

West Sussex Early Years and Childcare Providers: Contain Outbreak Management Fund

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) have secured £500,000 for early years and childcare providers who offer Free Entitlement (FE) places to help with the challenges of operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a temporary package of financial support in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

This financial support is separate to the FE funding and is taken from the West Sussex Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).

What is the grant for?

The grant aims to help address the increased costs of running your setting due to the pandemic. This includes ensuring your premises are safe for children and staff, whilst continuing to offer high quality care and learning in these exceptional times.

We are aware that with over 400 Early Years group settings and 350 childminders offering FE places, this funding will not be able to cover every aspect of the impact of the pandemic on your business. Any award will be a contribution towards supporting the future sustainability of the early years and childcare sector.

Possible uses for the grant could include, but are not limited to:

- Cleaning supplies/deep cleaning of the childcare environment.
- Purchase of supplies and resources where a risk of cross-contamination exists.
- To support with any additional costs that have been incurred as a direct result of the pandemic.

The grant cannot be used to:

- increase payments to staff members who are furloughed;
- offer financial support where a provider is fully or partially closed, against the current government guidance;
- support with additional costs that are not a direct result of the pandemic;
- top up income from FE funding or loss of income from fee paying places;
- provide resources/activities that would normally be expected as part of the delivery of the EYFS or your usual service; or
- cover the financial costs of something you have received financial support from the government for already.

How much could I get?

To ensure that the full pot of funding reaches providers as quickly as possible, we will ensure that the total funding allocation will be split fairly between all FE providers who successfully apply.

We would anticipate, dependent on the number of applications, that an FE provider who **remained open throughout** the pandemic would be eligible for at least:

- Day Nursery/Pre-School £750
- Childminder £250

Successful applicants must clearly demonstrate how the grant will be used to offset the logistical costs of running their provision during the pandemic. Any funding awarded will be **proportionate** to the time the provision was open throughout the different restrictions.

Eligibility criteria

- Applicants must be a currently Ofsted-registered private, voluntary or independent early years and childcare provider, offering FE places, based in West Sussex.
- Applicants must be currently open as per the current government guidance (unless temporarily closed due to positive COVID-19 cases).
- Only one application per registration is permitted.
- Applicants must have been open, in line with the government guidance for that time, during at least one of the following time periods:
 - 27 March – 31 May 2020 (minimum of 5 weeks)
 - 1 June – 31 August 2020 (minimum of 5 weeks)
 - 1 September – 31 December 2020 (excluding school holidays for term time only providers)
 - 1 January - present (excluding school holidays for term time only providers)

Please note, if your provision had to close temporarily as a result of positive cases during any of the time periods, you can count your provision as open during that time for the purpose of this application. There is space to explain any temporary closures on the form if needed

How do I apply?

Nurseries, pre-schools and childminders who are registered to provide FE are invited to apply via a short online application form.

- The application process will open on Wednesday 3 February 2021.
- Applications will close at midnight on Sunday 28 February 2021.
- Applications will be assessed w/c 1 March 2021.
- Providers will be informed of the outcome w/c 8 March 2021, including the amount they are being awarded where successful.
- Payments are planned for w/c 15 March 2021.

Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. Decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

WSCC will reserve the right to audit applications and ask for further evidence if required. WSCC may also confirm details given in your application against details held on our database.