

# **Sheffield Provider Portal**

**USER GUIDE** 

Free Early Learning Headcount & Census Information

September 2025

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# Introduction

This guide is designed to support the use of the 'Sheffield Provider Portal'. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself fully prior to using the Portal and completing any tasks issued to you.

#### **Sheffield Provider Portal**

The Portal is an online facility which enables providers delivering Free Early Learning (FEL) places to log in and complete and submit headcount census data electronically and securely. It allows providers to submit information directly to the Performance & Analysis Service for approval and the data is used to calculate payments in relation to the delivery of FEL places across the city. The Portal was introduced to phase out the need for paper-based Headcount Census returns.

The Portal also includes a messaging system which enables messages to be sent to providers informing them of changes, system downtime or provide prompts and reminders.

Each term Users will be issued with 'Headcount Census Tasks' which will require the User to check, amend and submit data. A deadline date will accompany the task and it is essential that a task is completed within the timescales specified.

This guide should contain all the information you need to use the Portal, however, should you have any further queries please contact the Performance & Analysis Service on **0114 27 36423** or e-mail us at **EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk** 

# **System Requirements**

In order to ensure that the Portal functions effectively it is important that you access it via the latest version of one of the following Web Browsers (a 'Web Browser' (more commonly known as a 'Browser' is a software application for retrieving, presenting and accessing information resources on the World Wide Web).



**Internet Explorer** 



**Google Chrome** 



Firefox

Need to check which browser and version you are using? You can check this by visiting <a href="https://www.whatbrowser.org">www.whatbrowser.org</a> from the computer you are using.

Please also check that your '**computer**' and '**browser**' language settings are set to **English** (UK).

This will ensure that the Portal operates correctly.

# **SECTION 1 – Login to the Sheffield Provider Portal**

Type or copy and paste the following link into your Internet Browser address bar: https://ems.sheffield.gov.uk/ProviderPortal/

Login to the Sheffield Provider Portal by completing the username and password fields on the login box; then click 'Log In'.

Note: If you cannot remember either your Username or Password you can click on the links below the Login button and follow the instructions.



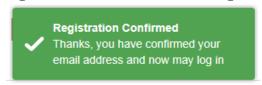
# Logging in for the first time

The first time you login to the Portal enter the 'username' and 'password' you have been allocated. You will be directed to an information page with a message which informs you that a confirmation email has been sent to your registered email address.



Log into your email and open the email. The message will contain a confirmation 'Web Address'. Click on the link to re-access the system (this process is to ensure access to the system is secure).

After clicking on the Web Address sent in the confirmation email you will see a registration confirmation message displayed.

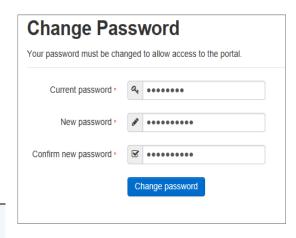


Re-enter the 'Username' and the 'password' you have been allocated. You will now be prompted to change your password to a memorable one.

# Your new password must:

- Be between 10 to 128 characters
- Contain at least one uppercase, one lowercase, one numeric, one special character. (e.g., # @ ! \$ % & )
- Not be one number higher than the previous password, e.g., not 'Password23' after 'Password22'
- Not be the same as the previous 10 passwords

Please do not use **Password** in your new password, this is only an example.



Complete the 'Current password' with the password you have been allocated and then input your new password into the 'New password' and 'Confirm new password' fields; click on 'Change Password'.

At the Security Details prompt select a secret question and provide a memorable answer; then click 'Save'.



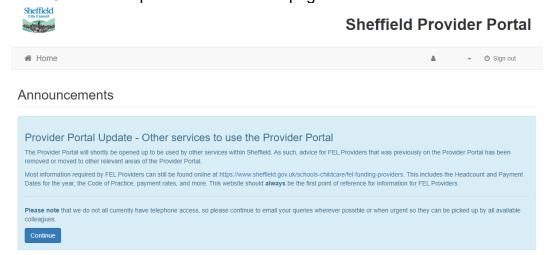
Congratulations you have now successfully logged in for the first time and will have access to the Sheffield Provider Portal!

With each subsequent login to the Sheffield Provider Portal, you will be directed to the Homepage as detailed in Section1.

