

## **Tax free childcare and 30 hours free childcare**

The government is introducing the 30 hours of free childcare as part of the Childcare Act 2016 and has committed to doubling the amount of free childcare from 15 to 30 hours a week for **working** parents of three and four year olds from September 2017.

It is advisable to apply for the extended entitlement the term before you wish to claim your child's place. Therefore, if you want a place for this September the cut-off date for applications will be 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. **Please be aware that Fledgelings is currently operating for 27 hours a week and there are no plans to change this at the moment.** You may, of course, split the funding with another setting so please feel free to discuss your requirements with me.

More information regarding Tax free childcare and 30 hours free childcare is available on the Childcare Choices website, so please take a look.

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What is Tax free childcare?**

Tax-Free Childcare offers parents with children under 12 up to £2,000 per child, per year, towards their childcare costs (or under 17 and up to £4,000 for disabled children). Eligible parents entering the scheme will open an online childcare account that they can use to pay for childcare.

#### **What is the difference between universal 15 hours and the extended 30 hours entitlement?**

In addition to the existing 15 hours, which all 3 and 4 year olds, (and some 2 year olds currently receive), 30 hours will be available for 3 year old and 4 year old children of **working** parents. **If parents only want to claim the universal 15 hour entitlement for three and four year olds they DO NOT apply through the digital service.**

#### **How do parents apply?**

Parents will be able to check their eligibility for 30 hours through the childcare calculator: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>.

If your child qualifies for the additional 15 hours you will be given an eligibility code, which along with your National Insurance Number will need to be shared with pre-school. This code will be validated by Fledgelings using the DfE Eligibility Checking System (ECS) upon receipt of your written permission. Parents will be asked by HMRC to reconfirm their eligibility at regular three monthly intervals - failure to do this will mean the additional funding will stop.

Those who could be eligible for 30 hours and/or Tax-Free childcare will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply. If parents encounter any problems with the application process they can contact Customer Interaction Centre on 0300 123 4097.

After the general election more information will be available, but I will be happy to try to answer any questions in the meantime.