

# Childcare Choices

Partner communications toolkit



# Childcare Choices – supporting families with childcare costs

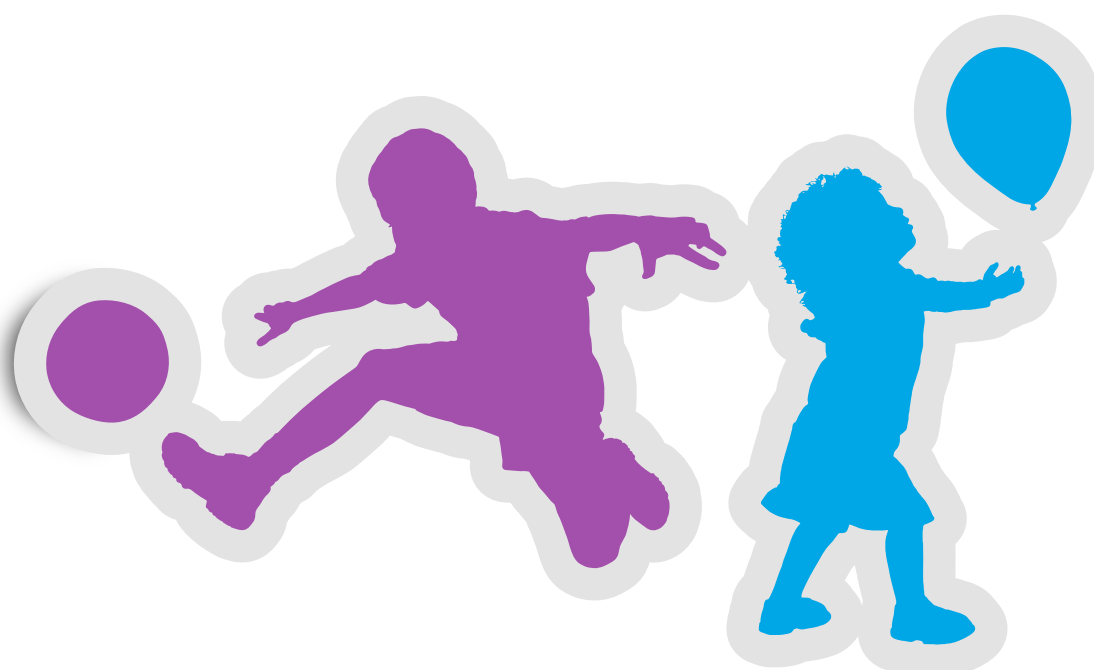
## About these materials

The government has introduced two new schemes to support working parents: **30 hours free childcare** for 3 and 4 year olds and **Tax-Free Childcare**.

We've produced this pack of materials to help you communicate with parents about the new government childcare offers: whether you're a local authority, employer, or childcare provider. In this pack you'll find a range of materials including:

1. Draft content to share with parents
2. FAQs for parents and childcare providers
3. Draft emails for you to share with either parents or providers
4. A glossary for parents, employers and providers to help explain key words associated with 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare
5. Customer journeys for both 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare
6. A factsheet for parents on how they can use their 30 hours entitlements
7. Posters to use locally – whether in your workplace or your childcare setting.

The aim of the toolkit is to enable you to help parents understand what childcare support is available to them and to emphasise the importance of applying in good time, in order to secure a 30 hours childcare place for the next term. These materials are also aimed at informing parents – including those who already have a 30 hours code/Tax-Free Childcare – that they need to check their details are up to date through their childcare account every 3 months.



## How to use the communications toolkit

You may wish to use some of the materials in this pack on your website, or in your direct communications to parents.

We also encourage you to promote the Childcare Choices website, including the Childcare Calculator, which helps parents find out which schemes are available to them and choose what works best for their family.

Local authorities might want to share this information through their Early Years team, Family Information Service or their central communications team. But, whether you are an employer, childcare provider or local authority please help to spread the message that support is available.

**Note for you as an employer:** As an employer yourself, you might also want to share some of this pack with your own staff, to help them make the most of the new childcare support. For example, if you currently offer childcare vouchers (also known as Employer-Supported Childcare) that scheme will close to new applicants. Parents can join the scheme, so long as they receive a childcare voucher before the October 2018 closure. After this change parents already claiming childcare vouchers can continue to use the scheme as long as you as their employer continue to offer it.

