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Wraparound childcare expansion

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The Wraparound programme

The government is investing £289 million to support the expansion of wraparound childcare for primary school-aged pupils in reception to Year 6. In October 2023, DFE published a handbook for local authorities (LAs) that sets out our ambition for all parents of primary school children who need it to be able to access term-time childcare in their local area from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

This will help to ensure that parents have enough childcare to work full time, more hours and with flexible hours. The programme aims to improve the availability of wraparound childcare for parent/carers and is designed to fund the initial setup or expansion of wraparound provision where there is clear demand. The funding will also remove the financial risk of setting up or expanding wraparound provision where sufficient demand is not guaranteed to sustain provision from the start, but where the guarantee of places could help build sufficient demand over time as parents/carers are assured of the supply of places.

The programme should be built on existing assets and understanding of the local community, which incorporates and does not disrupt and displace the existing wraparound childcare market. Parents should expect to see an expansion in the availability of wraparound care from September 2024, with the programme ambition being that every parent who needs it will be able to access term time wraparound childcare by September 2026.

Parents will still be expected to pay to access this provision, as this programme aims to increase the availability of childcare rather than subsidise childcare. Support with the cost will continue to be available to eligible parents through Universal Credit childcare and tax-free childcare. LAs, schools, trusts and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers, including childminders, are expected to make parents aware of this support and be set up in a way to enable parents to use it.

The role of the Local Authority

All Local Authorities are expected to support parents to access childcare, where they need it. This programme, and funding, will be delivered through LAs, given their existing childcare sufficiency duty.

Local Authorities will work with schools and PVI providers, including childminders, to introduce or expand before and after school childcare provision in their area. LAs recognise the different challenges schools and providers face, and should work collaboratively, encouraging professional respect across the sector.

The expectations on schools and trusts

In February 2024, the government published wraparound childcare guidance for schools and trusts, which sets out their role in relation to wraparound in more detail. It outlines the support they can expect, in particular from their LA, to meet these expectations including where wraparound provision is delivered on school site.

This guidance is designed to support schools and trusts, regardless of their involvement with the national wraparound childcare programme. Schools and trusts are central to the delivery of the programme as they operate at the heart of the community, understand the needs of local families, and are usually the first port of call for parents for wraparound childcare. Delivering school-led

or PVI provider led wraparound on a school site will support parents to access the childcare they need.

The expectations

- Work with the LA wraparound lead and others in the sector to support parents at their school to access quality wraparound childcare
- All schools are expected to have school or PVI provider (including childminder) run wraparound childcare on the school site, unless there is a reasonable justification not to (having considered all support available, in particular from the national wraparound childcare programme)
- Schools who are unable to have wraparound on the school site are expected to work collaboratively with their local authorities to ensure parents are, at a minimum, signposted to appropriate provision. These must not require parents to pick up or drop off their children between the school day and wraparound
- Schools will promote and support government subsidies such as Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit Childcare, which can help parents with the affordability of childcare and supports schools, trusts, and PVI providers with the sustainability of provision
- Support the LA to understand parental demand and, where relevant, existing wraparound provision on school site
- Adhere to the right to request guidance, which describes their role in considering and responding to parents' requests for the school to deliver wraparound childcare and PVI providers' requests to use the school site to deliver wraparound childcare.

Wraparound childcare expression of interest

Overview

This expression of interest (EOI) will inform Blackpool Council's wraparound childcare programme delivery plan which is due to be returned to the Department for Education (DfE). As such, information provided in this EOI will be processed by Blackpool Council and/or Childcare Works on behalf of the DfE.

The government's ambition is that by 2026, all parents and carers of primary school-aged children who need it will be able to access term time childcare in their local area from 8.00am to 6.00pm, so that parents can access employment and improve labour market participation.

This EOI for wraparound programme funding is for new or existing childcare providers and schools planning to set up or expand the number of wraparound places they offer as part of the National Wraparound Childcare Programme between September 2024 to March 2026.

Expressions of Interest

Projects will be reviewed against supply and demand data collated and analysed by Blackpool Council as well as information held as part of our sufficiency duties. Viable projects identified through the EOI process will be invited to complete a formal funding application, which will require further information on your proposed project including income and expenditure.

The DfE expect all new or expanded wraparound childcare places to be available to parents by September 2025 at the latest. The latest date programmes can start is September 2025, the programme funding runs until 31st March 2026 at the latest.

Wraparound provision can be offered by schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers (including childminders and early years settings). Provision can be run on a school site or at another setting in the area. It should not require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location.

Where schools have existing wraparound childcare provision run by PVI providers, schools should encourage those providers to complete this EOI form. If you are a PVI provider you **must** consult and plan with the schools your provision does or will serve when completing this EOI.

Who can apply

Wraparound provision can be offered by schools and private, voluntary and independent providers (including childminders and early years settings.) Provision can be run on a school site or another setting in the area. It should not require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them at another location.

Provision must align with the quality principles, including the requirement for all private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers to be Ofsted registered, or in the case of childminders, to be registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency.

The aim of the programme is to increase the number of places but not destabilise or compete with existing provision. PVIs, Childminders, and voluntary providers wishing to submit projects for new provision or extending their existing offer will need to show that they have discussed their proposals with any schools that they plan to support.

Completing your form

The EOI questions are provided in the document sent to settings. For any questions during this process, please contact: wraparound@blackpool.gov.uk

Providers are advised to read the following documents thoroughly before submitting their EOI:

- [National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook - a guide for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)\(External link\)](#)
- [Wraparound childcare: guidance for schools and trusts in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)\(External link\)](#)

Programme funding

The programme is designed to fund the initial setup or expansion of wraparound provision to meet existing unmet demand. It is also designed to remove the financial risk of setting up or expanding provision where sufficient demand is not guaranteed to sustain provision from the start (but where sufficient demand may be built over time as parents are assured of the supply of places).

The expectation is that this over supply of places will help to generate additional demand, as parents are assured of the availability of provision.

Capital funding

Capital funding is no longer available for this programme.

Questions or further information

If you wish to discuss your proposed project or require an application form please email wraparound@blackpool.gov.uk

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