

**Summer Term LA Regional Events June/July 2022**  
**Questions and Answers Pack**

Questions	Answers
<b>Auditing and Invoicing exercise</b>	
<p>What will DfE be doing with this information [from the deep dive exercise] once all the events have happened?</p>	<p>At the beginning of this year, regional leads asked you some questions about your auditing practices during your routine calls. From those conversations, many local authorities told us that additional resources to support their ability to review these types of documents would be helpful. Therefore, in our regional events we ran an exercise to help local authorities identify the key things to look for when reviewing providers' fee structures and invoices.</p> <p>Thank you for all your suggestions and contributions. We will collate the suggestions from all 8 events, and share these with you in due course.</p> <p>As discussed in the events, we would welcome examples of resources local authorities use when checking providers' charging practices, for example documents such as guidance or checklists. Please send these to our entitlements mailbox (<a href="mailto:earlyyears.entitlements@education.gov.uk">earlyyears.entitlements@education.gov.uk</a>), stating that you are happy for us to circulate, and whether you would prefer for us to keep your details anonymous.</p>
<b>Consultations</b>	
<p>What is the rationale behind running the consultations during the summer holidays, when most settings will be closed?</p>	<p>We know that relative levels of costs and need between areas has changed since the funding formulae were first introduced, so it is only right that we update the formulae to ensure funding is directed to where it will do most good. The consultation opened prior to the usual summer break period for providers, and will close in mid-September to allow us to process the responses and make decisions about hourly funding rates which, for 2023-24, will be published in autumn 2022 in the usual manner.</p>
<p>A slimmed down EYFS is concerning, what would this look like?</p>	<p>In July 2022, we announced our intention to publish a slimmed down, childminder specific Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework to ensure content is targeted and simpler to navigate.</p> <p>We do not intend to remove existing requirements, but do want to make the EYFS framework quicker and easier for childminders and all early years educators to understand.</p> <p>The government is currently consulting on proposals to increase the number of children that can be looked after by each staff member in early years settings. Depending on the outcomes of that consultation, some of the current requirements in the EYFS may change.</p>

<b>COVID-19 recovery: Experts and Mentors programme</b>	
When will the evaluation of the initial pilot be available?	Formal findings from the initial pilot evaluation will be available at the end of the full evaluation. This is expected in 2025. We have used real time feedback from the pilot to inform the full rollout from September 2022.
Does LA support to providers cease when they are involved with the experts and mentors scheme? How will duplication of effort be avoided? How do LA's ensure consistency of approach and advice?	In most cases, LAs have chosen settings to receive support from the programme that are not currently subject to intensive LA support. In other cases, LAs have chosen to continue to support settings with the actions from their action plan following support from the Expert. Where LAs have chosen to engage with the programme, Area Leads will maintain regular contact with the LA to keep them updated. We encourage LAs to share information with their Area Leads about the provision in their LA.
<b>Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs</b>	
Are you including something specific for Childminders under this Stronger Practice Hubs programme?	The Stronger Practice Hubs will be expected to support a range of provider types in their area, including childminders.  Further details on how the programme will support childminders will be shared in due course with the early years sector and Local Authorities via the <a href="#">Foundation Years newsletter</a> and other channels.
How will you know if you are an area where a hub would be considered?	Hub locations will be confirmed through the selection process, which we anticipate will open for applications on 15 <sup>th</sup> August (closing on 23 <sup>rd</sup> September with Hubs selected by mid-October and launched in November). Applications from all regions will be considered. Further detail on the process can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  The Hubs will be evenly distributed across England, with an ambition of two per each of the <a href="#">nine government office regions</a> (18 in total). Hubs' support will predominantly target settings and children most in need due to COVID-19, with a focus on supporting children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.  We anticipate that support will be provided mostly to settings located in each Stronger Practice Hubs' Local Authority in the first year of delivery (or neighbouring Local Authority depending on local geography), broadening out to the wider region in the second year of delivery.
Will LAs be involved in the selection process of settings wishing to become Stronger Practice Hubs?	Yes, local authority input and support will be key to ensuring we make the most of the good practice and networks that already exist. A reference or indication of support by the Local Authority will be required at application stage. The Hub applications process will be run our delivery partner National Children's Bureau. Further detail has been published <a href="#">here</a> .

