

## Joining the Directory of Providers

In order to take funded 9 months to 2 year olds, 2, 3 and 4 year olds, you must sign up to join the Tameside Directory of Providers and agree to the terms and conditions of the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Provider Agreement – April 2024.

To make an enquiry about joining the Directory please email the Early Education Funding Team at [earlyeducationfunding@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:earlyeducationfunding@tameside.gov.uk). A member of the team will contact you to outline the conditions and requirements of the free entitlement funding and answer any queries you may have around the application process.

Providers may need to be patient during the joining process. The priority of the Funding Team is to ensure all existing providers are paid promptly and the process below will be slotted into the work schedule as and when time allows.

### Application Process

New providers are advised that they should **apply to join the Directory at least one term prior** to expecting to receive funded children to ensure their application can be accommodated.

You **must** have good computer skills and an email address for communication purposes, providers will receive electronic communication or will be referred to the website for information.

1. You will be emailed the following:

- a sample copy of the Tameside MBC Provider Agreement and Declaration of Agreement which should be read in conjunction with;
- The Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance – April 2024

You should read both carefully to ensure that you are able to meet all the requirements of the agreement and to meet the requirements of delivery of Early Education Funding.

2. You will then be required to complete a Pre-Application Questionnaire with a member of the Funding Team. An application form, BACS form (Banking form to use internally to enable payment) and Sufficiency Establishment Details Form will then be issued which should be returned together with a copy of your most recent bank statement. The bank account must meet the requirements as detailed in Section 15.2 of the sample Tameside MBC Provider Agreement.
3. On receipt of the application form, the eligibility status of the provider will be checked with the:
- Families Information Services;
  - Department for Education;
  - Early Years Quality Officer

A new provider will not be included in the Directory until their registration and eligibility is confirmed. The council will also consider any information published by Ofsted about a provider including recent history about childcare provision or childcare at a particular address.

4. Once eligibility status has been confirmed a personalised Declaration of Agreement will be prepared and sent by post together with a covering letter. Please note this is a legal agreement and should only be signed if you are prepared to operate within the terms

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and conditions set out within the document. The provider will need to complete Form Annexe 1 and sign the agreement. The **entire document** should then be returned to the following address:

Tameside Council  
Early Education Funding Team  
PO Box 317  
Ashton Under Lyne  
OL6 0GS

5. The Department for Education (DfE) maintains a central directory of providers using information collected during the annual Early Years Census. Each January, the DfE carries out the Early Years Census by collecting, via Councils, information on all non-maintained providers. Ofsted has access to this database for the purpose of making arrangements for the inspection of providers newly included in the Directory of Providers at the earliest opportunity
6. Ofsted are the regulatory body who have responsibility for inspecting the provider's provision of free entitlement funding. Failure without reasonable excuse to submit to an inspection is a breach of condition of registration and the provider will be removed from the Directory immediately.

Upon receipt of your signed agreement you will be included in the Tameside Directory of Providers and you will receive email confirmation that you are able to take funded children.

**Please note** you will **not** be able to offer the funding until the Tameside MBC Declaration of Agreement has been received and approved by the Funding Team.

7. Your Provider Portal user name and password will be issued together with Parental Agreement and Funding Claim Forms. It is the provider's responsibility to keep their Provider Portal details secure but so they are accessible each term.

### Training

All providers will be offered basic Provider Portal training at the first available opportunity. The Early Education Funding Team will contact all new providers when dates are available, however where this cannot be accommodated immediately, 'How to Guides' can be found on the website to assist new providers that need to take funded children immediately.