## What are the new offers?

Parents and providers can find out more about the full government childcare offer on [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk), with a summary below. Parents can use the Childcare Calculator, and apply for Tax-Free Childcare and/or 30 hours free childcare through the Childcare Choices website.

### Tax-Free Childcare

**Parents can now get up to £2,000 per child, per year for children under the age of 12 and £4,000 for disabled children under 17.**

- For working families, including the self-employed, across the UK
- With children aged under 12 (or under 17 for disabled children)
- For every £8 paid in, the government will add an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child per year toward childcare costs. This means you can get up to £500 every three months per child.

A parent, and their partner, will need to expect to earn (on average) the equivalent of working 16 hours a week at their National Minimum wage (£120 at the National Living Wage in 2017-18, less for people on the National Minimum Wage). And earn less than £100,000 a year each. If they are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave for another child, or unable to work because they are disabled or have caring responsibilities, they could still be eligible.

Tax-Free Childcare can be used with the 15 hours and 30 hours schemes. It can't be used at the same time as childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits. The Childcare Calculator is a great tool to help families make an informed decision on which offer to use.

Registered childcare providers have a pivotal role in Tax-Free Childcare as they need to be signed up so that parents can pay them through their childcare account. All providers should have received an invitation containing the information they need to sign up, and tens of thousands have already done so. Childcare providers can find out more and sign up here [childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers)

## 30 hours free childcare

### 30 hours free childcare for working parents of three and four year olds

- For working families in England
- With 3 and 4-year-old children
- 30 hours for 38 weeks of the year but the hours can be stretched across the year.

30 hours free childcare is available for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents in England. The 30 hours offer doubles the existing 15 hours currently available to all 3 and 4 year olds and could save working families up to £5,000 a year.

Parents in England can apply for 30 hours childcare at the same time as Tax-Free Childcare, via the childcare service. To qualify, a parent, and their partner, will need to expect to earn (on average) the equivalent of working 16 hours a week at their National Minimum wage (£120 in 2017-18 at the National Living Wage, less for people on the National Minimum Wage). And earn less than £100,000 a year each. If they are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave for another child, or unable to work because they are disabled or have caring responsibilities, they could still be eligible.

Childcare providers do not need to sign up online in the same way as they do for Tax-Free Childcare. If a childcare provider would like to offer 30 hours they should speak to their local authority and check the resources on [childcareworks.co.uk](https://childcareworks.co.uk) for advice and guidance.

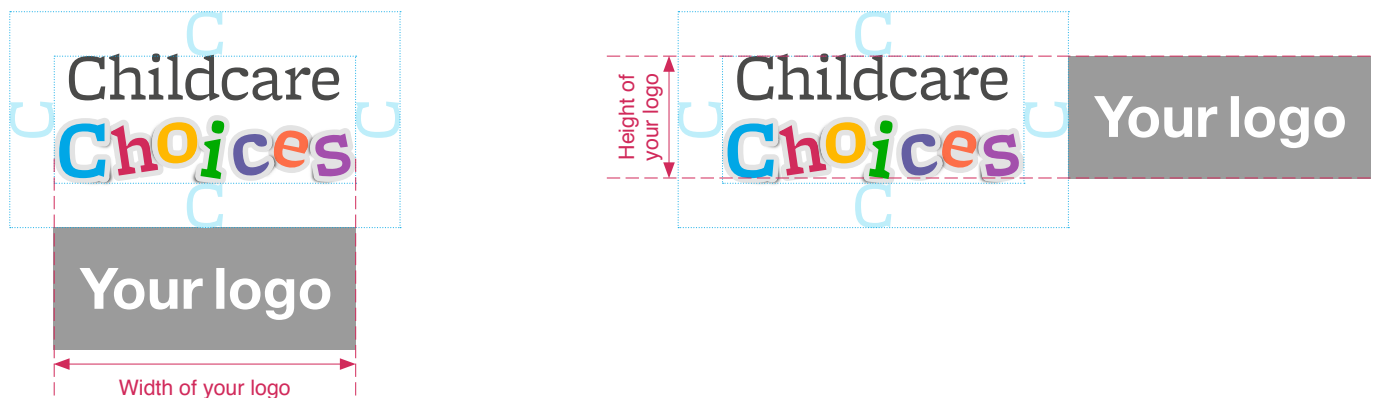


# Using the logo

To help support Childcare Choices, you are welcome to use the logo alongside your own, on any communications you may have with your parents.

