



Childcare Sufficiency Grant 2008 – 2009

Guidance notes for applicants

What is the grant for?

The Childcare Sufficiency Grant is available for: **creating new childcare places for children and young people aged 0 – 14** (up to 19 for young people with disabilities) to fill gaps identified by the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) The provision funded is primarily to enable parents to return/remain in employment/training to comply with section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Who can apply?

New or existing private, voluntary and statutory providers can apply if they can fill a gap identified by the CSA (copies of which can be obtained from the District Partnership Teams)

If a provider is aware of a gap in available provision which has not been identified by the CSA, robust market research will need to be undertaken and submitted with the application to prove the need.

What kind of childcare provision can I get funding for?

It might be: Breakfast Club, After School Club, Lunch Club, Holiday Scheme, Day Nursery or Pre-School

It might also be a combination of all of the above.

Length of time the provision is open for?

A day nursery needs to be open for a minimum of 48 weeks a year for a minimum of 10 hours per day

A Lunch club or Wrap-around should aim to be open for at least 1 hour a day Exceptions to this will be considered if it fits in with local need.

A Breakfast Club needs to be open for 38 weeks a year and should aim to be open for at least 45 minutes a day

An After School Club needs to be open for 38 weeks a year for 2 – 3.5 hours per day

A Holiday Scheme needs to be open for a minimum of 4 weeks per year (these can be 4 day weeks where there is a bank holiday)

A Pre School needs to be open for 38 weeks a year for 3 hours a day.

Will the money be available throughout the period from 2008 – 2009?

The money will be distributed on a First Come First Served basis. There is no guarantee that there will be money available for later rounds. It is essential to plan ahead and bear this in mind when preparing your application.

How much money can I apply for?

You will need to do your financial calculations for your business plan (Financial Planner) and see how much money you require. We anticipate that if you were opening a Lunch Club you will need less than if you were opening an After School Club. This calculation would be done with the assistance of the District Partnership Officer.

There is no set amount that you can apply for as it will depend on the type of provision you will be opening. Guidance will be given by the District Partnership Officer when discussing your plans.

Breakfast Clubs

Due to the uniqueness of Breakfast Clubs there will be a shortened application process (see appendix 1)

Revenue funding

The definition of revenue funding is: the day to day running costs including smaller items of equipment.

All grants will be for revenue costs

Any items of equipment which are valued at over £500 can also be included but they need to be itemised separately on an assets register. This register needs to be kept as part of your financial records.

You may apply for a grant to cover: staff costs, rent, administration, catering, advertising, office equipment, kitchen equipment, toys and play equipment.

Capital funding

There is no capital funding available for any projects making an application to this grant.

Can I delay opening once a grant has been allocated?

We expect that you will open the new provision as indicated within your plan.

You must open within 12 months of applying for the grant.

Meeting the needs of parents

The successful applications will be those that meet the needs of the parents in terms of hours and weeks of the year that they are open, the quality of the service provided and the cost of the provision. It is a vital part of the application process that robust consultation is conducted with parents to ensure their needs are being met.

Sustainability once the grant runs out

All applications have to show that they will be viable (not losing money) when the grant runs out.

All applications will be looked at very carefully to make sure that in the 2nd year they are breaking even or making a small surplus.

Market Research

Market research is an essential part of the application process. If sufficient need is not shown, as a result of robust consultation with parents, applications will be rejected. Your District Partnership Officer will consult with childcare businesses offering similar provisions. If your proposal meets with valid objections then your application will be declined by the panel.

SWOT exercise (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

This is an integral part of the planning and will be a useful exercise for you to undertake as it will indicate what aspects you need to be particularly careful about as your project continues.

OFSTED

You need to contact OFSTED so that you can register in good time. You need to obtain the National Day Care Standards from the Children's Information Service (CIS) based in Hertfordshire.

Premises

You need to have confirmation in writing that you can use the premises that you have identified. A lease/rent agreement will also be required.

Help in completing the form and preparing your grant application

You need to be in contact with your District Partnership Officer via the District Partnership Team as they will be able to advise you on all aspects of your application. The contact numbers are attached to these notes. They will be able to give you the local Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, and discuss the most appropriate methods of market research.

Groups who have received start up funding in the past for other projects may be asked to supply information on these projects. Up to date information such as current occupancy levels and progress on the original business plan will be required.

The Grant Application forms

We use a toolkit for setting up a childcare business.

This has been developed for Sure Start and is in electronic format.

These are available from your District Partnership Officer at the District Partnership Team Office.

The Toolkit comprises 3 separate items, which become the Business Plan and application for your grant.

Section A – Plan for Success

This is the work you need to do to work out all aspects of running the childcare business.

The market research is part of this section and it is essential that this is carried out as soon as possible. The results of the market research will influence what your next steps will be. Evidence of market research and consultation will need to be enclosed with your final application.

