

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

25th June 2020 at 8:30am – 10:30am

Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Primary Academies

Headteacher – Kenningtons	Ms J Sawtell-Haynes
Headteacher – Abbotts Primary	Mrs L James
Principal – Woodside Academy	Mr E Caines – Vice Chair
Headteacher – Giffards Primary	Mrs N Haslam-Davis
CEO - Catalyst Academies Trust	Mr T Parfett
Headteacher- East Tilbury Primary and Nursery	Mrs L Coates

Primary Maintained Schools

Headteacher – Aveley Primary	Mrs N Shadbolt
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Secondary Academies

CEO – Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust	Mr P Griffiths – Chair
Principal – Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Mrs N Graham
CEO - South West Essex Community Education Trust	Mr S Munday
CEO – ORTU Federation Ltd	Dr S Asong
Governor – Hathaway Academy	Mr S Sweeting

Secondary Maintained Schools

Headteacher – Grays Convent	Mrs P Johnson
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Special Academy

Headteacher – Treetops School	Mr J Brewer
Headteacher-Beacon Hill Academy	Ms S Hewitt

Olive AP Academy

Executive Headteacher	Ms C Hunnisett
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Non School Members

Diocese of Brentwood	Mrs M Shepherd
Diocese of Chelmsford	Miss S Jones
0-11 Representative	Ms A Jones
11-19 Representative	Dr J Revill

Introductory Items		
Item	Item	Time Guide
1.	Welcome from Chair	1 min
2.	Apologies for Absence	2 mins
3.	Agreement of agenda, time-guide and notification of 'Any Other Business'	2 mins
Items for Decision		
4.	Forum Membership 2019/20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented by Sarah Williams 	30 mins
5.	Union Facility Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented by Sue Lamkin 	10 mins
Items for Information		
6.	Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented by Alison Picknell 	30 mins
7.	Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2019/20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Presentation to consider and agree any urgent additions to the forward plan, presented by Sarah Williams. 	10 mins
Closing Items		
8.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 March 2020	5 mins
9.	Any Other Business	5 mins
10.	Date of next meeting To be confirmed	

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	25 th June 2020
SUBJECT:	Schools' Forum Membership
REPORT OF:	Sarah Williams
THE REPORT IS:	For Decision

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to outline proposals for the new structure of the schools forum from September 2020. This report has been presented over a number of forum meetings and to enable to move towards a decision the March Schools Forum agreed to a sub group being established to review and develop a proposal for school forum to review and agree.

The report also outlines changes from government in relation to how meetings are held going forward until March 2021 due to the current public health emergency.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members to agree the new proposal for the structure of the schools forum from September 2020.
2. To note the changes in guidance from the DfE in how the forum meetings will be conducted from 26th June to March 2021.
3. To agree the current chair of the forum remains in post for 12 months whilst the new structure of the forum settles the issues associated with the public health emergency are reviewed.

3.0 MAIN BODY OF REPORT

3.1 *Updated government guidance – published on 20th May 2020*

The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, which will come into force on 18 June, make provisions to enable schools forums to meet remotely while they are unable to meet physically in a room during the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This includes, but is not limited to, telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming.

These arrangements are currently in place for the 2020 to 2021 financial year, up to the end of March 2021.

3.2 School forum membership

The schools forum operational guidance advises that, Schools forums must have:

- school members
- academies members
- non-schools members

At the last forum meeting in March 2020, it was agreed that a number of forum members would form a sub group to work with the council on a new membership proposal, which will be implemented from September 2020.

The sub group meetings were held on 3rd and 8th June 2020. Options were discussed and a way forward agreed. In principal the decision to include all CEO's as members of the forum were agreed. The concerns raised by the primary Headteachers on the sub group was around fair representation of the standalone academies that are not part of a multi academy trusts. The sub group requested that representation, be based on pupil numbers from the latest census data this has subsequently been reviewed and presented in the table below.

Given that the two remaining maintained primary schools, Bonnygate and Warren Primary will be converting to academy status on 1st October, we have taken the decision to include them under the Primary Multi Academy reps. Those two maintained schools would be equivalent to one forum member.

Table 1 - Number of pupils excluding nursery & post 16	% of pupils		Number of Schools Forum reps	
	No.	%		
Primary Multi Academy / Maintained	13584	49.0	7.349589	7
Primary Standalone Academy	3610	13.0	1.953181	2
Secondary Maintained	643	2.3	0.347894	1
Secondary Multi Academy	9496	34.3	5.137787	5
			15	15
Specials	314	1.1	n/a	2
Olive AP Academy	77	0.3	n/a	1
			n/a	3
Total	27724	100	18	18

New membership structure from September 2020

There are a proposed 1 school members, the chair of TASS and chair of TPHA, two special school members, one member for alternative provision, two members for the standalone academies, four non-school members, which include the diocese of Brentwood and Chelmsford, 0-11 group and 11-19 group. In total, across all sectors excluding council officers there will be 19 forum members.

All forum members must ensure they delegate a designated officer to deputise in the event the forum member is unable to attend the any of the meetings. In addition, where CEO's have been identified as a forum member, the CEO may delegate their role to an alternative officer within their multi academy trust who can vote on forum decisions on their behalf.

Alternative Provision currently sits within the Multi Academy Trusts system and is represented by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the individual trusts.

Each of the tables below details the different school sectors of representation as well as the number of representatives for each sector. This proposal looks to include all Chief Executive Officers of each multi academy trust, which allows them to make decisions on behalf of all their schools within their trust.

Multi Academy Trust – 8 Members	
<i>Name of Multi Academy Trust</i>	<i>Number of schools representing</i>
CEO – Catalyst Academies Trust	5 primary schools
Harris Federation	2 primary schools 3 secondary schools
CEO Ormiston Park	1 secondary
CEO ORTU Federation Ltd (Stanford & Corringham Trust)	1 primary school 2 secondary schools
CEO Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust	6 primary schools 2 secondary school
CEO REAch2 Academy Trust	1 primary school
CEO South West Essex Community Education Trust (SWECET)	3 primary schools 2 secondary school
CEO The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)	4 primary schools 1 secondary school

Secondary Maintained – 1 member	
Headteacher/Governor	1 representative

Primary Standalone Academies – 2 Members	
Abbots Hall Primary	
Belmont Castle	
Bonnygate Primary	
Kenningtons Primary	
Shaw Primary	
Tudor Court	
West Thurrock Primary	
Giffards Primary	
Graham James Primary	
Warren Primary	
Woodside Primary	

Infrastructure Groups (TASS & TPHA) – 2 Members	
Chair TASS	Headteacher – Grays Convent
Chair TPHA	Headteacher – Kenningtons Academy

Alternative Provision – 1 member	
CEO Olive AP academy	1 representative

Special Schools – 2 members	
Treetops Academy	1 representative
Beacon Hill Academy	1 representative

Non-school members – 4 members	
Diocese of Chelmsford	1 representative
Diocese of Brentwood	1 representative
0-11 Representative	1 representative
11-19 Representative	1 representative

Nomination process

Of the standalone academies, two representatives are required, therefore these members should be nominated and agreed between those academies and names put forward to the clerk of the schools forum.

School forum organisation

If the new membership proposal is agreed, the organisation of meetings will be reviewed and meeting dates changed if necessary to ensure that papers can be sent to all Headteachers in advance to give an opportunity for consultation with their relevant group meetings. Forum members can then make informed decisions at each forum meeting.

Consultations

There are annual consultation meetings specifically in relation to funding, these consultations have been held separately and will continue to do so, with final decisions made at the relevant forum meetings.

4.0 FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There should be no financial implications to sector groups, as the fair spread of representation allows each sector to agree funding decisions on an equitable basis.

5.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact

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THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 25th June 2020
SUBJECT: Union Facility Time
REPORT OF: Sue Lamkin
THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an annual update to the Forum on the administration of Union Facility Time. The Forum requested for the administration of this service to be reviewed on an annual basis so that a decision could be made by members on whether they wished Thurrock Council to continue with the administration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Forum decides on how it wishes to proceed with the administration of this scheme.

That the Forum decides on the contribution rate for schools for 2020/2021.

3.0 Introduction

Thurrock Council administrates the Union Facility Time budget on behalf of all schools in Thurrock. The administration duties cover:

- design and management of claim forms along with guidance notes,
- managing and monitoring of the budget,
- reviewing claims for legitimacy,
- recording and raising debtors requests to charge all schools that have signed up to facility time,
- recording and raising creditor payments for claims received,
- reviewing and monitoring any changes to ACAS code of practice in relation to facility time
- updating documentation if and when required
- providing a reconciliation of the account to the Forum on an annual basis.

We propose that the Council reduce the annual service charge for 2020/2021 to £2,500.

4.0 Union Facility Time Cost to Schools

A charge of 10p per pupil was agreed for the 2018/2019 academic year. There is a complete buy in from all schools within the borough.

It was agreed by schools forum no charge would be made to schools for the year 2019/2020 as the balance was sufficient to cover claims.

During the year 2019/2020 three claims have been received, processed and subsequently been reimbursed. The total amount claimed to date is £463. 23. This is significantly lower than in previous years.

Due to Covid-19 there may be a rise in the number of claims made this term, however there is a current balance of £20,524.24. Based on this amount of surplus, the Forum may wish to consider that no contributions are required for 2020/2021 and that schools may then contribute a lower per pupil rate in 2021/2022.

FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This scheme is self-financing from the schools income and is reliant on all schools buying back into the scheme and the amount of contribution set for the following academic year.

5.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact

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THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	25 th June 2020
SUBJECT:	Draft EY Code of Practice 2020
REPORT OF:	Alison Picknell
THE REPORT IS:	For information

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information regarding the 2020 Code of Practice (CoP) for the Delivery of Early Education and Childcare for Two, Three and Four Year olds. The CoP sets out the expectations of Thurrock Council, early education and childcare providers; and refers to funded early years provision.

2.0 CHANGES TO CoP FOR 2020

- Page 4 – Introduction – Comments added regarding Covid-19.
- Most Links were updated to include latest pages (eg. Provider Portal and LSCP).
- Removed duplicate paragraphs (43).
- Paragraph 83 was removed.
- Page 20 - Children to benefit from funded provision – David May provided the new funding details.
- Page 23 – Deprivation Rates added.
- Looked after Children was changed to Children Looked After.
- The word 'Free' was removed from the title 'Free Entitlement'.
- Annex 5: Portal timetable – New Timetable was added including comments around Covid-19.
- Annex 6: Early Years Inclusion Fund – Added 2 Year Olds to paragraphs.
- Added link to the Early Years Inclusion Fund Application Form.
- Annex 1 page 21 - Added the new 2YE criteria as shown on the Thurrock website.

3.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact

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Thurrock Council

Code of Practice for the Delivery of Early Education and Childcare for Two, Three and Four Year olds

(September 2020)

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Terms & Conditions

THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE THURROCK AGREEMENT BETWEEN A PROVIDER AND THE COUNCIL

1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

1.1 In this Agreement, the following words and expressions shall have the following meanings:

“Administration Charge”	means the administration charge of £30 which is the sum calculated as the assessment of the cost of administration time and expenses to the Council in dealing with the defaults of the Provider referred to in clause 63;
“Agreement”	means the Thurrock Agreement as in the Code of Practice for the Delivery of Early Education and Childcare for, Two Three and Four Year olds (September 2018);
“Authorised Officer”	means the Councils Strategic Lead for School Improvement or his/her authorised representative;
“Child”	means the child intending to receive, or receiving, the Services;
“Code of Practice”	means the Code by which all providers must sign and comply with in order to be able to provide Government funded early education and childcare;
“Early Years Pupil Premium”	means additional funding for providers where children meet certain criterion as set out by the Department for Education;
“EYFS Statutory Framework”	means the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage dated September 2014 and subsequent revisions. This framework sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted registered providers must follow the EYFS Framework;
“Funding Period”	means the period for which the provider is provided with funds for 570 or 1140 hours over 38 weeks of the year or equivalent in accordance with the Code of Practice;
“Headcount (or Census) Day”	means the Headcount or Census day in each school term used to determine the funding as set out in the Code of Practice;
“Intellectual Property Rights”	means all copyright, patents or patent rights registers and unregistered design rights, trademarks, service marks, database rights, inventions, know-how and all other intellectual property rights whatsoever in the world enforceable;
“Parent Agreement”	means the agreement entered into between the parent of the child and the provider which reflects the rules of the setting;
“Parent Declaration”	means the form parents complete to ‘register’ for funded early years and childcare provision with Thurrock Council;
“Provider”	means the party to this agreement and a provider of the services and who is included in the Thurrock list of approved providers;

“Provider Working Day”	means any day specified by the provider as not a usual working day for that provider;
“Provision”	means the provision of early education and childcare for which eligible children for a period of up to 15 hours each week for a minimum of 38 weeks in a year (570 hours) or for eligible children for a period of up to 30 hours each week for a minimum of 38 weeks in a year (1140 hours) , during the period of this agreement at all times in accordance with this agreement and the Code of Practice, the Statutory Guidance and the EYFS Statutory Framework, the Parent Agreement and any additional instructions from time to time given by the Council;
“PVI”	means private, voluntary and independent early education and childcare providers;
“Statutory Guidance”	means the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance
“Thurrock Agreement”	means the Agreement between the provider and Thurrock Council;

DRAFT

Introduction

This agreement sets out the expectations of Thurrock Council (also referred to as the Local Authority) and early education and childcare providers, and refers to funded early years provision (sections 7 and 7a of the Childcare Act 2006) and funded childcare (section 2 of the Childcare Act 2016) as the funded entitlement(s) or 'funded hours' or a 'funded place'.

