

## Nursery Education Funding

### Information for Parents/Carers

Please read this leaflet before signing the Parental Contract

#### Three and four year old children are entitled to free nursery education

In Cambridgeshire, places are available in pre-schools, playgroups, day nurseries, independent schools, with accredited Childminder Networks and in Local Authority (LA) nursery schools/classes, reception classes or units. These groups or childminders offering early years education are called 'settings' or 'providers'.

#### When is my child eligible?

Children become eligible from the term after they turn three through to the term they turn five.

Children born between:	Become eligible for funding:
1 January - 31 March	1 April after their 3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday
1 April - 31 August	1 September after their 3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday
1 September - 31 December	1 January after their 3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday

#### What is my child entitled to?

Currently 3 and 4 year old children are entitled to five 2.5 hour sessions of free early learning per week for 38 weeks per year. From September 2009, there is a pilot scheme in certain areas where 3 and 4 years olds will be entitled to 15 hours free flexible early learning and childcare. This will be spread over a minimum of 38 weeks per year up to a maximum of 50 weeks, as long as the hours claimed do not exceed 570 hours per year in total. Not all providers can offer flexibility so please consult your provider about their offer.

From September 2010 the 15 hours Free Flexible Early Learning will be rolled out to the whole of Cambridgeshire.

#### What if my provider makes charges for additional services?

Some settings may "package" additional charges with their Nursery Education offer to make their business sustainable. They must declare this to the Local Authority. You will need to confirm your agreement to this arrangement on the Parental Contract. If you do not wish to take up additional services which are "packaged", there are other providers in Cambridgeshire who offer the free place only. (See **Finding a place** below)

#### Can I split the entitlement between settings?

**YES**, you may split the 15 hour entitlement between two different providers. Please note that you will be required to commit to a pattern of hours for a term.

## **Finding a place**

If you need help to find a provider who is part of our Nursery Education Funding Scheme, telephone the Cambridgeshire Childcare Information Service on **0845 04 54 014**, email: [info@opp-links.org.uk](mailto:info@opp-links.org.uk) or access their website at: [www.opportunity-links.org.uk](http://www.opportunity-links.org.uk)

## **What do I have to do to take up my funded place?**

When your child becomes eligible, your provider will give you a form called a *Parental Contract for 3 and 4 Year old Flexible Entitlement Funding in Cambridgeshire*. You will need to complete this form and return it to your provider with proof of your child's identity and date of birth (e.g. a birth certificate or NHS card). It is essential you reply by the date that they give you, as they need to submit their claim for funding to the Local Authority. If you miss this date, you may lose the opportunity to claim your funded place.

## **What if I want to change the number of hours during the term?**

It is a requirement for parents to commit to a pattern of funded hours for a term. Increases in the entitlement cannot be processed mid term.

## **What if I move my child?**

You must ensure that all outstanding payments to the setting are up to date. You will need to let the new setting have the address of your current setting so that they can liaise over the transfer of any funding, if applicable.

For further information contact the Nursery Education Funding Team on 01223 699805 or email [nef@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:nef@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)