

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-346
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/07179/12

William Powell AM

William.powell@wales.gov.uk

7 November 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 October about free childcare for 3-4 year olds.

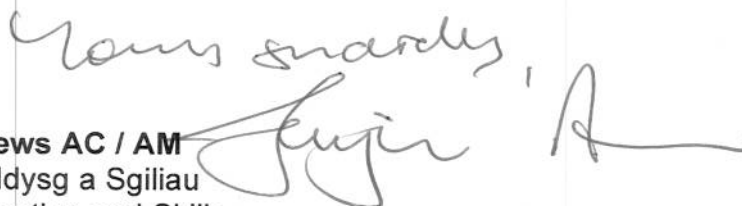
You will wish to be aware that the planning of such provision is a matter for the individual local authority. However, in planning the provision they are expected to take the needs of children and their parents/carers into consideration and put in place arrangements to ensure that as many families as possible are able to access the free provision.

My officials have carried out some initial work to look at the variation suggested and have found that there is less variation across Wales than initially perceived. All local authorities offer 10 hours with most local authorities providing 2 or 2.5 hours over or 4 or 5 days. Where there is variation it is due to local authorities offering additional support, which they are entitled to do, over and above the 10 hours.

With regard to issuing more direct guidance, we are aware that most local authorities already operate through a mixed approach for the provision of Foundation Phase places, with the vast majority offering provision through maintained and non-maintained settings.

Before deciding on changes to guidance, I have asked my officials to undertake further investigation with each local authority to clarify how they deliver their Foundation Phase provision for children below statutory school age in both maintained and non maintained settings.

I will write to you again when I have a full picture.

Yours sincerely,


Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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