People Directorate **🞍** Cumbria House **🞍** CARLISLE **🞍** Cumbria **🞍** CA1 1RZ

T: 01228 226884 **🞍** E: daniel.barton@cumbria.gov.uk

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Dear Provider

**Early Years Funding – Coronavirus**

Following an announcement yesterday from the Department for Education we are able to confirm payment of free entitlement funding relating to Coronavirus / Covid-19 related closure of early years’ provision and absent children:

* There will be no clawback of funding related to the Spring 2020 term for any providers who have to temporarily close or have children absent due to Coronavirus before the end of the Spring 2020 term
* The normal funding payment process for the Summer 2020 term of 70% will be paid into providers accounts on Tuesday 7thApril based on the interim headcount submitted via the Early Years Provider Portal – if you have not already done so, please complete your interim headcount tasks. As per the normal process, the second payment will be adjusted after half term to reflect the actual hours recorded on the Summer 2020 Actual Headcount tasks.
* **In the event of a provider having to temporarily close\* during the Summer 2020 term as a result of Coronavirus there will be no clawback of funding from the provider in respect of the Summer term 2020.**
* **In the event of children being temporarily absent from a provision as a result of Coronavirus there will be no clawback of funding from the provider in respect of the Summer term 2020.**
* If it is not possible for a provider to complete the Summer 2020 term headcount within the required timescale due to the absence of key staff who would normally complete the headcount as result of Coronavirus, on an exceptional and individual provider basis, an extension to the headcount period will be agreed.
* *Exceptionally for the Summer 2020 term, any provider who is able to offer temporary funded provision for any children where their normal provider has had to temporarily close due to Coronavirus, they will be funded for the period that the children are temporarily attending the setting. This funding will be subject to review at the end of the initial two-week period, and every two weeks after that point.*

\*A review of the temporary closure position would be undertaken for any providers who are closed more than 6 weeks.

**If your setting has to close due to Coronavirus, you must immediately inform Ofsted and the Council via** **joan.bradley@cumbria.gov.uk** **or** **Deborah.percival@cumbria.gov.uk** **or** **ailsa.witchell@cumbria.gov.uk** **.** You must state the closure date, the anticipated re-open date, the reason for closing and of any extension of closure if necessary.

Providers are also advised to consider the following in relation to their contingency planning for Coronavirus:

* If you have not already done so, enter and submit your Summer 2020 headcount data as soon as possible via the Early Years Provider Portal.
* Ensure that your parental agreements / declarations are up to date.
* Ensure your attendance registers are kept up to date and any Coronavirus related child absence is separately identifiable.
* Check whether your business insurance contains business interruption cover which could be claimed in the event of the provision having to close as a result of Coronavirus.
* Check the contents of your charging policies and parental agreements in respect of the clauses related to temporary closure of provision, child absence etc.
* Check the Government’s schemes which have been provided through the recent Budget and subsequent announcements to support business during the Coronavirus crisis. These include: the temporary Coronavirus interruption loan scheme and government meeting the costs of providing statutory sick pay for staff absent from work because of Coronavirus for businesses with fewer than 250 employees.
* Please ensure that you continue to monitor Coronavirus related updates on the DfE and Public Health England websites here:
	+ <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>
	+ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
* Please continue to communicate and reassure parents by sharing up-to-date information and advice from reliable sources
* Please check your health and safety policies and ensure you have effective hygiene processes in place to limit the spread of viruses
* It has been well documented in the media coverage and through Government announcements but, as a reminder, personal hygiene is the most effective way to tackle COVID-19, especially washing hands more; and the catch it, bin it, kill it strategy for those with coughs and sneezes
* **Please make arrangements to ensure your individual provider LA e-mail address is monitored, even if your provision is closed, as this will be the communication method used by the Early Years Funding Team to provide updates.**

**This guidance is subject to change and will be updated as further guidance is received from the DfE.**

Please contact the Early Years Funding Team if you have any queries with regard to the content of this email.

Yours sincerely,



**Dan Barton**

**Assistant Director Education & Skills**