



Commission on childcare Terms of reference

Context

1. The affordability and availability of childcare are central to enabling parents to work sufficient hours to support their families and therefore balance work and family life. The affordability and availability of childcare are seen by many working parents as a growing concern.
2. Parents expect childcare to be safe and of good quality. High quality childcare promotes child development in the early years, and provides school age children with safe and stimulating activities while their parents are at work.
3. It is the job of Government to ensure that support for childcare costs and regulation delivers high quality at good value for children, parents and the tax payer.

Aims and objectives

4. The commission will look at how to improve the affordability and accessibility of childcare for working families, particularly wrap around and holiday care for school age children, and how to reduce burdens on childcare providers, without compromising the safety or quality of provision. It will draw on the knowledge and views of a wide range of experts in the field, together with international evidence on high-quality, affordable childcare. It will:
 - *Look at ways to encourage the provision of wrap around and holiday childcare for children of school age:* through enabling parents and other volunteers to set up the schemes they want in their area; partnerships between schools and voluntary and private providers; and encouraging more schools to follow the example of many Free Schools and Academies in finding innovative ways of providing childcare before and after school hours;
 - *Identify any unnecessary regulation:* assessing the impact of regulation on the childcare market and how we might reduce burdens on providers without compromising safety or quality, particularly for wrap around and holiday childcare; and
 - *Examine the evidence on the role of childcare in supporting families to move into sustained employment and out of poverty:* assessing evidence on the range of factors which influence decisions that parents make about their working lives; and the implementation of government support to meet working parents' need for affordable and flexible childcare that reflects modern working patterns.



Activity

5. The commission will be led jointly by the Minister of State for Children and Families, DfE, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, DWP, reporting to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister.
6. Ministers will draw on expert advice from the fields of childcare and early education, business and employment and organisations representing parents and families. A call for evidence will seek views on the range of issues within the commission's remit.

Timescale

7. The commission will report in the autumn.