



Department  
for Education

# **National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook**

**A guide for local authorities in England**

**October 2023**

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## Ministerial foreword



The transition to school can be a difficult period for parents and carers for many reasons, one of which is the need to balance family and work commitments. Childcare needs do not stop for families once their children reach school age. The primary school day finishes much sooner than parents may have been used to in the early years, meaning that many parents find themselves having to change their working pattern or even leave jobs that they love. Equally, for those who are ready to get back into work after having children, school hours can be a barrier to finding the right role for them.

In March 2023, 36% of parents of primary aged children reported that they had used some kind of wraparound childcare for their primary aged children since the start of term (equating to around 1.6m children). For these families, it is an invaluable support, delivered by passionate, experienced professionals, who place children at the heart of what they offer. However, not everyone who needs it is able to access it.

That is why I'm so pleased that in the Spring Budget in March of this year this government announced an investment of £289m for a national wraparound programme, to achieve our ambition of supporting all families who need it to access wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm. Parents should expect to see an expansion in the availability of wraparound care from September 2024.

Local authorities are critical to the successful delivery of this programme, and this handbook is aimed primarily at them, although will be of interest to anyone in the sector. I would particularly like to thank the 16 local authorities who have co-designed this programme with us, along with all the schools, providers and other partners who have worked with us and given us their time and expertise to develop this programme.

We recognise the immense strengths of the current wraparound sector and want to build upon this, to achieve our ambition that no parent should be denied the opportunity to pursue a career because they cannot find appropriate childcare, ultimately ensuring that all children get the best start in life.

I look forward to continuing to work together.

David Johnston MP  
Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing

## Overview

This handbook from the Department for Education (DfE) has been produced to set out the aims and scope of the national wraparound childcare programme. It describes the programme's vision and objectives and sets out the expectations of the programme. This handbook is non-statutory and is designed to support local authorities in England to prepare for delivery of the national wraparound childcare programme from September 2024.

The department reserves the right to change the information contained in this handbook and we expect that an updated version will be published in early 2024. Any changes will be added to the change log.

## Who is this publication for?

This handbook is primarily for local authorities in England. It may also be of interest to wraparound childcare providers including schools, trusts, private, voluntary and independent providers, early years settings and childminders and parents/carers.

The department also plans to publish separate guidance for schools in early 2024, which will include practical guidance to support those who wish to deliver or expand wraparound childcare provision.

## Contact us

If you have any queries about the wraparound programme, or if there is anything you think this handbook is missing or should be made clearer, please let us know by emailing [wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk). If you have any queries specifically relating to programme funding, please email [wraparound.finance@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.finance@education.gov.uk).

If you have any specific queries or concerns about sufficiency, please contact [earlyyears.entitlements@education.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears.entitlements@education.gov.uk) or discuss this with your DfE local authority regional lead.

## **Glossary of terms**

### **Wraparound childcare:**

Wraparound childcare is childcare that 'wraps around' the conventional school day. It can also refer to provision in the school holidays. For the purposes of this handbook, we are using the term 'wraparound childcare' to refer to provision directly before and after the school day during school term time for school age children. This provision can be offered by schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers (including childminders and early years settings) and can be run on a school site or at another setting in the area. It should not require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location.

Many schools already offer enrichment and extra-curricular activities before and after the school day. While we support and encourage schools to continue to deliver these activities themselves or in partnership, in many cases they will not currently be delivered in a way which meets our definition of wraparound childcare. The principal aim of the programme is to ensure childcare provision is regular, has longer hours and is more dependable for working parents. Within these parameters, there may be opportunities where enrichment activities can interact with, complement, or support delivery of wraparound childcare provision.

### **Providers:**

A wraparound childcare provider is anyone who delivers wraparound provision. This can include private, voluntary and independent organisations, schools, childminders, and other early years providers.

### **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):**

The MoU referred to in this handbook is a non-legally binding agreement which formalises the working relationship and expectations relating to the payment of grant funding from the Secretary of State for Education to local authorities for the delivery of the wraparound childcare programme. The MoU must be signed by local authorities before their first grant payment is released.

### **Grant determination letter:**

A letter which provides local authorities with details of their grant funding allocations for the wraparound childcare programme.

### **Capacity funding:**

Funding for local authorities to use to build their internal capacity to deliver. This could include paying for a designated wraparound lead if one does not already exist.

**Programme funding:**

Funding for local authorities to deliver programme objectives, including to distribute to providers to set up new provision or expand existing provision.

**Capital funding:**

Funding for local authorities to support new / extended wraparound provision, including distribution to childcare providers. For capital projects only.

# National Wraparound Childcare Programme

## Ambition for Wraparound Childcare

The national wraparound childcare programme is part of the childcare reforms announced at the 2023 Spring Budget.<sup>1</sup> The government's ambition is that by 2026, all parents and carers of primary school-aged children who need it will be able to access term time childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm, so that parents can access employment and improve labour market participation.

To support this ambition, the government announced that it will provide up to £289 million of start-up funding over two academic years to support local authorities and providers in England to introduce or expand childcare provision on either side of the school day, which parents of primary school-aged children will be able to pay to access.

This programme will only focus on primary school-aged children from reception to year 6, Monday to Friday during term time. Our expectation is that all wraparound provision is 8am-6pm, enabling parents to work a full day with travel time, unless data shows that local demand is for different hours, for example reflecting local labour market patterns.

## Creating a sustainable system

In order to meet this ambition, we need to address three key barriers: availability, affordability, and quality.

### Availability

We need to improve the **availability** of wraparound provision as a first order priority by increasing the supply and take-up of wraparound places through removing barriers to setting up new provision or expanding current provision, both in terms of number of places and hours available. If provision is not available, parents/carers are more limited in the decisions they can make about returning to work, taking a new job, or working the hours that they wish.

Even where provision is available, some parents/carers have reported that they are unable to find suitable childcare that meets their needs, and that they would use more hours if they were available.

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<sup>1</sup> [Chancellor unveils a Budget for growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-unveils-a-budget-for-growth)



The programme is designed to fund the initial setup or expansion of wraparound provision where there is clear demand, and remove the financial risk of setting up or expanding wraparound provision where sufficient demand is not guaranteed to sustain provision from the start (but where sufficient demand may be built over time as parents are assured of the supply of places).

Our aim for the programme is for the substantial majority of new/expanded provision to be **self-sustaining from the end of the planned programme** (i.e. 2026 onwards). By 'self-sustaining' we mean that it will be feasible for the provision to continue, funded by continued parental demand and payments, without the initial 'pump-prime' funding available under this programme. This means that local authorities should aim to have most of the new places available to parents by the beginning of the funding period, to allow for demand to grow and to give settings the best chance of becoming financially sustainable.

A secondary aim is to **test flexible ways of providing childcare and gather evidence of what works**. This inevitably involves some financial risk. We accept that it will not be possible for 100% of new or expanded provision to prove sustainable: the programme is designed to test new models of provision and generate additional demand where it is not currently guaranteed, including through over-supplying places to test if this helps to build demand.

Understanding where provision does not prove sustainable will contribute to a stronger evidence base on wraparound childcare: through the programme, we will be able to build our understanding of how to create a system that is financially sustainable, cohesive, and places the needs of parents and children at the centre.

## **Affordability and quality**

To ensure that provision is sustainable we must also address the **affordability** and **quality** of wraparound childcare. The programme should deliver provision that is child-centred, easily accessible, and responds to the needs of the families, including those of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Parents/carers will not use wraparound childcare if they do not feel confident that their children are safe and engaged. Local authorities should understand the minimum standards required across all wraparound settings, such as registration with Ofsted, and ways in which they can go further to develop a high-quality and sustainable wraparound provision.

