

Childcare Works Briefing 2: Being clear on numbers

The estimated number of children eligible for 30 hours childcare from September 2017

The Department for Education (DfE) estimates 390,000 parents of three- and four-year-olds will meet the criteria as currently defined.

Estimates do not include any parents who are attracted back to work by the availability of 30 hours of free childcare, or who work more hours, as a result of the policy.

390,000 families is approximately 42% of all children who are eligible for the existing early years entitlements for three- and four-year-olds.

DfE estimates a total of 45,000 new 15-hour places are likely to be needed to accommodate the new entitlement. The tasks of identifying where these additional places will be required is for each local authority to assess and address.

Estimates are partly based on survey data from 2012/2013 which DfE used to generate assumptions about how many of the new childcare hours parents will use on average.

Further work continues, including during Early Implementation, to test these assumptions and establish which local authorities will face the greatest need for places.

Sources/further reading:

House of Commons Library Briefing Paper 07581, June 2016

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7581/CBP-7581.pdf>

National Audit Office March 2016 'Entitlement to free early education and childcare'

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Entitlement-to-free-early-education-and-childcare.pdf>