



Reference: FOI2840

**Request:**

I am writing with regard to a Freedom of Information Act request on early entitlement funding.

The Department for Education guidance on early entitlement funding in the autumn term 2020 states the below:

"From the start of the autumn term 2020, local authorities should continue to fund providers which are open at broadly the levels they would have expected to see in the 2020 autumn term had there been no coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. They should also continue to fund providers which have been advised to close, or left with no option but to close, due to public health reasons. Local authorities should not fund providers which are closed, without public health reason, from the start of the autumn term.

"The intention is to fund on the basis of 'as if autumn term 2020 were happening normally'. In order to do this, local authorities might, for example, use the numbers of children in places in the previous autumn to inform funding levels this autumn. This means that if a local authority is aware of particular changes in catchment demographics that would have impacted local demand (for example, a big increase in family housing in an area), they should take that into account. Local authorities should be transparent in the approach they take."

We at the Early Years Alliance are trying to ascertain how this guidance is being applied by different local authorities in England.

As such, I would like to file a Freedom of Information Act request for responses to the following questions:

1. Is your local authority funding early years providers during the autumn term 2020 using "the numbers of children in places in the previous autumn to inform funding levels", as suggested in the DfE guidance?
2. If not, what alternative approach is being taken, and will this approach mean that local providers are still being funded "as if autumn term 2020 were happening normally"?

**Response**

For the advance payments for autumn 2020 for the 2 year old offer and the 3 & 4 year old offer, the local authority will consider the hours claimed at Autumn 2019 and Autumn 2020 advance tasks, for each setting, and fund according to the higher number of hours.