Early education for two year olds from lower income families

A CHECKLIST AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR PROVIDERS AND CHILDMINDERS

New funding for early years
Following on from the success of providers offering free early education for three and four year olds, the Government is rolling out an entitlement of 15 hours per week for lower income two year olds in England.

Build up has already started, towards providing places for an estimated 130,000 children from September 2013 (about 20% of all two year olds nationally), doubling to around 260,000 children from September 2014 (about 40% of all two year olds nationally).

For 2013-14, the government is providing local authorities with £525m to make this happen, and it plans to increase the funding to some £750m a year from 2014-15. It means there will be an increasing demand for two year old places.

Whether you are a nursery, pre-school, community playgroup, children’s centre or childminder, think about how you can provide childcare places for two year olds, or if you know families who might benefit from the funding available.
HOW CAN ACHIEVING TWO YEAR OLDS SUPPORT YOU?

Achieving Two Year Olds is funded by the Department for Education. From now until 2015 we aim to support childcare providers and local authorities to make early education for two-year-olds a great success.

Keep in touch by registering on the Foundation Years website: www.foundationyears.org.uk

We talk with each local authority about what best will support you. As a result, we have funded a wide range of development work, consultancy and training to help you meet the challenge. We are also visiting lots of childcare provider networks and events to share information. If you've a question or something to share, email us at Achieving2YOProviders@mottmac.com

Eligible children
From September 2013, eligible two year olds are:

- In families who meet the criteria for free school meals
- Looked after children (or children in care)
- Any others at the local authority’s discretion

Eligibility will be extended in 2014. To check if a child is eligible, contact your local authority.

New business opportunity
Over half of two-year-olds from eligible groups currently use no formal childcare, so there is a new business opportunity offering you the possibility to sustain and grow your childcare setting. Just like for three and four year olds, there is a legal duty to secure places for these children, so this is permanent not a short-term initiative. The children will have a range of experiences - this is a large-scale programme, very different to the small-scale pilots which focused just on the very neediest children.

The hourly funding rate is set by each local authority in consultation with providers. The rate will be higher than for three and four year olds. The national average rate at which the Department for Education is funding local authorities is £5.09. The rate to individual local authorities varies to recognise that staff costs differ around the country, so your local rate may be higher or lower than this.

Give real help to lower-income children
Research (EPPE, 2004) has found that a quality pre-school experience can boost children's all-round development, is particularly beneficial for disadvantaged children, and that starting pre-school between two and three helps with cognitive outcomes and better social skills. By offering places to lower-income children, you will be making a valuable contribution to their future. Almost all three and four year olds already access early education places - this is an opportunity for you to work with the same children you do now but at an earlier age.
WHAT COULD YOU DO?
A 10-point checklist

1. **Ask the key question** Ask yourself, your team, your management or committee – could you provide places for two-year-olds?

2. **Discuss with your local authority(s) their funding arrangements and any requirements** What hourly rate are they paying? Do they offer places for any extra groups of children?

3. **Look at other ideas** What have other providers done or what are they planning? What lessons have they learned from working with two-year-olds before? Look at case studies, attend local training or share learning at network meetings and visits. Are any of these ideas useful for you?

4. **Small changes can make a big difference.** We have all learned how moving from sessional to flexible models, and increasing from 12.5 to 15 hours, have supported families and providers over recent years. What little changes could you make now? Could you take more children if you change the way you deliver your hours?

5. **Talk with parents** Is there a local demand for childcare for two-year-olds? How many of your local families may be eligible? Find out if your local authority can provide you with information about this.

6. **Are there opportunities to work in partnership with other settings (group providers or childminders), schools or children’s centres?** Getting in touch now could be a useful step to find out how you can support them, and they can support you.

7. **Think about your setting** Find out if changes to ways of working, or routines, could open up spare capacity. Consult with colleagues. What would meet their needs and the needs of families too? What skills and qualifications do you (or your team, if you have one) need?

8. **Look around your space** Perhaps you have an area you could adapt for two-year-olds. Could a little re-organisation make a big difference? Is something a little more ambitious needed? Some government capital funding is available through your local authority – get in touch with them to discuss your ideas.