Parents/carers will also not use wraparound if they cannot afford to pay for provision. We want to ensure that all parents/carers of primary school-aged children accessing wraparound and who are eligible for Universal Credit childcare (support for up to 85% subsidy of their costs) or Tax-Free Childcare (covering 20% of costs up to £2k a year) can use this financial support to help pay for wraparound. Local authorities should promote the use of Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit childcare and encourage providers to sign up to accept both.

## Vision for the programme

Since the budget announcement, we have been working with sector experts to understand the challenges and barriers that exist in the current system and what action we need to take to support the delivery of the programme. We have worked closely with 16 local authorities to co-design the programme. They were selected based on region, rural/urban areas, type of authority, level of deprivation and current level of wraparound provision, to provide a representative sample of the national picture.

All local authorities have their own unique strengths and challenges. The programme has been designed to provide maximum flexibility on how provision is delivered to enable local authorities to respond to the needs of their communities with appropriate support. This will maximise the capacity of local authorities to deliver the programme to ensure that the aims of the programme are met.

We have developed a collective vision for delivery of this programme.

- a. **Local authority-led:** building on their existing duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare in their local area, they will lead the strategy and delivery of the programme locally.
- b. **School-centred, with provision delivered by a variety of childcare providers.** Schools are uniquely placed to understand their communities and families. As happens now, we expect that the majority of parents will access childcare either through provision on a school site, or through the school signposting them to alternative local provision, for example PVIs and childminders. This approach reflects the diversity of delivery models for wraparound childcare and the need for coherence for parents.

In order to do this the programme needs to be:

- a. **Cohesive and collaborative** – the programme is an opportunity to build new relationships and strengthen existing relationships across local authority boundaries and with professionals.
- b. **Purposeful** – the programme needs strong leadership, with passion and shared motivation to provide the right support for families.
- c. **Reflective of the community** – the programme should be built on existing assets and understanding of the local community, which incorporates and does not disrupt and displace the existing wraparound childcare market.
- d. **Able to deliver** – the programme needs to be led by skilled staff and develop the skills and the capacity of the workforce.
- e. **High quality and inclusive** – the programme should provide provision that is child centred, easily accessible and listens to the needs of families.
- f. **Sustainable** – the programme needs to be sustainable for families and providers with the future always in mind.

## Key dates

Date	Activity
<b>October 2023</b>	<p>Department for Education announce capacity funding allocations</p> <p>Local authority programme handbook (version 1) published</p> <p>Local authority S31 grant determination letter published</p> <p>MoU issued to local authorities for signature</p> <p>Capital quantum announced</p>
<b>November 2023</b>	<p>Local authorities expected to start planning and preparation for rollout of national programme including any recruitment, if not already commenced</p> <p>Local authorities sign and return MoU</p>
<b>December 2023</b>	<p>Local authorities receive first capacity funding payment to support with employing local authority wraparound staff member/s, mapping provision and preparing for delivery</p>
<b>January 2024</b>	<p>Guidance for schools published</p> <p>Delivery support provider contract starts</p> <p>Updated version of programme handbook published, building on this version</p>
<b>February 2024</b>	<p>Local authorities submit delivery plan for use of local authority capacity funding</p>
<b>March 2024</b>	<p>LAs to submit completed supply and demand mapping data</p>
<b>April/May 2024</b>	<p>Some local areas supported to roll out the programme earlier</p>
<b>May 2024</b>	<p>Local authorities receive second local authority capacity funding grant payment</p> <p>LAs start to submit delivery plans for programme funding (7 May -14 June)</p>
<b>June</b>	<p>Deadline for local authorities to submit delivery plan for programme funding</p>

<b>June - July 2024</b>	Local authorities receive grant funding
<b>September 2024</b>	<b>Programme launch:</b> additional wraparound childcare places available for parents to access in all areas of the country
<b>End March 2026</b>	Funding for programme ends

There is the opportunity for some local authorities to begin delivery of the wraparound programme in the summer term 2024, rather than September. To be able to launch earlier, the local authority will also need to submit their mapping of supply and demand, and their delivery plan, at an earlier date. The total funding amount for the programme will remain the same for those who launch earlier.

For more information (including timings), or to express interest, please contact [wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk).

## Delivery of the programme – role of the local authority

Local authorities are responsible for delivering on the primary objective of the wraparound programme in their local area. That is, to increase parent/carers access to the labour market by increasing the number of wraparound childcare places for primary-aged children available and taken up between 8am and 6pm (or equivalent, depending on local labour market patterns).

They should use the funding available to them to create additional places and ensure existing places are available for the hours that are required, to:

- meet current demand – both in terms of number of places and hours available;
- ensure supply to build further demand; and
- where required, as traditional models of wraparound may not support sustainable provision, test new approaches to identify what works in their local area and identify the level of risk.

We expect local authorities to work collaboratively and in partnership with wraparound providers to deliver the programme.

## Summary of delivery model

The programme will be **delivered through local authorities**, given their existing sufficiency duty. The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to make sure that there are enough childcare places within its locality for working parents or for parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 to 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).<sup>2</sup> This programme's specific focus on children in reception to year 6 fits within this age range.

There will be funding for local authorities to build their internal capacity ('local authority capacity funding'), but the majority of the funding will be for local authorities to work with providers to set up new provision or expand existing provision ('programme funding').

The programme funding aims to **remove barriers to setting up new provision or expanding current provision**, including removing the financial risk of setting up new provision when demand is not guaranteed. It is based on a **'pump prime' model**, whereby relatively small amounts of government funds are provided to spur growth.

The initial funding will ensure that local areas can **increase the supply of wraparound** places. Over time, we expect to see an increase in the take-up of wraparound provision as parents are assured of the availability of places, combined with other government

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<sup>2</sup> [Childcare Act 2006 Chapter 21 Section 13 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/section/13)

interventions that will encourage and support parents to enter or increase their participation in the labour market.

Funding is intended to enable local areas to **test flexible ways** of providing childcare and gather evidence of what works, including if delivering provision before school from at least 8am and after school until 6pm (or equivalent, depending on local labour market patterns) is sustainable.

## **Working collaboratively and in partnership**

Schools are central to the delivery of the programme as they operate at the heart of the community, understand the needs of local families, and are usually the first port of call for parents for wraparound childcare. Wraparound provision should be set up around the needs of schools, given that it takes place directly before or after school hours, and should recognise the circumstances of each school. We expect that the majority of parents will access childcare either through provision on a school site (either provided directly by the school or by an external provider), or through the school signposting them to alternative local provision, for example PVI and childminders.

Whilst schools are integral to this programme, not all schools will provide wraparound childcare directly. For example, in some cases it may not be financially viable. However, we do expect all schools to work collaboratively with their local authorities to ensure parents are, at a minimum, signposted to appropriate provision. This could be on or off school site (provided parents are not required to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location or vice versa).

Local authorities may choose to deliver the additional places through working with local childminders, hubs/clusters, community-based provision, or adopt another delivery model, as well as more traditional schools-based models, whether run by schools directly or by PVI providers. The programme allows for and encourages some risk in testing different models as we build our understanding of what approaches will create the most sustainable market in the longer term.

Local authorities should then support schools to understand the availability of wraparound childcare in their area and ensure schools are communicating this to families. This will maximise the sustainability of the programme and ensure that parents can access the childcare they need to enable them to work.

We will also be appointing a delivery partner in January 2024 to support local authorities to mobilise and begin programme delivery (see page 26).

## **How should local authorities deliver this programme?**

The map below sets out the steps that local authorities need to take to be able to deliver provision for parents from September 2024 or sooner.

