



# **Sheffield Provider Portal**

## **30 Hours Eligibility Checker System (ECS)**

**PROVIDER USER GUIDE**

**May 2022**

## Contents

Introduction .....	2
SECTION 1 – Logging In .....	3
SECTION 2 – Homepage Navigation .....	5
SECTION 3 – Eligibility Check.....	7
Important Note About Checking Eligibility .....	8
SECTION 4 – Previous Checks.....	9
SECTION 5 – Expiration Dashboard.....	10
SECTION 6 – Local Authority Audits of the HMRC Codes.....	12
SECTION 7 – Further Information .....	13

## Introduction

This guide is designed to support the use of the ‘Sheffield Eligibility Checker System’. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself fully prior to using the Portal and completing any actions.

### Sheffield Portal - Eligibility Checker System (ECS)

Access to this portal will enable providers to:

- Process, check and receive confirmation from HMRC of eligibility when presented with a 30 hours reference number from a parent/carer.
- Search on eligibility checks previously made.

The online checker will confirm eligibility instantly. It will also provide the start and end dates of the eligibility, and the grace period end date.

Existing users of the ‘Sheffield Provider Portal’ will automatically have access to the Eligibility Checker.

This guide should contain all the information you need to use the Portal, however should you have any further queries please contact us. E-mail: [EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:EYFEL.Census@sheffield.gov.uk)



REFERENCE GUIDE:

# Sheffield Provider Portal – 30 Hours Eligibility Checking System

## SECTION 1 – Logging In

Using the Web Address provided in your email.

<https://ems.sheffield.gov.uk/ProviderPortal>

Select the address or copy and paste into your Internet Browser address bar.

Login to the EY Portal by completing the username and password fields on the login box; then select

Log In

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

If this is the first time you login you will be redirected to an information page and an email will be sent to you with a confirmation Web Address, this is to ensure security.

### Register User

We have sent a confirmation email to your registered email address.

The email contains a confirmation link which will bring you back to the main login page.

You must use this link to continue with your registration.

Each subsequent login to the Headcount Portal you will be directed to the Homepage as detailed in Section 2.

After following the Web Address sent in the confirmation email you will see the confirmation message displayed.



#### Registration Confirmed

Thanks, you have confirmed your email address and now may log in

## Change Password

Your password must be changed to allow access to the portal.

Current password \*

New password \*

Confirm new password \*

[Change password](#)

During this login you will be prompted to change your password to a memorable one, this must contain at least 10 characters; and must contain one uppercase, one lowercase, two numbers and one special character. E.g. Password01!

Please do not use Password01! as your new password this is only an example.

Complete the current password, new password, confirm new password fields; and select.

[Change password](#)

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

[Save](#)

## Security Details

Please choose a secret question and provide an answer

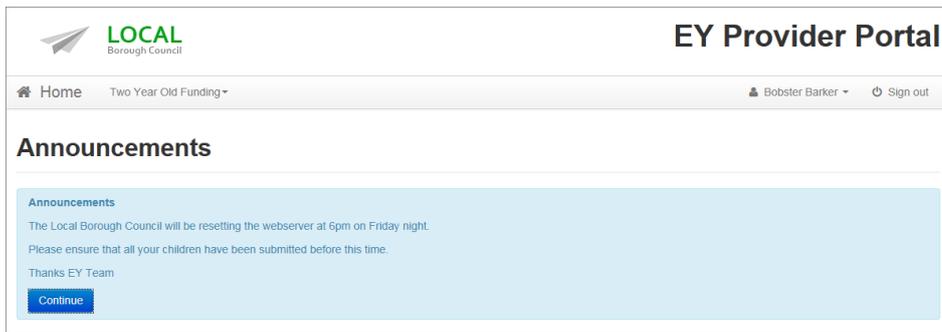
Secret Question \*

Secret Answer \*

[Save](#)

