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| We have a child who is split over two settings and will be attending solely the other setting for the next few weeks. He will continue to use his full 26 hours he claims with us and we are transferring the funding to the other provider until he comes back to us at full hours.  Will I need to send you a separate email, once I have completed and submitted the headcount data, explaining why the ‘weeks attended’ are different for that child? | You are not able to claim the funding for any child not attending your setting during the headcount week. The setting where the child is attending during headcount week needs to claim the funding  As it is the expectation that the child will return to you at their full hours, you should agree with the other setting and the parents of the child that when the child does return to your setting they commit to transferring the relevant funding for hours and weeks to you. |
| At the preschool, the Trustees took the decision to reduce our numbers because they felt it was a risk to the health of staff and children, with the number of children (53) and staff (9) we would have in each week and as we operate from one room only, reducing contact of this number of children and staff was impossible. Also, they took into consideration the guidance that states MOST nurseries and preschools are smaller than primary schools. No primary school would have a bubble of over 60 children and adults at this time.  Therefore, this restricts but does not stop our access to the premises. Please confirm if this puts us in the category of temporary inability to access the site and therefore enables us to put in an expected attendance claim?  If we are unable to claim for the children not attending, does this mean they cannot attend again until April or can we update the funding at a later date? | Current guidance does state that all early years providers are expected to be open for all children. Therefore if you have taken the business decision to only open for Key Worker and Vulnerable children which is not in line with current guidance then you are unable to claim FEEE funding for the spring term for children who have not been offered a place.  Should you open at some point in the term to all children then you will be able to make a late claim at amendment headcount in March so long as any children have not claimed funding at an alternative provider in the meantime.    However, as the DfE only very recently confirmed the early years headcount and census guidance ECC have decided to implement a short extension until Monday 25 January 2021, as follows: -  Any early years settings that is able to be fully open by Monday 25January 2021 will be able to make a full claim on the early years headcount and census for all children confirmed as registered for a funded place (irrespective of attendance) . |
| We have previously informed you of some days we have closed over the past couple of weeks, due to staff shortages and lack of demand from parents. We also have closure days over the next few weeks.  Before we submit our headcount could I please just clarify a couple of things.  1 - Do we need to continue to inform you of those days we are closed?  2- Do we claim for our full funding, as if we hadn’t closed on those days, and you will automatically remove the hours we were closed? Or do we adjust the number days/weeks in our claim? | 1. As per the terms of the Essex FEEE contract it is a requirement to notify us of any days that you are closed, so please continue to do so. 2. Please submit a claim based on your open pattern for next week as per COVID guidance we have issued with regards to children attending and or place offered. |
| We normally offer sessions around a 9am-3pm day that parents can pick and choose the sessions for the term as to how they make up their 15 hours FEEE.  Can we now be restrictive e.g. say we can only offer the 15 FEEE between 9am-12noon daily.  Would this meet the criteria? | If you decide to restrict how the hours can be accessed in this way, you will only be able to claim for the hours of 9am to 12noon for the children you can offer these hours too  You will not be able to claim for any of the usual afternoon hours you are unable to offer in the 9am to 12 noon slot  You should also be aware that this might not meet your parents needs and as a result they may choose to access a funded place elsewhere  If you are adjusting your opening hours you also need to notify Ofsted |
| We have some children that also claim up to 7 hours EFEE extended hours on top of the 15 hours FEEE.  Can we now be restrictive and say we can only offer the 15 FEEE at this present time (due to staff capacity)?  Would this meet the criteria (as long as the child can have the 15 hours FEEE)?  Obviously, we would not be able to record the EFEE on the return if we can't offer it. | Yes, you can decide whether or not to offer the extended hours. Normally this should be in advance of the start of a term. If you are making changes in response to the current national lockdown, you need to give a reasonable notice period to parents of the changes.  Parents may decide this does not meet their needs and therefore access a funded place elsewhere for all of the hours, in which case you will not be able to access any hours for these children  Please: -   * be aware, that as you are changing the terms on which you offered the parents a place you may not be able to insist on any notice period and should check the terms of your contract with parents on this and / or seek legal advice * note that any reduction in hours claimed from the interim headcount claim will generate a clawback situation |
| Just to clarify we are understanding this correctly,  if a child has a place for 15 hours, and we can offer that place and if the parents choose to keep their child at home (because they are nervous about infection rates then we include them on the Early Years Headcount/Census? | Yes, that is correct. So long as the place is available for the child, even if the parents choose to not send their child, you can still claim for the child and their agreed hours |
