

**Provision of Wraparound Childcare Places**

 Programme (Revenue) Funding

Total funds available:

Up to a maximum of £10,000 for the first academic term

**Refer to Guidance document for details**

SERVICE SPECIFICATION

Issued

Key Dates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **5pm** on 10th March, 14th April, 12th May, 9th June, 14th July,11th August and 8th September 2025 | Applications due in (will be on a rolling basis until all of the funding has been awarded) |
| By the 1st Friday of the month  | Last date for Business Management Consultant Support  |
| Feedback  | From the closing date, applications will be processed within a 12-week window.  |

1. **Essex County Council**
	1. Essex County Council (ECC) is dedicated to improving Essex and the lives of our residents. Our ambition is to deliver the best quality of life in Britain. We will achieve this by providing high-quality, targeted services that deliver real value for money.
	2. Everyone’s Essex, our plans for Levelling Up (2021-2025)
	3. Strategic Aims:
* Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
* High quality environment
* Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
* A great place for children and families to grow.

**2.0**  **National Context**

2.1 In the Spring Budget of March 2023, the government announced an investment of £289m for a national wraparound programme, to support eligible working families to access wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm during term time.

2.2 The term ‘wraparound childcare’ refers to provision directly before and after the school day, during the school term time for primary school age children.

2.3 The 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 must **not** require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location.

2.4 Many schools already offer enrichment and extra-curricular activities before and after the school day however, these activities do not meet the definition of wraparound childcare.

2.5 The principal aims of the programme are to ensure childcare provision is regular, dependable and meets the needs of working parents. Within these parameters, there may be opportunities where enrichment activities can interact with, complement, or support delivery of wraparound childcare provision.

**3.0** **The Project**

3.1 By 2026, the aim is that all parents and carers of primary school-aged children who need it, will be able to access childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm, Monday to Friday during term time. This will enable parents to work a full day with travel time.

3.2 There may be certain areas where local data shows that demand is for different hours, for example reflecting local labour market patterns.

3.3 The wraparound childcare must be sustainable, accessible, affordable, and high quality. ECC are committed to ensuring children are safe and engaged in inclusive and high-quality childcare, this will be vital to the sustainability of the provision. Settings should inspire confidence in families by ensuring children’s experience in wraparound childcare provision is fun, engaging and something that they want to attend.

3.4 We are looking for new or existing Good or Outstanding Ofsted registered childcare providers, to create new places, expand, or modify an existing provision to meet local wraparound childcare demand. Referred to as Provider for the remainder of this document.

3.5 The Provider will enter a contract with ECC to deliver a fully inclusive flexible provision for primary school aged children. This must meet high quality standards of care. Please email wraparound.childcare@essex.gov.uk for further information.

**4.0**  **The Funding**

4.1 The funding cannot be used to subsidise the cost of spaces.

4.2 Existing wraparound provision will not be funded. However, funding can be used to contribute to the cost of expanding existing provision to create new childcare places or expand current hours.

4.3 You can operate a franchise model for wraparound; any associated costs must be borne by the operator personally or be paid out of revenues received after the funding period has finished. Funding cannot be used to pay or subsidise any franchise or franchise related fees that in any way profit the franchisor during the period of funding. For any franchise arrangement, ECC can only contract with the person/ organisation submitting the application; there must be a franchisee in place prior to an application being submitted. If operating a franchise model, the applicant should speak with ECC if they need further clarifications.

4.4 A cashflow forecast covering a minimum of three years, must be submitted with the revenue application that shows a sustainable provision.

4.5 The funding can be used for initial set up costs including staffing, training, resources, and transport hire (but not for purchasing capital items).

4.6 All reasonable endeavours will be made to ensure the creation of any new provision should not jeopardise an existing wraparound provision in the area.

4.7 Ongoing funding is subject to a monitoring process. Funding will only be granted to cover any shortfall, or up until breakeven point has been reached. The maximum funding that will be allocated is £30,000. This will be paid termly for a maximum of £10,000 for each term.

