



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
DDI: 01895 250692
CMD No: 1527

**To: COUNCILLOR SUSAN O'BRIEN
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES &
EDUCATION**

**COUNCILLOR MARTIN GODDARD
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE &
TRANSFORMATION**

c.c. All Members of the Children, Families &
Education Select Committee
c.c. Julie Kelly, Corporate Director of Children's
Services
c.c. Lisa Swales, Children's Services

Date: 18 September 2025

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025/26

DEPARTMENT: Children's Services

SERVICE AREA/ PROGRAMME: Early Years & Childcare Wraparound
Expansion Programme

RELEASE NO: 2

Dear Cabinet Members,

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Friday 26 September 2025** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Ryan Dell
Democratic Services

Title of Report: Early Years & Childcare Wraparound Expansion Programme. RELEASE
NO: 2

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....

*Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education / Cabinet Member for Finance &
Transformation*

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025/26

DEPARTMENT: Children's Services

SERVICE AREA/ PROGRAMME: Early Years & Childcare Wraparound Expansion Programme

RELEASE NO: 2

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Councillor Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Councillor Martin Goddard, Cabinet Member for Finance & Transformation
Responsible Officer	Julie Kelly, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Report Author & Directorate	Lisa Swales – Children's Services
Papers with report	Appendix A with capital release requests for approval Appendix B: Expression of Interest Form

HEADLINES

Summary	To seek Cabinet Member approval for the release of capital funds received to Hillingdon education providers to enable them to provide wraparound and extended early years childcare as recommended by the Department for Education.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the Council objective of strong financial management.
Financial Cost	<p>This report seeks the release of £480k for Early Years Entitlement and Wraparound Care programme, funded by the Department of Education grant.</p> <p>The works will commence upon release of the funds and are due for completion by 31 March 2026.</p>
Select Committee	Children, Families & Education Select Committee.
Ward(s)	All wards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Finance & Transformation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education:

- 1) approve the capital release request of £480k for the Early Years & Childcare Wraparound Expansion Programme funded by the Department of Education grant to support the expansion of the provision for early years and wraparound services (Appendix A); and**
- 2) agree to delegate authority to the Director of Education & SEND to determine individual awards to providers following receipt of expressions of interest for 2025/26 within the approved budget, and for subsequent years should the same or similar fully funded Government initiative continue.**

Reasons for recommendations

This paper sets out the individual capital release requests to Hillingdon education providers to enable them to provide wraparound and extended early years childcare as recommended by the Department for Education (DfE). Local authorities are required to prioritise this funding to address local priorities and is being provided to meet the capital costs associated with projects that help ensure sufficient places for:

- Children taking up an early years place through the expanded 30-hours entitlement for qualifying working parents (from the term following the child reaching 9-months to the term in which they turn 3-years-old);
- Increasing the supply of wraparound childcare for primary-school aged children.

This is part of the UK Government's broader strategy to improve access to childcare, support working families, and promote child development.

Alternative options considered / risk management

No alternative options are available as this is a required provision set out by the DfE. As the programme is part of a national policy, failure to deliver could result in scrutiny from Ofsted, central government, or local stakeholders.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background & National Context

The DfE has allocated £289 million to expand Early Years entitlements, which includes Wraparound Childcare from 8am to 6pm for all primary-aged children, by September 2026. Local authorities are expected to coordinate provision, distribute funding, and ensure sufficiency in their areas for this.

The expansion of early years entitlements in England is part of a phased rollout announced in the 2023 Spring Budget, aiming to support working families with younger children. In summary:

- From April 2024: Eligible working parents of 2-year-olds gained access to 15 hours of free childcare per week (over 38 weeks a year).
- From September 2024: This was extended to eligible working parents of children aged 9 months and older.
- From September 2025: The entitlement will increase to 30 hours of free early education and care per week (over 38 weeks a year) for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months and older.

Wraparound childcare plays a crucial role in supporting the expansion of early years entitlements by ensuring that families can access flexible, extended care beyond the core hours of early education. While the 30 hours entitlement covers core education hours (typically during the school day), wraparound childcare provides before and after school care, helping parents manage full working days. Wraparound childcare ensures continuity of care, reducing transitions and stress for children and parents. It allows families to combine early years entitlements with Tax-Free Childcare or Universal Credit Childcare, making the system more financially sustainable.

The early years expansion (including wraparound care) enables parents, especially those on Universal Credit, to work more hours or return to employment. It helps reduce the employment gap for parents, by aligning childcare availability with standard working hours. Without sufficient wraparound care or early childcare places parents may be forced to reduce hours or leave work, undermining national employment goals and increasing reliance on benefits.

The Department for Education (DfE) has provided local authorities with two funding streams to support the implementation of this programme, one of which is capital funding. This funding is for local authorities to support new / extended wraparound provision, including distribution to childcare providers. For capital projects only. This covers:

- a. Building new early years or wraparound childcare spaces
- b. Expanding or refurbishing existing settings
- c. Purchasing large-scale equipment or facilities improvement.

