

Funding start a year
later. this will be

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Funding in the Early Years sector was introduced in 1996. It was established to allow all children the opportunity to attend a nursery or pre-school before starting school to allow them a transitional period into education. The funding was then made available to children aged 3 and 4 in 2000 and has since been extended to include 2 year olds for families receiving financial support. In 2017 the funding entitlement increased to 30 hours per child, per week, term time only but this can be used at a reduced weekly rate over more weeks if preferred.

Below is a link for more information regarding the issues of 30 hours of funding. <https://nurseryworld.co.uk/30-hour-free-childcareHistoryFunding> for part time early education was originally discussed by the Conservative government as early as 1996. This was aimed at children of 4 years of age to encourage education for those not yet eligible to start school. When the Labour government came into power in 1997 they also decided to focus on early education and introduced the entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. This new legislation entitled children to attend a pre-school or nursery or registered childminder from the term after their 4th birthday for 15 hours of funded childcare per week over a 38 week period.

In 2000 the funding for children aged 3 was introduced which allowed children free child care from the term after their 3rd birthday. This funding could be used in both private and local authority run settings and child minders were also allowed to apply for the funding, although they had certain criteria to meet. It was announced in 2015 by Nick Gibb, the schools minister, that admission rules would change to allow children born from 1st April the opportunity to defer their schooling and start a year later. This will <https://assignbuster.com/funding-start-a-year-later-this-will-be/>

be different from previous policies as children that currently decide to start late need skip a year to ensure they end up with the correct year group. Theoretical Perspectives Many theorists support the importance of well planned Early Education. From Vygotsky's scaffolding, which supports children in their learning, Maslows Hierarchy of needs to ensure the child's basic needs are met to support their learning, Montessori's theory of children learning through play with a child-centered environment, John Dewey's belief that education comes through stimulating their social interaction with appropriate, well planned activities and games to support their holistic development. Along with the introduction of the 2 year funding, the government also brought in the pupil premium.

This is additional funding that schools, pre-schools and nurseries can apply for to pay for additional resources and equipment for disadvantaged children. This funding needs to be agreed with the family and can only be spent on education resources to help improve the child's learning and progression but may be used by other children in the setting to ensure it remains an inclusive environment. The funding in place prior to September 2017 was 15 hours a week, term time only. This was equivalent to 570 hours per year but could be spread over 50 weeks for those not using a term time only setting. The Government then introduced a further 15 hours of free funding for eligible working families. This has resulted in an extra 570 hours per year of funding, equating to 1140 hours per academic year. This updated piece of legislation was re-introduced to clearly layout who was entitled to the additional funding, the conditions that needed to be

met in order to meet those requirements and also the standard of care that would be expected.

The Act states that settings have a duty of care to provide the 15 hours of additional funding for eligible working parents and that it must be of a good standard of delivery to ensure it meets the EYFS requirements. The EYFS lays out in great detail the expectations of each early years setting, along with how they need to meet both the educational and emotional wellbeing of the children in their care. It is important for both parents and providers to understand that the additional hours must be for the benefit of the child, to ensure their individual needs are met, as well as ensuring they meet their expected stages of development during their time at the setting. Their priority for these children is to ensure their school readiness to meet the EYFS requirements as mentioned above. The Childcare bill also supports this by laying out a definition of the expected quality of care for this new entitlement.

The government consulted both parents and providers before the introduction of the extra hours through an on-line questionnaire. Of those that responded, 49% stated that they had to change their working hours to support their families child care needs. In the same survey 89% of those that responded said that they would take up the additional hours once they became available. Although the new additional funding is aimed at working families, those that are studying or training may also be able to claim the extra 15 hours. The Impact of the Free entitlement on Child Development Whilst the idea of the additional funding seems like a good

idea, we need to think about the quality of care that will be provided in these additional hours.

As stated in the Childcare Bill (2015), the education and care offered must be of good quality, but will it be as well planned as previous free hours. We need to think about the impact this will have on both the setting and the children using them. Currently children will have individual planning drawn up in the short and mid term plans of the setting to ensure they progress through the ages and stages of the framework.

Many settings will follow the school method of having academic activities which are adult led in the morning, and lots of free play and creative activities in the afternoon. This allows for a well balanced day and to help the children with all of their developmental needs. Having children attend the setting almost full time can be of benefit to their learning but they may then miss out on the quality family time they may have had when they only attended for 15 hours. Most children will have had the opportunity for a well planned learning session, then will get to spend time with a friend or family member in a different environment.