4.8 All applications will be reviewed at an evaluation panel and be subject to ECC procedures and governance.

**5.0 The Scope**

Requirements

* 1. Wraparound childcare will be offered, as a minimum, from 8am until 6pm - Monday to Friday, during term time.
	2. Providers must be delivering the provision within the Essex County Council ward boundaries.
	3. The Provider will work collaboratively with Essex County Council to meet local need.
	4. The Provider will respond to data collection requests from Essex County Council within the required timeframe.
	5. The Provider must have regard for the Equality Act 2010, which places a legal duty on practitioners to eliminate discriminatory practice and to promote equality of opportunity and access for all children, regardless of their own or their parents’ Race, disability, religion, gender, age, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity or sexual orientation.
	6. The Provider must have regard for the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice which requires Childcare settings to actively promote equality of opportunity for children with special educational needs or disabilities, remove barriers to participation, make reasonable adjustments to prevent disadvantage and ensure that children with medical conditions receive the support they need. Providers are required to promote their service for children with SEND on the Essex Local Offer.

* 1. Where appropriate, the Provider will promote availability the of government childcare subsidies to parents, including Tax-Free childcare and Universal Credit childcare elements.
	2. Where in receipt of revenue funding, this must comply with the assurance requirements as set out in the funding agreement with ECC.
	3. 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 independently with Ofsted or through a childminder agency.
	4. Providers are expected to be registered on the Voluntary Register, the Childcare Register and the Early Years Register look after children aged 4-11.
	5. There will be an ongoing monitoring process and providers must evidence their trajectory towards financial sustainability.
	6. Subsequent termly funding, after the initial startup payment will only cover any shortfall between the income generated by the occupancy and the business breakeven point.
	7. Funding will cease once the breakeven point has been reached.
	8. Providers will be required to have an account on the Essex Early Years Provider Portal and update childcare sufficiency information on a termly basis. They will also be required to agree to their details being published on the [Family Information Service website](https://secureapps.essex.gov.uk/fis), childcare finder.
	9. Providers are encouraged to sign up to the Essex Early Years Charter and renew their subscription on an annual basis - [The Charter](https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/running-your-business/essex-early-years-and-childcare-charter/the-charter/)

**6.0 Regulation**

 The Provider will be expected at all times to meet their registration requirements under Ofsted’s Inspection framework, specifically under the following headings:

6.0.1 Meet the learning and development requirements, if appropriate

6.0.2 Meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements

6.0.3 Develop and deliver the educational programmes, if appropriate

6.0.4 Work in partnership with parents, carers and others

6.0.5 Offer an inclusive service

6.0.6 Evaluate their service and strive for continuous improvement

6.0.7 Compliance with General Data Protection Regulations 2023 (GDPR)

6.1 Safeguarding -

Adhere to [Southend Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Children and Adult Guidelines](https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2739/set-procedures-may2022.pdf)

**7.0** **Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

7.1 Essex County Council will provide a monitoring form that must be returned on a termly basis, for the first 3 terms of operation.

7.2 Essex County Council may conduct a financial audit. As part of this process, you will be required to provide all relevant financial records and documentation for review. Please ensure the following documents are readily available:

* Financial statements
* Invoices and receipts
* Contracts and agreements
* Any other financial records as requested

**8.0 Health and Safety Requirements**

8.1 Providers will be expected to hold and maintain the appropriate Health and Safety policies and certificates and these must be embedded into service delivery.

 **9.0 Insurance**

 9.1 Public liability insurance with a limit of indemnity of not less than five million pounds (£5,000,000) in relation to any one claim or series of claims arising from the Project.

9.2 Employer's liability insurance with a limit of indemnity of not less than five million pounds (£5,000,000) in relation to any one claim or series of claims arising from the Project.

9.3 Professional Indemnity Insurance with an indemnity limit of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds (£250,000) (optional as required by the Council).