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Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol - Addysg a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol
Corporate Director - Education and Corporate Services

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Dear Parent/Carer,

As promised, I am writing to explain the availability of childcare provision (free and charged) within Caerphilly County Borough Council over the coming months. I appreciate that there has been a lot of change and different information over the last months.

What is available for 0-4 year olds until 31st August?

Children under 4 years old will be able to access free private childcare until 31st August through the Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS). Parents/carers will need to apply and provide evidence of key worker status and not being able to work from home for all adults in the household via the online application form

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Schools-and-learning/Covid-19-Childcare-provision>. The scheme will close on **10th July, 2020** for new applications.

What is available for older children until 31st August, 2020?

As people return to work and some people providing childcare remain shielded and vulnerable, pressure has grown on the local authority to provide for pupils, especially in the primary school phase. 'Hubs' have been hugely successful, but they came to an end on Friday, 26th June, 2020. Schools opened on Monday, 29th June and have to reserve places for those children of key workers who are urgently in need as well as for vulnerable pupils. Schools can only have up to 30% of their pupils on site at any time at the moment, so it is crucial that childcare places are only taken up if it is absolutely necessary, as teachers want to have sessions with as many pupils as possible. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to limit the number of days available for childcare. If this is the case, the headteacher will contact parents to advise.

When schools finish on 17th July, 2020, there will be a week's break before our summer programme begins. This is advised in order to minimise risk of transmission, as children move from one setting to another.

Whilst there is no expectation from Welsh Government that local authorities should organise childcare for children of key workers through the summer, Caerphilly County Borough Council have decided to offer a 2 week block to those most in need. Parents who have already been offered places in hubs, and who meet the revised eligibility for the summer programme, will be contacted with details of the offer by Wednesday, 8th July, 2020.

You can also book childcare with registered childcare providers through the Family Information Service (FIS) website.

<https://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/fis/family-zone>. You will be able to plan your childcare needs and make a private arrangement with the provider.

September 2020

We are awaiting further guidance from Welsh Government, but we want to support you to find long term solutions for your childcare needs.

0-10year olds can access childcare including wraparound provision through private registered childcare providers. There may be some support available if eligible for Childcare Offer (3-4year olds in part time school of working parents), Flying Start (2-3year olds living in specific areas for part time provision), or through the Tax-Free Childcare scheme for all aged children. You can work out your best option through the HMRC website <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>. Details of all registered childcare providers and support towards costs can also be found through the FIS website <https://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/fis/family-zone/support-costs>.

As we approach the end of a very challenging term, I want to thank you for all your patience and support during the application process and I hope that you find this information useful in the choices you have to make.

Yours sincerely,

Keri

Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer, Caerphilly CBC.