



# Developing childcare provision

## A guide for schools





## Contents

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>What do you want to do?</b>	3
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Research and Consultation</b>	4
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Contact the Family Information Service</b>	5
<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Choosing a Management Structure</b>	6
<b>Step 5</b>	<b>Developing a Business Plan</b>	7
<b>Step 6</b>	<b>Staffing and Recruitment</b>	9
<b>Step 7</b>	<b>Marketing and Promotion</b>	10
<b>Step 8</b>	<b>Health and Safety</b>	11
<b>Step 9</b>	<b>Paperwork</b>	12
<b>Step 10</b>	<b>Quality</b>	13

## Introduction

Local authorities are required by legislation to secure sufficient childcare places, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0–14 (or up to 18 for disabled children). West Sussex County Council (WSCC) is actively encouraging schools to consider the need in their community to provide early years and childcare services as appropriate.

To support you and your school we have developed this guidance which should be used in conjunction with our Developing Childcare Provision Toolkit, which is available on [www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency). The tool kit is full of useful resources and templates to support your journey to opening high quality, sustainable childcare.

Although this is a step by step guide, you may find that some steps take place concurrently, although it is strongly advised that steps 1–3 are carried out first.

Developing high quality, sustainable childcare provision is not a quick process and your plans should take this into consideration in order to ensure you create a high quality setting within your community. This process can take anywhere between 6–12 months, possibly longer if your project includes building alterations.

The process must be owned and lead by those responsible for the governance of the school. For example, the Governing Body, the Academy Trust or diocese. For the purpose of this document, we will refer to this as the Governing Body.

# STEP 1 | What do you want to do?

This first thing you need to consider is what kind of provision are you hoping to offer? This could be;

- Pre-School
- Day Nursery
- Breakfast Club
- After School Club
- Holiday Playscheme

Or potentially a combination of the above.

For further information on definitions for these different types of setting please see [www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcare).

Your initial idea may alter following research and consultation, however, before taking the next steps to assess the viability of opening a childcare setting on the school site, you will need to get approval in principle to proceed from the following:

## 1. The Schools Governing Body

This should be, at this stage, approval in principle and included in formal minutes by the full Governing Body. The Governing Body must be kept informed at all stages of the project. You may like to discuss the aims and objectives of doing this and how this will fit with the school's ethos and wider plans.

## 2. West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) Property Services

First and foremost, any school accommodation must be used for meeting the basic demands of the school. WSSCC therefore would reserve the right to 'reclaim' space if required for educational purposes.

With that in mind, any school wishing to introduce childcare provision will need to ensure the following has been undertaken in assessing the proposal:

1. Identify the space to be used, period of use and the impact on school space and the ability to deliver curriculum.
2. Determine if the proposal is a commercial undertaking (this is discussed in more detail later in step 4 of this guide).
3. Determine procedures for terminating the arrangement if necessary.
4. Determine if self-help must be submitted, should there be a change of use for the identified premises. Please contact your WSSCC area surveyor for support and guidance.

Please email [ci.capitalprojects@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ci.capitalprojects@westsussex.gov.uk) for further advice on any of the above points and for approval to proceed.

These steps must take place prior to assessing the viability in detail. You must secure permission to use any surplus accommodation for this purpose before moving forward.

---

\* Schools who are not controlled and run by the local authority, for example, Academies, Voluntary Aided, Free Schools, Foundation and Trust schools, will need to ensure they comply with their own governance.

## STEP 2 | Research and Consultation

Once you have secured suitable premises and have approval in principle from your Governing Body, you now need to assess the demand for your proposed childcare, in order to ensure a financially viable business.

- Using the consultation toolkit, carefully research your market and the local need. This toolkit includes a guide to carrying out consultations, model questionnaires, as well as what to do with the information once you have collated it. You will also find lots of links to useful documents.
- Analyse the local competition and review whether or not there is a gap in the market for your childcare setting.
- Consider if there is a good childminder network locally or if existing provision could expand to meet the need?
- Is there an opportunity to work with other local schools?
- You should write to the childcare providers in your area advising them of your plans to open childcare provision. A list of these can be obtained from [www.westsussex.gov.uk/fis](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fis). This will ensure transparency and must also include childminders.
- The West Sussex Childcare Sufficiency Report will also help you to establish where childcare may be needed and can be found here [www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency).



STEP 1 ✓ STEP 2 ■ STEP 3 ■ STEP 4 ■ STEP 5 ■ STEP 6 ■ STEP 7 ■ STEP 8 ■ STEP 9 ■ STEP 10 ■

## STEP 3 | Contact the Family Information Service

Now that you are able to evidence a demand for your proposed childcare provision and are ready to move forward with your project, please contact the Family Information Service (FIS) via our online form which you can find at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency).