9. **Now review your business model** Do the sums add up? Can you make them add up if you make small adjustments? Can you offer places that are sustainable and high quality? Do you need to involve a second opinion to enable you to complete this review and offer other ideas? You may have a local development worker, business support service, accountant or use online resources. Check out the business support section of this document for ideas.

10. **Finalise your plans** Get started and monitor your progress, making changes along the way as you learn from the experience. Share your learning with others.
We know you will use lots of different sources of support, information and resources to enable you to deliver your business. Here, we have gathered a range of support developed to help you create more two year old places, make them of sufficient quality, and make families aware of and use them.

**Business support**

Thinking about whether you can accommodate funded two year olds in your setting will lead you to explore aspects of your business. There are sources of support to help you. Jobcentre Plus or your local Further Education College can give advice and support on staff recruitment and/or training.

4Children’s Business Skills Support Hub:  
[www.4Children.org.uk/BusinessSkills](http://www.4Children.org.uk/BusinessSkills) includes downloadable resources and information on everything from business planning, finance and marketing, to managing employees and governance and legal structures. There is also an online Business Health Check, which gives you a score based on responses to a series of questions about business management and signposts to further advice.

The National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) run business support training courses on marketing and expansion and reshaping your business around engaging two-year-olds into your setting, and maximising your resources to facilitate this potential influx. You may also find useful information on the Business in You website: [www.businessinyou.bis.gov.uk](http://www.businessinyou.bis.gov.uk)

Business in You is a partnership between private enterprise and government. It includes:

- A searchable database of public and private sources of investment and where to go for government help
- Free and impartial information and advice for every aspect of business, from recruiting and managing your workforce, to launching a new marketing strategy
- Resources to help making hiring clear and simple
- Resources to help you find the right markets and meet people in them
- MentorsMe, which connects you to individuals and organisations that can help you with your specific business needs.

We know you will use lots of different sources of support. If you are setting up as a childminder, HM Revenue and Customs has a useful elearning course:  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk/courses/syob/ncma](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/courses/syob/ncma) to help with tax, national insurance, business records and expenses.

**One-to-one support**

If you would like someone to come in and talk through business issues you may be having, or you feel you need some one-to-one support with creating two-year-old places, ask your local authority. It may have a business support officer, or link with a partner organisation or consultancy. Daycare Trust and NDNA offer consultancy support for providers looking at the business case for delivering early education for two year olds and integrating it into practice. This support can be tailored according to individual need and looks at the business plan for your setting as well as how to
make the most out of the hourly rate available for each place. It also looks at the practicalities of working with two-year-olds within your setting if you are not already doing so, this takes into account the additional support that some two year olds may need.

**Peer Support**

NCMA local ([www.ncma.org.uk/ncmalocal](http://www.ncma.org.uk/ncmalocal)) is a peer support project for home-based childcare professionals. Facilitated local meetings bring together like-minded professionals to alleviate isolation, empower newly qualified professionals and share in best practice including information on the two-year-old offer.

Free sector-led support on specific issues, including extending the free entitlement for two year olds, is now available in a peer-to-peer support programme delivered by the Early Childhood Unit with C4EO.

**Webinars**

Webinars are interactive web-based seminars. Participants can give, receive and discuss information. Relevant National Childminding Association (NCMA) webinars may be:

- Learning-rich environments to inspire and motivate two-year-olds
- Progress check
- Understand the needs of children and young people who are vulnerable and experiencing poverty and disadvantage

The Pre-School Learning Alliance also run webinars for members; look out for future policy update sessions as well as one on supporting settings to meet the needs of two year olds.

**Distance learning or elearning**

NDNA have an online learning hub at [www.earlyyearsdevelopmentzone.co.uk](http://www.earlyyearsdevelopmentzone.co.uk) which includes a course called Supporting Two Year Olds in the EYFS. It will enable practitioners to reflect on their current practice, and gain further knowledge and skills to meet two year olds’ individual needs.

