of delivery model and eligibility criteria in policy statement
	The Bill	October 2015 Lords Report Stage
	Funding	Spending Review
	Funding	Report on Funding Review
Winter 2015 / 2016 - Spring/Summer 2016	The Bill	Possible Royal Assent
	Early implementation	Early implementers announced
	Regulations/Guidance	Draft regulations and statutory guidance published
	Regulations/Guidance	Consultation on regulations
	Regulations/Guidance	Regulations made
	Regulations/Guidance	Statutory guidance to LAs
	Early implementation	Active learning of early implementers begins
	Early implementation	Refine operational details based on early implementation
	-	Supporting local authorities to prepare for delivery
Autumn 2017		30 hours free childcare available for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds



Department
for Education

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