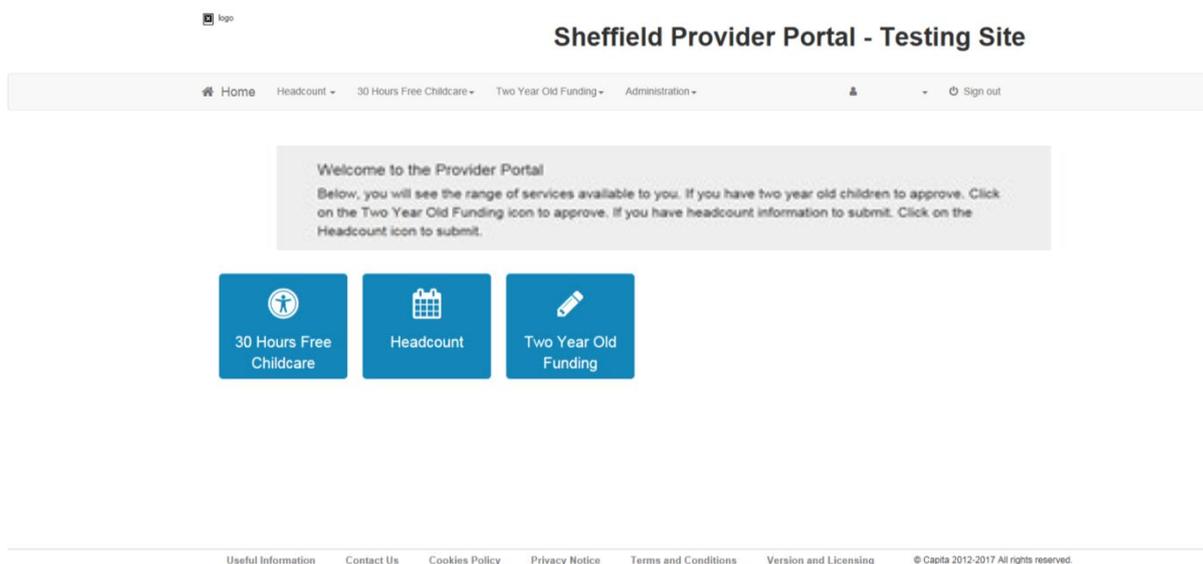
Congratulations you have now successfully logged in for the first time, and will have access to the EY Portal.

## SECTION 2 – Homepage Navigation

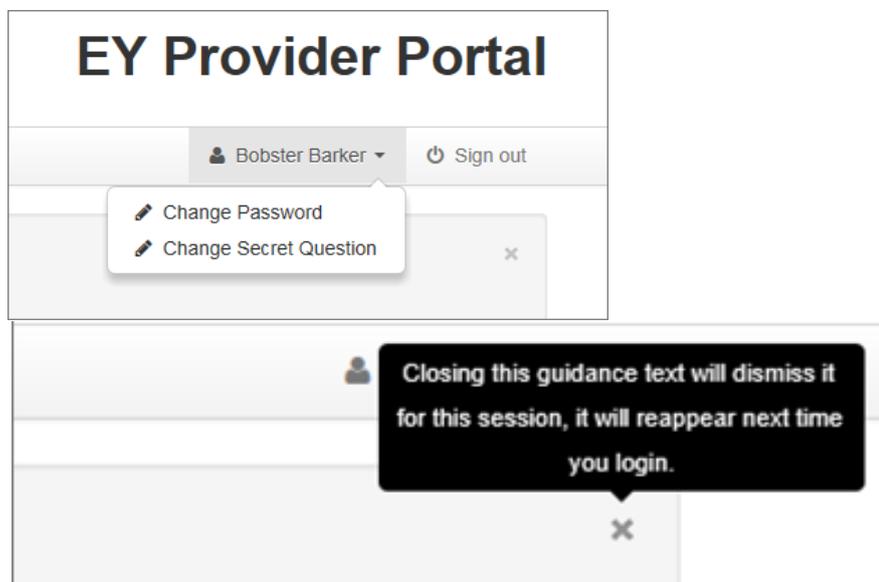


The Announcements page will be visible at every login, please read these carefully; select [Continue](#) to proceed to the Homepage.