Local authorities should take the following key steps to deliver the programme:

1. Ensure **strong local leadership** through a **robust governance** structure
2. Allocate a **designated wraparound lead** and ensure appropriate resourcing
3. **Plan for delivery** – undertake supply and demand mapping, and identify delivery models for wraparound provision
4. **Complete and submit costed delivery plans** – local authority capacity and programme delivery plans
5. Allocate **funding to providers**
6. Work with providers to **set up provision**
7. **Promote the National Wraparound Childcare programme** to providers and parents

## 1. Ensure strong local leadership through a robust governance structure

Each local authority should ensure that robust governance structures are in place to provide oversight of delivery. Good governance is required to ensure that any decisions relating to programme delivery can be made quickly and effectively. Local authority leadership teams should have a shared commitment to the wraparound agenda and actively engage with the wraparound lead to ensure the successful delivery of the programme.

Consideration needs to be given to where wraparound childcare sits strategically within local authorities to maximise opportunities and build on existing governance structures, experience and expertise. This will ensure that the allocated wraparound lead is able to engage and communicate with colleagues both within the local authority and across the wider childcare sector to maximise the success of the programme.

Governance structures should be clear and transparent to ensure clarity of responsibility and accountability. Local authorities will be expected to provide information on governance structures in the first delivery plan due to be submitted to the department. Governance should be inclusive of delivery partners and key stakeholders (for example, the Director of Childrens Services, trust CEOs, headteachers, parents and others), to ensure that priorities are shared and understood, and that all parties encourage and challenge each other to deliver positive outcomes. You may wish to use existing governance structures where appropriate, for example, EY reference groups.

### Case study: Cambridgeshire

In Cambridgeshire County Council, wraparound sits within the Early Years, Childcare and School Readiness Service, which is in the Education Directorate. The Education Director is responsible for the strategic and operational oversight of schools, early years and childcare settings and place planning. The Directorate reports to the County Council Children and Young People's Committee. The Service works closely with the place planning team, schools, and a wide range of childcare providers to secure sufficient high quality childcare places to meet parent/carer demand. There is a commissioned arrangement to support childminder development and strong links with Health, Public Health, Child and Family Centres, Ofsted, DfE, Social Care, SEND and other key partners and agencies, managed through a strong ethos of integrated working.

A range of other teams sit alongside wraparound, including business governance, intervention, safeguarding, SEND and vulnerable groups, workforce development, funding and HAF as well as Early Years and Childcare Advisers. This has created strong relationships within teams across the local authority, and will support a coordinated, innovative approach to the delivery of the wraparound programme.

## 2. Allocate a designated wraparound lead and ensure appropriate resourcing

Each local authority **must** have at least one designated wraparound lead. This can be an individual with a specific 'wraparound' role or be part of an individual's wider duties. They should also have appropriate additional resource to deliver the programme. This will look different in each local authority, but local authority capacity funding could be used to fund this.

DfE will offer maximum flexibility for local authorities to decide where and how the programme will sit and operate within the local authority, but the wraparound designated lead **should** establish links with schools, childcare, quality assurance, local safeguarding partnerships, and business support teams within the local authority.

It will also be important to the success of the programme for the wraparound lead to establish links with internal comms teams, community representatives, and wider government representatives (for example local job centres) to raise awareness of the programme and increase availability of provision.

If your local authority does not have an existing wraparound team in place, you will need to recruit a designated wraparound lead. To support with the recruitment of a designated



wraparound staff member, a template job description can be found in Annex A. Using this template is optional.

Local authorities need to ensure that all providers are aware of their named contact.

Although some local authorities may choose to employ a consultant to carry out supply and demand mapping, they must still ensure that there is a named person responsible for wraparound within the local authority in line with the programme requirements.

### 3. Plan for delivery

#### Mapping supply and demand

Local authorities already have a legal duty to complete an annual childcare sufficiency assessment.<sup>3</sup> Each local authority must map the supply and demand of wraparound provision within their areas. This is needed to make decisions about what to fund and where.

This is an important step for the programme, and we expect local authorities to:

- Work with **all** wraparound childcare providers in the local area. This is essential as they will have relevant information, direct engagement with parents/carers and understand the local need to support with mapping future demand once provision is available.
- Work with job centres on an ongoing basis to understand the potential for further unmet demand as a result of their work and as the availability of provision increases. This will be necessary to effectively map the supply and demand across the authority, and for the wraparound lead to be able to provide the appropriate support to providers.
- Work with and be supported by colleagues in the local authority to ensure the designated wraparound lead has the information they need to map supply and demand in local areas.

This mapping will allow local authorities to develop a local plan for provision, including any commissioning activity, based on knowledge of local supply and demand.

Consideration should be given to mapping potential future demand and understanding of the likely demand trajectory for the duration of the programme and beyond.

#### Data collection

Local authorities should ensure that when they map their provision, they distinguish between the different types of provision that are available, the number of places available

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<sup>3</sup> [Childcare Act 2006 Chapter 21 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21)

and being used, number of places where demand is not being met, and the number of providers offering 'full' wraparound, from 8am to 6pm.

Local authorities should already hold data on the supply in their area given their current duties. Collecting the following data should support the mapping of supply and demand and enable local authorities to meet the data collection requirement for the monitoring of the programme.

Local authorities must consider the following when **mapping supply**:

- number of schools, private providers, and childminders offering before and after school provision and the times that the provision is available.
- number of schools, private providers, and childminders offering 8am to 6pm (or equivalent) model;
- number of places available and used;
- number of available places for children with additional needs in special schools and the demand in their area.

Local authorities might consider the following when **mapping and predicting demand**:

- number of children on waiting lists in schools, private providers, and childminders who need wraparound childcare;
- number of places that need to be created to meet demand;
- number of available places schools, private providers, and childminders have to expand to meet demand;
- information on cost per hour / session;
- number of staff delivering wraparound and required to meet demand;
- information from job centres and other partners that may help to assess potential demand.

**Annex B** and the case study below provides some tips on the ways local authorities can collect data from providers, and data sources that are publicly available.

### **Case study: Hull**

In Hull, we believe that understanding local data and establishing strong relationships across our local authority is key to the delivery of this programme. Within Hull local authority, wraparound sits within a team which has responsibility for early education funding, nursery uptake, eligibility SEND, Ofsted and the Family Information service. This means we are able to gather and share data easily between us; alongside knowledge and expertise.

We also know our providers and schools very well, which enables us to understand the current supply of wraparound provision across Hull. We are confident that all schools in Hull already offer a breakfast club for every child. Therefore, we will be focusing our efforts on increasing after school provision in and around 44 schools. Our plan to map future demand is to look at the data we collect on 3- and 4-year-old extended hours as this is a useful indication, and we will continue to collect data from families, schools, and providers to ensure we create new and sustainable wraparound places to meet the needs of our local families. Developing an understanding of the data we already hold has helped us to establish what capacity we need to build in the team, to undertake any future supply and demand mapping.

We recognise the different challenges schools and providers face, and we aim to work collaboratively, encouraging professional respect across the sector. Schools, PVI, childminders and CMAs are all unique and equally as important to children and families. We plan to develop a working group to bring providers together to establish a shared vision and we want to ensure schools feel supported by us and engaged with the process from the beginning.

The level of data required to map supply and demand should be proportionate. It should aim to minimise the burden on wraparound childcare providers and avoid potential GDPR breaches while ensuring that data is available to meet the monitoring requirements of the programme.

Further information will be provided in the next iteration of this handbook about the requirements for how often the data will be collected and when local authorities will need to submit the data, but there will be a requirement to submit the mapping of supply and understanding of demand in March.

### **Types of provision and delivery models**

Once there is a good understanding of supply and demand, and before delivery plans can be finalised, local authorities will need to work with schools and all other providers to

identify which delivery models would be most effective in which contexts, in order to meet and build local demand.

Regardless of which model/models are used, we expect provision to be inclusive and to meet the needs of parents and children who use it. This means that sufficient supply and demand mapping should be carried out **before** any delivery models are proposed for new provision.

This will ensure that it is the model that best meet the needs of children and parents in that local area, and that it builds upon and complements any existing local provision. This will also help ensure wraparound childcare is sustainable.