Financial Planner

This will be completed at a meeting with the District Partnership Officer once you have completed Section A. Our aim is to support new groups to get going in the first year when numbers are often low and we expect some groups will need not as much as others. Be realistic rather than trying to get as much grant as possible. Groups that are expanding due to parental demand may not need any additional grant.

This is when you will be able to calculate how much grant you can apply for.

Section B – The Application Summary

This will be the application for the grant and contains the main elements of your plan and the financial elements that are needed to see whether your setting will be viable once the grant runs out.

How long will this process take?

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE TIME THIS TAKES. The development and research phase will take several months. Make sure you have a realistic action plan mapped out for the year ahead.

It will be quicker for those providers who are expanding as they will have most things in place already.

Best times for opening new provision

There is much evidence to show that the most successful childcare groups are those that are set up to open at particular times of the year.

The most successful After School clubs and Breakfast clubs are those that open in the Autumn Term. This is because working parents often plan their childcare for to fit in with the school terms.

Holiday clubs need to meet the needs of the parents and children– they often take a while to build up. You need to decide whether you would need to open at Christmas as many groups find there is little demand for a service at the is time.

Recent experience is showing that in the past 2 years the demand for holiday clubs has fallen with many existing providers not being full. Even the free and low cost schemes provided by District Councils have frequently been under subscribed.

Parents will often travel further to a holiday scheme, possibly on their way to work. There may be less demand for holiday schemes than is first apparent. You should look at what other holiday schemes are available in the local area and what capacity they have had in recent holidays as part of your research.

In regard to pre schools, again with the potential change in government legislation make sure that your market research is robust. Research other pre schools in your community to find out their vacancies, if there is a high level of vacancies within your community then your new business contrary to market research may be unsustainable. Also be aware of income and fee structure in regard to free three year old places when making your plans. further information regarding this can be obtained from your District Partnership Officer.

Sure Start Out of School Additional Places Grant

The Process for grant applicants

1. **Contact your local District Partnership Officer** via the relevant District Partnership Team – East 1, East 2, West 1, West 2 or Central to talk through your plans
2. **Meet your District Partnership Officer** who will give you the Playlines software and generic market research questionnaire, as well as advice on your business proposal.
3. **Complete Market Research and Consultation-** with assistance of District Partnership Officer
4. **Planning** – use Section A ‘Plan for Success’ of the Business toolkit as this will form the basis of your Business Plan.
5. **Financial planning** – this will be done with the District Partnership Officer once you have completed Section A – Plan for Success
6. **Amount of grant applied for decided with District Partnership Officer**
7. **Section B ‘Application Summary’ of Business Toolkit** – complete and sign
8. **Grant application** – submit Section A, Section B, Financial planner, enclosures and a covering letter to your District Partnership Officer at the relevant District Partnership Office. The Grant application will then be forwarded to the Grants Officer prior to the Grant Panel meeting
9. **There are Grant Rounds throughout the year** – a list is attached
10. **The Grant Panel** – the panel will meet about 3 weeks after the applications are received

11. **Notification of grant** – you will be notified verbally within one week of the Panel meeting
12. **Contract / Letter of Agreement – Terms and conditions** – these will be sent out shortly after you are notified about your grant. They must be signed and returned as the first payment will only be made once they are received. You will also be given information about how you repay the grant if for some reason you cannot open.
13. **Payment of the grant** – this will be paid in 3 instalments (2 for Breakfast Clubs). Each payment will require an invoice from you.
14. **Payment stages for 1 year funded projects** – 25% on receipt of signed contract/letter of agreement and a valid invoice, 50% on opening - OFSTED certificate and 1st day register and a valid invoice, 25% - at 6 months after receipt of monitoring report and a valid invoice.
15. **Monitoring** – You will be required to complete monitoring reports at 6 months and 12 months. You will also be visited by your District Partnership Officer

The Grant Rounds have been arranged to allow two per term

Dates for submitting grant applications

It will not be possible to submit a late application. Any which arrive after the closing date will automatically be returned or submitted in the following grant round. When submitting your application all relevant enclosures must be submitted too at the same time.

Decision of Grant Panel

It is intended that you will hear the result of the Grant Panel as soon as possible after the meeting. The grant decision dates given in the following list are the latest possible dates – you will probably hear earlier than this.

Grant Rounds

Grant Round	Closing date for applications	Group Notified by	Date for groups to open
1	4 th April 2008	2 nd May 2008	Summer playschemes onward
2	16 th May 2008	13 th June 2008	Summer playschemes onward
3	20 th June 2008	18 th July 2008	October opening onward
4	26 th September 2008	24 th October 2008	January opening onward
5	21 st November 2008	19 th December 2008	Easter Holidays onwards
6	23 rd January 2009	20 th February 2009	May opening onwards
7	27 th March 2009	1 st May 2009	Summer Playschemes onwards
8	1 st May 2009	29 th May 2009	Summer Playschemes onwards

9	19 th June 2009	17 th July 2009	October openings onwards
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Opening information

Each grant round has an earliest date from which the new places can be open from (i.e. September openings onwards). Settings can apply for grants which open later than this date. So if you applied in round 6 you could also apply for summer playscheme openings or September openings.

