

Children's Services

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Dear Colleague

Free Entitlement Summer term estimate submissions

The online provider portal to submit your Free Entitlement (FE) Estimate data for Summer 2017 is now open. Please use the online provider portal to submit the **total number of FE hours expected to be claimed in Headcount week only**. Headcount day is 11 May 2017. Our system will automatically calculate the estimated total number of FE hours for the term. You must ensure that this figure is as accurate as possible and this only applies to children who will be eligible for FE next term based on the usual criteria. Please take into account where a child is attending two settings or if a child's yearly allowance is close to being used up in their third or sixth funding period. Please remember the yearly allowance can be different for each child and is determined by when the child becomes of eligible age.

Please note that our Estimate payment is based/paid on the school term which is 12 weeks for Summer term. If you are open for more than 12 weeks this term, **do not** amend the number of weeks at this stage. Further instructions on how to increase the number of weeks will be included when Spring actuals are open. We recommend you retain a record of the child level hours (per week and number of weeks) that you used to calculate this estimate, which will assist you later when you are required to submit actuals.

Deadline

The deadline for estimate figures is **17 March 2017**. Please ensure that you have submitted your data by this date to enable your payment to be made beginning of April 2017. A late return will jeopardise prompt payment. Returns received after the deadline will be actioned when all payments for prompt returns have been completed.

Payments

Please note that the amount payable up front is 70% on the estimate which should be paid at the start of term. This is followed by a reconciled balance paid based on the headcount return. Please take this into account in your cash flow forecast and your planning of expenditure throughout each term.

Parent Declarations

A copy of the current Parent Declaration form can be downloaded from www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsfreeentitlement. This must be up to date at all times and any changes, including alterations to hours, must be signed by the parent. This is especially important where the child is claiming FE at more than one setting. Please retain copies of the declaration at your setting as usual. Where parents have indicated that the child attends another setting, please submit a copy to us when you make your headcount return. This is to help avoid misunderstandings later should a parent accidentally over claim. The date on the declaration will also help us ensure your setting receives the correct proportion.

How to submit your estimate data

Support guidance on how to submit your data online can be found at www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsportal and the portal can be accessed at www.westsussex.gov.uk/fis. The online portal is the only method of data collection. You will have previously been sent your login details. Please contact us as soon as possible if you require these to be re-sent or re-set for you.

FE for 2 year olds

You will need to submit separate estimates for your eligible 2 year olds who have already been awarded funding and your eligible 3 and 4 year olds. You will see how to do this on the portal.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Family Information Service.

Yours sincerely
The Family Information Service