Example delivery models could include the following, although this list is neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive; there may well be overlap between some of these models:

- **School-led provision delivered by school staff on a school site**

Provision that operates on school premises, managed by staff employed directly by a school. The provision is open to all children in that school.

- **Private provider-led provision, on or off school site**

Provision that is operated and delivered by staff employed by a private provider. If based on a school site, the private provider may rent space from the school to be able to operate provision. Provision could also be operated on another site rather than on school premises.

- **Community/cluster model**

The local authority co-ordinates a community-focused model with children from multiple schools attending provision on one site. This could be operated by a lead school, a private provider, a community organisation or any other appropriate body.

- **Childminders**

Provision delivered by childminders (registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency), which schools and local authorities signpost to. This could consist of a group of childminders working together on a single site or childminders working individually from their homes.

- **Early years providers**

Provision delivered by early years providers which may take school aged children during wraparound hours. For example, a local nursery or a pre-school operating on or off a school site may run the provision before and after school hours.

There is no one-size-fits-all model across or within local authorities and all delivery models have different benefits and drawbacks. For example, a schools-based model may not work as well in a small school, where there may not be sufficient demand for it to be

sustainable even when taking into account that demand may build over time. In this situation, drawing on local childminders may be the most appropriate model, or delivering a community-based model and providing transport from several local schools (recognising that some capital funding is available).

Most areas are already delivering a combination of different models, which we actively encourage. We also encourage local authorities and providers to consider testing new and innovative models where appropriate.

#### **Case study: Gateshead**

In Gateshead, a range of innovative delivery models are used to provide school-aged childcare. One example is The Bridges Nursery which provides wraparound to approximately 17 primary schools situated across the central area of Gateshead. The nursery has dedicated space to operate this provision and offers a safe pick up/drop off service. Although only small numbers of children are picked up from each school, via bus, car or walking bus, this is an important service for families where there is insufficient demand to run sustainable out of school provision in individual school sites. Children have usually attended the nursery when they were younger so they are already familiar with the staff and building. Operating the provision in this way allows parents to collect their nursery children at the same time as their older children, so avoids them having to travel to different locations.

## **4. Complete and submit costed delivery plans**

Once supply and demand have been mapped, and delivery models have been developed that aim to meet and build demand, local authorities are required to develop costed delivery plans. These costed delivery plans must be submitted for each grant payment.

### **Local authority delivery plans**

In February 2024, local authorities must submit their first delivery plan – a **local authority capacity plan**. This delivery plan will set out planned use of local authority capacity funding for the duration of the grant period (Annex C). It will cover two spend categories: 'local authority capacity staff', and 'local authority capacity other'. In addition, local authorities must submit information about programme governance and staffing structure, including confirmation of appointment/plans to appoint a wraparound lead. We recognise that requirements may change as local authorities undertake more detailed planning, and therefore local authorities may update their capacity plan when they submit their programme delivery plans.

The second delivery plan – the **local authority programme delivery plan** – must be submitted between 7 May and 14 June 2024. This will set out the planned use of funding for the duration of the programme up until 2026. As a minimum, the programme delivery plan will cover:

- **Strategy:**
  - assessment of supply and demand of wraparound places
  - delivery challenges
  - summary of approach to be taken (referring to delivery models set out in page 20)
  
- **Planned activity:**
  - planned number of additional childcare places to be created
  - assessment of addition places by provider type and level of confidence in delivery and sustainability
  - milestone plan setting out activity in relation to the creation and take up of additional places
  - additional planned activity to support the creation and take up of places but not tied to the delivery of specific places e.g., workforce training, communication with parents/employers
  - funding required

Local authorities will be required to provide an update to the programme delivery plan, including a report on progress, in both February and November 2025.

We will publish further guidance in January 2024, to include the role of the contracted delivery partner to provide support for local authorities when completing their plans.

### **Managing risk**

We know that there will be providers in the local authority that have tried to set up provision without success, or their provision has closed due to lack of demand.

As set out previously, it is unlikely that 100% of new or expanded provision will prove sustainable. In getting the balance right between investing in sustainable provision and testing flexible ways of providing wraparound childcare, we are asking local authorities to consider the following:

- Once local authorities have mapped supply and demand, and considered delivery models, they should include an assessment about how much of the planned new/expanded provision is low, medium, and high risk, in terms of how likely it is that both the demand generated and type of supply put in place prove sustainable.
- The majority of funding and efforts should be focussed on provision where demand and supply suggest likelihood of sustainability is high, and provision that is low risk should be prioritised for support ahead of testing and innovation. This could include testing some ‘oversupply’ models, whereby significant additional demand needs to be built before it can be sustainable.
- It will be important to keep sight of what proportion of your proposed delivery is relatively higher risk. This may change over time.
- It will be important for local authorities to communicate with DfE and the Delivery Partner if opportunities to test riskier provision that the programme could gain

valuable learning from are identified, which might require higher proportions of funding.

## **Reporting on progress**

We will require local authorities to report to the department on progress against their agreed delivery plan. This will include progress reporting against delivery of activities to support the creation of additional wraparound places along with supply and demand of wraparound childcare places.

In addition to progress reporting the department will undertake regular data collection from local authorities. Further detail on data collection is set out in the MoU / section 31 grant determination letter.

## **5. Allocate funding to providers**

Local authorities are responsible for allocating and administering payments to wraparound childcare providers.

Local authorities will need to set out a transparent process for dispersing funding to childcare providers and ensuring robust funding agreements are in place. Decisions about the dispersal of funding should be driven by the outcome of mapping, the local authority strategy/delivery models, and consideration of risk as set out above. Funding should be frontloaded (as LA allocations will be) to ensure that as much provision is available from the beginning of the programme as possible. This is to allow for time for demand to grow and increase the likelihood of provision becoming financially sustainable before the funding period ends.

Local authorities should ensure that funding agreements include requirements to gather the management information necessary for grant assurance and programme reporting.

Local authorities should be aware that funding agreements with childcare providers and suppliers are made 'at risk' until DfE have confirmed agreement with delivery plans. Local authorities should plan to ensure that funding agreements are finalised, and funding dispersed in line with programme delivery timelines.

Further information can be found in the funding section on page 28.

## **6. Working with providers to set up provision**

Once funding allocations have been made, local authorities should work with schools and other providers to set up new provision and scale up existing provision to create more places where needed, including ensuring all existing places are available full time.

This will require local authorities to build and maintain strong relationships with schools, trusts, PVI's (including childminders) and others within and across local authorities. Local

authorities should consider other teams and organisations in their area – and beyond – who may be able to support the successful delivery of places.

In particular, LAs should engage closely with schools and providers who are already delivering wraparound childcare, to explore their potential to expand, either in terms of hours or in terms of places available. LAs should also engage with existing HAF suppliers to harness their ability to support the programme, build continuity for families and support sustainability for providers, both private and schools.

Local authorities will need to ensure they are engaging with school trusts that operate in their area and consider the specific role that they could play in setting up provision across several schools. This may require local authorities to liaise with each other, especially where a trust works across several authority boundaries.

### **Support for providers**

We expect that local authorities will be able to dedicate more resource to offer business support to wraparound providers, as capacity within a local authority increases through local authority capacity funding.

As a minimum, all schools and other providers should know who their named wraparound contact is, although some providers may require additional business support in setting up and expanding wraparound provision. Where needed, local authorities should support providers to plan for the full extent of the activity that is needed before delivery can begin, whether that is Ofsted registration, workforce considerations, quality of provision, payment mechanisms and contracts, space and facilities, or anything else. Further information will be provided in early 2024.

Effective business support will help strengthen relationships between local authorities and wraparound providers, assure local authorities and the department that funding is being used appropriately, and enable delivery models to be chosen that are more likely to be sustainable in the longer term.