Free Early Learning Providers, when you login and land on the home page you will now see three lozenges, one that will take you to the 30 Hours eligibility checks, one to the headcount census portal and the other to the two year old funding portal.



Selecting on your name; Top Right of the screen, brings up a menu where you can change your own password or secret question. You can also sign out securely.



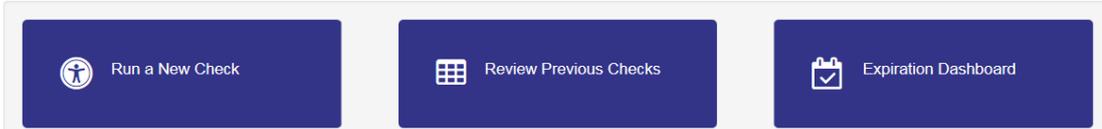
Guidance text can be provided; this text can be closed but will become visible again on each new login.



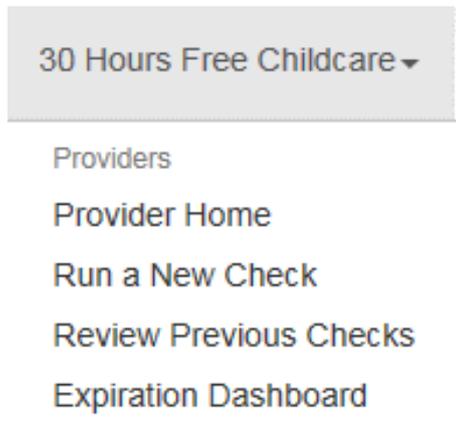
Clicking on  on the home page will present the details below.

### Welcome to the Thirty Hour Entitlement Portal

The Department for Education (DfE) provides an Eligibility Checking System (ECS) to allow you to check online and in real time the validity of eligibility codes issued by HMRC to working parents eligible for 30 Hours Free Childcare.



Selecting the '30 Hours Free Childcare' text, Top Left of the screen, brings up a menu which replicates the two large buttons on the 30 Hours home screen.



---

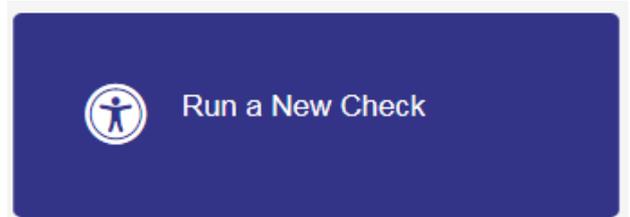
Note: These are particularly useful as shortcuts to the applications if you also use the Headcount Portal

## SECTION 3 – Eligibility Check

When a carer presents a 30 Hours reference number for their child, you can check their status by selecting;

**Run a New Check**

This will allow you to enter the Child and Carer details to send to the Eligibility Checking System (ECS).



You will be presented with a section like below, and can start typing the child's name.

### Run a new check

The Department for Education (DfE) provides an Eligibility Checking System (ECS) to allow you to check online and in real time the validity of eligibility codes issued by HMRC to working parents eligible for 30 Hours Free Childcare.

You may only perform checks where the parent/carer has given consent for you to do so and when they have agreed that this check information can be shared with the Local Authority and any other providers the child attends.

<b>Child forename *</b> for example John	<b>Child surname *</b> for example Smith	<b>Child date of birth *</b> for example 30/11/2012	<b>Parent National Insurance number *</b> for example NM123456C	<b>Eligibility code *</b> for example 5000100501.
---	---	--	--	--

If the child has already been entered on one of your headcounts, they will be attached to your setting and will appear in a list that populates below. You should select the child, then enter the National Insurance Number of the parent that made the application, and the Eligibility Code provided.

If the child does not appear, you should click the "Child Not Found" button below and add them as a new child for checking. This is known as an Ad-Hoc Check.