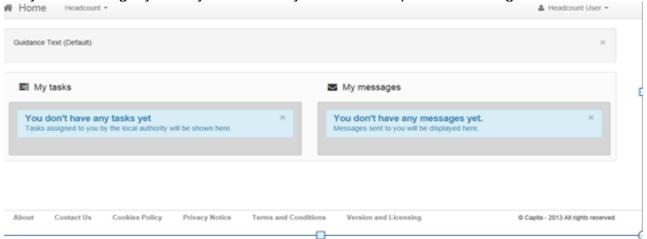
NOTE: You will be prompted to change your password for the Portal every 60 days.

# **SECTION 2 – Homepage Navigation**

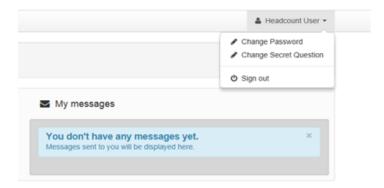
The Announcements page will be visible at every login, please read these carefully; click 'Continue' to proceed to the Homepage.



On your initial login you may not have any Tasks to complete or Messages to read.

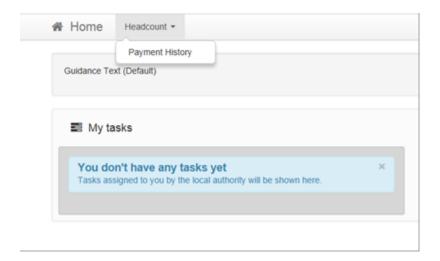


Selecting your name (top right); brings up a drop-down menu where you have the option of changing your own password or secret question and logging out securely.



# **Statement of Funded Hours Report**

Selecting Headcount (top left); brings up a drop-down menu where you can access any Statement of Funded Hours reports that have been provided by clicking "Payment History".



Note: If the Payment History page is empty this means that either no reports have been issued or old reports have been cleared out.

Reports older than 3 months will be deleted from the server and are not recoverable, so providers must download and save their reports locally for future reference (e.g. for auditing).



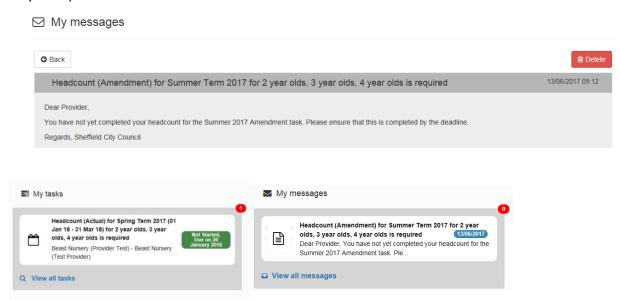
These reports show the total amount of hours and funding received for children who were claiming in the term at the time the report was issued. Any changes that occur after this time will not be updated in the Statement of Hours Report.

# **SECTION 3 - Messages**

The Sheffield City Council's Performance & Analysis Service will use the Sheffield Provider Portal to send messages to providers. When a Message has been issued to your provision, all relevant users will receive an email informing them to login. Once you login to the Sheffield Provider Portal you will see the message on your Homepage on the right under 'My Messages'.



Selecting a Message in the list allows you to read and delete this message (if required).



Note: You do not have to delete messages, but they will stay in your Message list and show that you have read them by the icon changing to icon shows how many Tasks or Messages are outstanding. 
□ icon shows how many Tasks or Messages are outstanding.

# **SECTION 4 – Tasks**

When a Headcount Task has been issued to your provision, all relevant users will receive an email informing them to login. Once you login to the Sheffield Provider Portal you will see the Task on your Homepage under 'My tasks'.



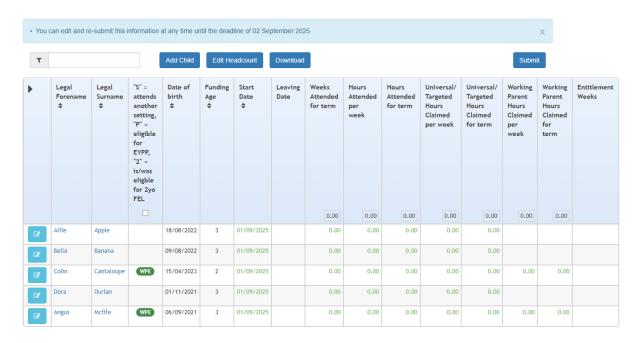
The Task has a Due Date shown in the lozenge. The colour and information on this lozenge changes to show the status of the Task - changing from Green to Amber and then Red the nearer it gets to the Due Date, and finally to Grey when the Due Date expires; see the examples below.