Local authorities should encourage providers to take a sustainable business approach to planning and signpost providers to resources to support them, for example [the business sustainability tool kit](#), the resources provided by the [Out of School Alliance](#), the [National Day Nurseries Association Early Years and Childcare training courses](#), and the [Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years' \(PACEY\) Business Smart resource](#).

## **7. Promoting wraparound childcare**

To ensure the success of the programme, local authorities should promote the availability of wraparound childcare in their areas to both providers and parents to stimulate and build parental demand. This will build on the engagement undertaken to map supply and



demand in their area and active engagement with providers, parents, and other partners, including job centres.

The department will provide local authorities with a communications toolkit that can be used to support with sharing messaging about what the programme is, the availability of provision and what support will be provided. This will be available to local authorities in early 2024.

In the meantime, and to support local authorities with any questions they receive, we have included a local authority information sheet (see Annex D) which should help parents and providers understand what they should expect from their local authorities and when they can expect new places to be available.

## **Parents and carers**

Local authorities should be clear on what is included as part of the wraparound care offer – including the scope outlined above – when communicating with parents.

Local authorities should consider using parent-facing communication materials, including social media, to support and drive demand for wraparound. Local authorities are encouraged to focus and target communication towards parents who may be most at need of before- and after-school childcare services (for example, those looking to move into work or extend their working hours or single parents).

There are existing routes that local authorities can use to promote wraparound childcare and ensure parents can access information on what is available to them, for example their Family Information Service or equivalent local authority website.

Local authorities should maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive Family Information Service or equivalent local authority website that includes information on what wraparound provision is available for parents in their local area. This should also include information for schools and providers about the programme and how they can introduce or expand wraparound provision. This must be updated termly as a minimum.<sup>4</sup>

As part of the programme and beyond the funding period, parents will be expected to pay for the wraparound they use. However, eligible parents will be able to use government subsidies such as Tax-Free Childcare and the childcare element of Universal Credit against payment for registered childcare (see page 41). Local authorities should be clear on this expectation when communicating with parents, as this may differ from their experiences using Early Years entitlements. Local authorities should also consider working with providers to help raise awareness of Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit support directly with the families who use their provision. Materials to help

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<sup>4</sup> Section C.1 of [Early education and childcare - Statutory guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/early-education-and-childcare-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf)

providers to raise awareness of support available can be found in [the Childcare Parent Communications Toolkit](#).

Local authorities should also consider linking to the wraparound programme from other parts of their website, for example through a local authority HAF or Family Hubs website.

## Information for schools

To enable schools to signpost parents to local provision where wraparound is not being delivered on site, local authorities should, as a minimum, provide schools with a list of local providers and ensure that schools know how to contact the designated wraparound childcare lead. This will help schools to answer questions quickly and provide parents with the information they need to make decisions about their childcare.

## Support for local authorities

### Support from DfE

The department is committed to working collaboratively with local authorities throughout this programme and aims to provide support alongside the delivery partner.

All local authorities have a regional lead within DfE, and local authorities are encouraged to continue to raise concerns with them as well as contacting the wraparound team via [wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk) for specific programme concerns.

The department will retain the responsibility for funding throughout the duration of the programme and be your point of contact for concerns about this issue.

We will continue to work with the co-design group of local authorities and other experts in the sector to understand operational challenges and respond quickly to any concerns.

We also aim to host regular webinars where we will provide updated information about the programme.

### Delivery partner

We are contracting with **a delivery partner, to be in place from January 2024, to provide additional support and expertise to local authorities.**

They will provide support to both the department and local authorities. The delivery partner will support local authorities in the following ways:

- Understanding local supply and demand, and to put in place delivery plans that will create sufficient provision to meet current and drive future demand.
- Identifying and sharing best practice through networks, including supporting innovation.

- Provide support to deliver activities set out in delivery plans.
- Provide expert support to local authorities to enable the expansion or set up of wraparound childcare.

The delivery partner will take a flexible approach, offering a range of support which local authorities can access dependent on their needs and delivery progress.

Further information about the role of the delivery partner, alongside details about how local authorities should work with them, will be published in January 2024.

## **Peer support**

Throughout the co-design process, we have heard that peer support is an invaluable tool for local authorities. We strongly encourage local authorities to collaborate and share best practice with one another wherever possible, and to establish peer networks.

The delivery partner will also support the establishment and facilitation of networks and forums, building on what exists already, for local authorities to share best practice, discuss concerns, and build relationships across the country. Further information will be provided in due course.

## Funding available to local authorities

Local authorities will receive both programme and capital grant funding to deliver the wraparound programme in their area.

Capital grant funding will be paid separately to the programme funding. Detailed guidance on capital funding allocations, how this funding should be spent, along with terms and conditions for the funding, will be published separately.

The guidance provided in this handbook is **only** for the local authority capacity and programme grant funding.

## Programme funding allocations and allocation method

Local authorities will receive a section 31 non-ringfenced programme grant to deliver the wraparound programme in their area. The grant includes funding for local authority capacity as well as programme funding to deliver new and expanded wraparound childcare. Details of the programme grant funding allocation for each local authority can be found in the [section 31 grant determination letter](#).

The local authority programme grant funding allocation methodology uses school census data on availability of wraparound childcare in primary schools as a proxy for the current estimated 'gap' in wraparound provision. This is the best nationally available evidence of current supply of wraparound childcare. Programme funding allocations are proportionate to the number of primary schools in each local authority that do not have full wraparound childcare, to ensure funding is tilted towards the areas where there is greatest need.

Although schools are used as a proxy to determine need across the local authority and to therefore determine the proportion of the overall funding pot each local authority receives, it does not mean that local authorities need to fund wraparound childcare at these specific schools. Local authorities should decide where to prioritise funding based on the outcome of mapping work.

The programme funding is tapered, with significantly higher funding allocations in financial year (FY) 2024-25 than in 2025-26. This reflects the expectation that programme funding is used to increase supply of wraparound places from September 2024 and that, as take-up of provision increases, and therefore income from parental payments increases, the level of grant funding needed to contribute to running costs to ensure sustainability reduces. Local authorities should determine how to apply the funding taper in their area.

The funding taper principle does not apply to the local authority capacity portion of the grant; local authorities may apply this at a consistent level through the duration of the funding period.

## **What programme funding can be used for**

Local authorities should use their programme funding to fund new and expanded wraparound provision, either to meet current demand or guarantee supply to build future demand. Local authorities should also plan activity that supports growth of future demand, for example, improved communication with parents and advice on use of Universal Credit and Tax-Free Childcare.

Local authorities should decide how to use their grant funding to best achieve programme outcomes given the context in their local area, and in line with the delivery model/s adopted by the local authority. This is likely to include dispersal of funding to schools and childcare providers (including childminders) to contribute to start-up/expansion and running costs. Childcare provision funded from this grant must meet the definition of wraparound childcare, i.e., be available directly before and after the school day, from 8am to 6pm (or equivalent, if data shows that local demand is for different hours) during school term time for primary school-age children. It may be run on a school site or at another setting. It should not require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location.

Programme funding can be used to cover costs including staffing, training, and transport costs such as minibus hire (not purchase, although capital funding could be used for this), as well as resources. It can also be used to contribute to running costs whilst demand builds, to remove any financial risk to providers of offering additional places before demand is guaranteed.

Funding can also be used to pay for training for wraparound staff, including specialist training for staff to ensure they feel equipped to support children with additional needs. Capital funding (provided separately) can be used so providers can ensure that inclusive provision is set up from the beginning, by using it to establish inclusive spaces and buy inclusive equipment and resources.

## **What programme funding cannot be used for**

The funding should not be used to subsidise the cost of places. Any places created through the programme should be paid for by parents. Parents will be able to use Universal Credit childcare support for up to 85% subsidy of their costs, and eligible parents can use Tax-Free Childcare to subsidise costs, covering 20% of costs up to £2k a year (or up to £4k for disabled children up to age 16).

