

# Services for Young Children

## Parents/Carers Update – February 2021

Included this month: 30 hours childcare/Tax-Free Childcare, (COVID) face covering exemptions, Healthy Start and Hampshire Hospitals *Stay in Touch* messaging service

### Important! Currently accessing 30 hours childcare or Tax-Free Childcare, or wanting to apply to start in April?

If your child is receiving 30 hours childcare or Tax-Free Childcare make sure you re-confirm your information; or apply for the funding **before the 31 March 2021** to ensure that your child receives their entitlement with no gaps or delays from April 2021.

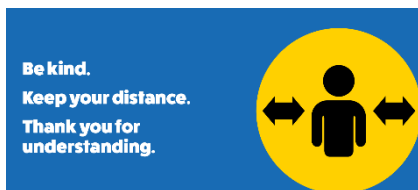
To re-confirm\* or apply, visit: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

\*Parents who already access the funding must check their childcare account to re-confirm.



Concerns about using early years and childcare service? Around 1,800 early years providers in Hampshire, like Pumpkin Patch Nursery, Farnborough are doing all they can to be COVID-19 safe in caring for children. Watch their video: <https://youtu.be/Afx4V96MEJU>

Are you a critical worker or a parent of a vulnerable child? [Find out about childcare in your area.](#) If you are struggling to find suitable early years and childcare services, please [complete this form](#) with your childcare requirements for assistance.



### Face covering exemptions

Since 24 July 2020 face coverings became mandatory in shops, supermarkets, shopping centres and enclosed transport hubs in England. However, this is not mandatory for people with disabilities or certain health conditions that make it difficult for them to wear a face covering.

Free [exemption cards and badges](#) are available for those who may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering because they are exempt. These can be downloaded onto a mobile phone or printed out.

### Healthy Start

Parents can receive through [Healthy Start](#), free vouchers every week to spend on milk, plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk. Free vitamins are also available.

To qualify – pregnant mums or have children under the age of four. Also parents on benefits, or pregnant and those under 18 years old.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the validity of the Healthy Start vouchers have been temporarily extended by 4 weeks, giving parents 12 weeks to use their entitlement.



Hampshire Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

### Stay in Touch Messaging Service

Hampshire hospitals have a new '[stay in touch](#)' messaging service which provides the opportunity for friends and family to share messages with their loved ones who are in hospital during the COVID-19 outbreak. As well as sending messages favourite tunes can be requested to be played on Hospital Radio Basingstoke or Winchester.