When using the Childcare Choices logo, please bear in mind the following guidelines:

- The logo should be a minimum of 35mm on all materials
- Ensure that there's a clear space around the Childcare Choices logo – use the height of the 'C' as a guide. Make sure this space is clear of all other graphics, for example other logos and images
- If you're placing the Childcare Choices logo alongside other logos (for example your own), bear in mind the exclusion zone and ensure all logos are a similar height and width.



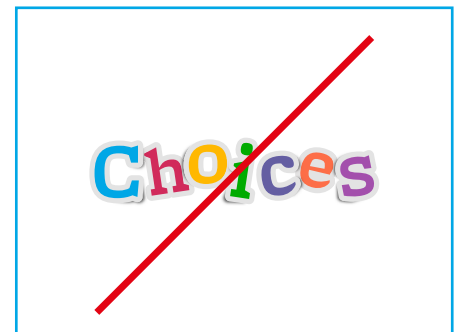
## What not to do



Never place partner logos too close



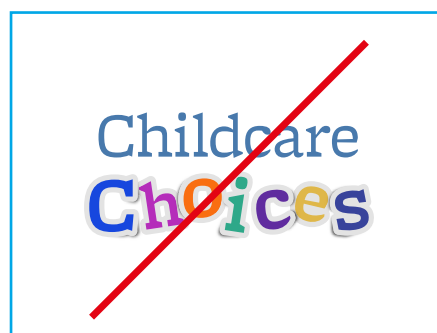
Never place other graphic elements within the logo exclusion zone



Never show the 'choices' sticker treatment alone



Never modify the logotype in any way, only use the master artwork files provided



Never modify the colour of the logo in any way, only use the master artwork files provided



Do not stretch or squash the logo

# Email/content for parents

**Subject line:** Government's new schemes to help with childcare costs



Dear parent,

Are you looking for support with childcare costs?

Getting financial help with your childcare costs is easier than you might think. [Childcare Choices](#) brings together all the government childcare offers in one place for the first time, including two new schemes for working parents: Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare.

Use the Childcare Calculator on [Childcare Choices](#) to see what offers are available to support you and your family.

To find out more about the new and existing offers, and how they can help you, go to the [Childcare Choices](#) website today.



# Email to childcare providers

**Subject line:** Sign up now for Tax-Free Childcare



Dear provider,

Hundreds of thousands of parents have now successfully applied for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare through the childcare service. All eligible parents with children aged under 12 can apply.

Sign up to receive Tax-Free Childcare payments now at: [childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk](https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk)

## You'll need:

- Your user ID and the postcode held by your regulator;
- Your bank account details (to receive childcare payments); and either
  - Your business 10 digit Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) and the postcode on your tax record (e.g. your business address, personal address, registered office). You can find these on previous tax returns or other communications from HM Revenue and Customs. The postcode used must be one on your tax record; or
  - Your National Insurance number, if you're a nanny/employed childcare provider and don't have a UTR.

**If you're a registered charity** and don't have a UTR please phone the helpline on **0300 123 4097**.

Tax-Free Childcare was introduced in April 2017 and helps working families with the cost of childcare. For every £8 a parent pays into their childcare account, the government will add an extra £2, up to a maximum of £2,000 per child per year (or £4,000 for disabled children).

Once you've signed up, parents can then use their Tax-Free Childcare account to make childcare payments directly into your bank account.

For further information on both Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare, please visit [childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers). You will also find information in our stakeholder toolkit to help you advertise the scheme to your parents.

If you are interested in offering 30 hours free childcare please contact your local authority for further information.

# Social media

One of the quickest and easiest ways to share messages with parents is through social media. You are welcome to use the examples below on your social media accounts, or in other communications, such as emails, your website or digital screens.



Get up to **£2,000** towards your childcare costs.  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

Childcare Choices HM Government


1. Find out more about Tax-Free Childcare visit [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)



To keep your 30 hours childcare place **you** need to check your details are up to date every 3 months. Go to [gov.uk/childcareaccount](http://gov.uk/childcareaccount)

Childcare Choices HM Government


2. Parents, make sure your details are up to date. You need to do this every three months [gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account](http://gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account) #30hours #Childcare



Not sure what support **you** could get with childcare costs? Go to [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

Childcare Choices HM Government

3. Find out more about Tax-Free Childcare at [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)



Log in to your childcare account every **3** months to check your details are up to date. Go to [gov.uk/childcareaccount](http://gov.uk/childcareaccount)

Childcare Choices HM Government

4. Parents, to keep your #30hours #childcare place next term, make sure your details are up to date [gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account](http://gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account)



# Glossary

**Additional charges:** Providers can charge for additional services, for example, lunch, trips or music classes. These charges cannot be a condition of accessing your 30 hours place and alternative arrangements should be made available. Any charges should be itemised and cannot be a supplementary 'top-up'.