| We have opened to key workers and vulnerable children; the reason was firstly safety of the children their families and our staff and their families.  We have half our staff are 50+, vulnerable family members and elderly parents who need our support.  None of our parents have complained to us and the majority of keyworker families aren’t sending their children in.  We are unclear of the guidance, we have made that decision because of Covid 19.  Can you please confirm with us what we need to do. | The government guidance clearly states that early years providers should be open for all early years children.  Therefore in line with the DfE guidance issued if you have restricted your childcare offer to key worker children and vulnerable children only, you will only be able to claim funding at headcount for those children you have offered a place to.  The only exception to this would be if you have needed to restrict your places or opening hours due to any staffing shortage due to Covid, for example staff that need to shield. This does not include extended family members    Should you be in the position to re-open for all children at a later date you will be able to put in a late claim at amendment headcount for the number of weeks and hours that they attend.  We do suggest that you check with parents to ensure that children have not attended an alternative provider in the meantime as the funding may have been claimed by the another provider. |
| I’m a childminder, and have temporarily closed, due to having to isolate for ten days and now my own children are at home and I am organising them.  I will probably re-open for early years after Feb half term, even if schools remain closed.  So what do I have to submit?? | If your reason for closing (and being closed during the headcount next week) is because you are self-isolating, you can claim for any funded children you have signed parent declaration forms for.  However, if you are not planning on re-opening until after half term you will only be able to claim for any hours offered so far this term (including any self isolation period)  You will then need to wait until the late claim headcount opens after half term for any hours you will be offering for the rest of the term |
| What do we put on the Census for children who have had to isolate because a parent or sibling or the child has tested positive at home whilst away from the setting? But they were due to return. | So long as the place is available for the child, even if the parents are unable to send them due to the need to self isolate, you can still claim for the child and their agreed hours |
| We are having to close on a Monday and Friday due to only having 3 children wanting to attend (not critical or key worker).   I have offered them another session on a Tuesday Wednesday or Thursday but obviously they are not having 15 hours in total now only 9.  Are we now not allowed to claim for any children that would attend on a Monday and Friday if we were open?  I would normally, non Covid times have around 18 children on these days?? | Yes that is correct, you can only claim for the hours and / or places that you have available so if you have closed on a Monday and Friday you won’t be able to claim for any children that would normally attend on these days  From the alternative attendance you have offered the parents you will be able to claim for 9 hours for these children rather than the usual 15.  You may have already considered this, but you might also want to consider furloughing your staff on Mondays and Fridays if you are not able to open and this is COvid related. |
| I am currently closed as I haven't enough children able to attend my setting whilst the core group of school children have to remain at home.  I am left with just 1 early years funded child and   3/4 key worker children who all attend on different days making it financially unviable to be open this month.  I'm quite confused but need to make urgent decisions regarding my business and especially for the funding and care of this child. | If the early years funded child returns to you after half term you will be able to put in a late claim when the amendment headcount task goes live in March for the number of hours and weeks you are open and a place is available.  You should check prior to submitting a late claim to check with the parent that funding has not been claimed at another provider in the meantime. |
| One of my families has been using both myself and another setting, and has decided to only use one setting as so have given me notice.  This has happened as a direct result of Covid-19 and its consequences.  Can you tell me where I now stand with payment please? I understand that I must take the child off my head count details. | Unfortunately, as the family have given you notice and will be accessing their child’s hours at another setting, you can only claim for any funded hours you have offered so far this term  You may be able to charge a notice period to the parent, under the terms of your parent agreement form |
| We are a small setting of 30 children (15 maximum children per session) and 3 full time staff.  Our setting was unable to return for the first week after the Christmas break because I myself was isolating for 10 days following a household member testing positive for Covid and not being able to fully staff the setting. I believe this is a legitimate reason for not opening  After long deliberations, as a staff team we decided that we would not open for the rest of January in the hope that our family members would be vaccinated during this time. We plan to reopen on 1st Feb.  So my question is this:-  Our setting will not therefore be open on w/b 18th Jan  Does this mean that I will not be able to claim funding for the whole of the Spring term or could I just amend the number of weeks for claiming to 8 weeks instead of 11 weeks? | As you have made the decision to close for the 3 weeks your calculations are correct.  You can claim for the COVID week and then 7 weeks of the term if you open on the 1st February. So for actual headcount you will need to submit a zero return for all children. Then if you reopen on the 1st February you will be able to submit a late claim when amendment headcount opens in March for the number of weeks open in the term. |
| If all my parents have signed a funding form for their place and I am open and can offer them that place, do they need to sign another form to say not sending due to personal choice because of Covid? | No so long the places remain available, even if the children haven’t attended you do not need to get new forms signed. However, it would be sensible to just check with your parents that they haven’t accessed anywhere else |
| I have a signed funding form, but my parents have said they are going elsewhere can I still claim? | No, parents can make changes to where they are going to access their FEEE funding up to Headcount  Depending on your parent agreements in place, you may be able to charge a notice period |
