Warwickshire County Council

30 hour Code - Guidance for Providers

Warwickshire County Council must comply with the DfE's guidance for 30 hours funding:

Parents are only legally entitled to start claiming a 30 hours place for their 3 or 4 year old the term following the date they receive a decision (30 hour code confirmation) from HMRC and the term after their 3rd birthday, whichever is the later.

The DfE's term start dates are:

Autumn term - 1st September

Spring term – 1st January

Summer Term – 1st April

All children qualify for the 15 hours Universal Entitlement from the term following their 3rd Birthday. **They do not need a code for this**.

Common 30 hour code issues:

- During previous Headcounts, there have been an increasing number of queries regarding 30 hour codes that cannot be accepted for funding because the validity dates of the 30 hour code are outside the accepted dates for funding for the term.

- This is usually because parents have not re-confirmed their 30 hour code at the validity end date or by the end of the grace period and they have not acted on the prompt by HMRC.

- Providers are not aware of the end dates of the 30 hour codes for their funded children and have reminded the parent too late to re-confirm their code, usually after the term has started.

- This causes problems for providers as they will not receive the funding they are expecting and for parents, as they will have to pay for childcare that they thought they would be funded for.

- To avoid problems at Headcount, we suggest that on receipt of the Termly Information letter, emailed 3 weeks before the end of term, the eligible dates for 30 hour codes are noted for the coming term and this process is followed for **ALL** children expecting to take up a 30 hour place in the following term:

30 hour code Process

The following process will support providers to meet the requirements for accepting 30 hour codes:

1. The parent applies for a 30 hour code via the government website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. If they are successful, they will be issued with a 30 hour code starting with 500 or 11 if a temporary code, to their Gateway account.

2. Foster carers applying for a 30 hour code for a child in their care, apply through the responsible LA and are issued with a 30 hour code starting with 400.

3. The parent gives you their 11 digit 30 hour code for validating.

4. Obtain consent from the parent to check the code using the ECS checker by completing the 30 hour Code section on the Parental Declaration Form (PDF).

5. Validate the code using the Eligibility Checker on the Provider Portal as soon as possible after receiving it.

6. All 30 hour codes should be checked to confirm that they match the eligibility dates, **before** the start of each term, where possible.

7. **DO NOT** accept the green tick as proof of eligibility for funding for the term. This confirms a match of the details.

8. **ALWAYS** check the Code start date and Code end date to make sure that they match the **eligible dates** for funding for the term as stated in the Termly Information Letter:

✔ **The details provided have been found:**

Eligibility Code: 20266990000
Code Start Date: 09-Sep-2017
Code End Date: 16-Nov-2017
Grace Period End Date: 23-Feb-2018

Eligibility Checker

Use this area to check if a child is eligible for extended hours. Please click the button below and provide the details as required.

Data Protection Notice - a record of the check is maintained for monitoring purposes. The information supplied is NOT stored by the system.

30 Hours Free Childcare

For new 30 hour codes for funding at your setting:

> The 30 hour code <u>must</u> be dated within the specific dates to be funded for the following terms:
>
> **Autumn term**
>
> Code **start** date on or **before** 31st August
> Code **end** date on or **after** the term start date following 1st September
>
> **Spring term**
> Code **start** date on or **before** 31st December
> Code **end** date on or **after** the term start date following 1st January
>
> **Summer term**
> Code **start** date on or **before** 31st March
> Code **end** date on or **after** the term start date following 1st April

Note: Grace Periods **DO NOT** count for **new** 30 hour codes for funding at your setting.

30 hour codes that can be accepted if funded in the previous term at your setting:

> The 30 hour code <u>must</u> have a Code **start** date as above **and** a Grace period on or after:
>
> **Autumn term: 31st December**
>
> **Spring Term: 31st March**
>
> **Summer term: 31st August**

Only AFTER checking that the code matches the eligibility dates for the term, should you offer the Extended Funded place for 30 hours.

If the code **does not** match the eligible dates for the term as stated in the Termly Information Letter or above, the Synergy Provider Portal will not accept the code and the place will **not** be funded for the Extended hours. **The child will still be entitled to 15 Universal hours**.

