



Management information on the number of 30 hours free childcare codes issued and validated for the summer term 2018

The following number of 30 hours summer eligibility codes have been issued by the Childcare Service and validated by local authorities and providers:

Eligibility codes issued by 31 st March	377,535
Eligibility codes validated by 7 th May	346,868
Eligibility codes validated as a percentage of codes issued	92%

Source: Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System

Spring term 2018

On the 15th March 2018, the department [published](#) its final estimates for the number of 30 hours eligibility codes issued by the Childcare Service and validated by local authorities and providers for spring as follows:

Eligibility codes issued	329,195
Eligibility codes validated	307,165
Eligibility codes validated as a percentage of codes issued	93%

Source: Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System

At this time we also set out there were an estimated 294,000 children in a 30 hours place in the spring term.

Autumn term 2017

Before this, on the 19th December 2017, the department [published](#) its final estimates for the number of 30 hours eligibility codes issued by the Childcare Service and validated by local authorities and providers for autumn as follows:

Eligibility codes issued	224,885
Eligibility codes validated	210,863
Eligibility codes as a percentage of codes issued	94%

Source: Department for Education's Eligibility Checking

At this time we also set out there were an estimated there were an estimated 202,783 children in a 30 hours place in the autumn term.

Background

All 3 and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours a week of free early education. From September 2017 this entitlement was extended to 30 hours free childcare for families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage, and less than £100,000 per year.

Parents apply and have their eligibility checked for 30 hours free childcare via the Childcare Service. If a parent is found to be eligible, they will be given a 30 hours eligibility code which they take to their chosen childcare provider. Childcare providers or local authorities will then validate these codes via the Eligibility Checking System. A parent must have generated a code and this code must be validated to enable a child to access the offer.

A parent can start claiming their 30 hours place the term following their child's third birthday or the term following the date their eligibility code was issued (whichever is the later). Therefore, the number of children eligible for 30 hours free childcare will increase through the academic year as more children turn three. Children are eligible for 30 hours free childcare from the term after they turn three until they reach compulsory school age, the term following their fifth birthday. Codes cannot be used to get 30 hours free childcare once a child has taken up a reception place in a state-funded school.

Purpose of this release

This release provides an update to the summer term figures published in March 2018 and continues to fulfil our pledge to provide transparency around the national rollout of this new entitlement.

Further updates on the number of codes issued and validated for the summer term will be published in May, followed by an experimental statistics release.

Notes

- 1) The figures excludes all eligibility codes issued after 31st March, the deadline for acquiring a valid eligibility code for a 30 hours place for the summer term.
- 2) Codes considered eligible for summer term are a) those with a validity end date during or after the summer term and b) those with a validity end date in the second half of the spring term, which would therefore mean the child could be in their grace period in the summer term. A validity end date is the date at which a code ceases to be valid if a parent has not reconfirmed or is no longer eligible following reconfirmation.¹
- 3) Eligibility codes have been excluded to avoid double counting in instances where a child is issued more than one eligibility code. For example, when a child has received a temporary code via a manual application route and subsequently generated a digital code via the Childcare Service.

¹ More details on reconfirmation and grace periods can be found in the DfE's operational guidance for LAs - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/629544/Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf

- 4) Code validations before 15th January are not included in the summer codes validated total above because we expect codes to have been validated after this date if the parent is still using a 30 hours place this term.
- 5) Local authorities and providers can validate codes for summer term childcare places during the term. Therefore, the number and percentage of codes validated may continue to increase during the term.
- 6) These figures are not directly comparable to figures released by HMRC referring to the childcare service due to a number of definitional differences:
 - a. These figures refer to the number of children rather than families; some families may have 2 or more children eligible for the additional 15 hours.
 - b. These figures only include children issued a 30 hours code who were 3 at 31st August, and for the spring and summer terms also those who turned 3 by 31st December and 31st March respectively.
 - c. These figures include codes in their 30 hours grace period.
 - d. These figures include temporary codes which were generated by a manual process, not by the digital service. Parents in receipt of a temporary code will need to reapply via the digital service at a later date to receive a permanent code.
- 7) The summer table excludes 4,097 codes issued and 1,866 codes validated for children aged 4 at 31st August and who did not turn 5 before the 31st March,² as it is likely these children will be in reception or of school age and therefore ineligible for 30 hours free childcare. Some of these children may defer their entry into reception and continue to be eligible for the additional 15 hours offer – these children are not captured in the tables above.
- 8) A separate table is published as part of this release providing a breakdown of the number of spring eligible codes issued and validated by region and local authority.

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² The spring table excludes 5,852 codes issued and 2,451 codes validated for children aged 4 at 31st August and who did not turn 5 before 31st December. The autumn table excludes 8,022 codes issued and 3,664 codes validated for children aged 4 at 31st August.