The agreement applies to the 15 hour entitlements for the most disadvantaged two-year-olds, the 15 hour entitlement for parents of three-and four-year-olds (the universal entitlement) and the 30 hours entitlement for working parents of three and four-year-olds (the extended entitlement).

The agreement is between:

- Thurrock Council
- Early years providers who are referred to as 'providers' and include:
 - Early years providers and childminders registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register;
 - Childminders registered with a childminder agency that is registered with Ofsted;
 - Schools and academies taking children age two and over and which are exempt from registration with Ofsted as an early years provider

The parent declaration at Annex 2a is for:

- Early years providers as set out above;
- Parents

The Childcare Act 2006 placed a duty on Local Authorities in England to secure sufficient childcare for working parents; to secure early years provision which is funded and also to provide information, advice and training to childcare providers. The Childcare Act 2016 increased that duty to include a duty to secure the equivalent of 30 hours of funded childcare over 38 weeks (or equivalent) for qualifying children. In Thurrock we work closely with all providers to ensure the very youngest children have the opportunity to access the highest quality of provision from a range of providers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all providers for engaging with the Thurrock Early Years Team. The team will support all providers in Thurrock with guidance, advice and support to enhance provision and to ensure a successful Ofsted outcome.

We will strive to ensure that all children who meet the prescribed criteria are able to take up a funded place benefitting their social, physical and cognitive development and outcomes and helping to prepare them for school. Evidence shows that attending high quality early education has a lasting impact on social and behavioural outcomes. Our Childcare Sufficiency Officer and Two Year Entitlement Officer work closely with providers and parents to ensure there are sufficient places across the borough allowing for parental choice. This is an ongoing task and we would ask all providers to engage with the advice, help and support provided to ensure the very youngest children in the borough are able access their full entitlement.

The Education Funding Team will ensure payments are made in a timely and accurate fashion. Thurrock Council reserves the right to change the agreed payment dates in exceptional circumstances (e.g. COVID-19). Providers are requested to ensure the information they supply to the team is also timely and accurate. The Childcare Act 2006 also places a duty on Thurrock Council to provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents. Please direct parents to the Family Information Service: 01375 652 801 option 2 or www.askthurrock.org.uk

Key local authority responsibilities Local Offer Guidance for Local Authorities

1. Local authorities must secure a funded entitlement place for every eligible child in their area. Please see Annex 1.
2. The local authority should work in partnership with providers to agree how to deliver funded entitlement places.
3. The local authority should be clear about their role and the support on offer locally to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as well as their expectations of providers.
4. The local authority must contribute to the safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and young people in their area.

Key provider responsibilities

5. The provider must comply with all relevant legislation and insurance requirements, and be registered with Thurrock Council and Ofsted, or in some cases a registered childminder agency. This includes General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR), such as only sharing children's personal details through secure encrypted channels.
6. All providers must adhere to the requirements within this document.
7. The provider should deliver the funded entitlements consistently to all parents, whether in receipt of 15 or 30 hours and regardless of whether they opt to pay for optional services or consumables. This means that the provider should be clear and communicate to parents details about the days and times that they offer funded places, along with their services and charges. Those children accessing the funded entitlements should receive the same quality and access to provision.
8. The provider must follow the EYFS and have clear safeguarding policies and procedures in place that link to the [LSCP SET Procedures](#) guidance for recognising, responding, reporting and recording suspected or actual abuse.
9. The provider must have arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. Providers in Thurrock should also utilise the Three Step Checklist from the School Effectiveness Team for identification of need and avenues of support. Providers should utilise the SEN Inclusion Fund and Disability Access Fund (Annex 6) to deliver effective support, whilst making information available about their SEND offer to parents.

Safeguarding

10. Thurrock Council has overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear, and the ['Working together to safeguard children'](#) 2018 guidance sets these out in detail.
11. The provider must follow the EYFS and have clear safeguarding policies and procedures in place that are in line with [LSCP SET Procedures](#) for responding to and reporting suspected or actual abuse and neglect. A lead practitioner must take responsibility for safeguarding and all

staff must have training to identify signs of abuse and neglect. The provider must have regard to [‘Working together to safeguard children’](#) 2018 guidance.

Eligibility

12. The provider should check original copies of documentation to confirm a child has reached the eligible age on initial registration for all funded entitlements. The provider must retain paper or digital copies of documentation to enable Thurrock Council to carry out audits and fraud investigations. Where a provider retains a copy of documentation this must be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer a good reason to keep the data. Please refer to the data privacy guidance set out in Annex 2b.

Born between	Eligible from
1 January and 31 March	Summer term (after the Easter holidays)
1 April and 31 August	Autumn term (September)
1 September and 31 December	Spring term (January)

13. The provider should offer places to eligible two-year-olds on the understanding that the child remains eligible until they become eligible for the universal entitlement for three- and four-year-olds. For more information on the two year entitlement, please see the [Thurrock two year entitlement information](#) published on the [Thurrock Traded Services \(SLA\)](#) website.
14. Thurrock Council must ensure that a child has a funded entitlement place no later than the beginning of the term following the child and the parent meeting the eligibility criteria for the funded entitlements. For more details on places, please see the Thurrock [Childcare Sufficiency Assessment](#)
15. Alongside the 30 hours eligibility code, which is the child’s unique 11-digit number, and original copies of documentation (see Point 12), a provider must acquire written consent from, or on behalf of, the parent to be able to receive confirmation and future notifications from Thurrock Family Information Service of the validity of the parent’s 30 hours eligibility code. The provider will record this consent on the parent declaration form, which can be found in Annex 2a.
16. Once a provider has received written consent from the parent, they should verify the 30 hours eligibility code with the Family Information Service.
17. Foster carers are eligible to apply for 30 hours however they will need to apply through their supervising social worker and FIS will provide the code, not the online HMRC ‘Childcare Choices’ portal.
18. The Family Information Service will confirm the validity of 30 hours eligibility codes to allow providers to offer 30 hours places for eligible three- and four-year-olds. They will provide a validity checking service to providers to enable them to verify the 30 hours eligibility code

through the Provider Portal. The Eligibility Checking Service (ECS) allows the Family Information Service to make instant checks for code validity. Providers will do this through the Provider Portal.

19. Thereafter, the Family Information Service will complete audit checks to review the validity of eligibility codes for children who qualify for 30 hours funded childcare at 6 fixed points in the year, both at half-term and at the end of term across the year (in line with the dates as listed at table A page 7). It is their responsibility to notify a provider where a parent has fallen out of eligibility and inform them of the grace period end date, which is done via the Provider Portal.

Table A: Date parent receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation:	Thurrock audit date:	Grace period end date:
1 Jan – 10 Feb	11 February	31 March
11 Feb – 31 March	1 April	31 August
1 April – 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September – 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	1 January	31 March

The Grace Period

20. A child will enter the grace period when the child's parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria set out in the [Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) Regulations 2016](#), as determined by HMRC or a First Tier Tribunal in the case of an appeal.
21. The Family Information Service will be able to access information about whether a child has ceased to meet the eligibility criteria and entered the grace period via the Eligibility Checking Service. The grace period end date will automatically be applied to eligibility codes.
22. We should continue to fund a place for a child who enters the grace period as set out in the [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2018](#). The child must be accessing some or all of the 30 hours before going into their grace period.
23. We will audit the 30 hours entitlement children on the audit dates shown in table A. If these dates fall on a non-working day, we will audit the eligibility on the next working day. Providers must log onto the [Provider Portal](#) after 4pm on these dates to check to see if any parent has fallen out of eligibility and is now in a grace period.

Flexibility

24. Provision must be offered within the national parameters on flexibility as set out in Section A2 of [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2018](#).
25. The provider must work with Thurrock Council and share information about the times and periods at which they are able to offer funded entitlements to support us to secure sufficient

stretched and flexible places to meet parental demand in the local authority. The provider should also make information about their offer and admissions criteria available to parents at the point the child first accesses provision at their setting.

26. A parent will only be able to access a maximum of three providers over two sites per day. All providers must ensure that the parent is aware of this, and that they fully complete the parent declaration forms (see Annex 2a). If a parent is eligible for 30 hours and are splitting their funding, providers must also ensure that the parent indicates on the parent declaration forms if they are taking the universal hours or the additional hours with the setting. Providers will need to ensure they update the [Provider Portal](#) with the relevant information if funding is being split. Providers must ensure that they record if a child is accessing more than one setting on their contracts. If a child attends more than one early education provider in a term, the funding will be split proportionally.
27. Parents may use Early Years registered Out of School providers, school run breakfast clubs, after school and holiday clubs, where their Ofsted registration covers the Early Years, for childcare provision within the 30 hours entitlement. We recommend a minimum of a 30 minute session or multiples of for the purpose of claiming funding. However, if a child is attending a school reception class, they are not entitled to the funding as it is deemed by the Government that they are accessing their full entitlement for that term in the reception class.

This also applies to children starting their reception place after the term has started.

Partnership working

28. Partnerships should be supported by Thurrock Council on four levels between:
 - i. Thurrock Council and providers
 - ii. Providers working with other providers, including childminders, schools and organisations
 - iii. Providers and parents
 - iv. Thurrock Council and parents
29. Thurrock Council should promote partnership working between different types of providers, including childminders, across all sectors and encourage more providers to offer flexible provision, alongside other providers.
30. The provider should work in partnership with parents, carers and other providers to improve provision and outcomes for children in their setting. An [interactive toolkit](#) has been developed to help providers set up or join a partnership, maximise the benefits of working together and tackle the challenges joint working can bring.
31. The provider should discuss and work closely with parents to agree how a child's overall care will work in practice when their funded entitlement is split across different providers, such as at a maintained setting and childminder, to ensure a smooth transition for the child.

Special educational needs and disabilities

32. Thurrock Council must strategically plan support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to meet the needs of all children in their local area as per the [Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(January 2015\)](#).
33. The provider must ensure owners and all staff members are aware of their duties in relation to the [SEND Code of Practice](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#).

34. Thurrock Council must be clear and transparent about the support on offer in their area, through their [Local Offer](#), so parents and providers can access that support.
35. The provider should be clear and transparent about the SEND support on offer at their setting and make information available about their offer to support parents to choose the right setting for their child with SEND. Providers will also need to ensure they updated their information on the [Local Offer](#), utilising the parent and carer questions, and that they complete the RAG in partnership with the School Improvement Team for audit purposes.
36. Providers must ensure equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning disabilities or difficulties, gender or ability as stated in the Thurrock RAG document. All providers are encouraged to attend training to support their statutory equalities duties.
37. Providers should monitor the take-up of places and achievements of different groups of children, including the disadvantaged and children whom attract the Early Years Pupil Premium.
38. Providers must maintain records detailing the child's development linked to the provision as well as achievements made at home. Support and guidance to develop record keeping and use of data is available from Early Education Improvement Officers at Thurrock Council.
39. Thurrock Council will set up a local inclusion fund to support providers to secure better outcomes for children with low level or emerging SEN (annex 6). Additional guidance and information can be found on the Thurrock [Local Offer](#).

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

40. The Disability Access Fund (DAF) is to support children with disabilities or SEN. The DAF aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or helping with building capacity (be that for the child in question or for the benefit of children as a whole attending the setting). For further information see Annex 6.

