

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Families Information Service. We hope you will find this guidance clear and informative to help you decide whether you are eligible to apply for the Learning or Earning Fund.

Please be aware this funding is for a limited period and will end 31 December 2008

The Learning or Earning Fund, funded by the London Development Agency through its Childcare Affordability Programme, can pay for your childcare whilst you are:

- Seeking Work
- Starting Work
- Training or taking a Work Placement/Volunteering

Criteria to consider

- As a parent you must be aged 16 or over.
- Your children must be aged between 0-14yrs old.
- You must be resident in the Royal Borough of Kingston.
- You must have recourse to public funds.
- You must have been unemployed or working part-time for longer than a month to qualify, as it is targeted at those parents in longer term worklessness. The project is not available to parents returning from maternity leave.
- Your maximum income should be 35,000 per annum for a single person and £50,000 per annum for joint household income. For most of the routes of transition only the joint income threshold applies.
- This funding is aimed at parents who cannot access funding from other agencies, such as Job Centre Plus, Sure Start and Tax Credits. If a parent is eligible for other funding those avenues should be explored before CAP funding is considered.
- This funding cannot be used to substitute existing public subsidy. All childcare must be funded 100% through us (with the exception of the Nursery Education Grant/Free Entitlement which can be topped up using CAP Phase 2 funds).
- Parents undertaking training should make a clear, convincing case for their course/training providing them with a definite and clear transition to employment upon completion.

- As a parent you must be able to demonstrate that if employment is secured you will be able to meet the cost of childcare when this funding finishes. A section on the application should reference this.
- The programme is currently scheduled to finish on the 31st of December 2008

Seeking Work

This type of transition will cover the cost of part-time childcare whilst you seek work. This provision is ideal for parents who need to attend interviews or other job seeking appointments, but require childcare at those times. Parents and Providers should be made aware funding will be for the agreed period or until they find a job. If as a parent you are successful in obtaining employment you will be advised to access the Starting Work type of Transition

Eligibility

- Unemployed seeking employment opportunities.

Evidence of Eligibility

- Income support/Job seeker's allowance letter (from referrer or DWP).
- Passport, Proof of Address, Child identification (birth certificate or passport), Income support letter (either from referrer or DWP) and Tax Credit Award letter.

Funding Provided

- 2.5 days a week for 2-3 months.
- Childcare Providers can not charge registration fees. We will negotiate with providers that registration fees are waived for parents.

Monitoring checks

- Evidence of job seeking to be submitted by parent fortnightly. This can take the form of any of: letters/emails confirming interviews, copies of applications sent out, diary of activity (preferably approved by an advisor at a training provider/job brokerage organisation/Jobcentre Plus).
- If a parent does not find work during the first two months they can re-apply (providing evidence of why more time is needed) 2 weeks prior to the original 2 month period ending. The extension would be for a further 4 weeks until the parent has used the maximum 3 months of childcare.

If you become employed during your Job Search you will be referred to the Starting Work type of provision

Starting Work

This type of transition is an access subsidy designed to fund the cost of childcare for parents going back to work after a period of unemployment. This enables parents to afford to pay for childcare before their first pay cheque and/or Working Tax Credit payments begin. This support can have an effect on a parent's working tax credits in the following financial year by slightly reducing the amount they will receive. However, by this point the parent will be in a better position to cover the cost.

Eligibility

- Parent has secured employment and is starting work.
- If parent is self-employed and has, or is about to, start full time work.

Evidence of Eligibility

- Letter of job offer which specifies the salary, hours and length of contract.
- Self-employed parents should provide proof of their self employed status.
- Passport, Proof of Address, Child identification (birth certificate or passport), Income support letter (either from referrer or DWP), Tax Credit award letter.

Funding Provided

- 100% of childcare costs for the first 4 weeks (first month) of employment.¹
- Funding could be provided for a second 4 week period (2nd month) of employment at 50%, providing more time to receive Working Tax Credit.
- Providers cannot charge registration fees to CAP.

If a parent leaves work prior to the end of the agreed period of paid childcare the funding will remain in place for a month after their last day of attendance (to ensure continuity of care) or until the end of the agreed funding period, whichever is the shorter

¹

Training

This type of transition will cover the cost of childcare for parents undertaking vocational training. These courses can include NVQ's, ESOL and other basic/life skills but the emphasis must be on access to employment.

Eligibility

- The parent must be engaged in training which will lead to employment.

Evidence of Eligibility

- Proof from training provider of enrolment, confirmation of course title, course length and timetable.
- If hours/timetable changes parent must provide signed evidence.
- If parent requires childcare for study days, they must provide signed evidence that it is required.
- Course duration should be 12 month maximum. Funding can only be provided until December 31st, 2008.
- Basic skills courses will be considered. However, the parent must agree to actively seek work upon completion of the course.
- Passport, Proof of Address, Child identification (birth certificate or passport), Income support letter (either from referrer or DWP), Tax credit award letter

Funding Provided

- For timetabled hours. For duration of course. 100% of the cost will be funded and this cannot be used with any other form of subsidy.
- For study time, if study time is confirmed as a requirement by course tutor.
- If a parent leaves training prior to the end of their course the funding will remain in place for a month after their last day of attendance (this is to ensure continuity of care) or until the end of the agreed funding period, whichever is the shorter.

Volunteering and Work Placement

This type of transition can fund parents' childcare costs whilst they take up a work placement or volunteering which will increase the parent's experience and employability and help reduce barriers to employment

Eligibility

- Parent must be unemployed and be undertaking volunteering or in a placement which will lead to employment.

Evidence of Eligibility

- Passport, Proof of Address, Child identification (birth certificate or passport), Income support letter (either from referrer or DWP), Tax credit award letter.
- Offer of work placement.
- Confirmation of placement hours, role and duration.
- Must provide confirmation of intent to find work after placement/volunteering (potentially through advisor).

Funding Provided

- For agreed placement hours.
- For duration of placement.
- 100% of care.
- If a parent leaves placement prior to the end of the agreed period the funding will remain in place for a month after their last day of attendance (this is to ensure continuity of care) or until the end of the agreed funding period, whichever is the shorter.

Applications will be processed as quickly as possible with our decision posted to you. To avoid any unnecessary delays please make sure all documentation is available to support your application.

If you require any support to complete the application please contact:

The Families Information Service
020 8547 6582