<b>Child forename *</b> Jill	<b>Child surname *</b> Brown	<b>Child date of birth *</b> for example 30/11/2012	<b>Parent National Insurance number *</b> for example NM123456C	<b>Eligibility code *</b> for example 5000100501.
---------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	--	--

No results

**Child not found**

You will then be able to add the date of birth, the National Insurance Number of the parent that made the application, and the Eligibility Code provided. If you have selected the child from a list of children populated, some of this information may be added automatically.

<b>Child forename *</b> Jill	<b>Child surname *</b> Brown	<b>Child date of birth *</b> 07/07/2017	<b>Parent National Insurance number *</b> JW567890A	<b>Eligibility code *</b> 50098765432
---------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	--	--

**Run check**

## Important Note About Checking Eligibility

When running an eligibility check for a child already attached to your setting, the system will save their eligibility result to the Local Authority's database. This will ensure that the LA has a record that the child is eligible and can take the 30 hours entitlement.

If the child is not yet attached to your headcount on the system and you would like to perform a check, you can add the child's details in manually. This is referred to as an "Ad-Hoc Check". You will need to enter the Child's Legal Forename and Surname, Date of Birth, the National Insurance Number of the parent that made the application, and the Eligibility Code provided.

If this is done this will still return a check, but because the LA does not have a matching record for this child it will not be saved to the LA's database. As such, when you perform your next headcount the child will not show as being eligible for the 30 hours. You MUST run another check after they have been added to your headcount to update their record. Without this, the LA will not have a record that the child is eligible for 30 hours, which could affect your headcount.

You may wish to perform an "Ad-Hoc Check" if, for example, a parent wished their child to start at your setting straight away and you wanted to confirm before the next headcount task that the child is entitled to the 30 hours.

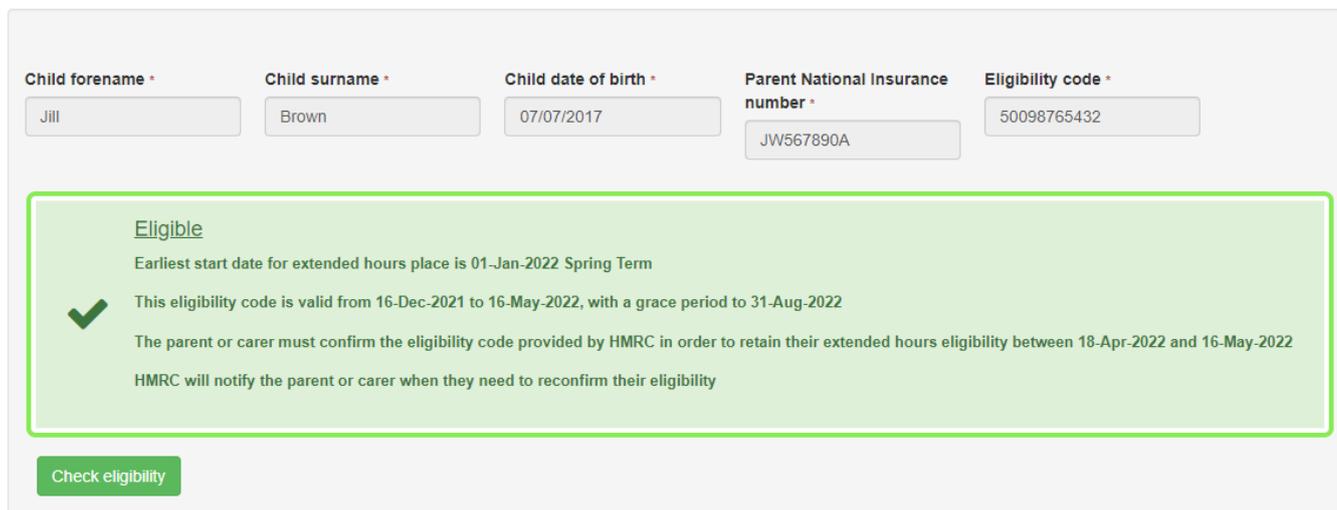
---

Note: You must ensure that any children on your headcount that will be claiming 30 Hours have had an eligibility check via your setting. You should not take a reference number at face value or take confirmation from elsewhere (e.g. a previous provider saying the child was eligible). The LA will not be held liable for any failure of the provider to confirm a child's eligibility

---

When you have added all of the details, click  .