The programme grant funding should not be used to contribute to the running cost of existing wraparound childcare places. This does not prevent use of funding to contribute to costs of expanding existing provision to create new childcare places.

The programme grant funding should also not be used for:

- i. contributions in kind
- ii. payments for activities of a political or exclusively religious nature
- iii. depreciation, repayment or impairment of assets already owned by the local authority
- iv. the purchasing or improvement of assets
- v. equipment or supplies which have an expected shelf life of more than one year where either the purchase price is in excess of £500 or is a group of lower value items where the combined value is in excess of £500 (Capital funding must be used for such purchases. Local authorities can use the Childcare Expansion Capital Grant funding.)
- vi. input VAT reclaimable by the authority from HM Revenue & Customs
- vii. interest payments or service charge payments for finance leases
- viii. gifts, other than promotional items, with a value of more than £10 in a year to any one person
- ix. entertaining (entertaining for this purpose means anything that would be a taxable benefit to the person being entertained, according to current UK tax regulations)
- x. statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties.

Information on eligible expenditure and exclusions can be found in the MoU issued to local authorities.

## **What local authority capacity funding can be used for**

There will be initial costs associated with setting up and establishing a new programme, as well as ongoing costs incurred by the local authority to deliver this programme. Local authorities should use a reasonable proportion of their overall grant for local authority capacity costs, including staffing, administration, and any other internal costs associated with the delivery of this programme. It is expected that the median average proportion of funding used for local authority capacity is 11%. However, local authorities with relatively low total allocations may need to use a higher proportion of funding to ensure sufficient capacity. 100% of the FY 2023-24 payment is intended to fund local authority capacity costs.

In FY 2024-25 and 2025-26, local authorities that need more than 11% of funding for internal capacity can request this via the delivery plan.

## **Grant determination letter**

The [section 31 grant determination letter](#) outlines the amount allocated to each local authority for each FY.

The grant determination letter includes provisional allocations for future FYs. DfE reserves the right to review the allocation methodology in line with new evidence or policy direction and amend future FY allocations accordingly.

Local authorities **must** abide by the conditions detailed in the grant determination letter and MoU.

## Memorandum of Understanding

Alongside the S31 grant determination letter, each local authority’s Director of Children’s Services will be issued with an MoU for signature. The MoU is a non-legally binding document that sets out the agreement between the local authority and the Secretary of State relating to the payment to the local authority of the grant funding for the delivery of the programme. Whilst this is non-legally binding, local authorities are expected to use the programme funding in line with the expectations in the MoU.

The Section 151 Officer/Chief Finance Officer for each local authority must sign and return the MoU as required. On receipt of the signed MoU, DfE will make the first grant payment. These will be paid from December 2023 onwards.

The MoU sets out the purpose of the grant and expectations of management and use of the grant, including, funding arrangements, reporting and evaluation requirements and eligible expenditure.

## Grant payment schedule

Payments will be made to the following schedule and upon receipt of the documentation detailed below.

<b>October 23</b>	Local authority allocations and grant determination letter published. MoU issued to local authorities
<b>November 23 onwards</b>	Local authorities sign and return the MoU to DfE
<b>December 23</b>	<b>Grant payment 1 FY 2023-24</b> – local authority capacity funding paid when MoU signed
<b>23 February 24</b>	Local authorities submit <b>local authority capacity plan</b>
<b>May 24</b>	<b>Grant payment 2 FY 2024-25</b> – local authority capacity funding paid once capacity delivery plan approved
<b>7 May - 14 June 24</b>	Window for local authorities to submit <b>local authority programme delivery plan</b>
<b>June 24 – July 24</b>	DfE confirm <b>local authority programme delivery plan</b> approval and <b>grant payment 3 FY 2024-25</b> made
<b>21 February 25</b>	Local authorities submit <b>local authority programme delivery plan update 1</b>

<b>May 25</b>	<b>Grant payment 4 FY 2025-26</b> – programme funding paid once delivery plan update approved
<b>November 25</b>	Local authorities submit programme local authority <b>delivery plan update 2</b>
<b>April 26</b>	<b>Grant payment 5 FY 2025-26</b> – <b>final</b> programme funding paid in arrears upon completion of final reporting requirements

Each grant payment is contingent on the local authority:

- i. returning the signed MoU before receipt of the first payment
- ii. submitting, of sufficient quality for DfE approval, a costed capacity delivery plan before receipt of the second payment, a costed programme delivery plan before receipt of the third payment and a delivery plan update for DfE approval before each subsequent payment
- iii. completing all required programme reporting and evaluation activity
- iv. completing a Statement of Grant Usage (see template at Annex E) at the end of each financial year, by the required deadlines
- v. having and making available, as required, a transparent process for allocating funding to suppliers and/or childcare providers
- vi. ensuring they have sufficient capacity to deliver the programme requirements, using a reasonable proportion of the grant to cover the costs incurred
- vii. ensuring that where funding is dispersed to PVI childcare providers, including childminders, all such childcare providers are registered with Ofsted (or in the case of childminders, Ofsted or a childminder agency) to provide school-age childcare before childcare provision commences
- viii. having in place a process to monitor and mitigate the risk of childcare providers receiving double funding for the same activities.

## Grant assurance

Local authorities are required to comply with DfE grant assurance processes and must submit a Statement of Grant Usage (see Annex E) by the following dates:

<b>29 April 24</b>	End of FY 2023-24 Statement of Grant Usage
<b>28 April 25</b>	End of FY 2024-25 Statement of Grant Usage
<b>28 April 26</b>	End of FY 2025-26 Statement of Grant Usage

The End of FY Statement of Grant Usage must be signed by the section 151 Officer/Chief Finance Officer and returned to [wraparound.finance@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.finance@education.gov.uk).



## Role of the providers

### Expectations of all providers

Childcare providers are key to the success of the programme. All childcare providers who want to take part in the programme, regardless of whether they are schools, private or voluntary organisations, or childminders, should:

- **Work collaboratively** with local authorities.
- Respond to **data collection requests** from local authorities promptly.
- **Adhere to statutory guidance**, including to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensure their provision is **inclusive** and has considered the needs of all children, including those with **SEND and additional needs**.
- Where appropriate, **promote availability of government childcare subsidies** to parents, including Tax-Free childcare and Universal Credit childcare elements.
- Where in receipt of funding for the programme comply with funding and assurance requirements as set out in the funding agreement with their local authority.
- Deliver provision that aligns with the **quality principles**, including the requirement for all private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers to be Ofsted registered, or in the case of childminders, to be registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency. Further information can be found on page 36.

### Schools and trusts

All schools, regardless of whether they provide wraparound themselves or not, will play a critical role in the success of the programme. Schools are uniquely placed – at the heart of their communities – to understand the needs of families and the support they require. In most cases, schools are the first port of call for parents who need wraparound childcare. Therefore, in a coherent system, all schools should support the availability of wraparound. Schools should:

- **Respond to their communities' needs for wraparound.** There is an existing expectation that schools respond to parents' requests for wraparound childcare. Schools also have a duty to respond to childcare providers' requests to use school facilities to deliver childcare.<sup>5</sup>
- **Report to their local authority where they have unmet demand.** Schools should respond to requests from local authorities around demand for wraparound

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<sup>5</sup> [Rights to Request Childcare Guidance 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414447/Childcare-Guidance-2019.pdf)

in their schools and inform local authorities where they have requests from parents that they cannot meet.

- **Communicate wraparound options to parents.** With the support of their local authority, schools should signpost accessible local provision to parents. This could be delivered by schools themselves, or by other childcare providers including childminders.