Social mobility and disadvantage

41. Thurrock Council will promote equality and inclusion, particularly for disadvantaged families, looked after children and children in need by removing barriers of access to funded places and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential.
 42. The provider should ensure that they have identified the disadvantaged children in their setting as part of the process for checking EYPP eligibility. They will also use EYPP and any locally available funding streams or support to improve outcomes for this group.
- Eligible foster carers can apply for 30 hours funding through their supervising social worker **Quality**
43. Evidence shows that higher quality provision has greater benefits on children's development, particularly for the most disadvantaged children. The evidence also shows that high quality early education at two brings benefits to children's development.
 44. The [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) is mandatory for all schools and providers that provide early years provision and Ofsted-registered early years providers in England. The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

45. Providers must ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and should continue to access training for early years in addition to EYFS training requirements to develop the quality of provision where judged by Ofsted as less than good. Accessing information, advice and training is essential for providers judged by Ofsted as requires improvement or inadequate. Support and advice on training is available from the Thurrock Early Years Team and training can be booked via www.thurrocktradedservices.co.uk.
46. Ofsted are the sole arbiter of quality for all funded entitlements and Ofsted and inspectorates of independent schools have regard to the EYFS in carrying out inspections and report on the quality and standards of provision.
47. For a provider to offer three and four-year-old early education and childcare, a provider may be judged by Ofsted to be 'requires improvement', 'good' or 'outstanding'.
48. For two-year-old early education and childcare, a provider must be judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. Thurrock Council will only fund a provider rated as 'requires improvement', where there is insufficient supply of accessible provision judged to be 'good' or better and where clear progression towards a 'good' judgement by Ofsted is evidenced. Any decisions on whether to fund a provider judged to be 'requires improvement' is at the discretion of Thurrock Council. (Please see Annex 4a and 4b)
49. Where a provider's Ofsted judgement is reduced to 'requires improvement', 'inadequate' or has received a welfare requirements notice from Ofsted, the provider should not admit any further two-year-old entitlement children without written confirmation from Thurrock Council to do so. In such circumstances, all providers must engage with the support provided by relevant Thurrock Council Officers.
50. Should a provider's Ofsted judgement decline to 'requires improvement', on publication of the Ofsted report, Thurrock Council will contact the provider to explain the processes as set out in Annex 4, 4a and 4b.
51. Thurrock Council will take appropriate action to improve the quality of provision should any of their maintained schools be judged to be inadequate, where a warning notice has been issued or where concerns have been raised by the School Improvement Team.
52. In any case, Thurrock Council will not fund any provider who:
- Is not meeting independent school standard in relation to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
 - Is not actively promoting fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths or beliefs; or
 - Is promoting a fact, views or theories which are contrary to established scientific or historical evidence and explanations
53. Thurrock Council has a legal duty to provide information, advice and training on meeting the requirements of the EYFS, meeting the needs of children with SEND and on effective safeguarding and child protection for providers who are rated less than 'Good' by Ofsted or newly registered providers.
54. Provision must be offered in accordance with the national parameters on quality as set out in Section A3 of [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#) for Local Authorities and the [EYFS statutory framework](#).

New Providers

55. Thurrock Council will fund a new provider registered with Ofsted for 3 & 4 year olds until their first full inspection judgement is published, or a childminder registered with an agency until the agency's first full Ofsted report is published – on condition that the provider accepts the contents of this document and signs the appropriate agreements.
56. Newly registered childminders must receive a funded 'two-year-old assessment' visit from one of Thurrock's Welfare Requirements Development Officer to determine quality of the provision before they can offer two-year entitlement places.
57. In order to support the delivery of two-year-old entitlement places, it is highly recommended that any new provider undertakes the Quality Improvement in Learning and Teaching (QuiLT) module, 'Tailored for Two Year Olds', prior to the first Ofsted inspection. This is available through www.thurrocktradedservices.co.uk.
58. Thurrock Council will take into account information published by Ofsted about a provider or childminder agency, either in relation to the registered address used or a named person/member of staff. Where there are concerns regarding a previous registration, this will be made clear to the provider and Thurrock Council may, at their discretion, withhold addition to Thurrock Council's childcare directory until after a provider's first inspection report is published. The Thurrock Provider Directory that is maintained by Thurrock Council: this is a local directory of providers eligible to deliver the funded Early Years entitlement.
59. The funded entitlement will be monitored through appropriate support/ RAG and audit visits by Officers from Thurrock Council, to ensure the provision is being delivered in accordance with the contents of this document.
60. In line with EYFS, providers should create the framework for partnership working between parents/ carers and professionals, and between all of the settings that the child attends; working on curriculum planning, information sharing, communication between providers, transferring children between settings and where relevant, assessments.

Business planning

61. Thurrock Council clearly set out the documentation we need to receive from providers to support payment and delivery of funded entitlements and the timetable which providers should follow when submitting their documentation, this includes setting out the importance of timely and accurate census returns. This information is available on the [Thurrock Traded Services \(SLA\)](#) website for providers to download.
62. Thurrock Council will not charge providers disproportionate penalties for providing late or incomplete information leading to additional administration in the processing of funded entitlements. Any charges should be reasonable and proportionate to the inconvenience or costs incurred to us as a result of the lateness and Thurrock Council will ensure charges are clearly communicated to providers. There are Post and Final Headcount terms on the Provider Portal for providers to apply for any funding after the Headcount date has passed.
63. Thurrock Council will not carry out audit regimes which are disproportionate or are unnecessarily burdensome to providers. Please see Annex 3 for more information.
64. The provider must ensure they submit timely and accurate information, including, but not limited to, Sufficiency and Family Information Service data and Provider Audit forms, headcount data particularly ethnicity data and SEN, post-headcount leavers forms, census

data, parental declarations and invoices, as per our financial deadlines. Failure to do so may result in inaccurate, delayed or suspended funding.

65. Early Years Census forms must be completed to ensure that full funding is received to Thurrock from the Government to be passed onto Providers. Failure to do this could lead to a reduced funding rate for all providers.
66. The provider should maintain accurate financial and non-financial records relating to funded entitlement places and should give Thurrock Council access on reasonable notice to all financial and non-financial records relating to funded entitlement places funded under the provider agreement, subject to confidentiality restrictions.
67. It is recommended that providers access business support offered by the Council. This information is available on the [Thurrock Traded Services \(SLA\)](#) website for providers.

Charging

68. Government funding is intended to cover the cost to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week (or equivalent) of funded, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the cost of meals, consumables, additional hours or additional services.
69. The provider can charge for meals and snacks as part of a funded entitlement place and they can also charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips and yoga. These charges must be voluntary for the parent. Where parents are unable or unwilling to pay for meals and consumables, providers who choose to offer the funded entitlements are responsible for setting their own policy on how to respond, with options including waiving or reducing the cost of meals and snacks or allowing parents to supply their own meals. Any increases should not be implemented until a minimum of 4 weeks' notice is given to the parents. Providers can use EYPP to fund meals for eligible disadvantaged children, where the parent is unable to.
70. The provider should deliver the funded entitlements consistently so that all children accessing any of the funded entitlements will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they opt to pay for optional hours, services, meals or consumables.
71. Thurrock Council will not intervene where parents choose to purchase additional hours of provision or additional services, providing that this does not affect the parent's ability to take up their child's funded place. The provider should be completely transparent about any additional charges.
72. The provider should publish their admissions criteria and ensure parents understand which hours/sessions can be taken as funded provision. Not all providers will be able to offer fully flexible places, but providers should work with parents to ensure that as far as possible the pattern of hours is convenient for parents' working hours.
73. The provider can charge parents a small deposit to secure their child's funded place but should refund the deposit in full to parents within a reasonable time scale. In order to ensure charging a deposit will not prevent take-up for disadvantaged families, it is recommended that the deposit is no more £20. Providers must ensure they separately retain and then refund the deposit on completion of parental contracts.
74. Providers must not charge a deposit in lieu of notice.

75. The provider cannot charge parents “top-up” fees (the difference between a provider’s usual fee and the funding they receive from the local authority to deliver funded places) or require parents to pay a registration fee as a condition of taking up their child’s funded place.
76. The provider should ensure parents understand any additional costs or alternative arrangements they are signing up to when accessing entitlement only sessions. For example, with snack/meal financial contributions, providers should offer the option for the parent to supply the provider with a suitable healthy alternative for their child, if they are not in a position to pay the additional charge if this occurs during an entitlement session. This should be discussed and explained to the parent in detail, prior to the parents signing any contract or declaration with the provider and evidenced in writing that this has taken place, or a copy of admissions policy/charging policy that explains full cost breakdown, signed by the parent to cover both parties. Providers would be expected to give a detailed breakdown of the additional charges to the parents, incurred when accessing an entitlement only place.
77. The provider must ensure their invoices and receipts are clear, transparent and itemised, allowing parents to see that they have received their funded entitlement completely free of charge and understand fees paid for additional hours. The provider will also ensure that receipts contain their full details so that they can be identified as coming from a specific provider. Providers may choose to have a separate agreement for those parents who also choose to pay for additional hours, meals and/or optional activities.

Funding

78. Thurrock Council will pay all providers who have requested monthly payments. Providers may opt back into the termly payments if requested, after submitting a terms notice to Thurrock Council.
79. The provider must accurately and fully complete, including the ethnicity and the special educational needs stage, and submit the Headcount and other necessary data returns by the agreed date to support Thurrock Council to make payment. Providers will be audited to review this data, for example the numbers of ‘refused’ ethnicities they submit.
80. Providers will need to follow the instructions below to ensure that they receiving funding:
- I. All funding will need to be claimed by the provider through the [Provider Portal](#). All user guides and instructions can be found on the [Thurrock Traded Services \(SLA\)](#) website.
 - II. Providers must ensure that parents have completed and signed the parent declaration form (Annex 2) before they add the child to the [Provider Portal](#).
 - III. Providers will need to submit all funding within the timeframes shown in table B (Annex 5) and within the correct Headcount term type.
 - IV. Providers will need to add 30 hours entitled children and two year old funded children onto the [Provider Portal](#) as soon as possible, to confirm the child’s entitlement.
 - V. Providers will need to ensure they submit the data accurately onto the [Provider Portal](#). This includes adding the Thurrock 2 year old entitlement reference number into Notes. Any inaccuracies can lead to payment being delayed.
 - VI. Providers must delete or amend any rolled over children on the [Provider Portal](#) to ensure that they claim the correct funding for that child.
 - VII. For stretched offer: If the child attends for 15 or more hours per week providers should claim the maximum entitlement for the term (the same as the non-stretched children). Providers will then need to demonstrate how the funding was accessed when audited. Any other combination should be entered as stretched ensuring that the maximum entitlement is not exceeded. The

[Provider Portal](#) is set up for a stretched offer of 52 week. If providers are not open for the full year they must delete the appropriate weeks from their claim.

- VIII. Early years funding will be paid for children accessing an entitlement place in Thurrock, i.e. if a parent/guardian/carer from another borough places their child in a Thurrock early education provision Thurrock Council will fund the child.
81. Thurrock's Sufficiency duty includes collecting data for funded and non-funded children, some of which we collect by Provider Audit Form's via the [Provider Portal](#). This must be completed, alongside any additional information requested (such as the Provider Audit), within the specified timeframes.
82. The funding will follow the child, therefore if a child moves partway through the term, the funding will be split proportionally between the providers.
- Thurrock Council will not fund any notice periods included in a providers parental contract that parents do not adhere to. Parents are liable, so providers must seek payment from them. It is recommended that this is made clear in the contract at the outset together with what action the provider will take if they fail to pay.
 - Providers must not charge a deposit in lieu of notice. A Leavers Form should be sent promptly via forms on the Provider Portal if funding has been claimed and the headcount day for that term has past.
 - Where Thurrock Council is the Corporate Parent, the provider should inform the relevant funding officer when a child is moved from the setting.
- IX. If a child leaves a setting and moves to another provider, the provider would need to inform Thurrock Council immediately of the child's end date via the [Provider Portal](#). This should be done either by amending the child's record in Actuals before headcount closes, or completing a Post-Headcount Leavers form if the headcount has already closed. The new setting will not be paid until the previous setting has actioned this on the [Provider Portal](#), therefore this needs to be completed as soon as possible. Thurrock Council will not mediate disputes between settings.
- X. All queries on duplicate claims must be resolved between settings before payments can be released. Providers must ensure that all parents sign a clear declaration form informing them of their funded entitlement and how they wish to use that entitlement. The provider must be clear with the parent about the maximum number of hours they can claim and how they wish to apportion their funding if using more than one Provider. Every individual Headcount claim is checked to ensure that claims do not exceed entitlement. Thurrock Council will not mediate disputes between settings.
- XI. If, for some reason, during a term a provider ceases to be able to offer funded two, three and four year old places, they will be required to return to Thurrock Council the portion of the funding applicable to remaining sessions not delivered in that term.
- XII. If a provider opens part-way through the term, a Headcount date will be agreed between the Early Years Team and the new provider and eligible claims for funding will need to be checked for double funding prior to payment.
- XIII. Providers must inform parents by letter if they are withdrawing from offering 2, 3 and 4 year old funding, giving at least a term's notice so that parents can make alternative arrangements and provide the parents with contact details of the Family Information Service. The provider must inform Thurrock Council in writing as soon as the decision is made to withdraw.
- XIV. As part of the eligibility for inclusion in the directory of providers, Thurrock Council has enhanced the provider agreements to reflect the standards and principles outlined in this code. This will include a statement request from providers on their delivery options.