<p>Will there be funding attached to the Stronger Hubs programme?</p>	<p>The DfE will provide grant funding to Hubs to deliver their objectives, which includes funding for staffing costs. The DfE estimates that around £900k of grant funding will be made available to each Hub over the two-year delivery period, subject to delivery considerations. Grant funding will be subject to the DfE’s monitoring and assurance processes and will be paid in arrears for the specific services provided by Hubs.</p>
<p><b>EYPP</b></p>	
<p>Can EYPP be used to fund families struggling with covering the costs of meals for their child?</p>	<p>The Early Years Pupil premium (EYPP) is additional funding to support better outcomes for disadvantaged three- and four-year-olds in early years settings. It gives early years providers an additional 60p per hour (up to £342 for the maximum 570 hours per year) for each disadvantaged three- and four-year-old taking up the universal 15-hour free early education entitlement and meet the eligibility criteria – see Section 8 of the <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-entitlements-local-authority-funding-of-providers-operational-guide-2022-to-2023">Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>. Early years providers can choose how to use the EYPP to improve the outcomes of eligible children in line with the aims of EYPP and have discretion to spend the additional funding as they see fit but determined by needs of the eligible child.</p>
<p><b>Family Hubs</b></p>	
<p>Is there going to be any more legislation to support the delivery [of Family Hubs] by LAs in the future?</p>	<p>There are currently no plans to introduce new legislation to further support the delivery of family hubs.</p> <p>Family hub models funded as part of the £302m Family Hub and Start for Life programme will need to meet the programme’s minimum expectations, which will be set out in the programme guide. Within this framework, local family hub models will continue to vary appropriately according to local circumstances and need</p> <p>The statutory requirements around children's centres remain in place. Decisions on whether to incorporate an existing children's centre into a family hub model are for the local council concerned. Many local authorities have made children's centres part of family hub networks. The National Centre for Family Hubs will work to ensure that councils understand how they can best be incorporated where it is appropriate.</p>
<p>The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 already place a duty on LAs to provide information to parents via Family Information Service delivery, so how does this fit with the family hubs?</p>	<p>Improving the accessibility of family support services is a key principle of the family hub model - through a universal single point of access and a clear local family hub offer, recognised and understood by families and which includes hub buildings, virtual offers and outreach. The local Family Information Service (FIS) and family hub network should work together to inform and engage families. The FIS should include information about the local family hub offer and families accessing and making enquiries at the family hub should be connected</p>

	to the FIS where appropriate.
<b>Future Childcare</b>	
Have you had any further considerations on offering all two-year-olds access to early entitlements?	<p>The core purpose of the two-year-old entitlement is to improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged children. This is why it is targeted at low-income households or children that have characteristics which are associated with having poorer educational outcomes.</p> <p>We have no plans to universalise the two-year-old entitlement but have recently concluded a consultation into extending it to disadvantaged children in ‘no recourse to public funds’ (NRPF) households. We will publish the consultation response in due course.</p>
When will there be more detail on the Childminder proposals? Are you looking at Childminders not being able to access entitlements funding for their relatives?	We are considering a number of options on childminders and childminder agencies – and will say more about them as soon as we are able.
<b>Overseas workers</b>	
When you refer to 'teachers' as part of the Skilled Worker Visa, do you mean only qualified teachers, or is it any qualified staff (level 3)?	<p>Several Early Years roles (and not solely qualified teachers) are specified in the list of roles eligible for a Skilled Worker Visa:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursery school teacher</li> <li>• Nursery manager (day nursery)</li> <li>• Owner (nursery: children’s)</li> <li>• Nursery assistant</li> <li>• Nursery nurse</li> </ul> <p>Level of qualification is not specified for each role; but we expect most settings would be seeking to recruit Level 3 practitioners under the ‘Nursery school teacher’ job title. The full list of eligible occupations can be found here:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations">Skilled Worker visa: eligible occupations and codes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
What would the salary expectation be of people coming here to work?	<p>Broadly, overseas workers applying for a Skilled Worker Visa need to be recruited into a job with a minimum salary of £25,600 to be eligible. However, a lower salary threshold can be attained if the migrant qualifies for any of the following tradeable points options:</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa-when-you-can-be-paid-less">Skilled Worker visa: When you can be paid less - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Workers also need to be paid at least the ‘going rate’ for their occupation. This will depend on the job as the eligible roles listed</p>