Multi-academy trusts should determine roles and responsibilities in relation to the wraparound programme based on existing governance arrangements. In all instances, they should work closely with local authorities and other providers of wraparound to meet local need.

We will publish further guidance in early 2024, which will include support for schools and trusts.

## Private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector

The PVI sector is critical to the successful delivery of the programme. PVI providers represent a significant proportion of the market, they are experts in the field, and they have a wealth of resources and experience. Local authorities should work closely with the PVIs working in their area, not only on existing wraparound provision but also those offering holiday provision, including HAF, seek out others who may be looking to expand into their area, and identify what role they can play in the expansion of wraparound provision.

Existing providers are also likely to have useful information about demand in the local area, which might not be currently visible to the local authority.

Providers themselves will also have an important role in communicating the offer to parents/carers with whom they have existing relationships. They should continue to build on the good working relationships that they have with their local authority. The programme is an opportunity for providers to build connections and form strong partnerships with schools and trusts, as well as to explore opportunities to work with other providers to maximise the sustainability of wraparound provision.

## Childminders

Childminders have a direct connection between children and families and provide flexible childcare options to meet their needs. They will also be critical to the success of this programme, particularly where there is not enough local demand to make larger provision sustainable.

They should engage with their local authority to understand the potential opportunities available to work in partnership with other childminders, schools and private providers.

At Spring Budget on 15 March 2023, we announced the Childminder Start-up Grant Scheme. This Scheme will provide start-up grants to new childminders and is worth up to £7.2m over the next two financial years. The grant takes into account the likely costs of registration, which include undertaking training in first aid and applying for Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks.

The grant a childminder receives will depend on whether they register with Ofsted (£600) or a childminder agency (£1200). The grants will be payable to new childminders who have completed their childminder registration on or after 15 March 2023. New childminders will be able to apply for the grant by 30 November 2023.

## **Interactions with early years provision**

Local authorities must use programme funding to set up or expand provision to increase the availability of wraparound care for the programme's target age group, namely children in year groups from reception to year 6.

Local authorities may be interested in expanding existing early years provision to accommodate primary school-aged wraparound, using funding through this programme. Local authorities may wish to map which early years providers offer school-aged wraparound and explore whether expansion of such provision would enable efficiencies to be made on space, staff and equipment.

Where there are queries or specific sufficiency concerns around early years provision, local authorities should liaise with relevant early years officials in the department. In the first instance, this can be through regular conversations with DfE's early years regional leads.

## Expectations for the provision of wraparound childcare

While the availability of places is the primary objective of this programme, ensuring children are safe and engaged in inclusive and high-quality childcare is vital to the sustainability of provision. Settings should inspire confidence in families by ensuring children's time in wraparound is fun, engaging and something that they want to attend.

### Quality

High-quality wraparound childcare is already being delivered in many settings, using a variety of delivery models. Existing provision delivers a wide range of different play opportunities and activities, based on the interests, ages and numbers of children attending, and the spaces in which the provision takes place.

### Ofsted registration requirement

To ensure minimum safe standards in wraparound childcare provision, all PVI providers and childminders funded through the wraparound programme must be registered with Ofsted, or in the case of childminders, Ofsted, or a childminder agency.

Dependent on the nature of the provision and the age range of children, this includes registration on the General Childcare Register (GCR) and the Early Years Register (EYR). Schools providing wraparound childcare directly, as part of their governance arrangements, do not need to register on either the GCR or EYR, however they must adhere to the same standards.

More information on Ofsted registration, including exemptions, is available here:

[Registering school-based provision with Ofsted \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671212/Ofsted-Registration-Requirements-2020.pdf).

### Quality and safety considerations

While maximising the availability of provision in general, local authorities should also consider the following factors when choosing to fund a childcare provider. They should also consider how they can support schools and providers to continue to work towards delivering higher quality provision over time, including whether there is a need for LA-supported qualifications and training.

1. **Premises and facilities** – are safe, suitable, and meet children's needs.
2. **Environment** – is safe, welcoming, non-stigmatising, and inclusive.
3. **Staff-child interaction** – when working with children, those who provide care are empathetic, considered, and child-focused.
4. **Voice of the child** – those who provide care facilitate child-led, choice-based activity and play.
5. **Resources** – are safe, stimulating, varied, age appropriate, and able to meet children's needs.

6. **Inclusion** – provision is accessible to all children.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. We want all wraparound settings to be a safe and happy place for children, and for parents, carers, and families to feel confident that their child is well looked after and that robust safeguarding arrangements are in place.

We encourage all local authorities to work closely with their local safeguarding children partnership to:

- make them aware of the wraparound programme and what it can offer;
- ensure that they can support the programme to put safeguarding arrangements in place.

Local authorities should ensure that their local safeguarding partners understand the wraparound programme and those working on the delivery of the programme are familiar with the [working together to safeguard children](#) guidance.

We expect local authorities to be able to demonstrate that those involved in the delivery of the wraparound programme in their area are competent and have received adequate training and support.

Local authorities are expected to produce and maintain a central register of all the providers they fund through their wraparound programme and to put in place a system for ensuring all adhere to the standards set out in this guidance.

All childcare providers registered on the Early Years Childcare register must also meet the safeguarding requirements set out in section 3 of [Statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage](#).

## Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

Schools and colleges in England must have regard to the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

When wraparound childcare is provided by the governing body or proprietor of a school, under the direct supervision or management of their school staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. Where governing bodies or proprietors hire or rent out school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals they should seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in

place for the provider to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

## Inclusivity

It is important to recognise the different needs of the children who will be accessing wraparound care and ensure that new and existing provision is accessible to all, including children with complex needs and those in specialist school settings.

All providers are expected to make reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities, in accordance with their duties under the Equality Act 2010, whether or not they have SEND. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) are clear that if a reasonable adjustment is needed to enable children with disabilities to attend childcare, **providers must pay for it**, not parents.

All local authorities in England are required to publish a local offer for children with SEND. This is to provide information in one place: detailing the services and activities that families can find locally and how to access them. We would expect local authorities to include the wraparound offer with the existing local offer.

## Special schools and alternative provision

We expect local authorities to factor all schools into their mapping activity, although we understand that traditional school-based wraparound models may not be feasible outside of mainstream settings, given the additional staffing requirements and the potential impact on cost for parents. Where demand is identified for pupils attending non-mainstream schools, local authorities should work with schools to establish appropriate provision where possible.

Schools should communicate the local available offer to parents of the children that attend their school to ensure equal opportunities for all children.

We are working with local authorities, parents and others to understand what additional support is needed beyond the parameters of this programme.

## Staffing

Local authorities should ensure providers are aware of requirements to ensure staff are trained, supported and provided with appropriate equipment in order to provide flexible and responsive care in line with government guidance.

Staffing levels and ratios should be determined on an individual basis according to the different levels of need of the children attending each provider, taking into account that some children with the highest needs may require 1:1 support.

## Case study: Norfolk

As Norfolk is a large county, we rely on childminders for much of our childcare provision, so our aim is to raise the profile and promote the professionalism and uniqueness of the childminding profession in particular.

As part of our SEND transformation programme, we are actively seeking to change and improve how we support children with SEND and their families by:

1. **Training providers** – We have a universal SEND training offer available to all providers. This includes termly SENCo networks, where providers receive updates on local and national policy, as well as having an opportunity to share what is going well and best practice examples. We have also been offering the accredited Level 3 SENCo Award for a number of years and have extended this offer to childminders by delivering weekend sessions. We also commission bespoke specialist training in-house for any provider looking after a child with a specific health condition, as well as working with colleagues outside of our team to support transitions for children with SEND.
2. **Responding to parent need** – By listening to parents, we can identify what works well and what needs improving. For example, one parent enquiry highlighted gaps in our current provision for children, young people and families with SEND, stating that the current wraparound offer could restrict parents of children with disabilities' ability to work. In response to this we are developing a 'Special/Champion Childminder' scheme to support our SEND families by linking them with a specialist childminder who can offer care that is tailored to their child's specific needs. This will give families more flexible, personalised, responsive support, as well as offering consistency in familiar small group care environments. The scheme could also give opportunities for parents and carers to have short breaks, return to work or access training while their child/young person receives high quality care. Childminders on this scheme will be able to enhance their professional development, for example through specialist training opportunities to aid and extend their knowledge of children with disabilities to fully understand the complex needs of each child.



