**Early Years**

**Application form and guidance notes for extended hours funding Foster Carer process**

**Overview**

Foster Carers who work outside their fostering responsibilities may be entitled to claim up to 30 hours per week funded Early Education Entitlement for foster children in their care. This is made up of 15 hours universal entitlement and 15 hours extended hours entitlement. It is only available to children aged 3 and 4 years.

Foster carers and social workers may open discussions about the possibility of accessing a childcare place, as the child approaches their 3rd birthday or when a foster carer decides to take up additional employment. We would expect these discussions to happen as part of the usual supervision meetings and review process. Children become entitled to a universally funded childcare place the term following their 3rd birthday.

Once a Special Guardianship Order is granted, a carer has the same right to benefits and tax credits as a birth parent, therefore you need to apply via the parent 30 hour funding link: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

**Stage 1:**

**Eligibility:**

Foster Carers will need to establish if they meet the eligibility criteria to access the extended hours entitlement (30 hours). Each foster carer (or lone foster carer) must earn at least the minimum equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national minimum wage or national living wage, for further clarification please access: <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>

Once eligibility is established the foster carer should speak to the allocated social worker to ensure that accessing the extended entitlement meets the needs of the child’s care plan.

*Foster Carers are required to check with the child’s allocated social worker before making an application*.

**Stage 2:**

**Application & Authorisation:**

If agreed that it is in the best interest of the child to access an extended hours place, the application below will need to be completed.

At this point in the process the allocated social worker will need to check evidence of eligibility.

The social worker will need to be confident that the foster carer(s) are engaging in paid work outside of foster caring responsibilities.

Evidence may include:

* Pay slips
* A job offer letter
* Evidence of self-employment such as a tax return

**Please note:**

Where one of the parents in the household is not the registered foster carer for the child/ren in question, they will still need to evidence that both partners in the household meet the normal income requirements for extended entitlement.

<https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>

* Foster Carers must have received their validated codes within the timeframes stated in the 30 hour process;

By 31st December for a January start date,

By 31st March for April start date and

By 31st August for a September start date

* Authorisation of the application takes up to 5 working days as this has to be approved by a Team Manager or Operational Lead from the Fostering Team or LAC Permanent Team.
* The form must then be sent to the Early Years Business, Sufficiency and Funding Team (BSF) at:

eycentral@coventry.gov.uk

The BFS team will issue a code which the Foster Carer will need to pass on to the identified Early Years Provider in order to claim funding. This process then takes up to an additional 5 working days.

* **All applications must be re-confirmed every 3 months to ensure eligibility still remains the same.**
* The BFS Team will contact the Foster Carer and nominated social worker in advance of the 3 month deadline, to ensure continued eligibility and that the childcare still fits within the child’s care plan.

**Stage 3:**

**Accessing a place:**

* Once the extended hours code has been received the Foster Carer/s can secure a childcare place for the fostered child. For a full list of Ofsted registered childcare providers within Coventry please visit: [www.coventry.gov.uk/cid](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/cid)
* Once an appropriate childcare provider has been identified they will ask for the child’s eligibility code and request the completion of the Early Years Parent Funding agreement.

Please note the following: -

* 30 hours is the maximum amount of funding available however, the code can be used to access fewer hours per week
* Foster Carers can choose to **pay** for additional hours above 30 per week, if this is consistent with the child’s care plan
* Costs in addition to direct childcare e.g. food or nappies will not be covered by the funding
* Coventry City Council is responsible for the generation of childcare codes for all eligible Coventry Looked After Children, whether the child’s address or childcare setting is within the Coventry boundary or other Local Authority areas

**Application for Extended Hours Entitlement (30 hours) for children in foster care**

**Privacy Summary**

We will use the information you provide to enable Coventry City Council to provide you with necessary and appropriate services or to process financial transactions in relation to grants and payments. More information on how we handle personal information and your

rights under the data protection legislation can be found in our Privacy Notice.

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/eyprivacynotice>

We will keep all information you provide confidential and treat in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation.

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Speak to the child’s social worker before applying. If they agree, complete this form.

Once you and your partner (if you have one) have signed, the form must be counter-signed by a Fostering Team Manager for Coventry City Council Foster Carers / Child’s Social Worker Operational Lead for independent Foster Carers

If your application is successful, you will get your eligibility code from the Early Years Business, Sufficiency and Funding Team (EYcentral@coventry.gov.uk)

**If you need more help contact your Supervising Social Worker**

This form is only for foster carers. If you are applying for your own children use the childcare service: [www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs](http://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs).

**Section 1 – About you**

1.1 Your details:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** |  |
| **First name** |  |
| **Last name** |  |
| **Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)** |  |
| **National Insurance number** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Postcode** |  |
| **Email address** |  |

We need your address and email to send your 30 hours free childcare eligibility code.

