

Childcare Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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Enable provision to be made for appeals relating to free childcare for young children of working parents to be settled by agreement; to make further provision designed to increase efficiency in the administration of free childcare schemes; to make provision about the promotion of the availability of free childcare, including to disadvantaged groups; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 30 hours of free childcare: settling of appeals by agreement

In section 2 of the Childcare Act 2016, in subsection (2), after paragraph (i) insert—

- “(ia) apply any provision contained in section 54 of the Taxes Management Act 1970 (settling of appeals by agreement) to appeals for which provision is made under paragraph (i), with such modifications as may be specified in the regulations;”.

2 Independent review of free childcare schemes

- (1) The Secretary of State must, as soon as reasonably practicable, appoint an independent person to lead a review of efficiency in the administration of free childcare schemes in England. 10
- (2) The objective of the review shall be to make recommendations which would result in children receiving high quality early years education which enables parents to work while maximising value for money for the taxpayer.
- (3) The review must consider— 15
- (a) the merits of the different funding models in operation in the childcare sector,
 - (b) the role of maintained nursery schools,
 - (c) ratios of staff to children,
 - (d) the training and development of the workforce in different childcare settings, 20
 - (e) hours of free childcare available to parents, and

- (f) other matters relating to efficiency in the administration of free childcare as the independent person sees fit.
- (4) The review must consult—
- (a) childcare providers,
 - (b) other organisations from the early years sector, 5
 - (c) research organisations, and
 - (d) other persons as the independent person sees fit.
- (5) The Secretary of State must lay a report of the review before Parliament no later than 1 May 2024.
- 3 Promotion of the availability of free childcare 10**
- (1) The Secretary of State must prepare a strategy for promoting the availability of free childcare, and the benefits of that childcare, to parents in England.
- (2) The strategy must consider how Government departments, other public sector bodies and the private and voluntary sectors can better co-ordinate to increase awareness of free childcare schemes. 15
- (3) The strategy must consider how to increase awareness of free childcare schemes among parents in disadvantaged groups.
- (4) The Secretary of State must lay the strategy before Parliament before the end of the period of six months beginning with the day on which this Act is passed. 20
- 4 Financial provision**
- There shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament—*
- (a) *any expenditure incurred under or by virtue of this Act by the Secretary of State, and*
 - (b) *any increase attributable to this Act in the sums payable under any other Act out of money so provided.* 25
- 5 Extent, commencement and short title**
- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only.
- (2) This Act comes into force at the end of the period of two months beginning with the day on which it is passed. 30
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Childcare Act 2021.

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Presented by Matt Rodda

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be
Printed, 16th June 2021.

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