

The Funded Childcare Offer for 3 and 4 year olds

November 2017



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



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The value of quality childcare

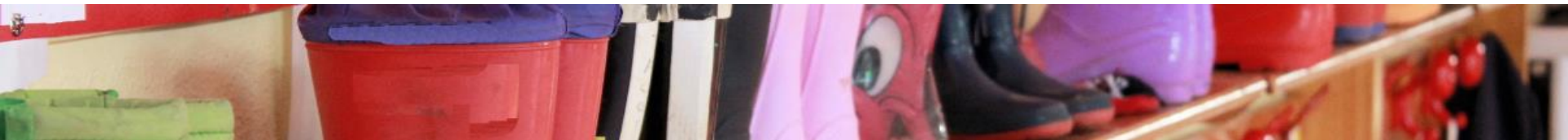


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Economic benefit – access to free childcare will remove this as a barrier to returning to employment.

Tackling Poverty – enabling parents to return to or increase their employment, improving families prospects.

Benefits for the child – supporting existing child development pathways.



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The Team



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Information Officers

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Where are the Early Implementer areas?

Gwynedd
1000 children

Anglesey
280 children

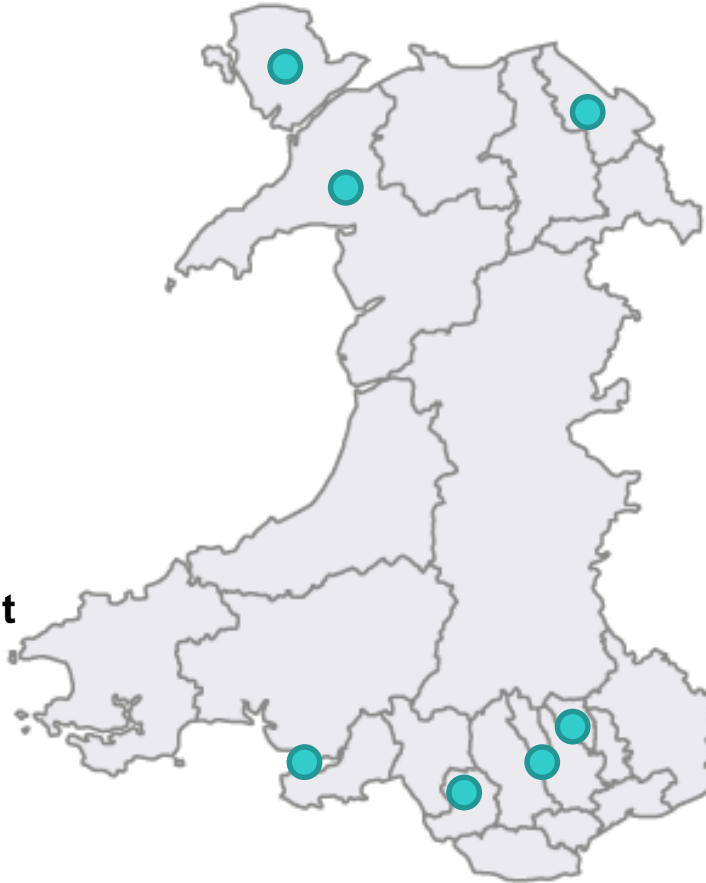
Swansea
540 children

Flintshire
750 children

Blaenau Gwent
500 children

Caerphilly
380 children

RCT
1050 children



Flintshire will test the Childcare Offer in:
Phase 1 Sept 2017: Buckley, Bagillt, Broughton and within areas of Aston, Connahs Quay (Central and Golftyn), Garden City, Greenfield, Higher Shotton, Holywell (Central), Mancot, Queensferry and Sandycroft.
Phase 2 Nov 2017: Connahs Quay – all Wards; Flint; Holywell; Saltney.

Early Implementers to test with 10% of eligible working Families from Sept 2017





What is the childcare offer?

The childcare offer will provide eligible working parents with 30 hours of a combination of early education and childcare for 3 and 4 year olds, for up to 48 weeks per year.

What does it mean for a parent?

