



Cynnig
GOFAL PLANT CYMRU
The **CHILD CARE** Offer for
WALES

Addysg gynnar a gofal • Early education and care



Your Childcare Offer in the Vale of Glamorgan



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd y Fro
Vale Family Information Service

VALE of GLAMORGAN



What is the Childcare Offer?

30 hours a week of funded early education and childcare for eligible working parents of 3 to 4 year olds, for up to 48 weeks of the year. The 30 hours will consist of a combination of Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision open to all 3 to 4 year olds, usually accessed in schools, and funded childcare for eligible families, usually accessed in childcare provision.

How many hours of childcare?

● During Term Time

The Childcare Offer is a maximum of 30 hours of combined education and childcare.

In the Vale of Glamorgan, children receive 12.5 hours of Foundation Phase Nursery provision, and up to 17.5 hours of funded childcare.

Eligible parents can still use the childcare element of the Childcare Offer (up to 17.5 hours) even if they choose not to take up their 12.5 hours Foundation Phase Nursery entitlement. However, funded childcare provision cannot be swapped for Foundation Phase Nursery hours. Childcare funded through the Childcare Offer does not increase if a parent does not use their Foundation Phase Nursery entitlement.

● During School Holidays

During school holidays, the Childcare Offer funding increases to up to 30 hours per week, for 9 weeks of the year. This is split into 3 weeks per term and parents can choose when to take these weeks. Parents will need to access their holiday provision in week long blocks and un-used weeks can be banked from one term to the next. For a list of school term dates visit the Vale of Glamorgan Website: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/schools

Who will provide the Childcare Offer?

All Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered childcare providers are able to deliver the Offer. The Offer **cannot** be taken with any provider or person that is **not** registered with CIW (or Ofsted in England).

Eligible parents will be allowed to take up their childcare, where available, in **any registered** childcare provider that suits their personal and family circumstance, whether inside or outside of the Vale of Glamorgan (including England). As long as the provider is a **registered** provider and has signed up to take part in the Offer with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, you can use them for your childcare hours.

When can families access the Childcare Offer?

A child will be able to access the Offer from the term after their third birthday until the September following their fourth birthday when they are offered a full time education place - aligning with the Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision.

Eligible parents should be able to access the Offer from whichever point they wish during that term, providing their child was eligible from the beginning of that term, or earlier. This includes parents who gain employment.

All parents assessed as eligible to receive the funded childcare will receive a confirmation letter. The funded childcare will begin after parents receive this letter, subject to agreement with the childcare provider.

Children will no longer be eligible to take up the Childcare Offer from the point at which they are offered a full time education place in school.

Who can access the Offer?

To access the childcare element of the Offer parents and guardians must:

- Be employed or self-employed and permanently reside in Wales. **Both parents must be working** in a two parent family, or the sole parent in a lone parent family;
- Earn a weekly minimum equivalent of 16 hours at the national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW). Please visit www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates for current rates
- Parents who earn the equivalent of 16 hrs wk or more (NMW/NLW) , but less than £100k per year

Parents will need to prove they are working a minimum of 16 hours a week through their earnings.

Where parents have separated but do not share equal custody of the child, the parent with primary custody will be eligible to take up the Offer (if they meet the eligibility criteria).

Where parents share equal custody one parent will need to be nominated as the lead parent for the Offer.

Parents, guardians, step-parents and live-in partners will all need to meet the eligibility criteria in order for a child living within that household to be able to take up the Offer.

What happens if I or my partner loses our job?

Should a parent fall out of eligibility, a temporary exemption period of 8 weeks will be granted during which they will be able to continue to access the Offer.

Exceptions to Eligibility

There are some circumstances in which parents will be able to access the Offer when they don't meet the eligibility criteria, these are:

- where one or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on statutory sick pay or are in receipt of statutory maternity/paternity pay;
- where one parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits or has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring;
- Kinship carers, family and friends carers who have taken responsibility for a child or step child who is not their own because:
 - The child has no parents or has parents who are unable to care for the child;
 - It is likely that the child would otherwise be looked after by a local authority because of concerns in relation to the child's welfare.

What is available for children with additional needs in childcare provision?

There is an Additional Support Grant which is available to ensure the childcare element of the Offer is inclusive to eligible children with additional needs. It can be used for a number of purposes including: training for childcare providers, additional childcare staffing, specialist equipment, and physical adjustments to childcare provision. You can identify your child as having additional needs when you apply for the Offer.

