

Information for Social Workers regarding funded childcare for Foster Carers

Do you have Foster Carers who are caring for a

- 9 month + child who could be eligible for 15 hours funded childcare?
- 3 or 4 year old who could be eligible for 30 hours funded childcare?

Please note: There is a different process for a 2 year old foster child. Foster carers should use the Suffolk online checker and apply as a under non-economic 2 year old www.suffolk.gov.uk/two

All 9 month + children of eligible working parents can have up to 15 hours funded childcare from the term after they turn 9 months.

All 3 & 4 year old children can have 15 hours funded childcare a week from the term after their third birthday (universal offer)

Eligible working parents including **working foster parents** can have funded childcare up to 15 hours (for 9 month+) or up to 30 hours (for 3 or 4 year olds).

Foster Carers of eligible fostered children can apply **if they are currently employed or self-employed outside their fostering responsibilities.**

For foster carers you think could be eligible please discuss and request the application form from Danny.Gwilliam@suffolk.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE: Foster carers are unable to apply using the Childcare Choices website.

How to Apply

1. **Social worker** should send the form to the foster carer.
2. **Foster carer** should complete Sections 1-6 of the application form.
3. **Foster carer** should return the application securely to the social worker
4. **Social Worker** must see current proof that the foster carer is employed or self-employed outside their fostering responsibilities and
5. **Social worker** completes Section 7 - Social worker declaration.
6. **Head of Fostering & Adoption** completes Section 8 -Head of Fostering & Adoption declaration, to authorise the application if agreed the arrangement is in keeping with the child's care plan.
7. **Head of Fostering & Adoption** will arrange for the authorised form be sent to the Early Years and Childcare Service FosterCarer30hours@suffolk.gov.uk before the end of term (**August, December, March**).
8. **Early Years & Childcare Service** will generate an eligibility code in readiness for use for the start of following term.
9. **Early Years and Childcare Service** will send the code by secure email to the foster carer.
10. **Foster carer** will need to present this code to a childcare provider offering early education funding at the start of the new term to book their funded hours.

Reconfirmation - before the end of each term

- Use the most recent reconfirmation form
- The **Social Worker** must verify the foster carers employment status every 3 months to ensure they still meet the criteria which must be before the end of the term.
- The **Head of Fostering and Adoption** must authorise the reconfirmation

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- Send the reconfirmation form to Early Years and Childcare Service so the code can be reconfirmed.
- This must be done before the end of a term (**August, December, March**) so the code can be reconfirmed in time for use for the start the following term.

Thank you for your assistance with this.

Christina Lewis, Head of Service - Early Years and Childcare