30 hour code that cannot be Accepted:

- Codes with a start date on or after 1ˢᵗ of the month following the cut of date **will not** be accepted. They are eligible for funding from the following term.

- The **ONLY** exception to the code start dates stated above would be if the parent applied **before** the deadline and the code was issued by:

    Autumn term -14ᵗʰ September

    Spring term - 14ᵗʰ January

    Summer term - 14ᵗʰ April

    AND where evidence can be shown such as copy of correspondence with HMRC or phone records showing a call made to HMRC dated before the deadline. This evidence will need to be emailed to the funding team at: eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk.

- If a code is not re-confirmed by the validity end date or if the parent no longer meets the eligibility criteria, it falls into a Grace Period, the date when funding ends if a funded place has been taken up. The Grace period should **NOT** be used as the deadline date to re-confirm the code.

- If a new parent applies for their code early (more than 3 months before their child can take up a funded place), they will still have to re-confirm their code, usually every 3 months. The code must be within a valid date at the start of the term in which funding is to be first claimed. See point 6. **Grace periods DO NOT count for codes that are new to funding.**

30 Hour Code Re-Confirmation Process:

- Parents are reminded by HMRC that they will need to re-confirm their code, **usually every 3 months,** 1 month then 2 weeks before the code validity end
  - date and at the Grace period end date, via their Gateway account or via their nominated email/text alert.

- Each term, the LA audit 30 hour codes that are in their database on or around 1st September, January and April and around each half term. The code details are then updated in the Synergy Provider Portal.

- The LA will remind providers, using emails and the Newsletter, to check their Provider Portal for 30 hour codes showing in their Grace Period.

- It is requested that providers also check their Synergy Provider Portal during the second half of each term for 30 hour codes that are showing as being in their Grace period and contact their parents to prompt them to re-confirm their code. A yellow warning triangle will be shown next to the child's name. ⚠️

- The provider should notify the parent that their extended funding will cease at the end of the Grace Period, unless they are able to re-confirm their code **before** the 'cut off' date at the end of each term (see point 6)

- The LA will notify providers at the start of each term of children whose codes have not been reconfirmed and where their grace period expired at the end of the previous term. **The child will only be eligible for 15 universal hours funding in that term.**

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30 hour code Eligibility Queries:

- Warwickshire County Council **do not** have any discretionary funding. We are unable to fund codes that fall outside of the eligible funding dates for the term, as advised by the DfE.

- Providers should make parents aware that we will **not** be able to override the DfE's eligibility dates unless the parent can prove that they had applied before the 'cut off' date.

- When parents contact HMRC to query the eligibility of their 30 hour code, HMRC may advise them that they have a valid code. However, they are advising them that their code is valid in their system, they are not advising them that the code is valid for funding for the current term.

- HMRC's Customer Care Line often refer parents to their LA suggesting they have discretion to fund a code outside of the eligible dates, **we don't**. This can give parent's false expectations.

- If parents wish to make a complaint about HMRC's process or for delays in issuing their 30 hour code, they should contact them at:

  https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complain-to-hm-revenue-and-customs or call the childcare service helpline on 0300 123 4097.

- If a code shows as 'Not Found' when checked on the Eligibility Checker on the Provider Portal, this usually means that the details entered do not match the details behind the code. The following details must be checked with the parent, preferably requesting documentary evidence:
  - The 30 hour code number
  - The child's date of birth
  - The parent's National Insurance number

- If the above details are correct and a 'Not Found' result still shows, contact the Early Years funding team at: eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk

Providers verifying 30 hour code eligibility

Parents to apply for 30 hours free childcare using the childcare service online application. Parents give providers their 30 hour eligibility code to reserve their 30 hours place.

Validate the code. To do this, you need from the parent:

1	2	3	4
Written parental consent	30 Hours code	Parent's National Insurance Number	Child's Date of Birth

Using the Eligibility Checker found on the Synergy Provider Portal check for a Found result and for the validity dates of the code

Inform parent their code is valid for the term and can take up 30 hours place

Make a note of the code's validity end date and Grace period end date to remind parents to re-confirm their code before these dates expire. The LA will also prompt you to check for codes in their Grace period. Your parents may also let you know when this occurs