



## Delivering 30 hours of free childcare – call for expressions of interest (EOI) from local authorities

### Advance notice of local authority capital bidding process

Ministers will be making capital grants available to early years settings through a local authority bidding process to support the delivery of the 30 hours extended entitlement coming into effect from September 2017. This may include schools that currently offer, or plan to offer, provision for three and four year olds. Applications will be made by local authorities that will include specific provider level projects in their area.

Successful bids will receive grants within financial year 2016 to 2017. Decisions on successful bids will be made by autumn 2016.

At this stage, we are not announcing project cost thresholds nor are we limiting the type of provider that might be eligible, beyond their ability to demonstrate a proven track record with Ofsted.

Your response to this EOI process will help inform the guidance and detail of the bidding process. To be eligible for the full bidding round you **must make an EOI**.

### Action

We invite local authorities to submit an expression of interest in this process. Local authorities can submit partnership bids that include more than one local authority. Please submit your EOI using the template, **by 29 April 2016**.

The template invites local authorities to work with providers in their area to provide initial information on:

- How you would be able to evidence the level of sufficiency need (at local authority level and below), including what data sources are available for you to draw on;
- How you would evidence that capital funding is crucial to meeting this sufficiency need.

We will support local authorities by providing some centrally held data to use as benchmarks and inform their applications.

### Local authority sufficiency need - things to consider

- The initial pass or fail criteria for the bidding process will be based on local authorities adequately demonstrating their sufficiency need with thorough data. The criteria will be balanced to ensure that differences in evidence type and some gaps in evidence base are taken into account to make a well-informed assessment.
- At this stage we are interested to understand how local authorities would demonstrate this need, the likely data sources, and how they would be able to evidence that additional capital is necessary to meet this need.

The template also invites local authorities to work with early years providers in their area to provide initial information on the types of project proposals they are likely to submit for consideration for funding.

**We are not asking for detailed proposals at this stage.** Local authorities will not be making any commitment to deliver on these projects. We will use these initial returns to understand the scale and type of demand. We will tailor the application process appropriately and issue detailed guidance in due course.

## Project proposals – things to consider

We are interested in hearing about a broad range of innovative ideas that would benefit from a capital grant.

We expect all projects to address sufficiency need and to provide evidence that capital funding is the appropriate solution to that sufficiency need. We expect all projects to involve a setting that will deliver the extended free entitlement and that providers have a proven track record with Ofsted in delivering quality provision. This could include schools that are considering expanding their provision to include 3 and 4 year olds, as well as schools and registered early years providers who currently offer provision for this age group.

In addition to these expectations, the criteria that will be used to consider project proposals will be:

**Outcomes:** the number of places created; clear link to supporting 30 hours delivery.

### Value for Money:

- Cost - evidence of reasonable costings of requirements and certainty of costing across project timescales.
- Funding sources and savings for project from outside sources, particularly match funding.
- Appropriateness of solution - evidence that alternatives have been considered

**Delivery Plan:** timescales for the project and a realistic delivery plan.

At this stage we only want high-level ideas so we ask that local authorities do not use resources engaging consultants or advisors. At a future application stage some professional advice and support to develop a full proposal may be necessary. We will seek to limit this by making forms simple to complete and by providing clear guidance.

**You must complete an EOI if you intend to take part in the full bidding process that will take place later this year.**

Please submit your proposals using the EOI template by the 29 April 2016 using the [EFA Enquiry Form](#). Please follow the instructions on the webpage to attach the completed EOI. When prompted to input what the query is about please choose **LA Funding - Early Years** from the drop down list and enter early years EOI when asked to provide more details about the query.

We expect to announce further details of any potential scheme in early summer 2016.

Please note that we will only be responding to technical queries while the EOI window is open.