| We were informed by the Trustees of the church where our playgroup is based that they would be delaying the start of the spring term for all activities that take place in the church building.  As Trustees they are honour bound under public health grounds to ensure that the risks associated within the building are mitigated, which is why they have made this decision at the current time.  The closure was originally until week beginning 18th January, however after their review meeting earlier this week they have extended the closure of the building until week beginning 1st February.  I have read through your email a number of times and I am unsure if we are able to claim the funding.   The Trustees have closed the Church building down as they are personally responsible for health and safety.  We are working with the Trustees to rigorously update all risk assessments and to put procedures in place to enable the building to re- open and our playgroup to recommence on the site. | As the decision to close has been made by the landlord and trustees of the church and is COVID related funding can be claimed for full 11 weeks of the term for all children that you have a signed parent agreement form for or email confirmation from parents until a form can be signed.  However should any child attend an alternative provider whilst you are closed we are informing settings that the funding must follow the child and FEEE funding transferred to the new provider for the relevant hours and weeks the child attends for the term. |
| I am a childminder who has been open, but is temporarily closed due to a positive COVID test, and will still be closed during the headcount week  Can I still claim for the funded children in my care? | Yes, as your temporary closure is covid related you are able to submit a claim for the funded children in your care  If your parents and minded children do not need to self isolate as a result of the positive test, you should check to see if any of them have accessed an alternative place whilst you are temporarily closed |
| I am a childminder but have had to close due to my own children being at home due to their school being closed  Can I still claim for my funded children | If you have chosen to close whilst your children are at home during the current lockdown, you will not be able to claim for any funded children  As a childminder you are classified as a critical worker, and therefore you might be able to arrange with your children’s school for them to attend school to enable you to continue childminding |
| One of my parents has reduced their child’s hours due to their working pattern. Can the parent increase the child’s hours after headcount? | No, parents are not able to increase the number of funded hours after headcount. The parent will need to pay for any additional hours they want to access after headcount for the rest of this term |
| One of my parents has not re-confirmed their 30 hour code by the 31st December 2020 deadline, will they still be able to access the extended entitlement funding? | Yes, so long as the parent successfully re-confirms their 30 hour eligibility code up to and including headcount day (19 January 2021) as a one of for the Spring 2021 term, ECC will be able to override the “eligible from” date to be valid for this term |
| I have a parent wanting to access their 30 hour funding but did not has not apply for 30 hour code by 31st December 2020. Will they still be able to access this funding this term? | Yes, so long as the parent has successfully confirmed and received an eligibility code by headcount day (19 January 2021) as a one of for the Spring 2021 term, ECC will be able to override the “eligible from” date to be valid for this term  If the parent has applied, but not received confirmation of their eligibility or code by 19 January 2021 they will not be able to access their extended entitlement funding this term – they will still be able to access their 15 hours universal FEEE funding |
| I am a childminder and have a Keyworker parent whose child attends my setting before and after school.  The parent wants me to have the child during the school day in order to work, as the school won't let her go in as the child has asthma.  Am I able to have the child so the parent can work? | ECC have sought clarification from the DfE on whether childminders are allowed to offer care for school aged children during that day if they are not in school. As this is the child of a critical worker who is not able to attend school due to health vulnerabilities, we would advise that a childcare place can be offered with the following considerations: -   * There is no funding to support so the parent will need to agree to meet the full cost. * The childminder should carry out a full risk assessment to ensure that the child is safe and that her health needs can be met * The childminder should contact their insurance provider to ensure her policy covers this situation * Ofsted should be notified * School aged children must have access to remote learning opportunities as set by the school. The childminder will need to consider how these needs will be met.   The same would apply for a key worker child if the school are unable to offer a school place. |
| I am childminder and the key worker parent of one of my school aged children has asked me to have their child during the day as she thinks it will be safer for the child to be with me and not in school  Can I do this? | Childminders should only offer a place during the school day to the children of critical workers or a vulnerable child if a school place is not available or it has been risk assessed it is not appropriate for the child to attend school (so long as the child is not classed as clinically vulnerable) |
| One of my parents can’t access a school place as they aren’t a critical worker, as a childminder I normally have them in the school holidays. The parent has asked me to have their children during the school day so they can work.  Can I do this? | No, as the parent is not classified as a key worker the children of parents who are not critical workers are not able to access either a school place or a childminder during the school day |
| One of the children I look after is in Reception but not yet statutory school age. Her parents aren’t critical workers so can’t access a school place.  Can I look after her as an early years child and claim on the portal as she isn’t yet 5? | No, all children in Reception should be treated as a school aged child even if they are not yet statutory school age |