

## **Parents Encouraged To Apply For Up To 30 hours of funded childcare**

Somerset County Council is encouraging working parents to apply for up to 30 hours of funded childcare for three and four year olds. From September 2017, the Government is doubling the amount of funded childcare hours from 15 hours to 30 hours a week (for 38 weeks each year). The additional hours will support working parents who are struggling to pay childcare costs, or who may be looking to increase their working hours.

Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families at Somerset County Council, said: "This is a great initiative and one that really benefits working parents, potentially saving families up to £5,000 per year. Don't delay, apply now to see how much funded childcare you are entitled to and reserve your place at a local childcare provider."

Parents can claim up to 30 hours of funded childcare per term-time week (38 weeks) for each of their three or four year olds. This can also be spread across the year to include school holidays, up to a maximum of 1,140 hours a year.

To qualify both parents must be working and earning on average at least the equivalent of 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage per week. And parents must earn less than £100,000 a year.

To apply for this new offer, parents need to go to [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

If eligible, parents will receive an 11 digit code to take directly to a participating childcare provider.

For more information and a list of all the participating childcare providers, visit Somerset County Council's website at [www.somerset.gov.uk/eye30](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/eye30)

### **Notes to Editors:**

- Families working 16 hours on the minimum wage and under 25 still qualify. 21 – 24 year olds need to earn at least 112.80 a week, 18 – 20 year olds £89.60 a week or under 18s £64.80 a week. Earnings must equal at least 16 hours at minimum or national living wage.

To view all of our news releases, please visit [www.somersetnewsroom.com](http://www.somersetnewsroom.com)

The SCC Communications Team is also on social media:

[www.twitter.com/somersetcouncil](https://www.twitter.com/somersetcouncil)

[www.facebook.com/somersetcountycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/somersetcountycouncil)

[www.flickr.com/somersetcountycouncil](https://www.flickr.com/somersetcountycouncil)

[www.youtube.com/yoursomerset](https://www.youtube.com/yoursomerset)

To find out who the elected Somerset County Councillor is for a particular area, simply visit [www.somerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/councillors/somerset-county-councillors/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/councillors/somerset-county-councillors/)