How am I able to use the hours of childcare?

Is there a limit to the number of settings the Offer can be accessed in, in any given day?

The Offer will allow children to access a maximum of two registered childcare setting in addition to their FPN setting in any given day.

During the holiday period a child may therefore access a maximum of two registered settings under the Offer.

Are there limits to the days, the times of day and the amount of hours the Offer can be accessed?

Eligible parents can access the childcare element of the Offer at any point they wish, however, it is the responsibility of the parent to find childcare providers who can accommodate their requirements.

Can parents accrue their hours?

No, an accruals/banking system will not be put in place. Parents will be provided with a total of 30 hours a week of combined FPN provision and childcare with parents choosing how much of the 30 hours to take up. Any hours not used in a week will be lost.

What do childcare providers receive?

What is the rate of pay for providers under the Offer?

All providers will receive a rate of £4.50 per hour for children receiving the Offer. This rate excludes food. Providers can therefore charge additional fees to parents for food. However, this cannot exceed more than £7.50 per day.

The Welsh Government guidelines in respect of setting additional fees under the Offer for a full day care session (approximately 10 hours) are that parents should not be charged more than £7.50 per day (this would include three meals at £2 per meal and 2 snacks at a charge of 75p per snack). For a half-day session (approximately 5.5 hours) parents should not be charged more than £4.75 (two meals at £2 per meal plus a snack at a charge of 75p per snack). For sessional care where a meal is not provided but children receive a snack, guidelines are that parents should not be charged more than 75p per day for snack provision.

Providers can also charge for activities and transport such as trips off site that incur an additional cost or pick ups/drop offs.

Providers cannot charge hourly top-up rates if they would normally charge more than £4.50 per hour.

Please note if providers normally charge parents per session, this sessional rate can be funded through the Childcare Offer. However, if the sessional rates exceed the number of hours funded through the Childcare Offer, parents may have to pay the shortfall directly to the childcare provider.

Deposits / retainers / holiday pay may still apply and you should talk to your childcare provider about this before entering a contract with them.

How many weeks of the year does the offer cover?

How will the Offer work outside of term time?

The Childcare Offer will cover up to 48 weeks per year. Foundation Phase Nursery Provision is available for 39 weeks per year. Therefore in the school holidays, the childcare funding increases to 30 hours per week, for three weeks per term: a total of 9 weeks per academic year.

School Term		Funded childcare in school holidays
Spring	January – March/April (depending on the date of Easter)	30 hours x 3 weeks
Summer	April - July	30 hours x 3 weeks
Autumn	September - December	30 hours x 3 weeks

For current term dates please see www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/schools

Parents can choose to bank their holiday weeks and carry them over to the next term’s holiday allocation. However, it is the parent’s responsibility to find a provider that offers the provision that best suits their needs. Parents will need to access their provision in week long blocks. Hours of childcare cannot be accrued across weeks.

Any additional childcare required in excess of the Childcare Offer is paid by parents to the childcare provider.

Who do I contact for more information?

You should contact Vale Family Information Service for more details.

Vale FIS can also provide information and guidance on what childcare options are available to you. This could include childminders, day nurseries, playgroups, Cylchoedd Meithrin, breakfast and after school clubs, and whether they offer a wraparound service if your child is also attending nursery provision in school. They also have details of holiday care schemes and whether childcare providers are signed up to the Offer.

If your child has additional needs they can search for childcare providers who have experience of caring for children with additional needs. They can also inform you about The Index, where you can receive information about local services, groups and support.

Vale FIS will ensure that you are aware of any other funding to help with childcare costs, such as the Government's Tax Free Childcare Scheme.

Call: 01446 704704
Email: fis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Facebook: [facebook.com/VOGFIS](https://www.facebook.com/VOGFIS)
Twitter: @VALEFIS
Website: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis

If you live in a neighbouring authority, please contact them directly:

- **Cardiff Childcare Offer**
029 2035 1713
cardiffchildcareoffer@cardiff.gov.uk
- **Bridgend Childcare Offer**
01656 642649
Childcareoffer@bridgend.gov.uk
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf Childcare Offer**
01443 570048
RCTChildcareOfferforWales@rctcbc.gov.uk