Compliance

82. Thurrock Council can carry out checks and/or audits on providers to ensure compliance with the requirements of delivering the funded entitlements. Auditing Early Years providers (see Annex 3):
- I. Early education providers must be audited by Thurrock Council at least once every three years, with two weeks' notice given.
 - II. Early Years providers must maintain and retain all attendance, signed parental declarations and finance records for a period of six years.
 - III. When requested, early education providers must provide Thurrock Council with copies of: -
 - a. Children's attendance
 - b. Parental declarations
 - c. Invoices or charges to parents
 - d. Records of Income and Expenditure each term
 - e. Copies of accounts
 - f. Proposed budget for the year
 - g. Any other evidence that can be reasonably requested
 - IV. The individual staff member who takes the register for the early education provision, must NOT be the person who undertakes the Headcount procedure (childminders are exempt).
 - V. Early education providers must maintain a specific, non-personal bank account, which is dual signatory unless a sole-trader.
 - VI. Any change of circumstance or organisation, including name, address, bank account details must be reported promptly to Thurrock Council, as this may result in a change of funding.
 - VII. Thurrock Council may request copies of charges to children for all round childcare, to ensure no charge is being made for the funded early years education entitlement.
 - VIII. Early education providers must contact Thurrock Council's Nursery Education Funding Officer, upon receipt of any payment for the funded entitlement, for children who are not eligible, in order that a repayment can be made.

Termination and withdrawal of funding

83. Suspension of registration by Ofsted or a breach of statutory requirements or safeguarding issues **will** result in the termination of the arrangement and withdrawal of funding.
84. Providers must ensure the Thurrock Code of Practice Entitlement Formal Agreement is signed and returned in **no more than 30 days** from date sent by the Early Years Team. Failure to return the signed agreement, and other relevant documentation if requested, will lead to funding being withheld until this is received. Providers who have signed the Thurrock Code of Practice will be included in the Thurrock Provider Directory that is maintained by Thurrock Council: this is a local directory of providers eligible to deliver the funded Early Years entitlement. Suspension of registration by Ofsted or a breach of statutory requirements or safeguarding issues will lead to your setting being removed. Please see Annex 4, 4a & 4bm for more information.
85. Failure by the provider to provide the funded entitlement as it is set out in this document, will lead to a withdrawal of funding. Where a provider is rated as "Inadequate", Thurrock Council are likely to secure alternative provision and withdraw funding, as soon as is practical, for children who are receiving their funded early years' entitlement with that provider. As part of this process Thurrock Council will take into account the continuity of care for children who

are already receiving their funded entitlement at that provider or agency registered childminder and Ofsted monitoring information about the provider or agency. In such a case where a provider is informed that funding may be withdrawn, this will be done on an individual basis and Thurrock Council will do its best to agree, with the provider, a timeframe for the withdrawal of funding. Annex 4, 4a and 4b show a typical timescale, however this will be followed on an individual basis.

86. If a provider fails to adhere to any aspect of this Thurrock Code of Practice or fails to adhere to any other rules or procedures that it must abide by (for example Ofsted standards), funding may be withdrawn. However, Thurrock Council seeks to work with early education providers to ensure they have appropriate support and guidance required to deliver on the necessary commitments, at all times, and to ensure that any likely breach is resolved as soon as and as appropriately as possible.

Appeals process

87. A provider may be denied approval to offer the funded entitlements or have their funding withdrawn as set out above. The provider can appeal against that decision.

88. The provider should first aim to reach agreement with Early Years Officers within the School Effectiveness Team through further discussion. Where agreement cannot be reached the owner/manager should follow the Council's [complaints procedure](#).

Our complaints process has 3 stages. Complaints about council employees are entered at stage 2. In the descriptions below, 'working days' are Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.

Stage 1

Your complaint will be investigated within 7 working days by a member of staff from the service you complained about. Our complaints team will track your complaint.

If you are not happy with the response you may ask that it be escalated to stage 2. You must ask for this no later than 28 calendar days from our initial reply.

Stage 2

When you ask for your complaint to be escalated you must explain why. The response at stage 1 will tell you how to do this.

If your complaint is recorded at stage 2, a senior member of staff will investigate your complaint within 15 working days. Our complaints team will track your complaint. If your complaint is not recorded at stage 2, the department will explain the reasons to our complaints team and you will be informed of this decision.

If you are not satisfied with the response you may ask that it be escalated to stage 3. You must ask for this no later than 28 calendar days from our initial reply.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with our stage 2 response, or if you have been informed that your complaint is not going to be escalated, you can ask for an independent investigation of your complaint. The response at stage 2 will tell you how to do this.

A senior officer in our complaints team will review your complaint and, if an investigation is needed, this will be completed within 15 working days. If it is decided that nothing further is to be gained from a stage 3 investigation, you will be informed and advised of the next options available to you.

After Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied after your complaint has been through all stages of our complaints procedure, you can refer it to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

Complaints process

89. Where an early education provider's application is rejected, Thurrock Council will give the provider a written explanation of the decision and ensure that all paperwork is retained. Providers rejected for inclusion to the Directory may appeal, in writing setting out the grounds for appeal, to Thurrock Council by contacting:

a. complaints@thurrock.gov.uk

b. 0800 021 3016

c. Complaints Team, Thurrock Council, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL

Please refer to [Thurrock Council complaints procedure](#) for further information

90. The complaints procedure for parents who are not able to resolve their concern directly with the provider where the parent is not satisfied that their child has received their funded entitlement in accordance with the legislation or as set out in this agreement and in Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities. Parents should use the [Thurrock Council complaints procedure](#).

91. The provider should ensure they have a complaints procedure in place that is published and accessible for parents who are not satisfied their child has received their funded entitlement in the correct way, as set out in this agreement and in Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities.

92. If a parent or provider is not satisfied with the way in which their complaint has been dealt with by the local authority or believes the local authority has acted unreasonably, they can make a complaint to the Local Authority Ombudsman. Such complaints will only be considered when the local complaints procedures have been exhausted. <http://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

Annex 1: Legal Annex and other relevant information

(As detailed in *Early Education and Childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities: June 2018*)

Summary of the key provisions in the Childcare Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”) relating to the entitlement to funded early education

Sections 1-5 require local authorities and their partners to improve the outcomes of all children under 5 and reduce inequalities.

Section 6 requires local authorities to secure sufficient childcare.

Section 7 places a duty on local authorities to secure funded early years provision of the prescribed description for each young child in their area who is under compulsory school age and is of the prescribed description.

Section 7A allows regulations to be made about how local authorities should discharge their duty under section 7.

Section 8 enables local authorities to assist others to provide childcare (including funded early years provision) including giving them financial assistance but says that local authorities should only provide childcare themselves if no other provider is willing to.

Section 9 gives local authorities the power to attach Requirements to the arrangements they make with providers (other than the governing body of a maintained school) to deliver childcare including funded early years provision.

Section 9A allows regulations to be made which prescribe the requirements local authorities may or may not impose when they make arrangements.

Section 12 places a duty on local authorities to provide information, advice and assistance to parents about childcare in the area.

Section 13 places a duty on local authorities to secure the provision of information, advice and training to childcare providers and childcare workers.

Section 13A makes provision for information relating to tax credits and social security information to be supplied to the Secretary of State, and to local authorities, for use for the purpose of determining eligibility for free of charge early years provision. Section 13B deals with the unauthorised disclosure of this information.

Section 20 defines early years provision as the provision of childcare for a young child and section 18 defines the meaning of childcare.

Sections 39-48 establish the early years foundation stage (EYFS).

Sections 31-38 and 49-98G set out the childcare and early years regulation framework.

Section 99 allows for the collection of information about young children.

The 2006 Act provides that local authorities must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State, when discharging their duties under:

- The duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents – section 6(3);
- The duty to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge – section 7(3);
- The duty to establish and maintain a service providing information, advice and assistance – section 1297); and
- The duty to secure the provision of information, advice and training to childcare providers – section 13(5).

Section 7 – duty to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge

Section 7(1) of the 2006 Act places a duty on local authorities in England to secure funded early years provision of the prescribed description for each young child in their area who is under compulsory school age and is of the prescribed description.

Regulations made under section 7

Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/2147) (“the 2014 Regulations”) are made under section 7 of the 2006 Act

These 2014 Regulations prescribe the early years provision which must be made available by an English local authority free of charge, the description of the children for whom the provision must be made available and how local authorities must discharge their duty under section 7. These regulations came into force on 8th September 2014. They revoked the Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2013 and the Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Type of free provision

Local authorities **must** secure that the prescribed amount of funded early years provision is available for each child in their area of the prescribed description from prescribed early years providers.

Early years providers prescribed in the 2014 Regulations are providers to whom section 40 of the 2006 Act applies. Section 40 applies to early years providers, providing early years provision in respect of which they are required by the 2006 Act to be registered with Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills. These providers are either a) registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register (as required by section 34(1) of the 2006 act or b) are schools which are exempt from registration on the Ofsted Early years Register (pursuant to section 34(2) of the 2006 Act). Section 34(2) covers maintained schools, approved non-maintained special schools and independent schools.

Prescribed provision **includes** provision from providers who are exempt from delivering the EYFS Learning and Development requirements because of a direction made by the Secretary of State under regulations made under section 46 (1) of the 2006 Act, or because a provider has made a determination in relation to a young child under regulations made under section 46 (2) of the 2006 Act. The relevant regulations are the Early Years Foundation Stage (Exemptions

from Learning and Development Requirements) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/1743, as amended by SI 2012/2463).

Prescribed provision **excludes** provision where it is provided by:

- an independent school (other than an Academy) which does not meet the independent school standard in relation to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school; or
- a provider in relations to whom the local authority has grounds to believe:
 - does not actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths or beliefs; or
 - promotes views or theories as evidence-based which are contrary to established scientific or historical evidence or explanations.

Children to benefit from funded provision

Three-year-olds (and two-year-olds who meet the eligibility criteria below) are entitled to funded early education from the start of the term beginning on or following the date set out below:

- Children born in the period 1st January to 31st March: 1st April following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable
- Children born in the period 1st April to 31st August: 1st September following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable
- Children born in the period 1st September to 31st December: 1st January following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable

These dates are consistent with those used for determining the start of compulsory education.

Two-year-olds are eligible for funded early education if:

- they come within the criteria used to determine eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) (as set out in section 512ZB(4) of the Education Act 1996 - see the 'Free School Meals' section of Annex D below);
- the parent of the child is entitled to Working Tax Credit under Part 1 of the Tax Credits Act 2002 by virtue of an award which is based on annual income not exceeding £16,190;
- the child has a statement of special educational needs made under section 324 of the Education Act 1996;
- the child has an Education, Health and Care Plan prepared under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the child is entitled to Disability Living Allowance under section 71 of the Social Security and Contributions and benefits act 1992;
- they are looked after by a local authority (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) or
- they are no longer looked after by a local authority as a result of an adoption order, a special guardianship order or a child arrangement order (within the meaning of section 8(1) of the Children Act 1989) which relates to either or both of the following:

- with whom the child is to live;
- when the child is to live with any person.

The Department for Education's eligibility checking service provides a mechanism for local authorities to verify whether children meet the qualifying criteria for Free School Meals.

Two-year-olds are eligible for funded early education if the parent is in receipt of:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit - with a combined income from work of less than £15,400 a year after tax
- tax credits and an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

A child can also get funded early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

- they're looked after by a local council
- they have a current statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- they get Disability Living Allowance
- they have left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

If you are the carer of a 2 year-old child, you may be eligible if your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, and you have either:

- leave to remain in the UK with 'no recourse to public funds' on family or private life grounds under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights
- the right to live in the UK because you are the main carer of a British citizen – known as a Zambrano Carer

Amount of funded provision

Local authorities **must** secure availability of at least 570 hours of funded provision over **at least 38 weeks** for each child in each 12 month period from the date at which the entitlement starts until the child reaches compulsory school age. (This works out at 15 hours per week if spread over 38 weeks.)

