



contact a family
for families with disabled children

Early Learning and Community Childcare Hubs parent case study

Challenges and opportunities of meeting the 30 hour offer for young disabled children

“The Early Years Minister, Sam Gyimah, and I... are aware that families with disabled children too often experience challenges and financial pressures in getting the [childcare] services they need.” Edward Timpson MP, Minister of state for children and families.

“Parents of disabled children must have the same opportunities as other parents to access the new entitlement to 30 hours.” Lord Nash, parliamentary under-secretary of state for schools and the Government’s spokesperson in the House of Lords

Top tips

Hubs can

- Provide a framework for the delivery of the 30 hour offer.
- Help providers understand what funding pathways exist to cover 1:1 care, workforce development and specialist equipment for disabled children.
- Organise staff to access training to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Promote the local offer. The local offer should set out entitlements on the 30 hour for children with SEND especially funding pathway

Context

Contact a Family, is the UK charity for families with disabled children and young people - what the condition, whatever the needs, wherever they live. Contact a Family have partnered with 4Children on the Early Learning and Community Childcare Hubs programme for the last three years. In 2015/16 they delivered bespoke SEND training to the Hubs.

Research shows that 40 per cent of families with disabled children say they are not accessing the full 15 hours of early education a week. So what does this mean for the extended offer for working families to 30 hours.

Why are parent unable to access the current 15 hours of early education?

“I have been unable to access any of the free early childcare entitlement as I don’t feel that any of the locally participating childcare providers would be able to provide the quality of support that my son Darragh needs in a learning environment.”

- Over a third (38%) said it was because they did not think the childcare provider could care for their child safely
- 30% did not think the childcare provider had adequately trained staff
- 28% do not think provision is inclusive and supports their child to participate in activities alongside their peers.

Contact a Family, 209–211, City Road, London, EC1V 1JN www.cafamily.org.uk
Tel: 020 7608 8700. Fax 020 7608 8701. Email: info@cafamily.org.uk

Freephone national helpline: 0808 808 3555

Registered Charity No. 284912. Charity registered in Scotland No. SC039169. Company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No 1633333. VAT Registraton Number GB 749 3846 82.



What the opportunities?

The blended childcare offer and partnership approach puts hub in a strong position to deliver the 30 hour offer.

Hub can provide clarity over how to access top up funding for things like 1:1 care and specialist equipment.

What parents think about the 30 hour offer?

"I worry that that the new 30 hour offer will mean even less disabled children will have access to early years education. Already with the free 15 hours, many disabled children are turned away. If the hours are not funded properly, and nurseries end up bearing the additional costs themselves.

As disabled children are more expensive than other children, how will they do it for disabled children? Disabled children need more supervision, training for staff, equipment and even changes to the infrastructure of buildings."

"30 hours of free childcare a week will be useless to parents of ill children like my daughter Eden if we are unable to access extra funding."

Feedback from hubs

"Our experience is that families with disabled children pay far higher rates than other families to keep their children in nursery. The financial burden of this is terrible."

"Providers are worried about how they will cover the costs for disabled children. They are businesses after all, and with the best will in the world, if they can't come up with that funding, who will take on for 30 hours of free childcare – a child that doesn't cost extra or one who does?"

Reform to the early years funding formula must recognise the additional costs for disabled children for both providers and parents.

The hubs model are offer a solution

The Newham hub will be one of the early innovator areas for new 30 hours offer focus on children with SEND. This will provide an opportunity for the hub model to test how the extended offer will work for children with SEND.

There is concern that if funding for SEND sits differently from the 30 hours offer, this offer will not be equitable for children with SEND because settings will not receive additional support and resources to be able to accommodate children who require constant attention. In this aspect, the hub will have a huge role to play in terms of helping PVI's understand whether they can meet these needs for extended times.