

**Provision of Early Years and Childcare Places**

**for 0-3 year olds**

**Project Name:**

**FEEE1W& FEEE2W childcare places**

**Phase 2 of capital funding**

**Total funds available:**

**£1,160,000 in total available across Essex**

**Funding is for multiple pots – please see** [**Phase 2 Childcare Capital Expansion application guidance**](https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/funding/childcare-reforms-feee1w-feee2w-and-wraparound-childcare/information-and-guidance-about-feee1w-and-feee2w/) **for details of areas and number of places to be created**

SERVICE SPECIFICATION

**Key Dates**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Application launch date** | 9th September 2024 |
| **Application closing date**  | 31st October 2024 5pm |
| **Last date for Business Management Consultant support** | 17th October 2024  |
| **Moderation Panel** | 12th December 2024 |
| **QI visits and Development review (For shortlisted applications only)** | 16th December 2024 -17th January 2025 |
| **EY Resource Panel (for applications to be endorsed)** | 28th January 2025 |
| **Outcome of application(subject to Governance)** | **29th January 2025** |

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.
1. **National Context**
	1. Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) funding is at the heart of the Government’s vision for all children to have access to high quality early years education.
* FEEE for **all** three and four-year olds - universal funded provision for every child from the term following their third birthday up until they reach compulsory school age.
* FEEE for eligible two-year olds from the term after their second birthday.
* Extended Funded Entitlement (EFE - 30 hours) for eligible working families of three and four-year olds (term following their third birthday up until they reach compulsory school age subject to meeting eligibility criteria).
	+ 1. As part of the new Department for Education (DfE) Childcare Reforms Expansion being implemented from April 2024, younger children will also be able to start accessing an early years funded place through the expanded 30-hours entitlement for qualifying working parents from the term after the child turns 9-months up to the term in which they turn 3-years-old. This will be rolled out in phases.
		2. These changes are being introduced gradually to support providers to meet the anticipated increase in demand from working families. This means that:

From **April 2024**, eligible working parents from the term after their child turns 2-year-old have been able to access 15 hours childcare support. (FEEE2W)

From **September 2024**, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents of children from the from the term after their child turns 9 months to 3-year-olds. (FEEE1W)

From **September 2025**, eligible working parents of children from the term after the child turns 9 months will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare a week.

1. **The Project**

|  |
| --- |
| * 1. Essex County Council has received capital funding from the DfE to increase the amount of 0-3 year old childcare places offering 30 hours funded childcare for eligible working families. These new places will be introduced in phases, as set out in 2.2.2
	2. We are looking for Ofsted registered childcare providers, or new provider who are able to register within 12 week of being notified that they have been successful, to create new places. These places must be for eligible FEEE1W and FEEE2W children meeting local need.
	3. The funding must be spent and the places need to be available from the beginning of the Summer term 2025, with the 30 hour offer available to eligible working families from September 2025. How this will be achieved should be captured in the application and supporting documentation.
	4. Capital funding is available up to a maximum of £3500.00 per new place created. These new 0-3 year old childcare places must be available to meet the needs of working families. Applications from Term-time only settings will be considered, if they can demonstrate how they will support working families to access a funded place to meet their working patterns.
	5. A minimum of 3 places (£10,500 minimum value of application) and a maximum 32 places (£112,000 maximum value of application) can be applied for each identified priority area.
	6. The order in which applications will be evaluated will be based on maximising the creation of new places in the identified top areas of priority across Essex. These areas are set out in the [Priority Area](https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/funding/childcare-reforms-feee1w-feee2w-and-wraparound-childcare/information-and-guidance-about-feee1w-and-feee2w/) document. Applications will be evaluated as follows:-
		1. Applications received for creating new places within a Priority One area will be reviewed first
		2. Applications received for creating new places that fall within a Priority Two area, will be reviewed second.
	7. Settings outside of Priority One and Two can apply, however these will only be reviewed if there is sufficient capital remaining once applications within Priority One and Two areas have been evaluated. Priority Three applications will also need to demonstrate the demand and how their setting will support the need of Priority One and Two areas. (Please see 3.10 for further capital opportunities available).
	8. Applicants need to demonstrate the demand in the area for FEEE1W and FEEEE2W places, and how the places they are proposing will meet this need but not over-saturate the local childcare market. Applicants will be scored on how well this is evidenced. Examples of how this could be demonstrated are:
* Use of Childcare sufficiency data
* Analysis of waiting lists and enquiries
* Own surveys, and market research
* Competitor analysis
* Marketing plan
* Use of local knowledge
	1. Applicants who have applied for funding in Phase One but were declined, are eligible to apply for Phase Two.
	2. Section 106 Capital funding, to create new early years and childcare places, in some parts of Essex will be available and published towards the end of September 2024. If you do not fall within a Priority One or Two area, your setting may be eligible if you are able to meet the publishedS106 capital funding criteria. Please email CCDL@essex.gov.uk. for more information.
	3. Providers must complete the Application Document Checklist in Section 5 of the Capital application form before submission to ensure all relevant documents have been provided and submitted in line with the instructions provided. Please note, if this is not adhered to the application will be automatically declined.
	4. We would encourage providers to submit their application as soon as possible in the timeframe before the closing date. This will provide time should there be a need to re-submit their application.
	5. If an application has been created using identified Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology, the application will be automatically declined.
	6. Successful providers will be expected to enter into a contract with Essex County Council to deliver a flexible range of FEEE places, meeting high quality standards.