Time frame for grant process

The grant rounds have been worked out to take about 3 months from the application being sent to County Hall for assessment until the grant money arrives. The grant arrival will be dependent on the contract being promptly returned. If this is delayed being returned then the grant will be delayed.

Summer Playschemes 2008

All applications have to be completed for the 16th May 2008 deadline

This will allow time to appoint staff and to get the money in time to open in July.

The Grants Panel

The members of the Grant panel will be from the Young in Herts Partnership and others who may have specialist input on aspects such as: sustainability, personnel or business matters.

In attendance: Grants Officer – who will be able to answer questions/queries arising from the grant applications.

The process for the panel

All panel members will receive photocopies of the applications **1 week before** the Grant panel meeting.

These will be sent out by the Grants Officer.

They will only be sent Section A and the Application Form (Section B from the Playlines process).

The panel will review each application form and make a decision as to whether you will:

- Receive the full grant immediately
- Receive a grant pending further information being submitted
- Not receive a grant

Grant Application Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing with a notification letter. There is an appeals process, which you can use if you are not successful. It is up to you, the applicant, to decide whether or not to appeal against a decision.

If you decide to Appeal

You may activate this by writing to the Grants Officer, Room 164, Young in Herts, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8DF and the letter should contain a statement stating the reason for appeal. In an appeal no account can be taken of any information or evidence that is not in the original application. An appeal has to be lodged within 1 month of the notification letter.

The Appeals Panel

The Appeals Panel will comprise of 3 members from the Young in Herts Partnership, none of whom will have been a member of the original grant panel. They will meet within one month of an appeal being made. The appeal panel will consider the original panel process and decision based on the application and evidence submitted at that time.

The Appeal Result

Appeals panel decisions will be given in writing to the applicant within one week of the appeals panel. The appeal panel's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Contact details

District Partnership Offices:

East 1: **Tel: 01462 704246** **Fax: 01462 704300**
Children Schools and Families
East 1 District Partnership Team
Old Grammar School, Broadway, Letchworth, SG6 3PS
(Districts: Stevenage, North Herts)

West 1: **Tel: 01442 453467** **Fax: 01442 453134**
Children Schools and Families
West 1 District Partnership Team
First Floor, Apsley One, London Road, Apsley, Hemel
Hempstead, HP3 9XJ
(Districts: Watford, 3 Rivers)

East 2: **Tel: 01920 880963** **Fax: 01920 880909**
Children Schools and Families
East 2 District Partnership Team

Porters Lodge, Collett Road, Ware, SG12 7LY
(Districts: Broxbourne, East Herts)

West 2: **Tel:** 01442 453839
Children Schools and Families
West 2 District Partnership Team
First Floor, Apsley 2, Brindley Way, Hemel Hempstead,
HP3 9BF
(Districts: Dacorum, St Albans)

Central : CSF District Partnership Team (Central)
Barnwell School, Burwell Road, Stevenage, SG2 9HQ
(Districts: Welwyn and Hatfield, Hertsmere)

Hertfordshire Children's Information Service (CIS)

01438 737502 or 01923 471502
www.hertsdirect.org/younginherts

OFSTED

General enquiries: 0845 601 4771
Publications: 07002 637 833

Appendix 1 Breakfast Clubs- Fast Track

To ensure Breakfast Clubs can be opened within a shorter timescale the application process has been streamlined and simplified. There is a set amount of funding given to Breakfast Clubs, £3200 for 8-16 places and £3700 for more than 17 places.

Only Breakfast Clubs based on a school site can use the Fast Track use. Any other breakfast clubs opening outside a school site must complete a full application, using the set amounts of funding.

Applicants must base their application on proving a need for the club through market research and consultation and support from the Extended Schools Coordinator. Applications without adequate market research will not be considered by the panel.

Applicants must complete Section A and B of the playlines software and the playlines financial plan, detailing 2 years costs. The software is available from your District Partnership Team who will advise you on your application and assist you in completing your financial plan.

You will be asked to send in some enclosures with your application. These are samples of your Market Research and a copy of any rental agreement to use the premises you will be occupying.

Your application must be submitted in electronic form to your District Partnership Officer. There are no rounds for Breakfast Clubs however there is only a limited amount of funds, so grants will be considered on a first come first served basis. Applications take up to one month to be approved. You will be sent the decision of the panel within one month of submitting your bid.

Should your application be declined, you can follow the appeals process for the Childcare Sufficiency Grant detailed in this document.

If your application is accepted a contract will be issued to you, shortly after acceptance. Fifty percent of the grant will be paid to you on receipt of the signed contract and a valid invoice. Once you have opened the rest of your grant will be paid to you on receipt of a copy of your first day register and a valid invoice.

It is a term of your grant to complete a monitoring report 6 and 12 months after opening your provision.