**Planning to deliver the extended free entitlement for three and four year olds (EFE) through a mixed model partnership approach**

Many working parents will become entitled to an additional 570 hours per year (equivalent to an additional 15 hours per week over 38 weeks) of free early education and childcare for children aged three and four years from September 2017.

Whilst this is a great opportunity for working parents to manage their childcare needs and work requirements and for more children to receive high quality early education, it does present challenges for local authorities and providers in terms of:

* capacity – ensuring there are enough places available
* staffing – ensuring there are enough trained and qualified early years staff and teachers to deliver additional places
* sustainability – managing the financial impact of a funded rate to replace fee income

Local authorities and providers need to start planning now in order to be ready to respond to this EFE.

Whilst it is possible for providers to respond and meet the EFE individually, partnership approaches should also be considered, since working together can bring a level of flexibility that individual providers cannot achieve. Partnerships, however, need careful planning and preparation, over and above planning for supply of and demand for, additional childcare places. Partnership planning can include:

* Managing the partnership – having shared values, being clear about the purpose of the partnership, what it will achieve and how partners will work together, who convenes meetings, takes notes etc and what are the different roles and responsibilities.
* Legalities – is this an informal or formal partnership? If the latter, what type of [**Partnerships**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/working-parents-dfes-30-hours-mixed-model-partnership-toolkit) is this and what are the legal implications?
* Delivery model – how will the partnership work to deliver the service and what role will each partner play? The role of a local authority for example, will be different to that of a provider and the roles of different providers may also differ depending on the [**Delivery Model**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/delivery-models-dfes-30-hours-mixed-model-partnership-toolkit) being developed.
* Getting the environment right – are there changes to buildings that need to be made? How will these be planned and funded?
* Financial planning – are there revenue and / or capital implications and how will these be managed?
* Communication and marketing – how will these be managed and by whom? Who are the key stakeholders and what are the messages that the partnership will need to communicate? Who within the partnership will do this, etc.
* Assessment of risks – what are the key risks and how will they be managed and by whom? A full [**Risk Assessment Template**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/risk%20assessment%20template.xls) is available.

In this section you will also find an [**Action Plan Template**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/Action%20planning%20template.docx) and [**Action Planning Guidelines**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/action%20planning%20guidelines.docx), and some guidance on [**Assessing Risks**.](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/Assessing%20Risk.docx)