 Please email FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk for a copy of the current Essex FEEE provider handbook |
|  |

1. **The Scope**

|  |
| --- |
| 4.1 Based on identified current local need and with consideration given to potential future demand, the scope for the project will include:* Flexible provision of FEEE2W places (15 hours) for working families
* Flexible provision of FEEE2W places (30 hours) for working families from September 2025)
* Flexible provision of FEEE1W places (15 hours) for eligible children aged for 9 months to 2 years
* Flexible provision of FEEE1W places (30 hours) for eligible children aged for 9 months to 2 years (from September 2025)
* Work with partners to facilitate community services.
* Please note, the implementation of new FEEE1 & 2W places should be in addition to current FEEE2, FEEE3 and FEEE4 places and not instead of., and not to the detriment of providing places for children with additional needs.

4.2 Providers will be required to achieve and / or maintain a ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ Ofsted judgement and ensure that all regulatory legislation (Ofsted Framework) is adhered.4.3 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.4.4 The provider must have regard for the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice which requires Early Years 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 Offer4.5 The provider will be required to provide ECC with monitoring information required by the DfE. This is expected to include evidence of newly registered childcare places and numbers of children accessing the funded places.  |

1. **Technical Requirements**
	1. Regulation

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

* The quality of education
* Behaviour and attitudes
* Personal development
* Leadership and management
	1. The Capital Funding shall be paid into a bank account in the name of the Provider which is separate to the account held for the running costs of the business.  All transitions from the bank account must be approved by at least two individual representatives of the Provider.
	2. The provider must deliver EYCC provision within the ECC county boundaries.
	3. Funded Early Education Entitlement

The provider will be expected to: -

* Sign up to an ECC Essex Early Education Funding Contract on an annual basis
* Provide a flexible FEEE offer for eligible children, with consideration given to increased eligibility for FEEE places
* Comply with the terms of the ECC Essex Early Education Funding Contract at all times
	1. The provider will be expected to be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations 2023 (GDPR)
	2. Safeguarding

The provider will be expected to adhere to the Southend Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Children and Adult Guidelines <https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2739/set-procedures-may2022.pdf>

* 1. Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

The provider will be expected to: -

* Provide [monitoring](https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/funding/childcare-reforms-feee1w-feee2w-and-wraparound-childcare/information-and-guidance-about-feee1w-and-feee2w/) for the first year.
* Accommodate a visit from ECC Infrastructure Development team to monitor the build progress before the final payment is issued.
* Update the Essex Early Years Provider Portal as changes occur and submit childcare sufficiency data termly.
	1. Health and Safety Requirements
* Providers will be expected to hold and maintain the appropriate Health and Safety policies and certificates and these must be embedded into service delivery.
* Providers will require a qualified Project Manager when the value of the funding application is above £50,000.
	1. Insurance

Providers will be expected to have: -

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