Spending time with friends and family is a good way for children to relax and learn new things without the weight of needing to achieve that they may get in their nursery or pre-school. Children learn through play, and although this will be done well in the setting, allowing them leisure time and learning through other sources is equally important. Children also need time to relax. Having time to watch TV, read a book or play in their own home and having quiet time to themselves is also important to ensure they have time

to not only reflect on their learning but to have complete freedom to choose what they want to do and to also spend time with other people of different ages. This can then have a positive impact on their self-confidence and resilience. Children also need different environments to help them in their development and not all pre-schools and nurseries will be able to offer quality outside play and trips due to the number of children they may have each session or their location. Children may be able to achieve higher stages of development when using the additional hours of funding but it may be at the cost of their emotional and social well-being. The wider impacts and Sustainability for Private Day Car Provisions When the 15 hours of free funding was introduced, some providers saw an increase in the number of hours children were brought into their setting, along with an array of different start and finish times, to ensure the 15 hours could be met for each eligible child.

All settings have a maximum number of children they are allowed to take in any one session and must also ensure that there is adequate staffing to meet the ratios needed whilst maintaining safeguarding and supervision of all children. Settings that can only offer morning or afternoon sessions, due to the nature of where they are situated, struggle to meet the eligible hours for the children registered with them. This may result in some of their children either splitting their hours over more than one setting or leaving them altogether. Some providers have been unable to offer the days or time slots people requested so again, lost out to other larger settings. Smaller settings in village halls that had limited space and times of use struggle to cope with the demands for the additional free hours so parents were have

been left with the dilemma of staying in a place they like and trust and having the only available sessions on offer, or finding a larger or less popular setting that could accommodate their requirements. The impact of the original extra funding is that providers have to sometimes work together to ensure learning development is correctly monitored. As well as impacting on the the number of children and hours a setting has to cater for, the 15 hours funding is often at a lesser hourly rate than they were initially charging.

As they are unable to claim a top-up to make up the hourly loss, they are having to absorb the losses in their overheads. For larger or private settings the opportunity has arisen to extend their opening hours to wrap around care, which they can charge the full amount for. Also catering for after school clubs for older children allows them to operate with a lower staff ratio which helps to fill the deficit created by the funding. For the more traditional church or village hall setting the impact of the free funding has been disastrous.

Many providers are unable to provide the free funding for the lesser amount and so have had to close. This is a problem nationwide with an alarming number of providers having to close. Another impact on early years educators is the change in legislation allowing Spring and Summer children to defer school for a year. This choice can impact on their achievement but can also impact heavily on the Early Years Sector. Having lots of children not moving into reception class until they are 5 will mean that nurseries and pre-schools have to keep spaces back whilst parent's decided which year their child will attend school. For many settings this will then impact on the

number of younger children they can offer places too which could mean that we end up with children not being able to find a suitable place to start their education.

Along with the additional hours from the 30 hours funding this could overall reduce the number of hours providers will be safely able to offer. With the introduction of an additional 15 hours of funding the pre-school learning alliance have raised concerns that this will again result in closures of early years providers. They completed an on-line survey of 1500 providers with the results listed below: Ubsite. <https://www.pre-school.org.uk/childcare-providers30-hours-funding-what-you-need-to-know>

Below I have included 2 youtube clips, one on the parent/carers perspective and one on the providers prospective. <https://youtu.be/dDFOZXBxaA> <https://youtu.be/50nWlzS-DGg>

Conclusion In conclusion, the 30 hours funding seems like a very positive step forward which allows parents and carers more freedom to work longer hours without the burden of excessive childcare costs. Having the flexibility to have your child in free early education can not only help their child develop but can also allow the family to have a better standard of living. It can also give parents/carers the opportunity to go into training or education before their child reaches the age of 3 so that they are job ready by the time they are eligible for the new funding. The negative side of this for families is that their local setting may have decided not to offer the new funding or may be restricted on the hours and days it can offer. Although 30 hours should be available, parents and carers may find that they are having to use different settings to use up the allotted hours or to find another

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setting that can accommodate the days and hours that are needed to cover working hours. This may not be a local setting and so they may incur additional costs for travel or extra time needed to collect their children after work. For large childcare providers the 30 hours is more likely to be sustainable due to the number of children that could take up spaces.

As the funding is less than the actual hourly rate that most settings charge, like the 15 hours free funding, settings could be working at a loss. They will be losing money per hour for each child using the funding. With large settings they have lots of staff and usually lots of available spaces so although they will be losing out on the funding they will be receiving, this should be offset by the number of children they have so will still allow them to run as a sustainable business. They may also be able to cater for larger numbers of younger children so that the money they charge for these spaces can offset what they are losing with the funding.

Larger settings also have the option to take on students and apprentices that can impact on the number of staff they need. This allows some managers the flexibility to move staff around to ensure they are not running at a loss. For smaller businesses that have a limited number of spaces, if they chose not to take up the funding then they could lose out on the number of children applying for spaces.

If they do take up the funding they could end up missing out on valuable fees which help keep them sustainable. For a small business, whichever way you look at it, the new funding that was brought in to help ensure good

quality early years education was affordable could actually be the reason that lots of them face closure.