It is important to look at every task as there may be children that have been carried forward from a previous term who require end dates or simply that you need to submit a blank return. This ensures that the Performance & Analysis Service know that you have actioned all tasks.

Note: Selecting an expired Task allows you to look at historic information.

# Selecting a Task opens the task



A task may contain existing children or be empty depending on the data the Performance & Analysis Service hold from the previous term.

# **Completing Tasks**

It is recommended that you complete each task in the following order to ensure that you have captured and updated all children's data accurately.

- 1. Children who have left your provision
- 2. Existing children who are continuing to access your provision
- 3. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)
- 4. Adding new children
- 5. Adding hours & weeks

# 1. Children who have left your provision

Review the existing children included in the 'Task' to identify any children who have left your provision.

Where children have left your provision click on the 'Edit Headcount' button and input the actual Leaving Dates for all relevant children.

Update the information for all children and select 'Save'. This will update the information and return you to the Headcount Task.

Finally, check that the 'End Dates' you have entered have updated against the relevant children.

# 2. Existing children who are continuing to access your provision

Next it is important to ensure that addresses are checked to confirm they are still accurate for children who accessed your provision last term and are continuing to access your provision for the current term. To check the address held, click on the edit button at the left-hand side of the child's name and scroll down to the address. If the address has changed, update the record with the correct information and click 'Save'.

You may be prompted to complete further information regarding First Language and Ethnicity. Please select the appropriate option from the drop-down list or if not known select 'Information not requested'.

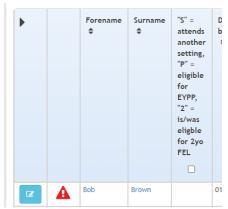
# 3. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Existing children at your setting might be highlighted a warning symbol. For all those children highlighted with the warning symbol, we require additional information to be added to verify whether they are eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).

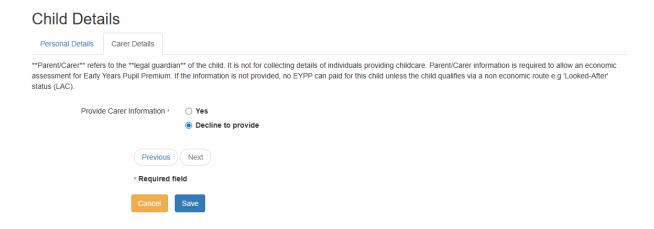
Further information on the EYPP can be found at <a href="https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/children-and-families/practitioners/information-for-childcare-providers/funded-early-learning-information-for-providers/">https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/children-and-families/practitioners/information-for-childcare-providers/</a>.

Note: You will not be able to submit your headcount information until this additional information has been added for all children.

There is an option to decline to provide information for those children for whom you do not have carer details.

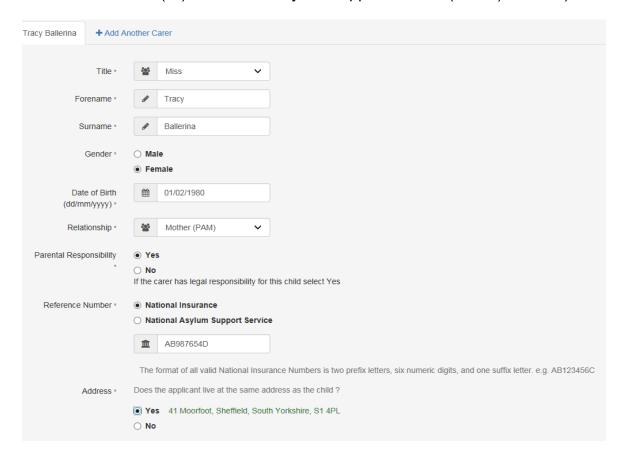


This information can be added by clicking on the edit button at the side of each child record. This will take you into the individual child details where you will see a new tab called 'Carer Details'.



Here you have the option to provide additional carer information. If you do not have this information, click 'Decline to provide' and press 'Save'. You will then be returned to the headcount screen, and you should notice that the warning symbol is no longer present. You have the option to add these details later or on a future headcount simply by clicking into the individual child record and choosing the 'Carer Details' tab again.

If you do have the necessary carer information, choose 'Yes' from the 'Provide Carer Information' option. A further panel will appear where you can input the relevant Carer details (Name, Date of Birth, Relationship to Child, Parental Responsibility & National Insurance (NI) or National Asylum Support Service (NASS) Number).