If the check is eligible, you will receive a response as per below. The notification will include the Eligibility Start Date, Eligibility End Date, and the Grace Period End Date.



The screenshot shows a web form with five input fields: "Child forename" (Jill), "Child surname" (Brown), "Child date of birth" (07/07/2017), "Parent National Insurance number" (JW567890A), and "Eligibility code" (50098765432). Below the form is a green-bordered box containing the following text:

Eligible  
Earliest start date for extended hours place is 01-Jan-2022 Spring Term  
This eligibility code is valid from 16-Dec-2021 to 16-May-2022, with a grace period to 31-Aug-2022  
The parent or carer must confirm the eligibility code provided by HMRC in order to retain their extended hours eligibility between 18-Apr-2022 and 16-May-2022  
HMRC will notify the parent or carer when they need to reconfirm their eligibility

At the bottom of the form is a green "Check eligibility" button.

The LA will regularly perform checks on all children where their 30 Hours Eligibility is known, and inform providers should any children fall into the Grace Period or if the Grace Period is coming to an end.

If the check returns as eligible but "no term available" this is because the child was either applied for too late to claim in the current term, or will need to have their code renewed before they can claim in an upcoming term.

If the check is not eligible, you will receive a "not eligible" result. If the code is correct but the child's details do not match the HMRC application the check will return as not eligible. It is important that parents and providers only use the child's legal names as per their birth certificate.

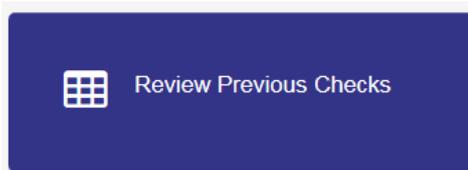
---

Note: The Local Authority do **NOT** have any ability to review any issues with eligibility codes. Queries about ineligibility need to be taken up directly with HMRC.

---

## SECTION 4 – Previous Checks

By selecting **Review Previous Checks** you can check existing application details.



You can filter by Name / Application Reference / etc, and search for specific details.

Checks run between ages 2 and 5 years 6 months

Use this screen to view checks that you have done.

▼

### Existing child checks

Child ↕	Earliest start date for 30 hours place ↕	Eligibility code ↕	Check last run ↕	Eligible from ↕	Eligible to ↕	Grace period end ↕	Check status ↕	From Citizen Portal ↕	Further action needed <input type="checkbox"/> Show all
Bob Smith (05/05/2017) - AB123456C		50001234567	15/03/2022				Not Found		

### Adhoc checks

Child ↕	Earliest start date for 30 hours place ↕	Eligibility code ↕	Check last run ↕	Eligible from ↕	Eligible to ↕	Grace period end ↕	Check status ↕	From Citizen Portal ↕	Further action needed <input type="checkbox"/> Show all
Jill Brown (07/07/2017) - JW567890A	01/Jan/2022 Spring Term	50098765432	16/03/2022	16/12/2021	16/05/2022	31/08/2022	Eligible		

Children who are existing on your FEL Headcount already will appear in the “Existing Child Checks” section. The Local Authority will have a record of these children having been checked and will know when they are eligible until because of your check.

Note: Providers should review this page periodically to keep on top of the eligibility and grace periods for children. Where children are nearing the end of the eligibility end date providers may wish to prompt the parent/carer to renew their eligibility to confirm continuing childcare.

After receiving an eligible check result, the LA will be able to conduct further checks against the child, and inform providers if the child falls out of eligibility.

As mentioned in Section 3, children who appear in the “Ad-Hoc Checks” section are children who aren’t already on your headcount, and the system will not send a copy of the check to the LA. You can still review any Ad-Hoc Checks that you have made for your own reference.

Note: Checks that appear as “Not Found” means that the child has not been found as eligible, not that the reference number itself has not been found. Other issues with the check may detail a more specific result in the Check Status.

