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**Provision of Early Years and Childcare Places**

**for Under 3s (Funded Early Education Entitlement)**

**Project Name:**

**Childcare Expansion for FEEE1W & FEEE2W childcare places**

**Total funds available £500,000**

**To be spent across:**

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| **District**  | **Wards** | **District**  | **Wards**  |
| Basildon | All | Harlow | All |
| Braintree | All with the exception of: Bocking & Blackwater; Bocking South; Bocking North; Braintree Central and Beckers Green; Yeldam | Maldon | Only available in:Southminster; Tollesbury; Wickham Bishops & Woodham |
| Brentwood | All with the exception of:Ingatestone, Fryerning and Mountnessing; West Horndon | Rochford | Only available in:Trinity; Lodge; Wheatley; |
| Castle Point | Only available in:St Mary’s; Appleton; Tarpots; Thundersley South; Thundersley North; St George’s | Uttlesford | All with the exception of: Waltham Abbey Honey; Newport; Clavering; Thaxted and the Eastons |
| Chelmsford | All  |  |  |

PROJECT SCOPE

**Key Dates**

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| **Launch**  | **19th May** |
| **Last date for BMC/CCDL support\*** | **4th August** |
| **Closing date** | **18th August** |
| **Quality visit**  | **1st-19th Sept** |
| **Site visit to assess build project\*** | **1st-19th Sept** |
| **Moderation panel** | **9th October** |
| **EY resource panel** | **16th October** |

\*Business Management Consultants (bmc@essex.gov.uk) and Children’s Community Development Leads (CCDL@essex.gov.uk)

\*If required, contact will be made to arrange visit

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**

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| * 1. Essex County Council has received capital funding from the DfE to increase the amount of under 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 2.3
	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. Essex County Council expects a project timeline submitted as part of the bid, which specifies when the places will be available for families to access. It is expected that the project will be completed within six months of the Funding Agreement being issued.
	4. Capital funding is available up to a maximum of £3500.00 per new place created. These new under 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. The minimum value of a project would be £10,500, which would require a minimum of three places to be created. There is not a set maximum bid value but value for money is a key consideration, so bids that provide best value for money per place will score higher.
	6. As a competitive application process, applications will be scored against the published criteria. Should there be multiple bids that exceed the total amount available; the value for money of each application will be considered. Following this, should a number of applications be successful but exceed the total funding amount, supplementary questions will be asked and scored.
	7. Applicants need to demonstrate the demand in the ward 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:
* Analysis of Essex County Council Childcare sufficiency data. Please request this from CCDL@essex.gov.uk
* Use of local knowledge and understanding of the local childcare market
* Analysis of waiting lists and enquiries
* Market research and marketing strategy
	1. If you have previously submitted a capital application for a project, you can re-apply submitting all of the required documentation.
	2. Section 106 Capital funding, to create new early years and childcare places, in some parts of Essex will be available and published from May 2025. If FEEE1W & FEEEE2W Childcare Reforms capital funding is not available in your area, it is likely that S106 funding may be available. Please see further details at [Growing tomorrow's childcare](https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/funding/growing-tomorrows-childcare/).
	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 |
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1. **The Scope**

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| 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).