



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Appendix 1

### Guidelines for Claiming Nursery Education Funding (NEF)

- The local authority should pay all providers, particularly childminders, monthly by September 2018 unless a provider request and the local authority agrees to continue an existing alternative sustainable method of payment
- The provider should accurately complete and submit headcount and other necessary data returns by the agreed date to support the local authority to make payments
- Any funding that the setting receives for children must follow the child, if the child moves to a different setting during the year.

#### Eligibility:

##### Twos, Three and Four year old Funding:

- If a child attends more than one provider, the funding will be split according to how the parent/carer specifies up to the maximum number of hours for the given term.
- An eligible child should claim funding from the Local Authority (LA) where the provider operates.
- If a child claiming the free entitlement leaves or does not attend for more than 2 weeks, the provider must inform Bedford Borough Council at the earliest possible opportunity
- If a child claiming the free entitlement leaves / joins after the headcount day, the provider must inform Bedford Borough Council as soon as possible.

#### Process for Claiming the Funding:

##### Two, Three and Four year old Funding:

For September 2017 only, settings will be asked to submit an estimated claim of hours at the beginning of the term (by 08 September 2017 at the latest). In subsequent terms, settings will submit an estimate on the system at the end of each previous term. They will receive an initial payment of 70% of that estimate. In September 2017, the initial payment will be made during the third week of the term. In subsequent terms the initial payment will be made during the first week of the term. The balance payment will then be paid at the end of the term.

#### Actual Headcount Procedure

Providers must check eligibility of all children through a valid form of identification, for example a birth certificate or passport. Funded two year olds and children who are eligible for 30 hours should have a valid reference number.

Providers must ensure that all Parent Declaration forms are completed and signed by the parent. Failure to submit parent declarations will mean payment will not be made.

Headcount takes place. Providers complete the online Headcount pages using information on the Parent Declaration forms. Providers must monitor attendance of all eligible children during the Headcount week and make any necessary amendments to claims.

Completed online Headcount is submitted. All original Parent Declaration Forms are returned to Bedford Borough Council by the given deadline. Failure to meet the given deadline will result in a delayed second payment to **all** providers.

The second payment is made towards the end of the term.

### **Providers awaiting their first inspection:**

Children eligible for all early education funding will be able to take up a place at a provider of childcare prior to their first Ofsted judgement. However, this will only take place where the provider has passed their initial Ofsted registration under the inspection framework.

### **Auditing Providers**

The Local Authority requires a robust audit process.

- Providers are required to agree to the audit process outlined in Appendix 2
- Providers need to maintain all attendance and finance records along with records about children receiving free entitlement for a period of 3 years. These should be made available to the Local Authority on request.
- It is important that providers demonstrate that they are using nursery education funding for the purpose that it is intended, namely that the funding supports the education of 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
- Providers must contact Bedford Borough Council upon receipt of any payment for the free entitlement, for children who are not eligible in order that a repayment can be made.
- Any changes of circumstance or organisation, including name, must be reported to Bedford Borough Council, as this may result in a change of funding.

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