Local authorities **must not** condense the funded early education entitlement into less than 38 weeks.

Childminders

Early Years provision is defined in section 20 of the 2006 Act as the provision of childcare. "Childcare", as defined in section 18 of the 2006 Act, specifically excludes care provided for a child by a parent, step-parent, foster parent (or other relative) or by a person who fosters the child privately or has parental responsibility for the child. Early years provision by a childminder (either independently registered with Ofsted or registered with a childminder agency) by the childminder (for the related child) does not count as childcare in legal terms. Early education funding cannot be claimed by, or spent on, childminders providing childcare for their own child or a related child, even if they are claiming for other children. However, a local authority can choose to fund the parent providing childcare for their child but this would have to be from other local authority funds.

Special Educational Needs

Local authorities must ensure that all providers in the maintained and private, voluntary and independent sectors that they fund to deliver funded early education places are aware of the requirement on them to have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 which gives guidance on supporting children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.

Early Years Single Funding Formula

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2018 set out how local authorities must operate their early year's single funding formula (EYSSF).

The Regulations require that a local authority must consult their schools forum and providers about changes to the EYSSF.

The formula to apply in 2020/21 is as detailed below:

- Universal Base Rate – A single rate to be paid to all providers at £4.28 per hour
- Deprivation – A variable rate linked to the child's IDACI score.
- The income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) is an index of deprivation used in the United Kingdom. The index is calculated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and measures in a local area the proportion of children under the age of 16 that live in low income households. The local areas for which the index is calculated are super output areas.

The table below shows the rates to be applied, based on the postal address of each individual child:

DEPRIVATION ANALYSIS FOR 3&4 YO	Annual Rate	Rate Per Hour
Band G - IDACI SCORE < 0.20	£0.00	£0.00
Band F - IDACI SCORE 0.20 - 0.25	£75.00	£0.13
Band E - IDACI SCORE 0.25 - 0.30	£75.00	£0.13
Band D - IDACI SCORE 0.30 - 0.35	£150.00	£0.26
Band C - IDACI SCORE 0.35 - 0.40	£250.00	£0.44
Band B - IDACI SCORE 0.40 - 0.50	£350.00	£0.61
Band A - IDACI SCORE > 0.50	£500.00	£0.88

The Early Years Pupil Premium remains distinct from the early year's national funding formula and will continue as a separate funding stream provided to Local Authorities in order to support disadvantaged pupils. The funding will continue to be paid within the DSG and there are no funding changes proposed for 2019/20, with the full 15 hour entitlement remaining at £302.10 (or £0.53 per hour).

The funding rate for the most disadvantaged 2 Year Olds in 2019/20 is £5.15 per hour.

Funding for Child Specific Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The Equality Act 2010 ensures that Local Authorities and settings must not discriminate, harass or victimise disabled children, and must make reasonable adjustments. Local authorities must ensure that disabled children entitled to a place are found suitable provision. Two measures are available which were introduced in 2017/18 to support children with disabilities or SEN:

- Disability Access Fund (DAF)
- SEN Inclusion Fund

The DAF aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and / or helping with building capacity (be that for the child in question or for the benefit of children as a whole attending the setting).

3 and 4 Year Olds will be eligible for the DAF if they meet the following criteria:

- the child is in receipt of child disability living allowance and
- the child receives funded early education.

If eligible, the settings will receive a payment of £615 per year with payment only made to one provider, which is not recouped if the child leaves that setting. Local authorities must issue DAF payments to providers as soon as possible when the child takes up the universal 15 hours entitlement for three and four year olds, following receipt and verification of the relevant application.

All local authorities are required to establish an inclusion fund in their local funding systems for 3 and 4 Year Olds with SEN taking the funded entitlement. The purpose of the fund is to support Local Authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEN.

Local authorities should target the fund at children with lower level or emerging SEN.

Children with more complex needs and those in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) continue to be eligible to receive funding via the high needs block of the DSG.

Compulsory School Age

Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998 (SI 1998/1607).

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his fifth birthday (or on his fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Equality

The Equality Act 2010 offers protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation and applies to statutory and non-statutory early years organisations and provision of early years services. It applies to a number of “protected characteristics” including sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Local authorities and other listed public authorities (which include local authority maintained schools and Academies) must comply with the public sector equality duty (found in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) which sets out the three “equality needs” that they must have due regard to when making decisions;

- to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Local authorities and other listed public authorities must also comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 which places a duty on them to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objective every four years.

While private, voluntary and independent settings are not bound by the public sector equality duty which applies to public authorities, the principles of equity and justice underpinning the law should be applied as good practice. Where provision is overseen, coordinated or advised by the local authority or a partnership with local authority membership, the local authority will have responsibility to ensure the duties are fulfilled.

School Admissions

School admissions authorities and local authorities must comply with the School Admissions Code.

Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school

Admission authorities must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The authority must make it clear in their arrangements that, where they have offered a child a place at a school:

- A. that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- B. the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and
- C. where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Published admission arrangements must make clear to parents that a separate application must be made for any transfer from nursery to primary school and from infant to junior school.

Children Looked After

Children who are provided with accommodation by a local authority for more than 24 hours on a voluntary basis or who are under a care order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential home or with parents or other relatives. A child who is "looked after" is defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

Education, Health and Care Plans

Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 contains provisions which set out the statutory framework for identifying and assessing the needs of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) that require support beyond that which is usually available. Statements made under section 324 of the Education Act 1996 and Learning Difficulty Assessments made under section 139A of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 are being replaced over a transitional period by new 0 – 25 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for both children and young people.

Child Arrangements Orders

Part 2 of the Children and Families Act 2014 makes the changes to the operation of the Family Justice system, as recommended by the Independent Family Justice Review and accepted by the Government in its response published on 6 February 2012. The Act contains provisions to introduce a 'Child Arrangements Order', replacing residence and contact orders from 22 April 2014.

**REGISTRATION FOR EARLY YEARS FUNDED PLACES (ENTITLEMENT) FOR
TWO, THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS**

To be completed by parent/person(s) with legal parental responsibility for the child

(TO BE RETAINED WITH THE PROVIDERS CHILD REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS)

Name of Setting								
Child's Forename				Child's Surname				
Child's Middle Name(s)				Child's Preferred Surname				
Date of Birth				Gender				
Child's Address								
Child's Ethnic Group (Please tick one)								
Asian or Asian British	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	White - British	White - English	<input type="checkbox"/>	White	Albanian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>		White - Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bosnian - Herzegovinian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>		White - Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>		Croatian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any Other Asian Background	<input type="checkbox"/>		White - Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/>		White Eastern European	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black or Black British	Black – African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed/Dual background	Other White British	<input type="checkbox"/>		Greek/ Greek Cypriot	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>		White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>		Traveller of Irish Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any Other Black Background	<input type="checkbox"/>		White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>		Kosovan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Other Ethnic Group	Afghan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>		Gypsy / Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/>		White and any other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/>		Serbian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Thai	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>		Turkish/ Turkish Cypriot	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Western European		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>		Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>			White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Hong Kong Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Information Not Yet Obtained		Other Chinese		
Disability (please tick one of the boxes below)				
Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)		SEN Support		
Statement of SEND		No Special Educational Need		
Is your child eligible and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)?		Yes		No
Three- and four-year old children who are in receipt of child DLA and are receiving the free entitlement are eligible for the Disability Access Fund (DAF)				
For parents to complete for EYPP (Early Years Pupil Premium):				
Please complete the details below if you are currently in receipt of any benefits, as this may mean that your child's setting will be entitled to extra funding to use towards the education of your child. Eligibility is checked termly				
For Parents to complete for 30 Hours Childcare:				
Please complete your details below if you have applied for and have been awarded 30 hours free childcare				
Parent 1 Details			Parent 2 Details	
First name		First name		
Surname		Surname		
Date of Birth		Date of Birth		
NI/NASS no.		NI/NASS no.		
30 hours eligibility code		30 hours eligibility code		
Applying for 30 hours		Applying for EYPP		
Is this provider using the universal 15 hours of entitlement, if the 30 hours funding is split between providers? Please tick			Yes	No
Signature		Signature		

Take up of free entitlement		Total number of hours per week	Number of weeks per year (e.g 38, 45, 51)	Nominated for DAF (if applicable)
Setting Name(s)				
A				
B				
C				
Total weekly hours attended				

DECLARATION FORM

- I confirm that the above setting may claim the Early Years funding for my child as agreed between myself and the setting. This will be claimed for each term my child attends the setting. I agree that the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) & 30 Hour information overleaf may be used on a regular basis to establish eligibility. I understand that I may withdraw my consent to this at any time by advising the setting.
- If my child is using part of the Entitlement at another setting I will ensure both are informed and I will advise both settings immediately of any changes.
- I undertake to provide proof of my child's date of birth, and evidence of eligibility (Two Year Old Funding, DAF & 30 Hours if applicable)
- I confirm that the information I have given on this form is complete and accurate. I will inform my provider immediately if any of these details change.
- Should I wish to move my child to a new provider after the term has started I undertake to make both my current and new settings fully aware of the situation BEFORE any move is made, including the agreed termination date with the current provider and the start date with the new provider. I undertake to abide by the conditions set out in the provider's parental contract and also give my permission for both settings to discuss the allocation of funding between themselves
- I confirm that my child will not exceed the maximum entitlement as published by the Government.

I also agree that the information I have provided can be shared with the local authority and Department for Education, who will access information from other government departments to confirm your child's eligibility and enable this provider to claim Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), 30 Hours Funding or Disability Access Fund (DAF) on behalf of my child.

Declaration and Submission: I understand that if I have given any false information on this declaration I may be asked to reimburse the Local Authority under the requirements of the early education entitlement funding by the Department for Education.

We will use your information to provide the service requested. We may share your personal data between our services and with partner organisations, such as government bodies and the police. We will do so when it is of benefit to you, or required by law, or to prevent or detect fraud. To find out more, go to thurrock.gov.uk/privacy. Get free internet access at libraries and community hubs.

Signature :		Print Surname:	
Date:		Relationship to Child:	

Provider Use only:

Evidence seen: *(please tick)*

Birth certificate or Other document..... or Statement from officer of the Council attached

DLA letter seen for DAF

Two Year Old Funding eligibility letter seen (If applicable)

Date of Letter----- EY Voucher Nos/ 2YE Reference Nos. -----

30 Hours Funding information from Provider Portal (if applicable)

Date check on Provider Portal_____ Eligible? Yes No

Start Date_____

Annex 2b: Privacy Notice - Data Protection Act 1998

The early years setting your child attends is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. The setting collects information from you, and may receive information about your child from a previous school or setting. The setting holds this personal data and uses it to:

- ensure that the early years setting receives appropriate funding

- provide appropriate pastoral care
- support the child's teaching and learning;
- monitor and report on your child's progress;

This information includes your child's contact details, characteristics such as ethnicity, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

The law requires the setting to pass some information to the Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE). The setting will not give information about your child to anyone else outside the setting without your consent, unless required by law.

If you want to see a copy of any information held about you or your child by the setting, then please contact your setting.

Each term a declaration form is completed by the setting, and the parent or guardian of each child attending the setting. Once this form has been completed the setting will pass the information securely and confidentially via a secure online portal to the Local Authority, Thurrock Council. The setting will not submit this information to the Local Authority unless parental consent has been collected. Forms will be stored securely by the setting and will be audited by the Local Authority on an ad hoc basis.

What the Local Authority does with data on children attending early years settings

Thurrock Council holds this personal data and uses it to:

- ensure that the early years setting receives appropriate funding
- meet funding requirements for early years places in Thurrock
- ensure there are sufficient early years places in the borough
- support the child's teaching and learning;
- assess how well the early years setting is doing
- enable the Local Authority (Inclusive of Thurrock Children's Centres) to carry out other specific functions for which it is responsible, such as school admissions, and the assessment of any special educational needs the child may have.

Thurrock Council will use the information supplied to us provide an appropriate, timely and effective service. The council may share the personal information you provide us between our services. This will be undertaken when sharing of this nature benefits individuals.

For more information, see our privacy notice on: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/privacy>

If you require more information about how the DfE store and use this data please go to the following website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/datatdatam/b00212337/datause>

If you do not have access to the internet please contact the Family Information Service on 01375 652801 **option 2** who will be able to provide a hard copies.

If you require further information please refer to the relevant contact details below:

To make a general enquiry or request to see personal data held about you / your child by the LA please contact the Council via our customer contact centre on 01375 652652 who will direct your call to the appropriate team.

