



Childcare Payments Bill Amendment briefing: Qualifying Childcare

Amendment

After clause 2(2)(b)(ii) insert—

(iii) to enable a qualifying disabled child to participate in education or recreation related to the child's wellbeing, or

(iv) to promote the wellbeing of the person where the qualifying child is a disabled child.

Purpose

Childcare support through the tax-free childcare scheme and the childcare element of Universal Credit should be made more flexible for parents with disabled children.

The draft regulations supporting clause 2 of the Childcare Payments Bill ('Qualifying childcare') state that parents may use the scheme to purchase childcare only where 'the main purpose, or one of the main purposes of which, is to work'. This requirement may cause problems for all parents but is particularly problematic for parents with disabled children.

The relationship between work, family life and childcare is not straightforward. Parents with disabled children are more dependent on accessing childcare provision to support family wellbeing and manage an often extremely tough combination of caring and work. Disabled children are also more dependent on organised activities which fall within the childcare registration system to stay active, make friends and participate in activities outside of school.

The definition of qualifying childcare should be extended to include childcare that supports carer wellbeing or educational and social activities for disabled children. Alternatively, children with disabilities could simply be exempted from the requirement.

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