Local authorities in England have a central role in delivering this programme, and the expectations placed on them are clearly outlined in the DfE's official guidance.

A key strand of this is funding management; local authorities are expected to:

- Administer and monitor the use of DfE grant funding, ensuring it is used effectively and in line with programme objectives.
- Submit financial returns and impact reports to the DfE, including an end-of-year statement of grant usage.

If a local authority does not use all its allocated funding for early years entitlements (e.g., due to lower-than-expected take-up), the DfE may recover the unused portion.

Hillingdon's Context

Delivery of early learning and childcare provision in Hillingdon is through a mixed market of private and voluntary providers, including childminders, day nurseries and pre-schools, and through schools, including academies. Hillingdon has:

- 181 registered childminders
- 57 school-based nurseries
- 144 Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings
- 1 Council-maintained nursery school

Hillingdon has received £511,000 in Capital funding to support the expansion of 30-hours entitlement places and wraparound provision and has spent £31,000 to date.

As outlined above, the national programme for early years expansion began in April 2024 to give working parents access to 15 hours of childcare for 2-year-olds, and 9-month-olds from September 2024. Hillingdon had sufficient places to support this growth across existing providers and schools without the need for expansion.

As the hours will increase to 30 hours for working parents of two-year-olds and 9-month-olds from September 2025, the local authority has been working with providers who are willing and able to expand to meet this increase.

As part of this process, providers were invited to make an Expression of Interest (EOI) if they wished to extend their provision as part of the National Wraparound Childcare Programme (Appendix B).

To date 26 EOIs have been received. Each EOI was considered against the guidance set out by the DfE; if the EOI met the DfE requirements and demonstrated sustainability, funding was allocated. The amount of funding awarded was based on the number of children who would be able to access each place in the expanded provision.

To date 13 EOIs have been approved. Those EOI which were unsuccessful, all received feedback regarding their submissions which could be considered should they wish to resubmit.

Moving Forward

As further EOIs are received, these will be considered against the same criteria and funding allocated accordingly. The funding will be allocated via direct award as a one-off payment to the various organisations once their EOI has been approved. The local authority will also be working with providers in wards where data indicates there may be insufficient hours for those eligible for childcare to try to ensure any insufficiency can be adequately met. Unsuccessful EOIs will also be reviewed to see if there is further support available to meet the success criteria.

With the move of the Early Years service to Children's Services, sitting within the Education and SEND Directorate, this enables the team to work closely with the Education Improvement service to identify schools and settings that would be able to support this opportunity, through making use of existing space for example. Schools with lower school rolls could benefit from this opportunity with wrap around, as an extended offer is likely to attract more working families. It is hoped this will enable the Early Years service to promote the scheme more and ensure there is increased take up moving forwards.

Financial Implications

(Early Years & Wraparound Programme Budget £511k, Previously Released £31k Capital Release Requested £480k) – Appendix A

In February 2024 Cabinet accepted a £511k grant funding from the Department of Education for Early Years & Wraparound Programme.

Previously £31k has been released from the Early Years & Wraparound programme for the 13 successful expression of interests.

The report seeks the capital release of the remaining £480k of the budget for the Early Years & Wraparound Programme, which is to support the provision of childcare expansion.

Expression of Interests in early years and childcare wraparound provision will be assessed for eligibility and grants payments will be made to education providers who are successful as a one-off grant payment.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

The National Early Years Expansion Wraparound and Childcare Programme offers a wide range of benefits to residents:

Benefits for Families and Parents

1. Increased Employment Opportunities

- a. Parents, especially single parents, can work full-time or increase their hours, knowing their children are in safe, affordable care.
- b. Reduces reliance on informal or ad hoc childcare arrangements.

2. Financial Relief

- a. Affordable wraparound care reduces the cost burden of childcare, especially for low-income families eligible for Universal Credit or Tax-Free Childcare.

3. Improved Work-Life Balance

- a. Parents experience less stress and greater flexibility in managing work and family responsibilities.

Benefits for Children

1. Safe and Enriching Environment

- a. Children are cared for in a structured, supervised setting before and after school, reducing risks associated with being left alone.

2. Academic and Social Development

- a. Many wraparound programmes include homework help, reading time, and enrichment activities (e.g., sports, arts, STEM), supporting cognitive and social growth.

3. Inclusion and Equity

- a. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds gain access to the same extracurricular and developmental opportunities as their peers.

Benefits for Schools and Providers

1. Stronger School-Community Links

- a. Schools that host or partner with wraparound providers become community hubs, fostering trust and engagement with families.

2. Revenue Generation

- a. Schools and providers can generate income through wraparound services, supporting sustainability and reinvestment in education, which is especially important now where some schools are seeing a drop in pupil numbers. It can also help to attract more families, increasing pupil numbers, with an extended offer.

3. Improved Attendance and Punctuality

- a. Children who attend breakfast clubs or morning care are more likely to arrive on time and ready to learn.