Thurrock Council 01375 652 652

Children's Services 01375 652 947

(for enquiries about Data Collections)

Information Manager (for general Data Protection enquiries) 01375 652 500

Email: information.matters@thurrock.gov.uk

Thurrock Council
Civic Offices
New Road
Grays
Essex
RM17 6SL

Department for Education

website: www.education.gov.uk

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

e-mail link: www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

0370 000 2288.

Annex 3: Thurrock Early Education Audit Requirements

THURROCK EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT FUNDING thurrock.gov.uk

AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Thurrock Council will put into place appropriate auditing and accounting procedures to ensure that early education funding is paid in respect of funded places and administered appropriately.

In line with the Thurrock Code of Practice and agreement early education providers are required to:

- Make copies of their accounts available to Thurrock Council upon request, including invoices or charges to parents.
- Keep parental declarations for the access of entitlement
- Keep records of attendance of all children for whom they provide funded places including monitoring of take up of various groups that will reflect the communities they serve.
- Keep records of Income and Expenditure each term.
- Have a proposed budget for the year.

Early education providers should maintain a specific bank account for their setting. This account should be dual signatory, unless an early education provider is a sole practitioner. Thurrock Council will only pay funding into that account.

Early education providers should satisfy themselves that claims made for individual children do not exceed the maximum entitlement. Where a provider is notified by parents or otherwise discovers that a child is attending another provision, which is also in receipt of funding, they should immediately inform Thurrock Council in order that the funding may be paid correctly in respect of that child. If a child claiming the funded entitlement leaves/joins an early education provision after headcount day, the early education provider should inform Thurrock Council via the Provider Portal.

Early education providers should make sure that all fees and billing procedures are presented clearly to parents and that parents' are made aware of all charges made for any additional services allowable. Local authorities should support providers to ensure parents' bills are set out clearly so that parents can easily recognise and understand what hours they have accessed in relation to the funded entitlement.

Thurrock Council will diarise dates and set clear processes for audit visits to ensure that all providers receive an audited visit at least once every three years, with two weeks' notice given.

Annex 4: Thurrock Funding Withdrawal Policy

THURROCK EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT FUNDING WITHDRAWAL from THURROCK DIRECTORY of PROVIDERS POLICY

Thurrock Code of Practice is effective from 1st September 2020 and replaces all previous guidance on the delivery of the funded entitlement.

The funded entitlement may be delivered by early years providers who deliver the full early years foundation stage (EYFS) and are either registered with Ofsted as early years providers, or are schools taking children age three and over and therefore exempt from registration with Ofsted as early years providers.

Thurrock Council can also fund providers who have exemptions from the EYFS Learning & Development requirements.

Parents of all three year olds are able to access the maximum of funded entitlement for up to two years and eligible two year olds, up to 3 years before they reach compulsory school age. Parents can access as little or as much of the entitlement as they choose within the Statutory Guidance guidelines, and may take up their funded entitlement at one or two providers.

Thurrock Council will fund maintained and PVI sector providers delivering the funded entitlement fairly, transparently and equitably. Ofsted inspectors judge the quality of early education provisions' using a four-point grading scale. The four grades are as follows:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires Improvement
- Inadequate

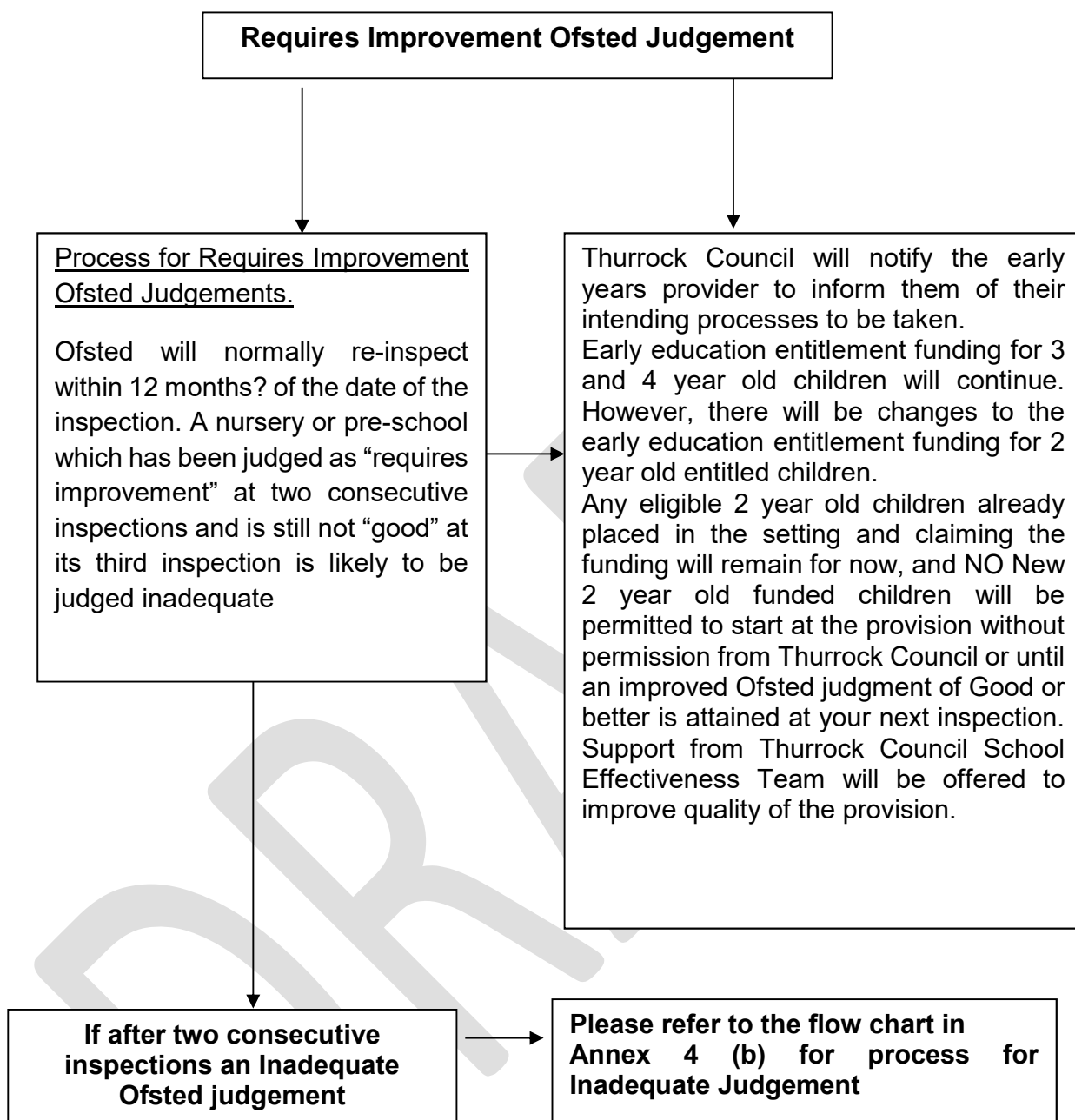
Where a provider is rated as "Inadequate", Thurrock Council **may** secure alternative provision and withdraw funding, as soon as is practical, for children who are receiving their early years entitlement with that provider.

In such a case where a provider is informed that funding **will** be withdrawn, this **will** be done on an individual basis and the Council will do its best to agree, with the provider, a timescale for withdrawal of funding.

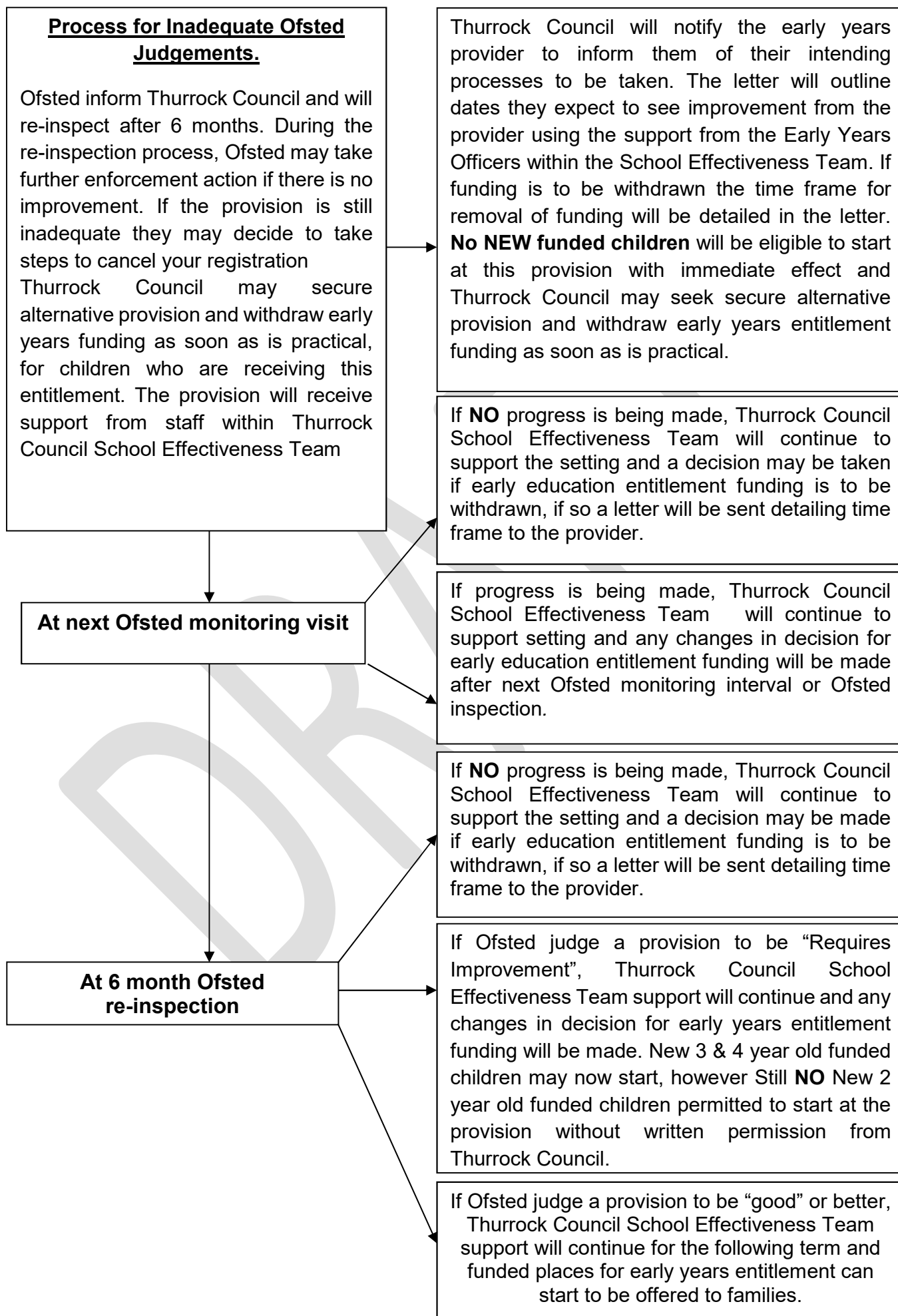
Readmission to Thurrock Directory of Providers:

Where an early education provider is removed from the Thurrock Directory of Providers as a consequence of an Ofsted inspection judgement of "Inadequate", they should not be readmitted until the provider is re-inspected and receives a rating above Inadequate.

Annex 4a: Requires Improvement Ofsted Judgement



Annex 4b: Process for Inadequate Ofsted Judgement



Annex 5: Portal timetable - Thurrock Council reserves the right to change the agreed payment dates in exceptional circumstances (e.g. COVID-19).

Table B: timetable	Estimates	Headcount	Post headcount	Final Headcount
Autumn – 14 funded weeks (18 Stretched)				
Provider Portal deadline	27 th July 2020	9 th October 2020	19 th November 2020	31 st December 2020
Payment by	7 th September 2020	18 th November 2020	4 th December 2020	15 th January 2021
Spring – 11 funded weeks (14 Stretched)				
Provider Portal deadline	27 th November 2020	21 st January 2021	8 th March 2021	1 st April 2021
Payment by	8 th January 2021	4 th March 2021	22 nd March 2021	22 nd April 2021
Summer – 13 funded weeks (20 Stretched)				
Provider Portal deadline	12 th March 2021	27 th May 2021	23 rd June 2021	29 th July 2021
Payment by	16 th April 2021	24 th June 2021	21 st July 2021	12 th August 2021

Annex 6: Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Eligibility for Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The setting which a 3- and 4-year old attends will be eligible for the DAF if the child meet the following criteria:

- the child is in receipt of child disability living allowance (DLA) and;
- the child receives funded early education.

Note: Four-year olds in primary school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding. Children become eligible for funded early education at different points in the year depending on when they turn 3.

Entitlement

The settings of three- and four-year-olds eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off payment of £615 per year. The DAF is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement.

Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of funded entitlement.

Identifying eligible children

Parents are responsible for identifying eligible children through the completion of the Registration for Early Years Funded Places (funded entitlement) for two, three and four year olds. (Annex 2a). Parents of children qualifying for Disability Living Allowance will be required to provide documented evidence of being in receipt of DLA to the provider. The provider will claim for the funding through the Provider Portal. The provider will need to upload a copy of the DLA letter onto the Provider Portal.

How early years providers will receive DAF funding

Thurrock will fund all early years settings providing a place for each child eligible for the DAF in their area at the fixed annual rate of £615 per eligible child. The DAF will not be offset against any other funding which Thurrock may ordinarily be providing for children eligible for the DAF.

The DAF is payable as a lump sum once a year per eligible child. If a child eligible for the DAF is splitting their funded entitlement across two or more providers, Thurrock will ask parents to nominate the main setting. This setting will be where Thurrock will pay the DAF for the child.

If a child receiving DAF moves from one setting to another within a financial year, the new setting is not eligible to receive DAF funding for this child within the same financial year. DAF funding received by the original setting will not be recouped by Thurrock Council.

Where a child lives in one authority area but attends a provider in a different local authority, the provider's local authority is responsible for funding the DAF for the child and eligibility checking. All early years providers who are eligible to receive funding for the 3- and 4-year-old early entitlement education are also eligible to receive the DAF.

Annex 6: Early Years Inclusion Fund

The Early Years Inclusion Fund has been set up for providers to help them support the needs of children aged 3-4 years and funded two year olds, with lower level or emerging SEN, who are accessing early education funding.

The fund should be used as a contribution towards providing additional resources and support, and is not expected to cover full costs.

There is a set £100,000 limit to the amount of funding available within Thurrock, and this is limited to £500 per year for each child or group of children. Providers will get a one off payment for the year, and this is paid directly to the childcare provider.

Who is the inclusion grant for?

The grant has been created to ensure the inclusion of children with additional needs within early education. 'Additional needs' could be:

- Children with special educational needs as described within the four broad areas of need identified within the [special educational needs and disability code of practice](#)
- Children with English as an additional language
- Children with medical needs
- Children in Need

The children may or may not be on the Social Services Disability Register AND may or may not be considered as needing support through the Department of Education code of practice for the identification and assessment of Special Education Needs.

Settings will be **unable** to claim this funding if they already get other SEN additional funding for the child.

What is the purpose of the Early Years Inclusion Fund?

The purpose for the funding could be:

- A setting may have a higher than usual number of children with SEND attending their setting or within one of their setting groupings/rooms
- A setting may want to provide small group interventions for children with similar needs requiring a higher staff ratio at certain times, e.g. attention and listening small group activities
- Support maybe needed to include a new child into the setting where their level of need is still emerging, e.g. a child who has previously received portage home visiting, a child who has moved into the borough

- Purchasing of equipment to meet specific needs within the group, which are different from or additional to the usual resources, e.g. sensory resources for older age groups

How to claim the Early Years Inclusion Fund

To claim the funding, settings will need to do the following:

- Complete the Early Years Inclusion Fund form for each eligible child, even if you are applying for a group of children
- Applications will then be submitted to the Early Years Case Planning Panel for decision.
- If successful, the grant will be processed by the Early Years Funding team.

Below is a link to the Early Years Inclusion Fund Application Form:

- https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/thurrock/fis/files/early_years_inclusion_fund_application_form.pdf

DRAFT

Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2020 - 2021

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item / Focus
September 2020 9:00 – 11:00 Virtual Meeting	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
	DSG Update
	DfE Consultations - Standing
	School Effectiveness Strategy
	Membership update
	Falling Roll Policy
	High Needs Block – Partnership Agreement and Band Funding
November 2020 9:00 – 11:00 Virtual Meeting	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
	Childcare Sufficiency - Standing
	Funding Options 2020-21
	Growth Fund – Standing
	Tuition Support Services
16 January 2021 9:00 – 11:00 Virtual Meeting	School Budgets
	Funding Consultation
12 March 2021 9:00 – 11:00 Virtual Meeting	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
	Dedicated Schools Grant Projected Outturn 2019/20
	Early Years Funding Formula 2020/21
	High Needs – Verbal Feedback from meeting to be held with EFSA Wednesday 11 th March
	High Needs Band Values and SLA
	Funding arrangements for permanent exclusions 2020/21
	Schools' Forum Membership
	Pupil Place Planning Review
June 2021 9:00 – 11:00 Virtual Meeting Venue to be confirmed	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
	DSG Outturn 2019/20
	DSG Budget 2020/21
	DSG Recovery Plan
	Union Facility Time Annual Review - Standing
	Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds - Standing
	Schools Forum Membership Review 2020-21 - Standing
	Review of Forward Plan 2020-21

Schools Forum

Draft Minutes of Meeting held 12th March 2020 at 8.30a.m
Conference Centre, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred
Chafford Hundred, Grays, RM16 6SA

In Attendance:

Primary Academies

Headteacher – Kenningtons
Headteacher – Abbotts Primary
Principal – Woodside Academy
Headteacher – Giffards Primary
CEO - Catalyst Academies Trust
Executive Head - East Tilbury Primary & Nursery

Ms J Sawtell-Haynes
Mrs L James
Mr E Caines – Vice Chair
Mrs N Haslam-Davis
Mr T Parfett
Mrs L Coates

Primary Maintained Schools

Secondary Academies

CEO – ORTU Federation Ltd
Governor – Hathaway Academy

Dr S Asong
Mr S Sweeting

Secondary Maintained Schools

Headteacher - Grays Convent

Mrs P Johnson

Special Academy

Headteacher-Beacon Hill Academy
Headteacher – Treetops School

Ms S Hewitt
Mr J Brewer

Non School Members

0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative
Diocese of Brentwood

Ms A Jones
Dr J Revill
Mrs M Shepherd

Also in Attendance:

Mrs Shield Murphy
Mr Malcolm Taylor
Mr David May
Ms Sarah Williams
Miss Teresa Lydon

- Corporate Director of Children's Services
- Strategic Lead – Specialist Provision/PEP
- Strategic Lead - DSG and Schools
- Educational Specialist, Service Manager
- Minute taker

1. **Welcome from the Chair**

The Chair welcomed the Forum to the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Winstone, Mrs Lucas and Mrs S Jones.

3. **Agreement of Agenda, Time-Guide and Notification of Any Other Business**

- i) No items changed.
- ii) The Forum agreed the agenda and time guide.
- iii) The Forum agreed to add the following to Any Other Business Coronavirus.

The Chair proposed that they continue with pre-meets. He advised this will need two separate rooms. The pre-meet would start at 8.30 and the main meeting at 9am.

Action: S Williams to look into venues with two meeting rooms.

4. **Dedicated Schools Grant 2019/20 and 2020/21**

Mr May commented that Thurrock Cabinet approved that the National Funding Formula would be implemented in full in 2020/21. Following discussion with the EFSA the inflationary increase applied to the Basic Entitlement increased from 1.68% to 2.125%. This reflects clarification of pupil growth to be included in the funding formula for the summer 2020 term.

He advised that the High Needs Block (HNB) continues to experience significant increase in demand and costs. This is presenting a very challenging position in both 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Schools Block

Mr May advised that in 2020/21, this funding will continue to be distributed using the Schools National Funding Formulae (NFF). Thurrock's key principles that have been applied in 2020/21 are:

- National Funding Formula values have been applied;
- An inflationary increase of 1.02125 to the Basic Entitlement values, this is an increase from that previously reported;
- Retained growth fund of £1.385m
- Transfer of £0.635m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support an increased demand for Specialist placements and Education, Health and Care Plans.

Early Years Block

Mr May advised that the updated funding rates have been reflected in the latest release of information. The final confirmed allocation will not be received until July 2020 to reflect the outcome of the January 2020 census return.

In 2019/20 the updated allocation is an increase of £0.639m. This has been allocated to payment to providers reflecting the increase in early years take up. The projected outturn for 2019/20 is £0.167m, including the £0.123m brought forward from 2018/19.

Included within the funding announcement is an additional £66 million investment in early years. The ESFA have confirmed that the hourly rate paid to Thurrock will increase by 8p. This is the first increase in the hourly rate that Thurrock has received since 2016/17.

In addition the use of the carry forward has been considered and the final option is to:

- passport in full the 8p increase in hourly rates to providers;
- increase the hourly rate paid to 3 and 4 year old providers by an additional 2p per hour, with a cost implication of £45,000;
- increase the deprivation quantum and change the formula to be based on the postcode of the child, not the setting. Deprivation funding would increase from £220,000 to £285,000, a cost Implication of £65,000.
- The total cost implication of £110,000 to be funded from the available carried forward allocation of £167,000.

The rates to be paid to providers from April 2020 will be:

- 2 Year Olds £5.15
- 3 and 4 Year Olds £4.28.

This proposal has been discussed with both the Early Years managers Forum and the Childminders forum.

Mrs L James asked if the Local Authority were going to support private settings due to a change in small businesses by the government.

Mr Caines also asked about sick pay and if they now needed to pay sick pay to staff.

Action: Mr Taylor to take this question back and discuss with the Local Authority and get clarification on this.

Pupil Premium Grant

The EFSA have confirmed the Pupil Premium Grant per pupil rates for 2020-21 are as follows:

Pupils in year groups reception to year 6 recorded as Ever 6 free school meals (FSM)	£1,345
Pupils in years 7 to 11 recorded as Ever 6 FSM	£955
Looked-after children (LAC) defined in the Children Act	£2,345

1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority	
Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order)	£2,345
Pupils in year groups reception to year 11 recorded as Ever 6 service child or in receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence	£310

He advised that the Virtual School Headteacher was responsible for the use of the Pupil Premium for looked after children (CLA). This grant would be used to improve attainment, narrow the gap and accelerate progress as identified in the young person's Personal Education Plan (PEP).

AGREED

All Schools Forum members present agreed to the following recommendations:

- a. Increase in the hourly rate paid to 2 year old providers by 8p from £5.07 to £5.15 per hour.
- b. Increase the hourly rate paid to 3 and 4 year old providers by 10p from £4.18 to £4.28 per hour.
- c. Increase the deprivation quantum and change the formula to be based on the postcode of the child, not the setting, for 3 and 4 year olds. Deprivation funding to increase from £220,000 to £285,000.

The Schools Forum noted the change to the Schools Funding Formula that was approved by the ESFA on 17 February 2020.

5. High Needs Block 2020/21

Mr May advised the reports shows everything they have been working towards for the last 12 months. The High Needs Block has received additional funding. He advised this is not enough but they have tried to set a budget. There is a continued increase in EHCPs and this is a continued trend.

In Thurrock (Autumn 2019), out of a school population of 29,680; 4,333 (14.6%) children and young people were identified as having special educational needs. Of these, 3,134(10.6%) were SEN Support and 1,199 (4%) had an Education Health and Care Plan.

In 2019 240 new plans were completed, 182 were completed (76%) within the 20 weeks statutory timescale.

In 2019/20 the local authority commissioned 580 pupils in specialist provisions. In 2020/21 the commissioned numbers will increase to 657; this is an increase of 77 from original 2019/20 submission.

The increase for 2020/21 can be broken down into 5 key areas:

- Expansion of the Inclusion base at East Tilbury and the Resource base at Quarry Hill by a combined 14 additional places.

Within the primary sector are 2 resource bases for SEMH (Quarry Hill and Dilkes), with 20 places and 2 inclusion units (East Tilbury and Thameside), with 16 places.

The inclusion units are turnaround places and the expectation is that the pupil will attend for 2 terms and be reintegrated back into mainstream setting. Mrs Coates did not feel that re-integrating after two terms was realistic for all pupils. Mr Taylor commented that there will be cases where they are in these provisions for a longer period of time as they are at risk of Permanent Exclusion (PE) or not ready to return to mainstream.

- Increase by 10, from 20 to 30 places for Social Emotional Mental Health at Ormiston Park, this is based on assessed need with a phased implementation from January 2020;
- Increase by 11 places to 85 at Olive Alternative Provision, reflecting current demand for places in 2019/20.
- Proposed establishment of a new 20 place secondary Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision from September 2020.
- Establishment of additional provision at Treetops of 16 places, equally split between the two new bases for Verbal Behaviour (VB) and Moderate Learning Disabilities (MLD). This will prevent these places being commissioned from providers outside of Thurrock at higher costs.