If you believe the child is entitled to EYPP under non-economic criteria (such as the child being looked after by a Local Authority), you should set the relationship option to "EYP – Other". We will then know to check the child against these criteria. If the care is/was placed by another LA, you should also email us at <a href="EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk">EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk</a>, explaining you want to check an out of area child for non-economic EYPP, stating the child's initials, DOB, and the name of the Local Authority involved. We will then check with that Local Authority.

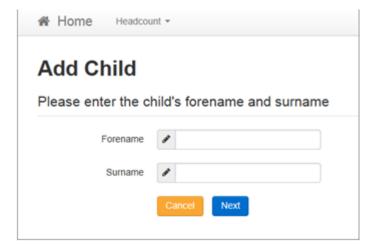
Click 'Save' once all the relevant details have been added. You will then be returned to the headcount screen, and you should notice that the child's row has changed from pale red to white.

You have the option to amend this detail later or add another carer simply by clicking into the individual child record and choosing the 'Carer Details' tab again.

# 4. Adding New Children

You are now ready to input any new children that are attending your provision for their FEL place who are not already included in the Headcount.

To add your children to this Headcount Task, click 'Add Child'.



Complete the relevant fields with the child's Legal Forename and Surname and click 'Next'.

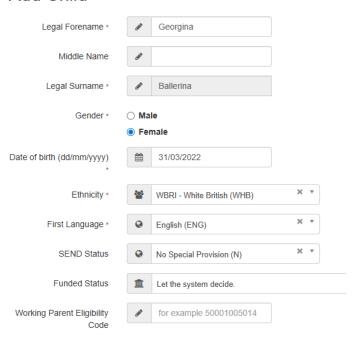
IMPORTANT: Do not include a child's 'middle name' in the forename box unless it is part of the child's legal forename e.g., Ellie-May

Choose the child's Gender and enter their Date of Birth, other details, and click 'Next'.

IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you are inputting the correct children into the correct Task i.e., children whose date of birth falls into the correct date of birth range for the Task.

Note: Please select 'Information Not Obtained' in the drop-down list in Ethnicity or First Language if the information has not been provided by the parent.

#### Add Child



To find the home address please enter the postcode and click 'Find Address'. If the address is not listed then type the correct address in the boxes provided. If you do not know the postcode, you can look it up http://www.postoffice.co.uk/postcode-finder.

Please enter a space in the postcode, for example. Z1 2AC

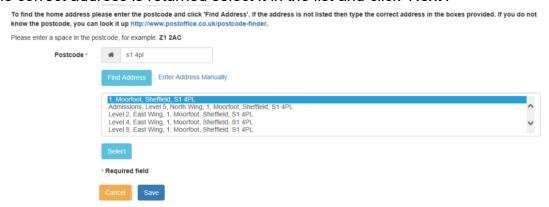
Postcode \* # s1 4pl

Find Address | I don't have a Postcode

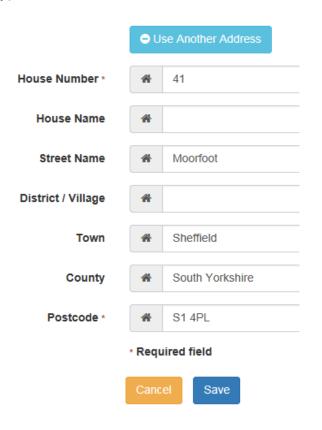
\* Required field

Complete the Postcode field and click 'Find Address'. All available addresses will be returned.

If the correct address is returned select it in the list and click 'Next'.



Note: if no suitable Addresses are returned you can click 'Enter Address Manually' and type the new address in.

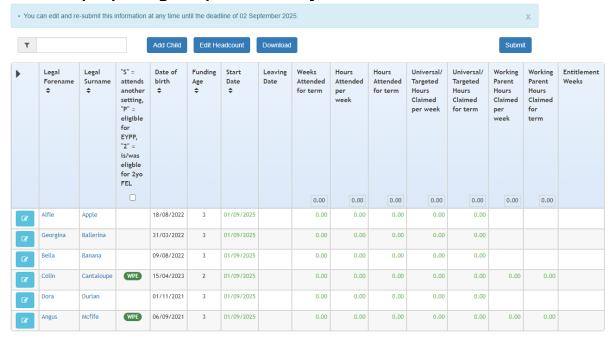


Once the child's address details have been completed on the Contact Details page click 'Next'.