**Approved childcare:** You can only take up 30 hours free childcare at an approved provider, this means they must be registered by an appropriate regulator. e.g. not a family member.

**Childcare Calculator:** The online tool allowing parents to check how much support they can receive from the government towards childcare costs. The Calculator is available on the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

**Childcare Choices:** The government's childcare offers website, [childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

**Childcare service:** The government service and website where parents can apply for both 30 hours free childcare and Tax-Free Childcare.

**Childcare service account:** The online government account where parents can manage their details, reconfirm eligibility and make Tax-Free Childcare payments. Parents apply through the childcare service to open a childcare service account.

**Code validation:** The check undertaken by childcare providers to ensure the eligibility code provided is legitimate.

**Eligibility code:** The code provided by the childcare service for a parent eligible for 30 hours free childcare. This usually starts with 500.

**Grace period:** A short period of time in which a parent can retain their 30 hours free childcare place after they have fallen out of eligibility.

**Reconfirmation:** Every three months parents will need to reconfirm their eligibility by checking their details are up to date. The childcare service account is used to reconfirm eligibility for 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare.

**Regulator ID:** The ID given to childcare providers by their regulator (for example, Ofsted, CSSIW etc.).

**Sensitive providers:** Some providers are designated as sensitive by their regulators. This might be because they're a childminder working from their home address. To pay these providers using Tax-Free Childcare, parents need to search for them using their regulator ID and postcode.

**Unique Taxpayer Reference number/UTR:** The code childcare providers need to sign up for Tax-Free Childcare. Businesses are given a UTR when they register with HMRC for tax purposes.

**User ID:** The unique code childcare providers receive in their letter inviting them to sign up for Tax-Free Childcare.

**Validity end date:** The date by which a parent is no longer eligible for 30 hours/Tax-Free Childcare. A parent must reconfirm that their details are up to date to determine whether they're still eligible for the offers. Parents can reconfirm up to 4 weeks before their validity end date.

**Validity start date:** The date a parent receives a positive eligibility decision from HMRC. This is not the date when a child can take up their 30 hours place. A parent can claim 30 hours from the term after their child turns three, and the term after the date they receive their eligibility code from HMRC, whichever date is later.

# Tips for using your childcare service account for the first time

Once you've successfully applied for childcare support, you can start using your new childcare services account – to receive up to £2,000 per child per year towards your childcare costs and, for three and four year olds, up to 30 hours free childcare a week. All you'll need to do is sign in to your account on the Gov.UK website [gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account](http://gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account) and select the following options:

## Use 'Your Tax-Free Childcare account'

Select this tab to:

1. Pay money in
2. Automatically receive the government top up
3. Make payments to your childcare provider

You can choose a childcare provider and set up one-off and regular payments for each of your children. Payments to your provider will take up to 3 working days to be received.

## Check your 'Secure Messages' tab

To find important information about how to use your childcare service account, including your eligibility response for your 30 hours application.

If you are signed up for Tax-Free Childcare, your Tax-Free Childcare payment reference number can be found here. You must give this number to your childcare provider so they can identify your payments.

**GOV.UK** Business account

**BETA** This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it. [Get help](#) [Sign out](#)

## Your childcare service account

Ria Jones

▶ [I'm new to the childcare service, what do I do first?](#)

<a href="#">Your Tax-Free Childcare account</a> Manage your Tax-Free Childcare account, pay money in and select and pay childcare providers	<a href="#">30 hours free childcare</a> View your 30 hours free childcare codes	<a href="#">Secure messages (6)</a> View messages about your application and account
<a href="#">Contact details</a> View or change your email address or phone number	<a href="#">Reconfirmation</a> Reconfirm your eligibility every 3 months. Your next reconfirmation date is 13 September 2017	<a href="#">Security</a> Reset your telephone password, change and view your security check questions

## Access your '30 hours free childcare' code

If you have a 3 or 4 year old and have signed up for 30 hours free childcare, you'll find your 30 hours eligibility code here. You'll need to take this code to your childcare provider to secure 30 hours free childcare.