The key principles is that all providers will be fully funded for agreed staffing ratios and support. During 2019/20 Officers have discussed with each specialist provision their associated costs and staff ratios required to ensure the provision can provide the agreed standard of provision and this is outlined in the Service Level Agreement.

A table showing the Band Values for 2019-20 was presented to all members.

At the Headteachers briefing in January 2020, key issues both in terms of continued increase in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), the implication of the Dedicated School Grant and particularly the High Needs Block was discussed in detail.

The following questions were asked:

Consider how we can build parental confidence and ensure that pupil's needs are appropriately met at SEN support. Consequently reducing the level of need for Education, Health and Care Plans.

A summary of the points raised are shown below:

- Would the development of an Early Help offer support the system and lead to a reduction in the number of EHCP's;
- Increased parental understanding of system and process. Clarification and promotion of what parents should expect from all schools without the requirement of an EHCP;
- Identify training needs within schools to support inclusion;
- Greater focus required on the Notional SEN amount of each school and how schools are using this to meet need;
- Consistency of the EHCP process.

These points were discussed with the ESFA.

Work has been undertaken to develop our strategic principles and they are in the process of reviewing and updating these. The development of local provision is a key priority and the Local Authority have commissioned a number of local educational pathway opportunities through all key phases. This will only be achieved if we have clearly articulated our shared vision to provide outstanding local provision to meet the needs of our SEND learners.

Over the coming months a range of sessions will be held with Headteachers, Governors, Parents and Carers, SENCOs and School Business managers to clarify the SEN system and the expectation and requirements at each stage of the process.

In order to set a balanced budget the report highlighted a number of key risks that were acknowledged by all and will be closely monitored throughout the year, with updated reports presented to each meeting of the schools forum.

Mr May advised that at the ESFA discussion yesterday they were impressed with the partnership approach with the schools. They are aware that all the funding has gone into schools. They acknowledged as a result of an increase in pupil numbers there will be a correlation with EHCPs. They also acknowledged the risk in the budget and that the local authority were seeking to mitigate this. They understood the strategies and the reasons for increasing resource bases and moving children from out of borough back into the borough provision. They asked them to look at EHCP thresholds and make sure they are consistent with other authorities. Thurrock needs to work with parents and schools to try and reduce EHCPs by giving the support within the school environment. The Chair advised that against other local authorities, the growth was faster here. Mr Caines commented that this is not just the EHCPs but children being put in resource bases where he feels that the school would be able to support them. The Chair commented that they did discuss what mainstream schools should deliver. Mr Taylor felt that because of parental pressure and the

reputation of Treetops and Beacon Hill this is part of the reason for the growth in EHCPs in the borough.

Mr Caines commented that he feels there is also extra pressure from parents who want to move their children from mainstream schools to specialist provision when they move to secondary school when he feels that mainstream school would be able to support them.

The Chair acknowledged the good work that is being done within the borough. Mr Taylor commented that they have particular challenges in the parent forum groups and this has led to a local issue around the strength of the parent carer forum. Mr Taylor felt it was hard to convince parents that support put in mainstream schools would meet their child's needs. This is the key to reducing some of the plans.

Mr Taylor commented at the moment they have around 40 children who are on a waiting list for a place at one of their specialist schools. Mrs James asked about the children's health needs. Do they get the money they need for this? The Chair commented that the Local Authority provided the right challenge for this to the ESFA.

The Chair commented that the meeting with the DfE was a support measure and did not come out with any solutions and felt they were taking solutions from the Local Authority. Mr May commented that he feels that more money will go into the High Needs Block next year. Mrs Coates commented around the 20 new places for SEMH and asked that the people involved in moving Year 6 children into Year 7 should have discussions with the provisions the children are in at the moment. She feels that some children are not ready to move into a secondary school in September 2020. Mr Taylor commented that they are still waiting for the data on what will best meet the needs of these children. He commented that they have enormous challenge in getting Year 6 children into secondary schools as the schools are pushing back these children. Mrs Coates feels that there is a piece of work to be done across Year 6 children moving to Year 7.

Mr Taylor commented that another important point from DfE meeting was that specialist independent school places were very costly. Placements outside the LA have outrageous charges and have been extraordinarily high over the next couple of years. The Chair asked what these settings say when they are challenged about their costs. Mr Taylor commented it is very difficult for the LA to get any changes put in place. The DfE did understand this but did not offer any solutions. Mr Caines commented we need to be able to provide our own provision within the LA. He advised that they could also approach another authority to work together to provide affordable provision together. Mr Taylor advised that they need residential provision for pupils who need to be away from their parents during the week. He commented the difficulty with residential is the capital and staffing. They looked at this a few years ago and it was not feasible to try and provide this within the borough.

The Chair commented that if they are looking at Alternative Provisions across secondary schools they should be done in an appropriate timescale. Mr Taylor commented that the risks in the budget need to be understood by the school forum.

The Chair advised that the DfE Meeting was challenging and appropriate but there was no solutions. The future is going to take years to unravel unless the DfE give some more funding next year.

AGREED

The School Forum members considered and commented on the information provided in the report. The Chair asked all members to agree the revisions to the band values to be implemented from September 2020 that reflect discussion held with providers. 2 members abstained from voting all other members agreed.

6. Funding arrangements for permanent exclusions 2020/21

Mr May discussed this item as Mrs Lucas could not attend the meeting.

The methodology for the calculation of exclusion charges for mainstream pupils is set out within the School Finance Regulations and is unchanged from previous reports.

The report highlighted the change to pupil values recommended to be implemented in April 2020 for Maintained schools and September 2020 for Academies. This was the only change proposed and keeps the policy in line with the Schools 2020/21 Funding Formula.

Mrs Hunnisett asked if the money follows the child in all cases. Mr May commented that if the places are already commissions i.e. The Olive Academy places already commissioned then the money would go to the High Needs Block.

Mr Caines commented that he felt this would help discourage schools to exclude pupils. Would the Local Authority be policing possible off-rolling by schools instead? Mr Taylor commented that this is being monitored by Ofsted. He also commented that encouraging EHE inappropriately would be challenged.

Mrs Haslam-Davies asked that all information is shared with the Headteachers once agreed. Mr Taylor commented this is in the guidance that has gone to all schools. This will be re-visited at the Headteachers briefings. Mr Taylor asked representatives to take this back to TASS and THFA. Mrs Haslam-Davies would like an email sent to all Headteachers.

Actions: Mr M Taylor to put this as a general item for TASS and TPHA.

AGREED

Schools' Forum members approved the update to the charges/allocations for all mainstream schools and use this mechanism to form an agreement with all academies.

Schools Forum members accepted the changes to be applied from April 2020 for the changing/allocation mechanism for permanent school exclusions:

7. Schools Forum Structure/Membership 2020

Ms Williams spoke about the structure of the forum. She advised that all schools will be Academies shortly apart from Grays Convent.

She would like to setup a sub-committee to discuss the forum structure going forward. The following colleagues agreed to be part of the group. Mrs Coates, Ms Sawtell-Haynes, Mrs Johnson, Mr Caines, Mr Brewer, Mrs James and Dr Asong.

AGREED

All School Forum members agreed to a sub-group to work with the LA on a fair structure that can be presented to the Forum meeting in June 2020. The new members will need to be appointed in time for the Forum meeting in September 2020.

8. Pupil Place Plan Update

Ms Williams talked through her presentation on how the Pupil Place Plan is put together.

The Chair commented that there was more detail than he has seen before. He also commented that at the meeting with DfE yesterday they advised that there are many future developments going ahead in the next 10 years.

Mr May commented there is nothing factored in for growth in the High Needs Budget. This money is lagged and given when children are already in the system.

The Chair thanked Ms Williams for her presentation.

The Chair advised that they made their bid for the new Free School Thames Park on the basis that it was needed. He asked if this would affect other schools in Thurrock. Ms Williams commented that these bids were based on basis need at that time which was five years ago. She also commented that these schools would be needed in the future.

Dr Asong asked what measures are being made to protect schools that are being affected by the new Free Schools.

Action: Ms Williams to look into the effects of the new Free Schools in Thurrock.

AGREED

The Schools Forum members noted the process for the Pupil Place Plan (PPP) and the impending publication of the 2020-2024 Pupil Place Plan.

9. Academies and Free Schools Update

Ms Williams advised the forum that Bonnygate Primary and Warren Primary were due to convert to Academy on the 1st June 2020 joining the Osborne Co-Operative Academy Trust. She also advised that there was now only one secondary school, Grays Convent which remained a local authority maintained school.

She commented that they were working on the temporary accommodation behind South Essex College in Grays for Thames Park one of the new secondary Free Schools due to open in September 2020. There is minimal internal remodelling works required. There are also some ground works to be undertaken in order to create a safe and secure outdoor space.

Orsett Heath Academy the 2nd Free School will open in temporary accommodation at the Thurrock Rugby Club and the development of the accommodation is well underway and scheduled to open in September 2020.

The Chair commented that currently there are parents holding three school offers for Secondary places in September 2020 and therefore the number would change for all secondary schools in the next few weeks, once parents advise what offer they are going to keep.

Treetops has had an initial timetable of key dates agreed. The contract has been awarded. The building will be a net zero building construction. Mr M Taylor commented that there is two temporary classrooms and they are looking at two more temporary classrooms for end of this year.

The Reach 2 land transaction has now been completed. This is a private arrangement between the DfE and a private land owner. This is situated in Aveley. Mr Parfett advised that this is situated in Love Lane, Aveley. The Chair asked if there is a projection of when this will open. Ms Williams advised they do not know at the moment. Mr Caines asked if this school is needed. Ms Williams advised that this would not be delivered for at least three years and at this stage would be needed. She also commented there is a potential large development around this area.

AGREED

The School Forum members noted this report.

10. Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan 2019-2020

All the following Agenda Items/Focus were agreed for the next meeting.

- Academies and Free Schools Update
- DfE Consultations
- DfE Benchmarking Data
- Union Facility Time Annual Review
- Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds
- Schools Forum Membership 2020
- Review of Forward Plan 2020-21

In addition to the forward plan:

1. Mrs Coates would like an update on the Alternative Provision
2. Mrs James would like to know where the pressures are i.e. Education, Health, etc. Mr Taylor will look into this
3. Mrs Sawtell-Haynes would like the forum to look at SEMH children. She feels that some children who currently have an EHCP due to SEMH may not need this type of support.

11. Minutes of Previous meeting

All governors were happy with the content. **NEED TO ASK MALCOLM ABOUT A COMMENT THAT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED.**

12. Matters arising

Mrs Haslam-Davies commented that the IDACI rankings were not sent to the schools.

Action: Mr May to send IDACI rankings to all schools.

13. Any other Business

Coronavirus

Mr M Taylor advised they are going to meet with Mr Brewer, Ms Hewitt and Mrs Murphy to discuss issues which may affect the Special Schools due to the high needs of the children.

Mr Caines spoke about the different rumours on why Little Thurrock Primary had been closed yesterday. He wanted to know who gave permission for this to happen. The Chair advised as the CEO of the school he made the decision to close the school so that a deep clean could take place as there was links to a child with an underlying condition and a visit to Great Ormond Street Hospital. The Chair feels that all communication should go through Comms in the Local Authority but they cannot always stop social media giving their opinion before this happens.

Mr Caines would like clarification on who can close the schools. Mr Taylor commented that historically when the schools were all maintained they would need to discuss with the Local Authority. As most schools are now Academies this decision would be taken by the head of the Trusts.

All schools need a sensible approach as it affects other people i.e. parents that work in the NHS who would not be able to go to work due to child care arrangements

Mrs Murphy commented that Public Health advice is that the whole family should isolate if one person is suspected of having this virus.

Mrs Haslam-Davis asked in the event that the schools needs to close will staff still come into school. What should be expected from Thurrock Catering staff regarding any deep cleans.

Mrs Murphy spoke about any vulnerable children who would go without a meal if the schools had to shut. There needs to be further discussions if the schools close. The Chair commented that maybe they could look into keeping a school open in each area so that children who needed to be cared for could attend and meals would be available. Mrs Coates commented that maybe they could look at linking with the foodbanks. Ms Sawtell-Hayes commented that they could use the free school meals money to fund this.

Mrs A Jones commented that in some other local authorities early years will not be funded if they close. Mr May commented that as the children were on the spring census the settings would get their money. However this could be more difficult next term if children have not taken up places.

The Chair advised they need to recognise that there are some very vulnerable children who will need to be discussed if the schools were to close.