When adding new children to your headcount task you will be prompted to supply additional carer information to verify whether a child is eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). You can complete this as described in the previous section. Once all the fields have been completed click 'Save'.

You will then be returned to the headcount front screen and a message should appear in the top left -hand corner telling you the new child has been successfully saved.

# Note: Keep repeating this process until you have added all relevant children.



# 5. Adding Hours & Weeks

Now all the children for the 'Task' have been input you are ready to input the hours and weeks attended for each child. To add the hours and weeks against the children in the list click 'Edit Headcount'.





Here you can enter all relevant hours and weeks attended for all children.

**Note:** You will not be able to enter any claim hours for children who have not been confirmed as eligible to claim. You will first need to validate their eligibility codes (see "2 Year Old Portal User Guide" or "Working Parent Entitlement Portal User Guide" for more information)

WARNING: If you spend more than 10 minutes entering hours, but have not saved your work during this time, you will receive an "Internal Server Error", and the system will not have saved your work.

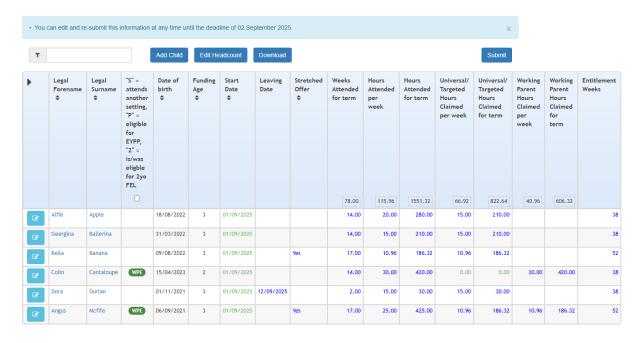
This is because you have been on the same page, so the system does not think you have been active.

We advise that you regularly save your work and complete the headcount in batches (e.g., enter the hours for 10 children, save, then edit the next group of children) to avoid losing the hours. Saved hours will not be lost.

To complete the headcount:

10 cor	mplete the head	acount:					
1	Start Date	This date is the date a child first started claiming FEL					
2	Leaving Date	Should only be filled in if a child is no longer claiming FEL funding this term or leaving part way through a term.					
3	Stretched Offer	Select 'Yes' from the drop-down box in the 'Stretched Offer' column if a child is accessing their entitlement on a 'stretched' basis.					
4	Weeks Attended for term	This is the total number of weeks a child is claiming funding at your setting. If a child is claiming a stretched offer, you should claim the maximum number of weeks the LA is funding for that term.					
5	Hours Attended per week	This is to be populated with the total number of hours a child attends your setting in any one week.					
6	Hours Attended for term	Will be pre-populated when items 4 and 5 above are filled in. You only need to alter this if a child's FEL hours either increase or decrease within the present term*. You will then need to calculate the termly hours a child is taking. *See Change of Hours Calculator Tool below.					
7	Universal Hours Claimed per week	Will again pre-populate when items 4 and 5 are filled in. If this field should be different from the automatically populated hours, you will then need to change the FEL hours in this field.  Children under 3 claiming only Working Parent hours should not have any value in the Universal Hours section as they are not entitled to this, and must have their claim recorded in the Working Parent Hour columns.					
8	Universal Hours Claimed for term	Will be pre-populated if item 7 is populated.					
9)	Working Parent Hours Claimed per week	Will pre-populate if the child is entitled to claim and there are more attendance hours than recorded in item 7. If this field should be different, you will need to change the hours in this field.					
10)	Working Parent Hours Claimed for term	Will be pre-populated if item 9 is populated.					
11)	Entitlement Weeks	Will automatically populate as 38 for children claiming hours to reflect the number of term time weeks across the year. For children on a stretched offer, this must be changed to reflect the number of weeks per year they claim over.					

Once you have completed this for all children and selected 'save', your information will have been updated and you will be returned to the Headcount Task.



You are now ready to submit the data to the Performance & Analysis Service, see **Section 5 Submission of Task** 

Note: Tasks can be submitted and re-submitted up to, and including, the deadline date. Tasks can be submitted by different users if the provision has more than one user set up.

# **Stretched Offer Calculation**

Children can claim up to either 570 hours per year or 1140 hours per year (subject to which eligible criteria they meet). Over the 38 funded term time weeks, this calculates at 15 (or 30) hours per week.