	<p>above fall into various occupation codes. Guidance on ‘going rates’ can be found here:</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupation-codes">Skilled Worker visa: going rates for eligible occupation codes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>And specific guidance on ‘going rates’ for education roles can be found here:</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-teaching-and-education-leadership-occupation-codes">National pay scales for eligible teaching and education leadership occupation codes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p>Please can you share a link of where we can access information on the skilled work visa?</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/skilled-worker-visa-overview">Skilled Worker visa: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p>As I understand it, the employer has to be a sponsor, is that correct?</p>	<p>There is a cost for applying for a licence (between £536 - £1476, depending on the type of licence and type of organisation – more information <a href="#">here</a>), and there are certain responsibilities attached to being a sponsor once the licence is issued (more information <a href="#">here</a>). A sponsor licence is valid for 4 years.</p> <p>Migrants in the UK with general work rights e.g. those with an immigration status under the EU Settlement Scheme, Youth Mobility Schemes, family or humanitarian routes (more information can be found <a href="#">here</a>) are free to work without Home Office restrictions, so employers looking to hire migrants from these cohorts do not need to be sponsors.</p>
<p>How will the qualifications translate? How would settings know if the qualifications are matched and were relevant? Do the qualifications need to be checked by NARIC?</p>	<p>As early years is a regulated profession, holders of overseas qualifications must apply to the DfE to have their qualification recognised before they can work within the EYFS staff: child ratios. Recognition is granted where qualifications are comparable in scope, content and level to either the Level 2 <a href="#">early years educator (EYE) qualifications criteria</a> or the Level 3 <a href="#">early years practitioner (EYP) qualifications criteria</a>.</p> <p>As there are specific sub-criteria - for example on safeguarding practices, and knowledge of the English curriculum - it is rare that an overseas qualification is found to be ‘full and relevant’. Where a qualification meets some, but not all, of our criteria, there is the option to either complete a supervised adaptation period, or undertake top-up units, to become qualified.</p> <p>If a qualification does not meet sufficient criteria it cannot be approved. However, it is possible to work as an <u>unqualified</u> member of staff in an English setting, so this is not an automatic barrier to employment. This applies to anyone who has achieved a qualification outside of England,</p>

	<p>including in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the rest of the world.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-you-make-an-application-for-recognition-of-overseas-qualifications">How you make an application for recognition of overseas qualifications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
Is there a cost to the top-up courses?	<p>In most cases there is a fee attached to top-up courses. However, as course content can vary so widely depending on the specific needs of the learner, this fee also varies. The DfE therefore advises settings to consult their Local Authority's adult education services for more information both on the courses available in their local area and specific prices.</p> <p>Certain level 3 qualifications are, however, free for those aged 19 or over who do not already have a level 3 qualification. The list of free level 3 qualifications can be found here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/list-of-free-level-3-qualifications-available-to-eligible-adults">List of free level 3 qualifications available to eligible adults - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>.</p>
<b>SENCo</b>	
Will backfill cover be provided to settings to enable staff to attend EY SENCo training?	Backfill payments will not be available for this training.
You mentioned "targets" for LAs regarding SENCo qualification take-up, when will we know more?	The contract with our provider will specify targets for LA regions and for settings to be prioritised for training. These targets will be based on levels of disadvantage. The targets will ensure that a proportion of training delivered will benefit areas of disadvantage. The training will otherwise be nationally available across England. More information will become available once the contact award notice is published, expected this summer (2022).
<b>Two-year-olds</b>	
Is it possible to get some guidance around assessing eligibility of NRPF families?	We have shared guidance with local authorities on how they may assess eligibility for those NRPF children that are currently eligible for the two-year-old entitlement.
Where can I find the two-year-old statistics?	You can find the latest statistical first release 'Provision for children under 5 in England: January 2022' here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provision-for-children-under-5-in-england-january-2022">Provision for children under 5 in England: January 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
<b>Ukraine funding</b>	
How will I know children in my area are eligible for the Ukraine funding in my area?	DfE funding will be allocated to the 152 unitary and top tier local authorities. This will be based upon the return the Local Authority provides to Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities on the number of 2–18-year-olds who have arrived via the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme.
Can you confirm if the funding for Ukrainian children (through the Homes for Ukraine	Yes, the Homes for Ukraine Education funding is separate and for the 2022-23 financial year. Those children on roll at the Early Years

scheme) will be in addition to the Early Education Funding?	census in January 2023 will be included in Early Education Funding allocations also.
How do LAs identify these children if they self-apply to settings without any support from the LA?	<p>As with schools, where parents may apply for a place directly rather than go through the LA, it would be for the provider to make the LA aware that they have a Homes for Ukraine child in the setting (and to agree any funding needs).</p> <p>When you receive the funding, you do not need to break it down by each child and can use the funding as appropriate. For example, one child may need funding for EAL support, whilst another child of the same age may not.</p>
Can the Ukraine funding be used for transport?	The department's funding allocation can be used for transport, where deemed necessary. LAs should also note that we have confirmed with DLUHC that the £10.5k per person allocated to LAs from the sponsorship scheme can be used for the provision of transport.
Will there be any funding to allow access to additional training?	The full terms and conditions of the funding will be covered in grant agreement once published.
Can the Ukraine funding be used to pay for children's entitlement hours?	Yes. When you receive the funding, you do not need to break it down by each child and can use the funding as is most appropriate. The amounts are allocated on a per child and phase basis, but we trust LAs to make the final decisions on how the money is distributed to providers and school settings. For example, one child may need funding for EAL support, whilst another child of the same age may not.