

Guidance for childcare providers: Accepting codes after the 31 March deadline for summer term

As we near the deadline for summer term take-up of 30 hours, we are aware there may be a small number of parents who applied by 31 March that may receive their 30 hours code in April. This may be due to technical problems with the childcare service online application or because HMRC required additional information before making an eligibility determination.

You will be aware for the autumn and spring terms we offered flexibility to accept codes generated after the deadline. We are asking you to do this again where a parent **applied by 31 March** and has a 30 hours eligibility code **dated between 1 and 23 April**.

The below guidance will support your implementation of this process.

Temporary codes

The childcare service will be offering temporary codes to parents with ongoing technical difficulties from 1 March to 23 April. Please encourage parents, who are having difficulties completing their application or reconfirmation online, to contact the helpline on 0300 123 4097. The helpline will then check eligibility and provide them with a temporary code if they qualify for 30 hours. The date of the temporary code letter or email will be the same as the code validity start date.

Parents will receive an email or letter with their temporary code and this will include an 'application date' to indicate when a parent initially applied. Examples can be found in Annex A and B. Temporary codes will only be generated for parents where HMRC have evidence they applied/ tried to apply by 31 March. If a parent has a temporary code, no additional evidence is required.

Please remember that these codes need to be validated via the Eligibility Checking System (ECS) in the same way as standard codes. The temporary codes begin with '11' as opposed to '500'.

Permanent codes

There will be some instances where a parent applies through the childcare service by 31 March but receives their code after this date. This will be where HMRC required additional information from the parent before determining eligibility i.e. 'amber cases'. You should only accept codes with a validity start date up to 23 April.

Where a parent provides a permanent code (beginning '500') which has a validity start date between 1-23 April, providers will need to ask parents to provide evidence of when they applied. Parents will need to confirm that they received a message from HMRC advising that their application was pending, to determine their 'application date'. Please see step by step guidance in Annex C.



ANNEX A

HM Revenue
& Customs

Childcare Service
HMRC
BX9 1GR

Customer name
customer address
1st line

Postcode

Phone 0300 123 4097

Opening times Mon to Fri 8am to 8pm. Sat 8am to 4pm. Sun and bank holidays 10am to 4pm

Web www.gov.uk

Date 3 March 2018
NI number AA121212A

Dear Sir or Madam

30 hours free childcare application for Jane Smith

You can get 30 hours per week of free childcare for 38 weeks of the year. If you need childcare for more than 38 weeks, you can do so by using less than 30 hours free childcare each week. You can use the hours you save for extra weeks of childcare.

Your application for a temporary eligibility code received on 1 March 2018 for Jane Smith is 11999999999. This code is temporary and is only valid until 21 June 2018.

This code is important as you'll need it to get your 30 hours free childcare.

What to do next

You should take your child's temporary eligibility code to your childcare provider, along with your National Insurance number and your child's date of birth to get your free childcare place.

If your childcare provider is not offering 30 hours, you can check your local council's website to find out which providers are offering 30 hours in your area.

When you can get a free childcare place

You can use your 30 hours from:

- the term following the date of this letter
- the term after your child becomes 3 years old

whichever is latest.

For example, if your child is 3 years old in April and you get an eligibility code in September. Therefore, you can get a place from January (as long as you still meet the eligibility criteria).

You can't use this code to get 30 hours if your child is in full time reception. Your child also can't get free childcare once they reach compulsory school age.

More information

For more information about:

- free early education and childcare in your area, go to www.gov.uk/find-free-early-education
- 30 hours free childcare, go to www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk



3 March 2018

Dear Customer name

Your application for a temporary eligibility code received on 1 March 2018 for Jane Smith is 119999999. This code is temporary and is only valid until 21 June 2018.

You should take your child's temporary eligibility code to your childcare provider, along with your National Insurance number and your child's date of birth to get your free childcare place.

If your childcare provider is not offering 30 hours, you can check your local council's website to find out which providers are offering 30 hours in your area.

For more information about:

- free early education and childcare in your area, go to **www.gov.uk/find-free-early-education**
- 30 hours free childcare, go to **www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk**

Regards

Childcare Service team

This inbox is not monitored please do not reply to this email

You can identify genuine contact from HMRC on GOV.UK by searching: 'Genuine HMRC contact and recognising phishing emails'.

Annex C – Step by step guide on how to find evidence of initial application by 31 March, where a parent has a permanent code dated between 1-23 April

You will need to ask the parent to take you through the following steps to show you the evidence of when they initially completed their 30 hours application, where their permanent code is dated between 1-23 April.

- 1) The parent will log into their childcare service account and select the 'Secure messages' section.

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Zoe Smith

Your childcare service account

[I'm new to the childcare service, what do I do first?](#)

- Your Tax-Free Childcare account**
Manage your Tax-Free Childcare account, pay money in and select and pay childcare providers
- 30 hours free childcare**
View your 30 hours free childcare codes
- Contact details**
View or change your email address or phone number
- Reconfirmation**
Reconfirm your eligibility every 3 months. Your next reconfirmation date is 15 January 2018
- Security**
Reset your telephone password, change and view your security check questions
- Secure messages (6)**
View messages about your application and account
- Re-apply or apply for a new child**
Apply for a new child, or one who wasn't eligible in an earlier application
- Your last application**
View your last application or reconfirmation summary

- 2) The parent will be able to show the date of the message they received from HMRC advising them they're looking into their application. This will prove when they originally applied.

This date shows when the message was received. If the message itself indicates HMRC was looking into the parent's application, then it is evidence of when the parent applied

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Secure messages

Date	View details	Status
2 March 2018	Welcome to 30 hours free childcare	Read
2 March 2018	30 hours free childcare application for Sam Smith	Read
26 February 2018	30 hours free childcare application for Sam Smith	Read

[Homepage](#)

The parent will need to click on the message to show you that HMRC was looking into their application

- 3) When the parent clicks on the message you should see something similar to the below message.



30 hours free childcare

Web: www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk

Dear Zoe Smith

30 hours free childcare - application for Sam Smith

Thank you for applying for 30 hours free childcare.

We're looking at your application for Sam Smith.

Next steps

You don't need to take any action now, you can expect to receive a reply from us within 10 days. This may take longer during busy periods.

Yours sincerely

Childcare service team

- 4) If step 2 and 3 have been completed successfully, then you can offer a 30 hours place for summer term.