FIS will be able to ensure you receive advice and support throughout the project via your local Early Years and Childcare Adviser.



## STEP 4 | School run provision or a PVI provider?

You should now be at a point where you have secured suitable premises and have evidence that there is enough demand within your community.

The next step is to consider how this will be managed. The setting could be either:

- run by a private, voluntary or independent (PVI) provider; or
- run by the school.

The benefits of using a PVI provider include:

- The school are able to select a high quality, experienced provider to take on all aspects of the running of the provision
- There will be no financial risk to the school.
- Rent can be paid directly to the school which could generate income.
- The provider and the school's Early Years department can work to support school readiness (for early years providers only)

The benefits of school run provision include:

- The school retains full control of all aspects of their childcare provision.
- The school will be able to ensure close links between the Early Years provision and Reception (for early year's providers only)

If the school chooses to run the provision you will need to ensure that there is no financial risk to the school and consider the implications should the business not be sustainable. For example, potential redundancies. You may also decide to set up a sub-committee to oversee the running of the provision and report back to the full Governing Body at regular intervals.

If you would like to consider identifying and working with a PVI provider, you will not need to carry out steps 5 to 10 in this document. Instead please now follow the guidance in the toolkit – *'Selecting a high quality provider to run childcare at your school'*.

# STEP 5 | Developing a Business Plan

Full and comprehensive guidance on how to develop a robust Childcare Business Plan is available on the WSCC website, [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness).

When looking at your financial planning you should produce a cashflow forecast for at least a 3 year period. Examples are available by following the link above, including an online training module to support you through the process.

Generally, you should consider:

- Does the Business Plan balance? Is the income greater than the expenditure including any recharges from the school? If not, how will you cover the deficit?
- Are all start-up costs included?
- Are running costs realistic and include contingencies and replacement equipment where appropriate?
- Have food and drink costs (where relevant) been included at a realistic level?
- Are staffing ratios correct? Please see [www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)
- Do staffing costs include all costs where relevant i.e. National Insurance and Pensions?
- Does the financial planning take into consideration wage increases in the future?
- Have the redundancy cost implications been considered and accepted by the Governors?

## If you are planning on running an Early Years Setting

- All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 570 hours free childcare starting the term after they turn 3. The maximum hours can be taken over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year (up to and including 15 hours per week). Parents may be able to take up patterns of hours which “stretch” their child’s entitlement by taking fewer free hours a week but over more weeks of the year, where there is capacity and sufficient demand from parents. Alternatively parents may be able to “self-stretch” their child’s entitlement through an arrangement between themselves and the setting.
- In addition, 40% of all 2 year olds are eligible for Free Entitlement the term after they become 2 years of age. To qualify, the child must be of eligible age and the family in receipt of one or more of specified income-based benefits. Further information can be found at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/freechildcare](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/freechildcare).
- To access free entitlement funding you must go through your Early Years and Childcare Adviser who will be able to provide all the relevant paperwork and talk you through the terms and conditions of providing this. See [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsfreentitlement](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsfreentitlement) for more information including the current rates.
- The Pre-School or Day Nursery must operate as a business and its viability will depend on both the take up of funded hours as well as the amount of extra time that parents will buy so it is important that your consultation and financial planning takes this into consideration.
- The Government is extending this offer to 1140 hours a year (30 hours per week) for eligible 3 and 4 year olds in working families from September 2017. Eligibility is based on parental income.

## STEP 5 | Developing a Business Plan (continued)



- Some 3 and 4 year olds will also be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium. This is extra funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria, which is different and separate to the school's Pupil Premium. Further information is available at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsfreetitlement](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsfreetitlement).

### **If you are planning on running breakfast, afterschool or holiday clubs**

- Will you subsidise places for children in receipt of Pupil Premium? [www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings)

Ultimately, your Business Plan must demonstrate long term viability and eliminate risk to the Local Authority.

\* Schools who are not controlled and run by the local authority, for example, Academies, Voluntary Aided, Free Schools, Foundation and Trust schools, will need to ensure they comply with their own governance.



# STEP 6 | Staffing and Recruitment

Your staffing structure should have been considered and agreed as part of your business and financial planning. You need to know what staff you will need in order to analyse the financial viability of the business. Once you are ready, you can begin the recruitment process. You will need to consider:

- Time scales – consider the potential notice periods for the successful applicant and when you would like them to start.
- As per your staffing structure and Ofsted requirements, what are the minimum childcare qualifications needed for different roles?
- How many staff will you require initially? Will you employ the full staff team or build up the team as numbers increase?
- Are there existing internal team members who may take on these roles? What implications might this have on their current contracts?
- How many staff will you need based on child to adult ratios?
- What are the responsibilities for each staff member including line management responsibilities? Job descriptions for all staff roles must be in place.
- Staff salaries, contracts and pay conditions, including pensions/benefits
- How will you advertise these positions and where?
- Interview questions and processes.
- Are bank staff required to cover holidays/sickness and other staff absences, e.g. to attend training.
- You will also need to consider the administration that will be needed. Can existing staff take on this responsibility? Or will additional hours be needed or are you creating an additional post?

You must, of course, follow Safer Recruitment guidelines (including interviews, all pre-employment checks including verification of qualifications, medical fitness, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), etc.)

Further advice and guidance should be sought from the Human Resources Department.

Other useful links and documents to support you through this stage include:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)
- Staff recruitment  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness)
- If you would like to advertise a childcare job vacancy  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcarejobs](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/childcarejobs)

# STEP 7 | Marketing and Promotion

Marketing is an essential part of business planning to ensure financial viability of your setting. This is key to long-term sustainability.

At this stage you should be considering:

- What will the setting be called?
- Will you have a logo or a separate brand identity?
- Will staff wear a uniform?
- Where and how will you advertise, e.g. website, signage, newsletters, noticeboards, banners, fliers, local community?
- Will you use social media to promote the setting?
- Who will take responsibility for initial and ongoing marketing campaigns?

You will find a helpful online training module which includes information on how to develop a marketing plan by following this link [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsbusiness).



## STEP 8 | Health and Safety

As you would for your school, the new childcare provision must comply with all Health and Safety regulations.

It may be that you can use existing school policies with an addendum to cover the wider age range to include the childcare provision. You may also find that some new policies and procedures need developing in addition.

The first step should be to review your current policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, parents and visitors for the new setting are met through these. Fire safety is an area that will definitely need looking at to consider exit routes and implications for children, parents and staff potentially being on site outside typical school hours.

Following the review of existing policies, you should consider what additional areas need developing. For example, some of the day to day practicalities such as:

- Physical access to the childcare setting, with particular focus on drop off and collection times.
- Equipment and Storage.
- Communication between the setting and the school.
- Toileting/Nappy Changing/disposal of nappies.
- Lighting and heating, potentially for a longer day and during school holidays.
- Food preparation and storage including baby milk, where applicable.



# STEP 9 | Paperwork

As with any childcare setting, certain paperwork must be in place. In addition to the points in Step 8 and as a minimum you must:

- Review the Early Years Foundation Stage/Childcare Register documents and ensure you have all relevant policies and procedures in place for childcare.
- Create a prospectus for parents containing all the relevant information about the setting.
- Consider which 'school' policies and procedures need to be reviewed and amended to take into account the new provision and a potentially changed age range. Again you may need to develop new policies may be specific to the setting.
- Develop a clear admissions process including registration forms and contracts. You should also consider policies to cover fee payment, including the process should invoices be unpaid
- If you will be offering Free Entitlement places, you must complete a provider declaration and accompanying documents. Your Early Years and Childcare Adviser will take you through this process.
- Ensure that your paperwork is clear so that parents are aware that by securing a place in the school's nursery or pre-school, it does NOT automatically guarantee them a place at the school.



# STEP 10 | Quality

As well as being financially viable, you will also need to consider how you will ensure you are providing high quality inclusive childcare.

There are several sources of support and guidance around this which will be of use both prior to opening and as an on-going resource. These include:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted-registered early years providers must follow the EYFS, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.  
[www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk)
- Skills Active's role is to improve the quality and range of play opportunities for children and young people through the professional development of the playwork workforce across the UK.  
[www.skillsactive.com/sectors/playwork](http://www.skillsactive.com/sectors/playwork)
- Information on what Ofsted considers high quality and how they will look for evidence of high quality is also outlined in the Inspection Framework.  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015)
- WSCC website has a wealth of resources and guidance to help you, including a comprehensive training programme.  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsgoodpractice](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsgoodpractice)  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsinclusion](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ecsinclusion)  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/Trainingsubscriptionscheme](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/Trainingsubscriptionscheme)

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 outlines the requirements for providing support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

The WSCC Early Childhood Service offers a range of networks, training, events and a weekly broadcast email for settings to keep you up to date with changes to legislation, share good practice and to promote working in partnership with other agencies.

# Contact Us

You can contact the Family Information Service for further information and guidance.

## WEBSITE

[www.westsussex.gov.uk/family](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/family)

## POST

**West Sussex Family Information Service  
Early Childhood Service  
First Floor, The Grange  
Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RG**

## PHONE

**01243 777807**

## EMAIL

[family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk)

## OPENING HOURS

**Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm**