



Department
for Education

Wraparound Childcare Programme

**Delivery expectations – guidance for
local authorities**

March 2024

Key programme expectations

As set out in the [Programme Handbook](#), the government's ambition is for all parents who need it to be able to access childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm.

To achieve this ambition, we need to build a sustainable model. This means increasing both the *supply* of wraparound childcare and the parental *demand* for it.

The programme is designed to remove the financial risk to schools and providers of setting up or expanding wraparound provision, particularly where there may not be enough demand to sustain provision from the start. Setting up and expanding provision needs to be done early in the funding period so that providers have time to build enough demand to become financially viable.

As such, the expectation is that local authorities *over-supply* places from the beginning. The expectation is that this *over-supply* of places will help to generate additional demand, as parents are assured of the availability of provision. Parents need to know that childcare is available before they can make decisions about changing their working hours or looking for work. We know that this takes time.

There is a strong expectation that local authorities should aim to have as many places as possible available to parents by September 2024, rather than building up places gradually over the funding period.

This will maximise the use of the funding allocated to each local authority and the opportunity for all provision to become sustainable. The programme funding is tapered over 5 terms, with significantly higher funding allocations in financial year 2024-25 than in 2025-26. Any provision that is set up after September 2024 will have less time within the funding period to reach a point of financial viability, increasing the risk that it will not be sustainable beyond the end of the period.

You should therefore plan to deliver as many additional places in September 2024 as possible, and all additional places by September 2025 at the latest.

To achieve the objective that all parents who need it can access childcare, all schools with primary age pupils will need to be serviced by some form of wraparound provision. Local authorities should work with schools and providers to determine the delivery model that is most likely to deliver sufficient, sustainable provision in each context.

For a relatively small number of schools, particularly special schools, there may be evidence that there is no current or future demand or there are long-term barriers to putting in place provision e.g. ongoing affordability. You will be asked to report this in delivery plans. This helps us to gather evidence.

Delivery plans – How will we assess value for money?

We will assess delivery plans to ensure that local authorities are delivering value for money. There will be four aspects to this assessment:

Reach: Will all mainstream schools with primary aged pupils be served by some form of full wraparound provision (available 8am-6pm, unless there is clear evidence that local parental demand is for different start and/or finish times)?

You can test how far this expectation is being achieved through the following calculation:

Number of schools being funded (either the school being funded directly or PVI/childminders who will provide wraparound to that school) divided by the number of schools without full wraparound available to its pupils (as reported in your supply and demand mapping) and multiplying the result by 100.

Increased supply: are enough additional places delivered so that all parents who need it will be able to access full wraparound provision in line with supply and demand mapping evidence? Is the number of places sufficiently ambitious and does it create an initial over-supply of places?

We expect approximately 15 additional wraparound places to be supplied (either expanded or created) for each school which does not currently have full wraparound available to the parents of pupils at that setting.

Some schools/providers will require or seek more or less than 15 additional wraparound places, therefore we do expect your delivery plan to include providers funded to deliver a varied number of additional places.

You can test whether the total funded projects meet this expectation through the following calculation:

Sum of additional places being supplied (expanded and created) divided by the total number of schools without full wraparound available to its pupils (as reported in your supply and demand mapping).

If the result is much lower than 15, you may want to consider whether the following is occurring, which you should review prior to submitting the plan:

- 1) On average, a small number of additional places are being supplied across schools without full wraparound;
- 2) A small number of schools without full wraparound are being funded.

Cost: are estimated costs provided for all activities, and does the total programme cost represent value for money in relation to the number of additional places set out in the delivery plan?

You can carry out the following calculation of the average cost per place for each provider, to help understand the variation in how much places are costing.

Cost of the additional places being supplied (expanded and created) per provider, divided by the number of additional places being supplied per provider.

Some providers within your authority may have a high cost per place ratio (over £3000), which may be explainable but could present a risk to overall value for money.

Costs to deliver additional places will vary due to a range of factors, including:

- The proportion of additional places in new provision (such as a school beginning to provide wraparound, or a private, voluntary, or independent provider (PVI) beginning to run after-school provision for primary-aged children), compared to supporting an existing provider to expand the number of pupils it can serve, or to extend its hours;
- The mix of providers being funded;
- The proportion of additional places supplied through 'cluster models' where children from multiple schools attend one site for wraparound, including provision of transport;
- Challenges within local labour markets to attract and retain sufficient staff.

Addressing barriers: does the plan include activities to address barriers and local priorities e.g. wraparound workforce recruitment and training (e.g. in Playwork or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)), promoting availability of wraparound to parents and use of Tax-Free Childcare/Universal Credit? Typically, we would expect the total cost of these activities to be 20% or less of total programme funding (excluding local authority capacity funding).

How did we calculate local authority funding allocations and what assumptions were made on the expected number of places to be created?

We used school census data (January 2023) on the availability of wraparound childcare in primary schools as a proxy for the current estimated gap in supply. This was the best nationally available evidence of current supply of wraparound childcare. Whilst this data has limitations it can be applied across local authorities as a comparator.

To determine local authority allocations, we estimated the current 'gap' in wraparound provision based on this data, and weighted the results based on geographic factors and the proportion of children with SEND at the authority as recorded on the school census. This was to ensure that local authorities are funded according to need, rather than just on pupil numbers, reflecting the variation in current levels of provision. We used this data to estimate the number of additional wraparound places that may be needed in each local

authority. We will write to each wraparound lead shortly to set out the estimated number of additional places for their local authority, in case this is a helpful framework.

These estimated number of additional places are indicative of the *scale* of our ambition for additional places, rather than an absolute target. Supply and demand mapping will give local authorities a more robust assessment of potential need. We recognise that local authorities' data is likely to show that existing supply of wraparound provision is higher than suggested in the school census data.

What does this mean for your planning?

Through your supply and demand mapping you will have a more accurate and fuller picture than the school census data. For example, you will have considered a wider range of providers, particularly those PVIs (Private, Voluntary and Independent) and childminders that deliver wraparound off-school sites. You will also have a better understanding of unmet demand; potential future demand and where additional places are needed.

Your delivery plan should be based on outcomes of your supply and demand mapping. If you set out a significantly lower number of places in your delivery plan than our estimated additional places, this will need to be underpinned by confident assessments of supply and demand. You will need to have considered oversupply of places to help build parental demand.

Evidence from supply and demand mapping may indicate that the gap in supply, and therefore number of additional places needed is lower than our estimated additional places in this instance, you should consider value for money of delivery plans.

Format and content of delivery plan

To support you to prepare for submission of your delivery plan we have set out below both the format and process for submission along with expectations of what the plan will need to include.

- The delivery plan will be in an excel spreadsheet in a similar style to the supply and demand mapping template. The template will start by asking you to set out your strategy for expanding or creating places within your local authority (this will be free text). We will then ask how this strategy aims to address gaps in provision including reaching more challenging areas for each school in your local authority.
- For each school in your local authority, we will ask you to confirm whether you plan to expand or create additional places (to meet the 8am to 6pm definition), when these will be available and the number of places you expect to create or expand. There will also be questions on your confidence in likely take up.

- We will pre-populate some information from your supply and demand returns, such as school name and URN (Unique Reference Numbers) for each school in your local authority, and provider type for existing provision (school, PVI, childminder or other). We will also pre-populate from your supply and demand whether there is existing provision and existing places which meet the wraparound definition (8am to 6pm).
- You will be asked how you intend to spend the programme grant funding. You will be asked to set out planned activities and their estimated cost by financial year. Planned activities will include funding to providers/schools to contribute to set up and running costs for additional places, and activity to overcome barriers to supply and demand e.g. workforce recruitment or training, parental engagement to raise awareness of Tax-Free Childcare.
- We will ask if you want to update your local authority capacity funding plan. We will pre-populate some information from your capacity funding plans with the ability for you to review and update.

Reporting against delivery and data collection

As set out in the local authority [programme handbook](#) and memorandum of understanding, local authorities will be required to submit reports throughout the programme. We are sharing further detail on what will be required now so that you can prepare process and systems to gather information. This will include ensuring that funding agreements you put in place include requirements to gather the management information necessary for grant assurance and programme reporting.

Reporting against your delivery plan:

Following submission of your delivery plan in May / June 24, you will be required to provide progress reports against your plan in February and November 25. This report will include both progress reporting against the activities set out in your plan along with an opportunity to amend your plan and estimated costs where your planned activities have changed.

Termly management information reporting:

We will gather management information at the start of each term, from Autumn 24 and at the end of the funding period:

- October 24
- January 25
- April 25
- September 25
- January 26
- April 26

You will be required to complete a form and upload this into your area on the Childcare Works portal within the return window.

For each provider receiving funding through the programme, this return will need to include:

- Name and Ofsted URN
- School(s) being served by provision.
- Detail on the days and times of provision including start and finish times for each day provision is available.
- Number of places available both before and after funding.
- Take up of additional funded places and number of additional children.
- Number of children on waiting lists.
- Number of staff.
- Charging information, both charging structures i.e. flat hourly rate, flat session rate, variable rate, and charge.

We have contracted external evaluators to evaluate how the programme has been delivered and the impact it has had. This will be important in understanding what the programme has achieved. As part of this evaluation, 20 local authorities will be selected to take part in the research and will be asked to provide the details of individual children accessing provision funded through the programme along with contact details for parents. The selection of local authorities will take place in May 2024, and we will contact those local authorities selected to confirm engagement with the evaluation. We strongly recommend that any grant agreements you put in place prior to then need to be flexible to allow personal pupil level data to be securely collected should you be selected as an evaluation local authority.



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