

Dear Provider

## Early Years Funding – Coronavirus

At this stage, there has been no advice from the DfE as to the impact of Coronavirus / Covid-19 related closure of early years' provision on the payment for funded provision. However, in light of the current situation, North Yorkshire County Council has developed local guidance relating to child non-attendance / setting closures and the allocation of Early Education Funding. This local guidance will be updated as the situation continues to emerge and to reflect any guidance which is subsequently received from the DfE.

North Yorkshire County Council wishes to support the early years' sector in relation to business continuation and sufficiency of provision. In this respect the following measures will be implemented for funded provision:

- There will be no clawback of funding related to the Spring 2020 term for any providers who have to temporarily close or have children absent due to Coronavirus before the end of the Spring 2020 term
- The normal funding payment process will be applied for the Summer 2020 term with monthly payments being initially based on either Summer 2019 funded hours or the updated estimate submitted by the provider. As per the normal process, the funding will be adjusted at the end of the term to reflect the actual hours recorded on the Summer 2020 term head count.
- **In the event of a provider having to temporarily close\* during the Summer 2020 term as a result of Coronavirus there will be no clawback of funding from the provider in respect of the Summer term 2020.**
- **In the event of children being temporarily absent from a provision as a result of Coronavirus there will be no clawback of funding from the provider in respect of the Summer term 2020.**
- If the provider is closed due to Coronavirus on the Summer 2020 term headcount week (week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020) it is acceptable for the attendance, as detailed on parental agreements, of the children who would normally attend the provision to be claimed on the headcount.
- If it is not possible for a provider to complete the Summer 2020 term headcount within the required timescale due to the absence of key staff who would normally complete the headcount as result of Coronavirus, on an exceptional and individual provider basis, an extension to the headcount period will be agreed.
- *Exceptionally for the Summer 2020 term, any provider who is able to offer temporary funded provision for any children where their normal provider has had to temporarily close due to Coronavirus will be funded for the period that the children are temporarily attending the setting. This funding will be subject to review at the end of the initial two week period, and every two weeks after that point.*

\*A review of the temporary closure position would be undertaken for any providers who are closed more than 6 weeks.

The 2020/21 financial year contains 37 term weeks, however as you will be aware North Yorkshire County Council is paying 38 funded weeks during the financial year with 13 weeks funding being paid during the Summer 2020 term compared to 12 term time weeks. Whilst it is deemed that the additional weeks' funding will be

utilised by providers in the future for those financial years where there are more than 38 weeks, this additional funding may provide some additional, interim cash flow support during the Summer 2020 to assist with any Coronavirus disruption to provision.

**If your setting has to close due to Coronavirus, you must immediately inform the LA in writing through the Families Information Service at [fis.information@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:fis.information@northyorks.gov.uk).** You must state the closure date, the anticipated re-open date, the reason for closing and of any extension of closure if necessary. You must also notify the LA in writing through the Families Information Service when you re-open.

Providers are also advised to consider the following in relation to their contingency planning for Coronavirus:

- Enter and submit your Summer 2020 headcount data as soon as the headcount opens (27<sup>th</sup> March 2020)
- Ensure that your parental agreements / declarations are up to date.
- Ensure your attendance registers are kept up to date and any Coronavirus related child absence is separately identifiable.
- Check whether your business insurance contains business interruption cover which could be claimed in the event of the provision having to close as a result of Coronavirus.
- Check the contents of your charging policies and parental agreements in respect of the clauses related to temporary closure of provision, child absence etc.
- Check the Governments schemes which have been provided through the recent Budget to support business during the Coronavirus crisis. These include: the temporary Coronavirus interruption loan scheme and government meeting the costs of providing statutory sick pay for staff absent from work because of Coronavirus for businesses with fewer than 250 employees.
- Please ensure that you continue to monitor Coronavirus related updates on the DfE and Public Health England websites.
- Please continue to communicate and reassure parents by sharing up-to-date information and advice from reliable sources
- Please check your health and safety policies and ensure you have effective hygiene processes in place to limit the spread of viruses
- It has been well documented in the media coverage and through Government announcements but, as a reminder, personal hygiene is the most effective way to tackle COVID-19, especially washing hands more; and the catch it, bin it, kill it strategy for those with coughs and sneezes
- **Please make arrangements to ensure your individual provider LA e-mail address monitored, even if your provision is closed, as this will be the communication method used by the Early Years Funding Team to provide updates.**

**This guidance is subject to change and will be updated as further guidance is received from the DfE.**

Please contact the Early Years Funding Team (e-mail: [eyft@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:eyft@northyorks.gov.uk)) if you have any queries with regard to the content of this email.