Pre-school Learning Alliance is developing a distance-learning programme for childminders which will include the two year old offer, as well as financial and business support. It will be launched in spring 2013. Also around the same time will be a revised online programme for group settings called Managing your Early Years Small Business.

**Other online information**

The Early Childhood Unit website has links to their publications, events, training courses, and peer support programme.

The Foundation Years website is a one stop shop for resources, information and the latest news on the foundation years. It is developed collaboratively by the sector. We recommend you register with this site for regular updates on sector news, resources, and events. Also available to download from the site is: The EYFS Progress Check at Two – A Know How Guide.

Early Education has a range of information, including their Learning Together series of information sheets that can be downloaded free of charge. They are also publishing a book: I am Two! Working Effectively with Two Year Olds and Their Families exploring the role of early intervention, personal, social and emotional development of two year olds, the progress check, and working with parents.
There are lots of training courses being created by national organisations and offered directly to childcare providers or through local authorities, helping you develop quality places for two-year-olds.

The best way of finding out what’s going on in your area is to contact your local authority early years and childcare team, Family Information Service, or one of the national organisations. Here is a selection to give you an idea of the courses you might come across. If you see a training course here that you like the look of, find out if it is being run near you.

**The two-year-old offer and EYFS** looks at the eligibility criteria, learning from two-year-old pilots, the new EYFS and Ofsted requirements.

**Business support for the two-year-old offer** aims to help childcare providers to integrate the two year old offer into their business plan and highlights the key benefits of working with two-year-olds and the advantages this can have for their business.

**Quality provision for two-year-olds – a partnership approach** is suitable for managers and Early Years Professionals wishing to increase quality provision for two year olds within settings.

**Parents, Early Years and Learning (PEAL)** The home learning environment is key to ensuring we make the greatest impact on two-year-olds. PEAL supports all those who work with young children and their families to develop ways of engaging parents in their children’s early learning and development.

**Learning-rich environments to inspire and motivate two-year-olds** helps childminders understand why it is important to provide a learning-rich environment to inspire children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. It particularly focuses on identifying the development of these skills at age two.

**Progress check** This course explores the format of the two-year-old progress check, contents and information sharing as required by the revised EYFS.

**Fascination and frustration: the behaviour of two-year-olds** explores the various kinds of behaviour that two-year-olds often exhibit.

**Observation and assessment in the early years, with a focus on the Two Year Old Check** will examine the importance of observation and consider the most effective and practical way to make assessment processes manageable, with a focus on two-year-olds and also consider what should be included in the progress check.

**Working with all two-year-olds to achieve best outcomes** develops awareness of the huge development taking place during the first two years of life, understand how to pick up particular competences or aspects of developmental delay, and discuss approaches to the progress check.

**Working with vulnerable families** equips providers with knowledge and confidence around how to deliver provision that best meets the needs of vulnerable families and have access to practical and achievable support tools.
USEFUL CONTACTS

4Children
Information helpline: 020 7512 2100
info@4Children.org.uk
www.4Children.org.uk

Business Link Helpline
0845 600 9006
Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm

C4EO
www.C4EO.org.uk

Daycare Trust (please note that Daycare trust will soon be changing their name)
For more about training courses contact:
Collette Prince on 0207 940 7510 or cprince@daycaretrust.org.uk
For general enquiries:
info@daycaretrust.org.uk
www.daycaretrust.org.uk

Early Education
0207 539 5400
office@early-education.org.uk
www.early-education.org.uk

Early Childhood Unit
ecuadmin@ncb.org.uk
0207 843 6064
www.ncb.org.uk/ecu

Find your local council
www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

Foundation Years – the Department for Education’s strategic partner
www.foundationyears.org.uk

National Association of Family Information Services
www.findyourfis.daycaretrust.org.uk

National Childminding Association (NCMA)
0845 880 0044
info@ncma.org.uk
www.ncma.org.uk

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
01484 407070
www.ndna.org.uk

Pre-School Learning Alliance
020 7697 2500
info@pre-school.org.uk
www.pre-school.org.uk
achieving 2 year olds

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