## Staffing

### Safeguarding and DBS checks

As set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, all schools providing childcare for pupils under 8 must ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals employed to work in reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations. Providers must make sure that everyone providing childcare has obtained an enhanced DBS with barred lists check.

Childcare providers registered on either the Early Years Register or the compulsory or voluntary parts of the General Childcare Register must also not let children have unsupervised contact with anyone who does not have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with barred lists.

Where voluntary staff are used by schools and providers, and will have regular unsupervised access to children, they will be considered to be in regulated activity. This means they will be subject to an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, in line with the guidance on checks for volunteers set out in [Part 3: Safer recruitment of Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

### Qualifications and training

Whilst there are no specific staff qualification requirements for wraparound for school-aged children, providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how best to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met. For PVI providers registered on the voluntary part of the general Childcare Register, at least one person looking after the children must have either a minimum level 2 qualification in an area of work relevant to the childcare provided, or training in the common core skills, and an appropriate first aid qualification.

Qualification requirements will also apply to childcare providers if they are registered on the Early Years Register. The [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) sets out the required minimum staff to child ratios, minimum staff qualification levels, and minimum space requirements. The ratio and qualification requirements apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with children.

### Ratios

Where provision is solely before/after school care or holiday provision for children who normally attend reception class (or older) during the school day, there must be sufficient staff as for a class of 30 children. It is for providers to determine how many staff are needed to ensure the safety and welfare of children, bearing in mind the type(s) of

activity and the age and needs of the children. It is also for providers to determine what qualifications, if any, the manager and/or staff should have.

## **Affordability: Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit childcare**

Local authorities should ensure that provision funded through the programme is affordable to parents, as far as is reasonably practical. The cost of provision should be benchmarked against that of other childcare in the area. Provision should be both affordable to parents in a way that drives up and sustains demand but also supports providers to charge fees that maintain the financial viability of their businesses.

While this programme does not offer funded places, where parents are eligible, they should be able to receive support towards the cost of wraparound. Full details on eligibility can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

With Tax-Free Childcare, the government will pay £2 for every £8 paid into an account, which can be used against payment for 'approved' childcare provision. Eligible parents can receive up to £2,000 per year per child up to the age of 12, or £4,000 per year for a child up to the age of 17 if the child is disabled.

Using the childcare element of Universal Credit, eligible parents may be able to [claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs](#). The amounts parents can receive in childcare costs are a maximum of £951 per month for one child, or a maximum of £1630 per month for two or more children.

Local authorities should work with providers to ensure that provision that is funded is set up for parents to use Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit. Information on how a provider can sign up to TFC can be found here [Sign up to Tax-Free Childcare if you're a childcare provider](#). Local authorities should ensure providers produce appropriate documentation (i.e. contracts, invoices, letters, receipts) to enable parents to evidence and reclaim childcare costs through Universal Credit. Guidance on Universal Credit childcare can be found here: [Universal Credit childcare costs](#).

Local authorities should link where appropriate to government-owned websites providing more information about these government subsidies and what parents may be eligible for. This could be, for example, through the [Childcare Choices website](#) or the [Childcare Calculator](#).

## **Food**

The department encourages providers to include a snack as a minimum offering during both morning and afternoon wraparound provision.

A previous Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) impact evaluation of the breakfast programme found that offering pupils in primary schools a nutritious meal before school can boost their reading, writing, and maths attainment by an average of two months' additional progress in Key Stage 1.<sup>6</sup>

A scale-up evaluation found that the National School Breakfast Programme (NSBP) achieved extensive reach within schools, with 38.6% of children at NSBP schools served breakfast compared to 6.5% of children before the intervention started.<sup>7</sup>

## Food Standards

Any food provided during wraparound including snacks must:

- comply with regulations on food provision
- take into account allergies and dietary requirements (see the [allergy guidance for schools](#))
- take into account any religious or cultural requirements for food.

We encourage local authorities to read the [School Food Standards](#) and the guidance on the [Food Standards Agency Website](#), and to work with providers to ensure they are adhering to the regulations.

Providers looking after children aged 5 years old and under should familiarise themselves with how to prepare food appropriately for their age and development. This is to minimise choking incidents.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [Magic Breakfast | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/national-school-breakfast-programme>

<sup>8</sup> [Food safety advice on choking hazards in settings - Foundation Years, Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

## Links to other programmes and working with wider government

The National Wraparound Childcare Programme has links with many other government-led programmes and schemes. These include:

### Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Engagement with local job centres is crucial as we know that the lack of wraparound care can limit job opportunities for families. Local authorities should make sure that local job centres are aware of where to find the latest information in relation to available childcare within their locality to enable them to signpost parents who cite childcare as a potential barrier for returning to work to the most up to date information.

We expect local authorities to work with DWP on an ongoing basis to understand the potential for future unmet demand as uptake of the new provision increases.

### Family Hubs and Start for Life

Family hubs are a place-based way of joining up locally in the planning and delivery of a range of family services. They are 'one stop shops' that make it easier for families to get the support they need. The hub approach means professionals and partners working together more effectively, with a focus on supporting and strengthening the family relationships that carry us all through life.

Where local authorities have established family hubs, they may want to explore using family hubs to signpost families to the available wraparound in their areas, in line with the programme's aims for services to become more accessible and better connected.

More information on Family Hubs and Start for Life can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

### National School Breakfast Programme

The National School Breakfast Programme subsidises the food and delivery costs of breakfast provision for schools in disadvantaged areas. While some schools that will be offering wraparound care will also be participating in the National School Breakfast Programme, whether provision of breakfast clubs constitutes wraparound care is dependent on the delivery model. Breakfast provision funding will not be extended as part of the national wraparound childcare programme.

More information on the National School Breakfast Programme can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

## **Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)**

The national wraparound childcare programme only covers term-time provision and does not extend to holiday childcare. However, the government has provided more than £200m of annual funding to 153 upper tier local authorities to coordinate and provide free holiday provision including healthy food and enriching activities for children in receipt of free school meals.

Each local authority will have a nominated HAF coordinator whose role is to ensure that the offer of free holiday club provision is available for all children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals in their area. They will have responsibility for the coordination and implementation of the HAF programme in their area, which involves several important aspects, including understanding the supply and demand of holiday provision in their area, making sure the HAF programme is broad and represents a wide range of local partners and stakeholders, awarding funding to providers, and making sure they are operating in line with the high-quality standard expected.

We expect local authority wraparound leads to work closely with HAF coordinators (if different) to ensure both programmes capitalise on any opportunities for join-up, and the potential for mutually beneficial outcomes, particularly in terms of provider sustainability.

More information on the HAF programme is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) or by contacting the HAF coordinator in your local authority.

## **Ministry of Defence: The National Wraparound (WAC) Childcare Scheme**

The Wraparound Childcare (WAC) scheme was created by the Ministry of Defence to help to remove some of the barriers that Service families face around childcare. Funding for WAC is designed to help working families with the cost of childcare, and to allow partners to get back into work (or work more hours). WAC funding can support eligible Service families with children aged 4 to 11 years old (16 years old if in receipt of certain disability allowances), who are attending school or being home educated in the UK. If eligible, Personnel can claim up to 20 hours per week of funding for each child that is attending before and after school care during term time.

There is more information on the WAC Childcare Scheme available on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.



Department  
for Education

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