

Early Years and Childcare

Stakeholders briefing sheet no. 9 (October 2020)

Welcoming children back to pre-school education

Hampshire has seen over 11,500 children return to early years settings in September. 98% of childcare settings are open and there are still new services opening.

This is all thanks to childcare providers putting in place COVID secure environments. Following Government guidance, childcare providers have been working hard; carrying out risk assessments and putting into place procedures to safeguard both children and the staff who care for them.

The Government has published [guidance for parents and carers](#) to explain what is expected when using early years or childcare services. This guidance is also available in [other languages](#).

Hampshire early years and childcare providers are using different approaches to show parents what services can be offered, such as virtual tours and the use of social media.

If parents (or family support practitioners) have any questions they can speak to the childcare provider direct.



2-Year-Old Funding

Parents of two year olds wanting to use childcare services in Hampshire can apply for the 2-Year-Old early years funding entitlement [here](#).

During COVID-19 the Government are **temporarily extending** eligibility criteria for the offer to include children assessed as being vulnerable and meeting the definition in Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) and who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

Children who are British born and are entitled to be in the country but are not receiving support by virtue of their parents' immigration status (which triggers the NRPF), are eligible.

If you know of any families who could be eligible for the 2-year-old offer please email [Services for Young Children](#).

Help with finding childcare?

Parents can find childcare services using the *Hampshire Family Information and Services Hub* directory. <https://fish.hants.gov.uk>



The childcare records that are listed on the directory continue to be updated to show what services are available across the County.

If a service is required for a child with a special educational need or a disability, parents may find the SEND [Local Offer](#) helpful with their search. Childcare providers have provided further details of how they will support a child that has additional requirements to access a childcare place.

If further help is needed in finding childcare then parents or family support practitioners can complete the online [Childcare Request Form](#) or email [Services for Young Children](#).



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk

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The home learning environment

Services for Young Children have also put together ideas for supporting young children with learning and development when at home.

Parents/ carers (and childcare providers) are encouraged to use the range of free [home learning activity guides](#) and links to further useful resources to help their young children.

These resources are designed to be used at any time to compliment the learning and development that takes place in pre-school provisions.



A reminder to practitioners supporting families that parents can receive through [Healthy Start](#), free vouchers every week to spend on milk, plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk. Free vitamins are also available.

Pregnant mums (including those under 18) or families with children under the age of four are eligible. Parents on benefits can also apply.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the validity of the Healthy Start vouchers have been temporarily extended by 4 weeks, giving parents 12 weeks to use their entitlement.



Free flu vaccination for children

This year, children aged 2-3, plus those in school years R to 7, will be eligible for a free flu vaccination. Children aged six months to 2 years, and from age 12 to 17 will also be eligible if they have a long-term health condition.

Children under the age of five are more likely to be admitted to hospital due to flu than any other age group. By vaccinating children, not only does it protect them, it also helps to slow the spread of flu within the community.

The vaccine for children over 2 is a nasal spray, which is quick and painless.

Parents should contact their GP surgery to get the [flu vaccination](#) booked for pre-school children and look out for the consent letter from schools if you have children in Years R to 7.

Children starting school in September 2021

On Sunday 1 November 2020, applications will open for parents to apply for their child to start school in September 2021. The closing date for applications is 15 January 2021.

Parents will be able to apply online from 1 November via the Hampshire County Council website: www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions. Paper forms will also be available from any Hampshire primary or infant school on request from Monday 2 November.

Full information about the application process can be found on the website. If parents require further information or need help with their application, they can contact the Admissions Team email: admissions.team@hants.gov.uk or call 0300 555 1377.

If you no longer want to receive this briefing, please email: alice.warr@hants.gov.uk