

Parent agreement – NYCC Guidance for Providers

A parent agreement is an agreement between a North Yorkshire funded early years childcare provider and parents whose children take up government funded hours. NYCC provide a sample document that childcare providers can customise to reflect their offer.

Purpose

The purpose of the parent agreement is to ensure that parents can make informed decisions on their choice of childcare. Providers must publish their admissions criteria and ensure that parents understand which hours/sessions can be taken as funded provision and any charges for extra services.

Format

A parent agreement can be in a paper or electronic format either way it must also comply with General Data Protection Regulations. Copies of parental agreements will also be checked during any compliance check of early years funding carried out by the local authority.

A parent agreement must be completed for all eligible funded 2, 3 or 4 year old children, signed by either the parent or the child's legal guardian, before a child starts accessing their funded place, and must be in force for the duration that a child is accessing their government funded hours and kept for 6 years.

The provider must see a form of identification, such as the child's birth certificate or passport to verify the child's full legal name and date of birth. Please note: it is not necessary to keep copies of any DOB evidence.

A copy of the parent agreement must be kept by the provider, this is a requirement to prove the number of funded entitlement hours that the parent has requested and to support the information submitted via the Provider Portal.

Golden Tickets – 2 year olds

Funding for 2 year olds can only be claimed if a parent/carer provides evidence of eligibility by way of either a North Yorkshire County Council Golden Ticket Letter, or Voucher Code letter. Parental information submitted will also be used by NYCC to check/verify eligibility for 2 year old funding.

Providers should, in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance, make sure that all invoices and receipts are clear, transparent and itemised allowing parents to understand any fees paid for additional hours or services where applicable. Charges can be made for meals, snacks and consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips or yoga. These charges must be voluntary for the parent. Where a parent is unable or unwilling to pay for meals and consumables, providers are responsible for setting their own policy on how to respond, with options including waiving or reducing the cost of meals and snacks or allowing parents to bring their own meals.

With the exception of an absence due to illness, or other extenuating circumstances, parents must ensure that their child attends the funded hours that have been requested on the parent agreement. If a child's attendance is less than the signed for funded hours, a provider must speak to the parent and explain that the child must attend for the funded hours requested.

Providers may wish to charge parents a deposit to secure their child's funded place, however the deposit must be refunded in full to parents within a reasonable time scale, for example two weeks after the headcount week.

The purpose of the deposit is to give providers certainty that a parent will take up the place.

Questions and Answers

Do parent agreements have to be in place for all our funded children?

Yes, parent agreements must be completed and signed by both parties (i.e. the parent and provider) prior to the start of the funded place. You should not claim funding for children whose parents have not signed an agreement.

Do Providers need to complete a new parent agreement every term?

No, the agreement has been designed so that only one agreement needs to be completed for each child while they attend your provision - unless significant changes are made to the funded hours.

What should I do with the parent agreement?

You should keep the original and give the parents a copy. There is no need to send them to the Early years Funding Team unless specifically requested to do so, which may happen in the event of an over claim or a disputed claim. Retention period for completed parental agreements is 6 years.

What if the child is attending another provider?

The parent must declare the name of the other provider, the number of hours and if accessing universal or extended that the child is accessing at the other provider. This reduces the an over claim.

I have a parent who has not signed a parent agreement?

You must make the parent aware that you will not be able to claim for the funded hours from the local authority until you have a signed agreement.

I have a parent who claims they did not understand what they were signing when they signed the parent agreement and now want to change provider.

NYCC allow parents the choice of where their child accesses their funded place. However, parents are responsible for reading the parent agreement before signing; if this is not possible due to sensory impairment or a language barrier the provider should ensure it is fully explained before asking the parent to sign.