570 total hours / 38 weeks = 15 hours per week

On a stretched offer, children can claim the same 570 hours per year, but over more weeks. Providers set the number of weeks they are claiming stretched funding, with a maximum of 52 weeks per funding period. For example, a provider claiming all 52 weeks a year would calculate a child's hours as below.

570 total hours / 52 weeks = 10.96 hours per week

You can then apply these hours and the number of weeks for the given term and enter this on the headcount. Providers cannot do the opposite and claim fewer than 38 weeks and try to claim more than 15 universal/extended hours per week.

**Note:** For children who are entitled to both universal and extended hours, these are funded separately and should be calculated separately. Do not calculate a child entitled to 1140 hours as a total of 1140, but as 570 universal and 570 working parent hours instead.

# **Change of Hours Calculator Tool**

We have provided an excel spreadsheet tool on the website which can be used to calculate average termly hours where children increase or decrease hours part way through the term. This can be found at <a href="http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/fel-funding-providers">http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/fel-funding-providers</a>

It is recommended you download this spreadsheet onto your computer for future use.

Simply enter the pattern of attendance & FEL claim in the tool and average values will automatically calculated. These can then be entered on the Portal.

	(1) Type the number of weeks attended here (the total of these not to exceed the maximum for the term)							
	v	(2) Type t	Type the total hours attended per week here (the maximum number of hours will be entered on the porta					
	V	V	(3) Type the FEL hours per week here (up to a maximum of 15)					
	v	V	v					
		Weekly	Weekly	Termly	Termly			
		Total	FEL	Total	FEL			
Pattern	Weeks	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours			
1	12	12	12	144	144			
2	2	15	15	30	30			
3				0	0			
4				0	0			
5				0	0			
Calculated values	14	15.00	12.43	174	174			
	٨	٨	۸	۸	۸			
		( 4) Enter these values						

# SECTION 5 – Submission of tasks, downloading, completion, and printing reports

#### **Submission of Tasks**

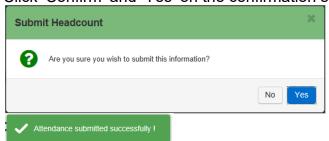
Prevent Fraud - Data Matching

Cancel Confirm

When you have added all your children and are happy that all the data is complete click 'Submit'.

# Declaration I have read the Sheffield City Councils Free Early Learning (FEL) Code of Practice – Including the Provider Funding Agreement and agree to comply with them. I confirm that the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that this claim will be subject to any compliance / or audit visit by Sheffield City Council. Where funding overpayments occur I understand that I am obliged to repay any overpayment in full. The Free Early Learning (FEL) hours claimed in the period, comply with the eligibility criteria. I have checked that the following are in place: • That a signed Parent Agreement for each child in attendance. • Copy of the 2 year old eligibility letter that includes a reference number • The number of Free Early Learning hours accessed in each term. I agree to give SCC any additional information they require to enable them to process the funding claim, and agree to tell them immediately if any circumstances change in any way that might affect my entitlement to Free Early Learning Entitlement funding. This authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. For further information, see:

Click 'Confirm' and 'Yes' on the confirmation screen.



You have now submitted your completed Headcount Census task.

Note: If there are changes to make to your headcount after you have already submitted (e.g., a new child registers while the task is open), you can continue to add or amend children and hours to the task. Once you are happy all the information is correct you can then re-submit the task before the deadline date.

Support is available from the Performance & Analysis Service on 0114 27 36423 or by E-mail EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk.

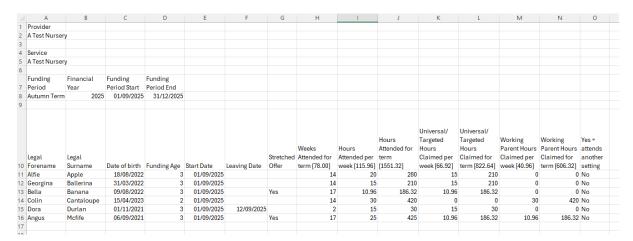
# **Report Downloading**

Once you have submitted your task, you can download a report of the information submitted for your own records.



Click on the 'Download' button. This will generate an excel spreadsheet of your funded children.

Note: When the excel spreadsheet opens you may notice that some of the fields show '######. This is because the cells aren't wide enough to display the figures. To display the content of these fields simply widen the columns.



# **Printing**

Once the information has been downloaded, the spreadsheet can be printed (ensuring that the page settings are set to 'Landscape' and printing properties are set for all columns to fit on one page).

<sup>\*\*</sup>End of document\*\*