

Saltwood Play and Learning Centre

Breakfast Club,
Saltwood Playschool,
321 After School Club
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17.05.17

Saltwood CE Primary School
Grange Road
Saltwood
Kent, CT21 4QS

Dear Parents,

As you may be aware, from September 2017 the government will be implementing a change in the funding offered to 3 and 4 year olds of working parents across the country. The increase in this funding is a welcome change for working parents as it recognises the challenge that childcare costs have on working families. However, it has proved to be very challenging for childcare settings as, unfortunately, the hourly rate paid by the government doesn't meet the hourly rates charged by our setting.

Currently the hourly rate we charge for a 3 to 4 year old at SPLC is £4.75 per hour. However, the rate paid by the government is just £3.91. The government will be providing us with an increase of 5p per hour from September 2017, this is our first increase in over 4 years and is significantly lower than the Kent settings had advised was required to make Early Years childcare sustainable.

The government has led us to believe that they are offering 30 hours of "Free" childcare. In practice, it means childcare providers must find their own way to make up the shortfall between the funding and the actual cost of providing quality childcare without penalising families who are not entitled to the offer. Kent County Council acknowledge the challenge that childcare settings are facing and they are trying to support us all with ideas of how to recover the significant drop in income we will experience, however, there is little they can do.

At Saltwood Play and Learning Centre we have made the decision to offer the 30 hours to eligible families as well as the 15 hours currently offered to families not eligible for the 30 hours. As we are a charity run nursery we will need to charge funded parents a small fee for consumables so we can continue to keep running our outstanding nursery. More information of this will be provided when parents sign up to the 30 hours.

The new funding operates similar to the current funding which is offered for 38 weeks of the year (term time only) however this time it is the parents responsibility to check their eligibility, to ensure that they are claiming the correct amount of hours and they must reapply every 3 months. We will be asking parents to sign an agreement each funding cycle for our own records and to ensure that parents are claiming the correct funding option. This is a new system for parents, settings and the government so we will be all learning the system together!

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Who qualifies for 15 hours of funding?

All children aged 3 and 4 years will continue to be eligible for 15 hours of government funded childcare for 38 weeks of the year (570 hours).

Who qualifies for 30 hours of funding?

Children of a single parent who work, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum wage or national living wage and does not earn more than £100,000 per year.

Children of a couple, BOTH of whom work, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum wage or national living wage minimum of 16 hours a week with neither independently earning more than £100,000 each.

The government has developed an eligibility checker for parents to register and enter their personal details, you will then receive confirmation of eligibility.

All eligible parents will then receive an 11 digit code that they must share with their chosen childcare setting.

The funding can be used at up to TWO different settings.

If you think you are eligible for the 30 hours funding, please apply as soon as is possible using the HMRC website

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

childcare calculator: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

Please speak to Jessica if you have any questions or would like help accessing the website.

Kind regards

Jessica Edmed