

THE ENTITLEMENT FOR DISADVANTAGED TWO YEAR OLDS

Lincolnshire currently has funding to support 360 childcare places for disadvantaged 2 year olds. Demand currently exceeds the number of available places. To this end, the following criteria has been established in order to target the most vulnerable children and their families.

THE AIMS OF THE FUNDING

- To improve outcomes and narrow the gap in educational achievement between disadvantaged children and other children in the LA.
- To improve outcomes for parents, signposting them to services and supporting them as appropriate.
- To increase the take-up of the Free Entitlement for three and four year olds.
- To build evidence on the impact of the offer to inform proposals for wider rollout in line with the Prime Minister's commitment to a universal offer of free early learning and childcare places for two year olds.

AGE OF THE CHILD

We have ensured the transition from the extended offer for two year olds to the Early Years Entitlement (EYE) for three and four year olds is as seamless as possible. Therefore, in line with the Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 & 4 year olds, children become eligible for a place the term after they turn two years old.

A child born on or between	Will become eligible for a place from
1 April and 31 August	September following their second birthday (Start of Autumn school term)
1 September and 31 December	January following their second birthday (Start of Spring school term)
1 January and 31 March	April following their second birthday (Start of Summer school term)

SELECTION RATIONALE

Providers:

- Settings must have an Ofsted Good or Outstanding rating.
- Settings must have a graduate with EYPS (or teacher with relevant experience) leading practice, or, through the Graduate Leader Fund, be committed to employing an Early Years Professional within a reasonable time period.
- Settings must have a Green or Dark Green RAG rating with the Birth to Five Service

Families:

Must be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits to meet eligibility:

- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit at a higher rate than the family element (above £545 per year - this amount will be identified at the top of the award letter)
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Working Tax Credit (Disability element)
- Pension Credit

Looked After Children will also be prioritised as part of the allocations process.

Secondary Criteria has also been established to enable the Birth to Five Service to prioritise places appropriately (please see the Referral Form for further details).

REFERRAL PROCESS

A Referral Form must be completed with parents/carers who would like to be considered for a funded two year old place. You can find the Referral Form and Referral Process Flow Chart on the Birth to Five Service website at:

<http://www.birthtofive.org.uk/earlyyearsentitlements/theentitlementfordis2yolds.aspx>

A waiting list is used when all 360 places are filled and places will be reallocated as places become available. Children will access the funding for either 1, 2 or 3 terms based on their age and when they transition into the EYE for 3 and 4 year olds. Places will then become available for reallocation to those children on the waiting list based on their age and additional priorities.

The referral process can be initiated by any professional involved with a family (e.g. Health, Children's Centres and Childcare Providers).

ACCESSING A FUNDED PLACE

- Families in Lincolnshire will be offered the maximum 15 hours per week per child.
- Providers must be able to signpost families to wider support which may include skills, training, employment or more personal aspects such as benefits
- Parents must not be charged for any element of the offer for two year olds
- The minimum session length is 2 ½ hours
- Sessions must not exceed 6 hours per day
- Sessions should be taken over a minimum of three days per week
- Settings must inform the Birth to Five Service if a funded child does not access the setting within one week of the start date (identified on the confirmation email)
- Where children do not attend on more than 3 consecutive occasions, without reasonable explanation, the provider must inform Birth to Five Service by email to jessica.sinclair@lincolnshire.gov.uk and the place may be withdrawn

FUNDING

Providers must complete an online Actual Headcount return at the start of each term via the data exchange to confirm the number of hours agreed on the Parent/Carer Declaration for each child accessing the funding.

Providers will receive an 80% payment for the children returned on their Actual Headcount claim, followed by a 20% balancing payment made towards the end of the term, (please see payment schedule for dates).

If a child leaves the setting or changes their hours after the Headcount, providers must inform the Birth to Five Service by completing the online notification form on dataexchange.

Providers will be paid for up to 15 hours per child per week. Providers will be paid for the full hours agreed on the Parent/Carer Declaration.

FAMILY SUPPORT

In addition to the 15 hours funded childcare, a package of family support is also provided to the families by the childcare provider and other services. There are two strands of family support:

- Home Learning Environment Support (i.e. structured parent/ toddler time and other parenting support)
- Wider parental support (i.e. referral to health services, counselling, training, employment etc)

Evidence suggests that elements of 'home learning support' can bring strong benefits to children and their families. Providers must encourage parent/toddler time at home and actively support parents to devise appropriate activities that support their child's development.

Providers are supported to signpost families to services such as health, training, counselling and employment to ensure all participating families know how to access the support they need to provide family stability and a positive environment for their child.

Childcare providers' will have the ability to signpost families to Children's Centres for further support services and offer ideas for activities to support home learning.