# SECTION 5 – Expiration Dashboard

By selecting **Review Previous Checks** you can check existing application details.



This page will show you by default any children you have previously run a check for who will be coming towards their Grace Period End Date in the next 180 days.

You can filter by Name / Application Reference / etc, and search for specific details.

## Entitlement expiration dashboard

Use this screen to track eligibility which is due to expire.

Further action needed **Yes** Days **180** Eligibility filter **Grace period ending in the next 180 days** **Search**

Filter using any keyword

Child	Earliest start date for 30 hours place	Eligibility code	Eligible from	Eligible to	Grace period end	Eligibility was last checked on	Notes (further action needed)
Jill Brown (07/07/2017)	01/01/2022 Spring Term	50098765432	16/12/2021	16/05/2022	31/08/2022	16/03/2022 Eligible Recheck now	Update

The cell highlight colours indicate the below:

**Green:** Code is currently in the eligible period

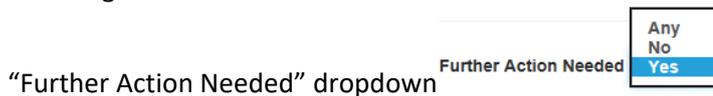
**Orange:** Code is currently in the eligible period and within the 1 month renewal period

**Red:** Code has fallen into the Grace Period

**Black:** The Grace Period has expired

In addition to the filters, you can change the search settings on the dashboard.

To change between children who need further action and those who don't select one of the options in the

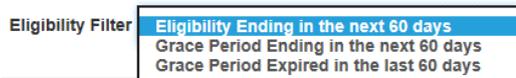


“Further Action Needed” dropdown

You can also change the number of days the system is searching through. The default is 180 days however you can change this to find children who will be falling out of eligibility/etc in a shorter time frame. The “Eligibility Filter” will automatically update based on this figure.

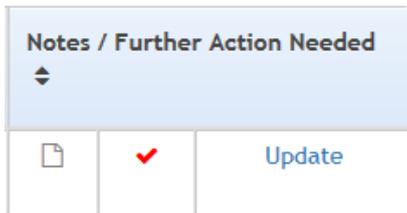
Further Action Needed **Yes** Days **60** Eligibility Filter **Grace Period Ending in the next 60 days**

You can also change the search between upcoming eligibility end dates, upcoming grace period end dates, and expired grace period end dates.



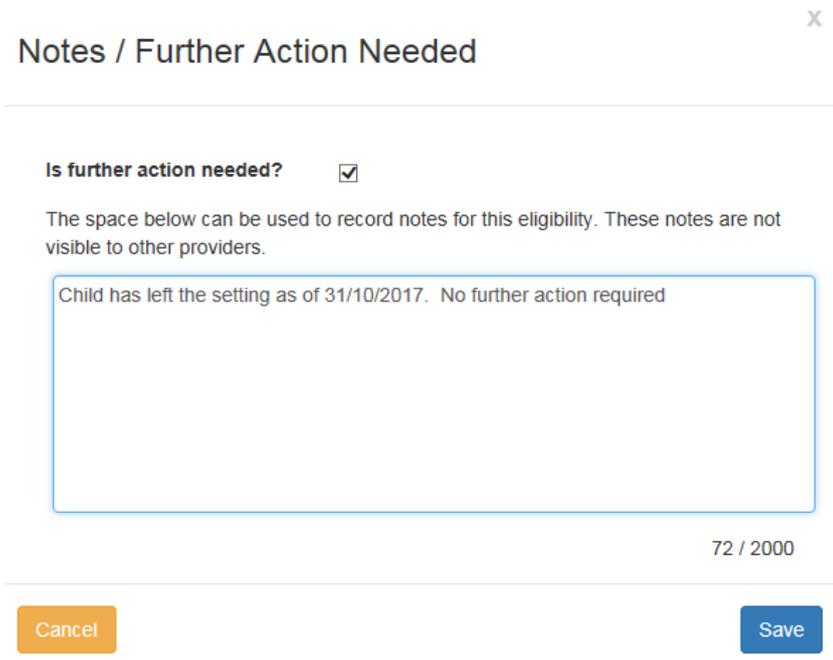
Once you have refined your search criteria, click **Search**.

Next to each row in the dashboard, there are 2 icons and an “Update” button. The file icon will change if there are any notes on the record. The tick signifies that the child will still need to be checked (a cross if no follow up action /the record is no longer relevant).



To add notes to a child’s eligibility check, you must click the “Update” button.

Once in the Notes section, you can add any notes necessary for the record. This can be useful for any reminders (such as the parent has stated they will provide evidence by a particular date).

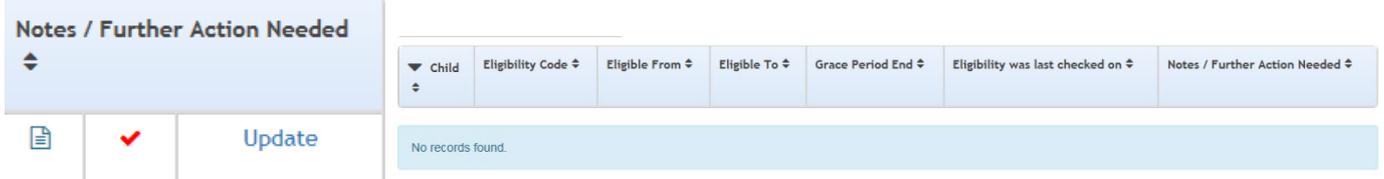


If you do not want the record to appear in the list of “further action needed” file, you can un-tick the “Is further action needed?” box. This is useful if the child has left your setting and you do not need to be reminded that their eligibility is coming to an end.

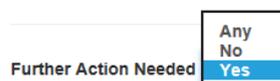


When you have finished, click  to return to the dashboard.

If you have added a note, the file icon will appear with text to indicate that you have added a note to the file. If you have un-ticked the record for further action, the child won’t show up on the main search.



To see any records that no longer need checking, change the



search to “No” or “Any”.

## SECTION 6 – Local Authority Audits of the HMRC Codes

The initial validation checks carried out by providers are:

- Once for existing children already attached to their headcount in the council's database
- Twice for new children not already on the system (an "Ad-Hoc" check done when the child first queries about a place, and an "Existing Child" check once the child has been added onto the headcount)

Providers DO NOT need to carry out subsequent checks when a parent /carer reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

The LA will carry out the required audits of the HMRC codes daily. The 'Extended Entitlement Expiration Dashboard (EEED)' on the portal (see section 5) will automatically update the start, end and grace period dates for children on the providers list.

The EEED on the portal will highlight all children who may be falling out of eligibility.

Providers are advised to utilise the EEED to keep abreast of start, end and grace period dates. SCC will send an email alert three times per term to remind providers to refer to the EEED to check the eligibility status of the children accessing EFE hours in their setting.

(Providers may recheck or reconfirm any child's eligibility at any time, by clicking the 'recheck now' link on the EEED results table.)

The LA will not fund Extended hours for children who are not eligible to claim in that period. Providers should confirm eligibility using the methods outlined in this document before offering any extended hours to the child.

## SECTION 7 – Further Information

### Parent/Carer information

Unlike the Two Year Old Eligibility Checker, childcare providers do not have the facility to assist carers with making applications for their children. This is because all eligibility checks are performed directly by HMRC.

Carers wishing to apply or find out more information should be signposted to the following places;

- Childcare Choices:  
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
- 30 Hours Free Childcare and Tax Free Childcare Applications:  
<https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/applynow>
- 30 Hours Free Childcare Telephone Helpline: 0300 123 4097

It is the responsibility of Parents/Carers to renew their eligibility with HMRC by the eligibility end date. HMRC will notify parents when they need to do this.

For guidance on other areas of the Provider Portal, please review the Provider Portal User Guide or the Two Year Old Funding User Guide. Both can be found online at <http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/fel-funding-providers>