



There is much confusion and misinformation surrounding the Childcare Offer for Wales. Pembrokeshire County Council has produced the below guide to help dispel some of the most common myths surrounding the Childcare Offer for Wales.

Myth: Parents have to work for 16 hours or more a week to be eligible for the 30-hour offer.

Fact: Eligibility for the 30-hours has nothing to do with the number of hours worked; it is based on earnings. Parents have to earn the equivalent of 16 hours at national minimum/living wage (depending on their age). At the moment, this is about £115 a week (each in a dual-parent household) for those earning the 'national living wage' i.e. aged 25 and over, and around £111 per week for those earning the national minimum wage. This means that if a parent earns, say, £120 per week but only works six hours, they will still be eligible for the 30-hour offer. The maximum earning limit (£100,000) applies to each parent, so a household with a dual income of £199,995 would still be eligible for the 30-hour offer. More information on eligibility is available in our free guide.

Myth: Once parents have chosen their childcare provider on their application, they cannot change or add providers.

Fact: If Circumstances change and you would like to change your hours or change/add childcare providers it **can** easily be amended. Contact Ceredigion (delivery authority) on 01545 570881 with your reference at hand and amendments and the team will be able to update your application.

Myth: Parents can only access the offer up until the point at which they are offered a full time education place.

Fact: Where a child is offered a full time education place before the September after their fourth birthday (e.g. the day after or term after their fourth birthday), that child is still eligible to receive 30 hours per week of holiday provision up until the September after their fourth birthday. This is to ensure all eligible parents receive the same offer and to avoid penalising parents who take up a full time education place for their child before the September after they turn 4 years of age.

Myth: Parents will stop being eligible for the offer immediately if they lose their job.

Fact: The offer is intended to support working parents and to encourage parents to return to work or to increase their hours. Families may at times fall out of eligibility for the offer. One of the most common reasons for this is likely to be where one or both parents lose their job or their hours are reduced below the minimum requirement. In order to provide stability for both children and childcare providers, and to give parents the opportunity to become eligible again, families who fall out of eligibility will still be able to access the offer for a limited amount of time. Should a parent fall out of eligibility, a temporary exemption period of 8 weeks will be granted during which they will be able to continue to access the offer.

Myth: I can't take up the Offer if I'm on working tax credits.

Fact: Receiving the Offer will not impact on your family's entitlement to receive working tax credits and you can access the Offer and tax credits at the same time. Working tax credits are calculated on income and estimated childcare costs. Receiving the Offer may lead to an increase in your income (if for instance you can take on more hours) or a reduction in your childcare costs, meaning the amount of tax credits you receive may be reduced.

Myth: To access the Childcare Offer my child needs to access their early education

Fact: Parents are not required to access their early education entitlement in order to access the childcare element of the offer. However, their entitlement will include these hours whether they access them or not. For example; in Pembrokeshire you will be entitled to 20 hours of funded childcare.

Myth: I can't use Tax free vouchers the same time as claiming the Childcare Offer

Fact: Parents are able to use Tax free vouchers only for any additional childcare hours.

Myth: I am able to benefit from the Childcare Offer as soon as my child turns three

Fact: Your child will become eligible for the Childcare Offer from the term following your child's third birthday. For example, if your child turns three in July, you will be eligible from September.