

Early Years Extended Entitlements Audit



Context

- The DfE expanded entitlements to funded childcare in September 2024 for children from the term after they are nine months old for working parents. This is currently 15 hours per week, this will rise to 30 hours from September 2025.
- From September 2025 all children from the age of nine months of working parents will be entitled to 30 hours of funded childcare for 38 weeks of the year up until they start school.
- Two-year-olds in families receiving additional support will continue to be entitled to 15 hours per week.
- Approximately 18,500 children will qualify for funded entitlements from April 2025.
- Consequently, the Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funding budget increased from £33m in 2023-24 to £53m in 2024-25 to £77m for 2025-26.

Finding 1 - Inadequate record keeping by providers

ACTION: A programme of quality assurance of provider registers and parent declaration forms will be implemented:

- Additional data statement to be included on Headcount submission to confirm consent (GDPR compliance) for information to be shared between parents to providers to the Local Authority
- 10% compliance cross checking Parent Declaration forms against claims by Early Years Entitlement (EYE) team
- 3 x termly visits to providers to check Parent Declaration forms against registers by EYE team
- Annual self-assessment surveys to be completed by providers

This will be implemented by 31 March 2025

Finding 2 – Process notes for calculating payments to Early Years providers

ACTION:

The guidance for calculating payments to providers has been reviewed and updated during the audit.

Completed October 2024

Additional Actions

- We have looked at Inclusion Support Funding (ISF – SENIF) applications from providers and they are now cross referenced with the EYE claimed hours, and we will recoup any over payments.
- This process has been communicated to providers and added to the ISF guidance document available on Right Choice.