

Dear Provider

At this time, Essex is working hard to implement the Government's guidance which is being updated on daily basis.

Currently, we have not yet received detailed guidance to specify what financial reimbursement or support will be offered to childcare providers specifically for loss of income. Therefore we are not currently able to answer specific enquiries on how to access grants.

This is the link to the government's guidance for employers, where up to date information is issued, and includes guidance on how to claim Statutory Sick pay as well as the financial support packages that will be made available to small and medium size businesses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

### **Packages of financial support:**

At this time, we are awaiting guidance on the implementation of the support packages that were announced for small and medium size businesses earlier this week. At this stage, we are able to advise you of the following:

- Business rate relief will be available for one year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020
- There is a coronavirus business interruption loan scheme intended to support businesses suffering cash-flow problems due to the current situation. The loans will be available to apply for from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.  
<https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/>
- Small business grant funding of £10,000 was announced for businesses that received business rate relief. Currently this is guidance, as we understand that district councils are currently working on procedures for claiming this.

### **Business Rate Relief:**

The Government will introduce a business rates holiday for nurseries and Childcare settings in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

You are eligible for the business rates holiday if:

- Your business is based in England
- Occupied by providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register
- Wholly or mainly used for the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### **How to access the scheme:**

There is no action for you. This will apply to your next council tax bill in April 2020. However, local authorities may have to reissue your bill to exclude the business rate charge. They will do this as soon as possible. You can estimate the business rate charge you will no longer have to pay this year using the [business rates calculator](#).

Further guidance for local authorities is available in the [nursery discount guidance](#).

### **Support for businesses that pay little or no business rates:**

The government will provide additional Small Business Grant Scheme funding for local authorities to support small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBBR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief. This will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to eligible businesses to help meet their ongoing business costs.

You are eligible if:

- your business is based in England
- you are a small business and already receive SBBR and/or RRR
- you are a business that occupies property

You do not need to do anything. Your local authority will write to you if you are eligible for this grant, guidance for local authorities on the scheme will be provided shortly. Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the reliefs and grants should be directed to the relevant Local Authority or District Council.

### **Support for employers:**

As an employer, there is information and advice available which should support your decision making around staff contracts and pay. ACAS offer a range of publications and guidance as well as offering training through webinars and on-line learning. There is a helpline for employers so you can talk through your particular situation [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

There is regularly updated advice specifically for employers on the response to COVID-19 <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

There is specific information for employers closing their workplace <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus/if-the-employer-needs-to-close-the-workplace>

In the meantime, further information on the Government's approach to supporting businesses can be accessed [Covid 19: support for businesses](#)

Guidance for employers on how to respond to the virus are provided [Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus](#)

### **Free entitlement payments:**

Your setting should already have received confirmation, that the Free Entitlement funding for summer term 2020 will be paid to all settings that are closed due to the Coronavirus. The Headcount task is now live on the provider portal, so if you have not already done so, please complete this as a matter of urgency for payment to be made.

### **Insurance and sector support:**

If you have not done so already, please check your insurer to see what can be claimed for business interruption. If your setting has membership to a sector organisation such as NDNA, PACEY or EYA, we would encourage you to check their website for updated information, and make use of their membership helplines and services.

[www.ndna.org.uk](http://www.ndna.org.uk)

[www.pacey.org.uk](http://www.pacey.org.uk)

[www.eyalliance.org.uk](http://www.eyalliance.org.uk)

## Support with Salary Costs

At this time we have not received any further guidance as to how the 80% of workers' wages will be paid to staff. Currently, we recommended that you use the government webpages to keep up to date as we imagine the payments for furloughed staff (i.e. those whose employers cannot cover staff costs) will go via HMRC and the PAYE system. There is a new Self-employment Helpline at the HMRC Tel: 0800 0159559.

We are, however, receiving new and updated guidance on a very regular basis so as soon as we receive guidance, it will be cascaded to all childcare providers via the early years portal and on the dedicated Covid-19 early years webpage <https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/covid19-coronavirus/> so do please keep checking this webpage

This is the link to the government's guidance for employers, where up to date information is issued, and includes guidance on how to claim Statutory Sick pay as well as the financial support packages that will be made available to small and medium size businesses <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

We appreciate this is a very difficult and uncertain time for yourself as a small business owner. Hopefully this email has provided you with at least some of the information you need. If there is anything you would like to discuss in more detail, please do contact the EYCC Business Management Consultancy team directly to the contacts below. If your query is specifically relating to FEEE, please email [free.entitlementenquiries@essex.gov.uk](mailto:free.entitlementenquiries@essex.gov.uk). As and when we receive guidance, it will be cascaded to childcare settings so please do continue to check our which can be found at <https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/covid19-coronavirus/> as we are updating this regularly.

Please be assured Essex is working at full pace to implement the Government's guidance which is being updated on daily basis.

Kind Regards

The Early Years and Childcare Business Management Consultancy Team.

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Rosemary Newell - West Quadrant      | <a href="mailto:Rosemary.newell@essex.gov.uk">Rosemary.newell@essex.gov.uk</a> |
| Alan Haylock - North & Mid Quadrants | <a href="mailto:Alan.Haylock@essex.gov.uk">Alan.Haylock@essex.gov.uk</a>       |
| Gemma Eva – South Quadrant           | <a href="mailto:Gemma.eva@essex.gov.uk">Gemma.eva@essex.gov.uk</a>             |