A 3 or 4 year old could access early education entitlement. If the parent is working 16 hours or more, they could receive additional hours of government-funded childcare on top, so that they receive a combined total of 30 hours of childcare and early education per week for up to 48 weeks a year, depending on the child's birthday.





What is early education?

Children are entitled to **early education** (Early Entitlement) from the term after their 3rd birthday and (Foundation Phase Nursery) September after their 3rd birthday.

All local authorities provide a minimum of 10 hours per week early education, either in the local school or in a non-maintained settings.

During term time for 39 weeks, this early education will be part of the childcare offer's 30 hours.

During the school holidays, when there is no early education, the offer will provide 30 hours a week of childcare, for up to 9 weeks pro rata.

Family Information Service can help to find a registered provider.

A child can access a maximum of two registered childcare settings in addition to their Early Entitlement or FPN setting in any given day.



How will parents know if they are eligible?

All parents of 3 and 4 year olds can already access the early education entitlement. For the childcare offer:

- the child must live within a pilot areas
- be within the age range
- the parent must earn on average a weekly minimum equivalent of 16 hours or more at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW) or more.
- lone parent family - need to be working
- two parent family - both need to be working
- self-employed or zero hours contract - need to be able to prove this by providing the relevant documents.

(There are a number of Exemptions too)





Aims of the pilot / early implementers

To test the offer to make sure it works, eventually to be available across Wales (Ref: Welsh Government Taking Wales Forward 2016 –2021)

In Flintshire, this will allow testing of the Offer in areas of low and high employment, across travel to work routes, including travel outside Wales, and through a mixture of maintained and non-maintained settings. To test capacity and demand of childcare along with how it fits with the Foundation Phase and Welsh medium provision.

Close monitoring will provide lessons to adapt the offer accordingly.





Can a parent choose any childcare provider?

Yes, as long as they are willing to be part of the Offer and they are registered with CSSIW - Wales or OFSTED - England (the inspectorates for childcare settings).

Places are available. The agreement is between the parent and the Setting.

It is up to parents to find a childcare provider that suits their families' needs – the list of registered settings is available through the on-line application process.

The Family Information Service can help by providing information on all childcare settings.





Will a parent have to pay for anything?

It does not include food, transport to and from other settings or off-site activities that incur an extra charge and providers will be able to charge for these.

Providers should not charge more than £7.50 per day for food or £4.75 for half a day (including lunch).

It does not include hours above the Offer, these are paid for by the parent.





How do parents apply?

Applications are made through: www.flintshire.gov.uk/childcareoffer

The screenshot shows the 'Eligibility Checker' page. At the top is the Flintshire County Council logo and navigation links for 'Resident' and 'Business'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Resident > Schools > Eligibility Checker'. The main heading is 'Eligibility Checker'. Below this, a paragraph explains that the checker helps determine eligibility for government-funded childcare offers for three and four-year-olds of working parents. A section titled 'You are eligible for the Offer if:' lists pilot areas: Buckley, Bagillt, Broughton, Aston, Connah's Quay, Garden City, Greenfield, Higher Shotton, Holywell, Mancot, Queensferry, and Sandycroft. A note states that users will be redirected to search results after clicking the 'Check Postcode' button. The form shows the postcode 'CH7 2JT' entered and the 'Check Postcode' button highlighted.

The screenshot shows the 'Childcare Offer Registration Form'. It features a header with the council logo and a language dropdown set to 'English'. The form title is 'Childcare Offer Registration Form'. A red-bordered box contains the instruction: 'Please note, fields highlighted in red must be completed.' Below this are two tabs: 'Your Details' (selected) and 'Childcare Offer Registration Form details'. The form fields include: 'Customer reference number if known' (empty), 'Surname:' (red border), 'Title:' (empty), and 'Forename(s):' (red border).

**Aim: To maximise applications for all eligible parents.
To learn from the development and early implementation of the Offer.**





For comprehensive details of all childcare options visit:
www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

The quality of provision and equity of access, both in terms of geographical reach and language is central to developing and rolling out the offer.
First Minister