1.2 Are you a foster carer of the children named in this form?

Yes

No

1.3 Do you and the children live in England?

Yes

No

If no, speak to your local council about what childcare schemes are available in your area.

1.3 Are you a British/Irish national?

Yes

No

1.4 If you have answered “no” to 1.3:

 Have you acquired settled or pre-settled status through the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS);

 Have you made an application through the EUSS and are waiting for a decision, or;

 Are you appealing a decision on your EUSS application?

1.5 Are you subject to immigration rules that prevent you from receiving public funds?

Yes

No

**Section 2 – Your employment details**

2.1 Are you employed or self-employed for more than 16 hours, per week outside your fostering responsibilities?

Yes

No

You can still answer yes if you are not currently working. For example, you are on parental leave or sick leave, or expect to start or re-start work in the next 31 days.

2.2. Do you expect to earn more than £100,000 in this tax year (April to March)?

Yes

No

If your income is over this amount you cannot get 30 hours free childcare.

2.3 If you are **not** employed outside your fostering responsibilities, select any that apply to you:

 For Universal Credit purposes, I am assessed as having limited capability for work

 I receive National Insurance credits because of incapacity or limited capability for work

 I receive a Carer’s Allowance

 I receive an Employment and Support Allowance

 I receive Incapacity Benefit

 I receive a Severe Disablement Allowance

If you get one of these benefits you may still be able to get 30 hours free childcare if you have a partner who holds additional employment outside their role as foster carer.

2.4 Do you have a partner who lives with you?

Yes

No

A person is your partner if you are married or in a civil partnership, and live together in the same household, or a couple who live together as if you are married or in a civil partnership.

If **Yes**: go to section 3.

If **No**: skip to section 5.

**Section 3 – Your partner**

3.1 Your partner’s details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** |  |
| **First name** |  |
| **Last name** |  |
| **Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)** |  |
| **National Insurance number** |  |

3.2 Is your partner also a foster parent?

Yes

No

If **Yes**: go to section 4.

If **No**: please contact your local authority (see page 1) who will help you further.

**Section 4 – Partner’s employment details**

4.1 Is your partner employed or self-employed for 16 or more hours, per week outside their fostering responsibilities?

Yes

No

You can still answer yes if they are not currently working. For example, they are on parental leave or sick leave, or expect to start or re-start work in the next 31 days.

4.2 Does your partner expect their total taxable income in this tax year (April to March) to be more than £100,000?

Yes

No

If their income is over this amount you cannot get 30 hours funded childcare.

**Now go to section 5.**

**Section 5 – The children who will get 30 hours free childcare**

If you are fostering non-related children who could both be eligible for 30 hours free childcare you will need to complete a separate form for each child.

5.1 Foster children details:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First name** | **Last name** | **Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)** | **When do you expect the child in foster care to join a school reception year?****MM/YYYY** |
|  |  |  |  |
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**Section 6 – Declaration**

6.1 Your declaration:

I declare that I am applying for 30 hours free childcare, to enable me to work outside of fostering and that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Date (DD/MM/YYYY)** |  |

6.2 Your partner’s declaration:

I declare that I am applying for 30 hours free childcare, to enable me to work outside of fostering and that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Your partner’s signature** |  |
| **Date (DD/MM/YYYY)** |  |

**Section 7 – Fostering Team Manager or LAC / Area Operational Lead declaration**Before Coventry City Council can issue you with a code, this form must be counter-signed by either: -

* A Fostering Team Manager – for Coventry City Council Foster Carers
* The Operational Lead for the Child’s Social Worker – for Foster Carers approved by another agency.

I declare that I have seen evidence of employment outside fostering, and it has been discussed how this employment is consistent with the care plan for the child or children listed in this application.

**7.1** I confirm that I support this application for 30 hours free childcare in respect of the foster children listed in this application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Position**  |  |
| **Telephone Number** |  |
| **Date (DD/MM/YYYY)** |  |

**Section 8 – Re-Confirmation (every 3 months)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Have there been any changes to your employment status** **(as described on your application form)** | **Re-confirmation confirmed by Social Worker/ Fostering Team Manager****(please sign)**  | **Social Worker/Fostering Team Manager Position and print name** | **Telephone contact** |
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|  |  |  |  |  |

Please re-submit this application to re-confirm the eligibility code to EYCentral@coventry.gov.uk

| **Data protection statement*** **I understand that any information supplied by me in respect of my application for childcare may be held and/or processed in an electronic form and is subject to the relevant provisions in the Data Protection Act 1998, UK-GDPR and other relevant statutes. I understand that any information supplied will form part of the agency’s case record held in respect of my application.**
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| --- |