**Remember**, to keep receiving the government Tax-Free Childcare top-up or 30 hours free childcare **you'll need to check your details are up to date every 3 months** using the 'Reconfirmation' link in your childcare service account. We'll send you a reminder text or email when you need to do this.

# Childcare Choices

Up to £2,000 towards  
childcare costs



HM Government

Find out more at  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

# Childcare Choices

We've signed up for  
Tax-Free  
Childcare:  
Have you?



HM Government

Find out more at  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

# Childcare Choices

Are you eligible for  
30 hours for your 3 or  
4 year old?

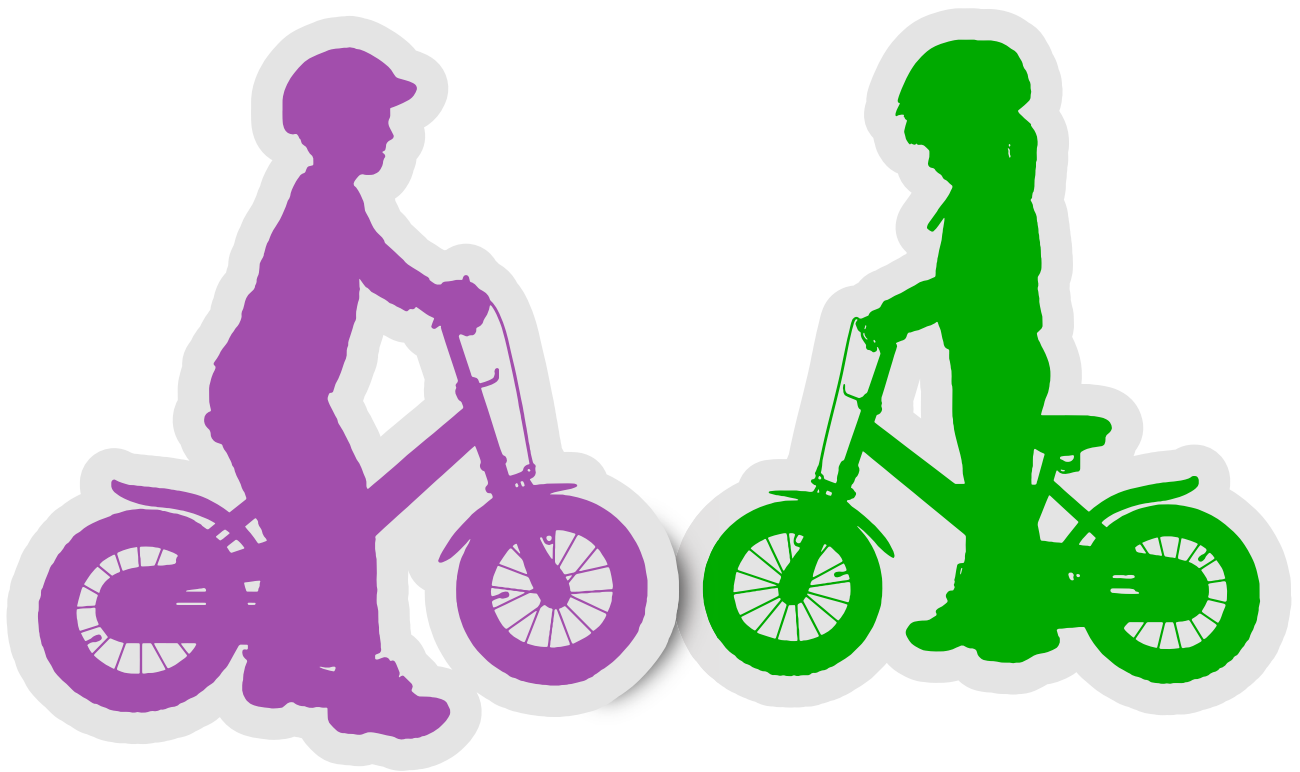


HM Government

Find out more at  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

# Childcare Choices

Signed up for support  
with childcare costs?



HM Government

Find out what's available at  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

# Childcare Choices

Keep your childcare support – check your details every 3 months:  
[gov.uk/childcareaccount](https://gov.uk/childcareaccount)



HM Government

Find out about childcare support  
at [childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk)