

## Early Education Funded Place Expansion – Capital Funding Opportunity Guidance

The Government is rolling out its programme to expand early education funded places. From September 2024 this will expand to include 15 hours for qualifying working parents (from the term following the child reaching 9-months to the term in which they turn 3 years old) and from September 2025 this will increase to 30 hours.

To support this place expansion some capital funding is now available for providers who offer (or are looking to offer) provision that supports the roll out of this programme. This includes all settings registered with Ofsted Early Years and schools who take 2+ year olds.

Solihull has received £325,000 of capital grant funding for this programme. Providers of early years places, based in Solihull, can now complete the [expression of interest](#) form to be considered for grant funding to support a project. The closing date for expressions of interest is **Friday 20th September 2024**.

The aim of the programme is to focus on projects that will increase the physical capacity of early years provision in wards (or adjoining wards) where demand is likely to exceed existing supply from September 2025. In addition, we must ensure that places created are accessible to all children, including those with additional needs.

DfE guidance provides the following examples of appropriate early years projects: -

- Projects that enable and/or increase access to childcare places for eligible children.
- Projects that adapt, re-model or improve existing childcare places to make them suitable for a wider range of needs.

Priority will be given to projects that meet the following criteria:

- Provide additional early education **funded** places for 0-3 year olds
- Are located in the wards and provide places at the age range identified in the demand table at the end of this guidance.
- Provide places at settings rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding, where possible.
- Provide places for children with additional needs.
- Provide value for money
- That are compliant with all relevant statutory legislation and meet the Local Authority procurement requirements.

Funding cannot be used for routine maintenance or refurbishment of premises or for providers not offering early years entitlements. The funding is for capital purposes only and cannot be used for revenue expenditure of any kind such as training and staffing costs.

When completing the Expression of Interest, please give as much detail of your proposal as you can at this stage. We are particularly keen to understand how the

funding will support the expansion of places where there is demand. Whilst we do not expect final costings at this stage, an indicative amount of funding is required.

The Expressions of Interest will be used to shortlist providers whom we will ask to complete a full application. Shortlisted providers will be notified at the end of September 2024.

### Supply and Demand Table

The data below has been compiled using three data sources, DfE analysis of demand, the recent provider survey and future demand forecasts based on population data. The Wards listed below indicated demand exceeding supply in two or more of the data sets and this will be used as one of the key criteria in determining where to locate additional early years places.

Ward	Children aged 0 to 1 years	Children aged 1 to 2 years	Children aged 2 to 3 years
Meriden	✓	✓	✓
Chelmsley Wood	✓	✓	
Kingshurst and Fordbridge	✓	✓	
Lyndon	✓	✓	✓
Olton	✓		

To be considered for grant funding please complete the [expression of interest form](#) by **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024**.