Benefits for the Wider Community and Local Economy

1. Economic Growth

- a. More parents in work means increased household income, higher local spending, and reduced benefit dependency.

2. Job Creation

- a. The expansion of wraparound care creates employment opportunities in childcare, administration, and programme delivery.

3. Social Cohesion

- a. Community-based childcare fosters stronger neighbourhood ties and supports vulnerable families through inclusive services

Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)

A consultation with parents in the borough was conducted in Spring 2024 which sought information on their working patterns/commitments and the impact this has on childcare, if any.

435 responses were received in total, the majority of which were from parents (98.9%). Key findings of the consultation included:

- 49% of respondents stated that over the past year they have been prevented from taking up or continuing in a job or training because of a lack of suitable childcare.
- 55% of respondents expected to require the use of childcare in the next three years, with most preferring this to be provided through a day nursery or playgroup near to their home.
- 27% of respondents expressed an interest in wraparound childcare.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate finance concurs with the financial implications set out above, noting that the recommendation to release £480k for the early years and wraparound programme which will be funded from external grant. The release request will have no impact on Council resources.

Legal

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to make sure that there are enough childcare places within its locality for working parents or for parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 to 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

Thus there are no legal impediments to the capital release being authorised, although any contract that is entered into must comply with the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- DfE guidance for Local Authorities for Wraparound Care: [Wraparound childcare: guidance for local authorities - GOV.UK](#)
- DfE guidance for Local Authorities for Childcare expansion: [Childcare expansion capital grant funding - GOV.UK](#)
- [Hillingdon School Organisation Plan 2025/26](#)

APPENDICES

Appendix A with capital release requests for approval

Appendix B: Expression of Interest

APPENDIX A

Early Years & Childcare Wraparound Expansion Programme 2025/26 - CR 2

Location	Project/ Expenditure Title	Information	Funds Release Sought £000s	Approve	Hold	More Information Required
Boroughwide		Early Years & Childcare Wraparound Provision	480			
Total seeking release			480			
Previously released			31			
Budget			511			
Remaining budget			0			

APPENDIX B

Expression of Interest for programme funding for Wraparound Childcare

The government's ambition is that by September 2026 all parents and carers of primary school aged children, who need it, will be able to access term time wraparound childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm. This EOI is to support the development of new and expanded wraparound provision to meet current demand and to guarantee supply for future demand.

Name of School/Organisation	
Registered Office Address	
Contact Name	
Job Title	
Telephone Number	
Email address	
Legal Status of Organisation (please include company number/registered charity numbers as appropriate)	

The Wraparound Childcare programme delivery grant is intended to provide a contribution towards revenue costs to increase the availability of wraparound childcare for primary school aged children. This might include a contribution towards:

- Running costs whilst building demand
- Staffing, including recruitment costs
- Staff training, including specialist training for staff to ensure they feel equipped to support children with additional needs
- Essential resources to expand or create new places

Please highlight the category that you are planning to develop:

a) The creation of new wraparound childcare provision	Yes/No
b) The expansion of childcare places as part of a provision that already exists	Yes/No
c) Extension of the childcare hours, if not currently from 8am until 6pm	Yes/No

Please complete the tables below with your current offer, number of places, and planned expansion:

	Current opening hours	Current capacity	Planned opening hours	Planned capacity
Before school				

After school				
--------------	--	--	--	--

Please provide details of the estimated costs to deliver an increase in places or extend hours for the first year of operation.

A three-year cash flow projection to demonstrate financial sustainability must be submitted along with this EOI.

Programme costs (non-capital)	Estimated cost for year one (£)
Wraparound childcare staffing	
Premises rental / utilities	
Resources / equipment	
Wraparound consumables (food etc.)	
Wraparound workforce training and recruitment	
Other:	
Total programme funding costs for (non-capital)	
Non-capital funds provided from setting/school/childminder to support the programme	
Total programme grant funding applied for (non-capital)	
Programme costs (capital)	Estimated cost for year one (£)
Funding costs (capital)	
Capital funds provided from setting/school/childminder to support the programme	
Total programme funding applied for (capital)	

Please give an overview how you intend to create the new spaces/expanded provision and which school(s) you will be supporting. Detail what the money will be spent on.

Summary of funding being applied for:

Summary of total funding applied for	
Total programme funding applied for (capital and non-capital)	
Total funds from setting/school/childminder available to support the expansion project	

Expressions of Interest and the three-year cash flow projection, to demonstrate financial sustainability, will be considered by a panel on a regular basis.

Please return this form and a three-year cash flow projection to

fis@hillingdon.gov.uk

Please include the word **‘Wraparound’** in the subject heading.

ADMIN ONLY:

Grant application outcome	
	Accept proposal in full
	Accept with minor modifications for Wraparound Care Lead to follow-up. List here:
	Accept with reduced funding List here:
	Request re-submission to panel with changes List here:
	Application doesn't meet criteria requirements List here: