

Email from Carolyn Terry to Essex early years and childcare and childcare providers

From: Free Entitlement Funding Queries

Sent: 14 January 2021 20:54

Subject: Urgent - Please Read - Covid-19 Update 14 January 2021 FEEE funding

Dear All

I am sorry it has taken so long to be able to confirm to you how the FEEE funding is going to be administered for the Spring 2021 term, and I know this delay has added to all of your anxieties in these difficult times.

However, we have now received the clarifications we needed from the DfE, and they have said:

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"In summary we have taken the view that where a child is reasonably expected to attend Early Years provision, and that provision is made available to them by the provider, their expected hours should be recorded in the Early Years Census. This means children who, were it not for the impact of coronavirus on either their own personal circumstances or on the operation of their Early Years setting, would be attending Early Years provision. This includes children who have previously attended the provision and children who were expected to start attending the provision in January

Where a provider is counting a child on the census, the place must be genuinely "available" : this means a provider must not count a child where they have furloughed the staff who would be required to deliver the child's place".

On this basis, I can confirm that Essex childcare providers will be paid FEEE funding for the Spring 2021 term to reflect "expected attendance" for the Headcount / Early Years Census week so long as the following criteria is met: -

- A signed FEEE parent declaration form and child attending setting
- A signed FEEE parent declaration form, child not attending but place for child continues to be available
- Providers which have been advised to close, or left with no option but to close, due to public health reasons for all children that there is a signed parent declaration form

Where providers have chosen to: -

- Close and not offer a FEEE funded place and the reason is **not** public health related, FEEE funding will not be paid and should not be claimed
- Restrict the number of places they are offering, and this is **not** related to public health closure reasons ie only offering childcare to the children of critical workers and vulnerable children, FEEE funding can only be claimed children for which there is a place for

Please ensure that you either have a signed FEEE parent declaration form (or clear email evidence covering the equivalent information) in place for all children claimed for. A word format form is available of the parent declaration form and can be found at the bottom of the page at the following link <https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/funding/data-collection/>

Please see the attached DfE Common Scenarios document for more information and examples of what can and cannot be claimed for.

The Early Years Headcount and Census will open as planned on Monday 18 January 2021.

Local authorities are funded at the level of actual take up of the FEEE funding and do not receive FEEE funding for every eligible child. The Early Years Census data returns are used to inform the FEEE funding levels the DfE pays each local authority; this works on the same principle as a provider submitting an interim headcount and then an actual headcount submission – the Early Years Census is local authorities equivalent of an actual headcount.

This means that due to the anticipated lower levels of attendance this term, ECC will need to analyse this data return to understand any impact this will have on the funding levels received from the DfE. Until such a time as we are able to do this, we have had to take the decision to suspend the proposed Early Years Emergency Covid Sustainability grant and the ECC 3p increase on the FEEE funding hourly rate for the time being. This is because having sufficient budget available to continue to pay the FEEE funding claims needs to take priority at this point. This will all be reviewed at a later date.

However, I can confirm that that the national funding rate increases will still go ahead from 1 April 2021, with an 8p per funded hour increase for FEEE2 and a 6p per funded hour for FEEE3&4. This means the new rates from 1 April 2021 will be as follows: -

FEEE3&4	Current 2020 – 2021 rate p /h	New 2021 – 2022 rate p/h
Maintained Nursery School	£6.29	£6.35
Maintained School and Academy Nursery Class	£4.32	£4.38
Childminder	£4.32	£4.38
Day Nursery	£4.32	£4.38
Independent School	£4.32	£4.38
Pre-school	£4.32	£4.38
FEEE2		
All Providers	£5.28	£5.36

Please let me know if you have any queries

Best wishes.

Carolyn

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