

Employer Leaflet



Newport Family Information Service
Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth Teulu Casnewydd



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newport.gov.uk/fis



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd
Family Information Service



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Working Parents

When entering employment or moving into to a new job, the main priority for working parents will be “how will this affect my family” and “what will my work/life balance be like”. Newport Family Information Service talk to parents daily about the needs of their family and the majority of those parents are either considering work, returning to work or adjusting to working whilst juggling the duties that come with having children. In our recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, working parents and employers told us that information and communication around the issue of working and being parents/carers could be better. Newport FIS are aiming to help improve the information that parents get from their employers by providing employers with quality information that they can use to support their employees.

The family friendly approach to employment

From 30 June 2014 every employee has the statutory right to request flexible working after 26 weeks employment service. Before this date this was only applicable to parents.

Family Friendly Work places have proven track records of high retention and improved work ethics. Knowing that your employer understands the demands of having small children can give employees peace of mind and motivate them to complete work and perform to a high standard consistently.

It can also improve Wellbeing and health which ultimately will improve the number of days taken as sick leave and reduce absenteeism.

The added value of flexible working will increase loyalty and commitment from staff which can reduce staff turnover and recruitment costs.

Having a reputation as a caring and flexible employer is of great value within the market place and in the long run will see your business thrive from having the best staff, and a happy working environment.

What an employee wants to know

• What flexible working benefits do you offer?

There are many forms of flexible working options that have proven to benefit business and employee wellbeing. Examples are: Term time only, flexi time contracts, condensed or compressed hours, part time working or reduced hours, all of which can increase productivity and can also save your company money on salaries and associated on-costs.

Obviously it's not always possible to offer all forms of flexible working due to the nature of your business but knowing that an employer is always open to listening is a real attraction for employees.

• **What will happen if my child is ill and I have to take time off work?**

For a lot of people heading back into employment, the worry of what will happen if children become ill, particularly if you have a child with additional or complex needs, is often real enough to put people off taking employment. Knowing procedures and protocols for family emergencies and having transparent communication is often very reassuring and will avoid unauthorised absenteeism and encourage loyalty from your workforce.

• **Do you offer salary Sacrifice or Childcare Vouchers? How do I register for the scheme?**

The increased drive to get people back into employment is unfaltering, and being better off is the current hot topic in the UK. Advertising your current financial incentives to existing employees and new recruits is a real attraction for many working parents. Often if both parents are working, childcare vouchers and child benefit are the only elements of financial assistance they are entitled to.

Even for those on a low income or those eligible for tax credits, the added incentives from employers can make all the difference for working parents or those returning to work. For the employer, salary sacrifice schemes can also save you money in the long term. Employers' savings occur through exemption from National Insurance Contribution on the value of the vouchers purchased by employees.

✳ **BUT YOU MUST COMPLY WITH HMRC GUIDELINES**
www.hmrc.gov.uk/payerti/exb/a-z/c/childcare.htm

A good benefits package can:

- **Attract and retain the best staff**
- **Enhance your image as a caring employer**
- **Save money on those joining the scheme**
- **Help to reduce absenteeism**

• Improve productivity and commitment of staff

Childcare voucher schemes are easy to set up and require little maintenance from the employer. The Government used the 2013 Budget to announce that a new tax-free childcare voucher scheme would be introduced in autumn 2015. Tax-free childcare was expected to provide parents with tax savings of up to £1,200 per child each year. Until this date employers are still able to set up childcare voucher schemes which means you are still able to enjoy NI savings. Parents already on the scheme will continue to remain on their existing scheme as long as their employer continues to run it. Initially, the government scheme will only account for children under 5 years of age which means many parents with children older than this accessing after school or holiday childcare will not be able to benefit from the savings until a later date.

• Where can I get information about childcare in the Local area?

If you have a business based in Newport then chances are the majority of your employees will need information on childcare within Newport particularly if they have children under 5 years of age. Newport Family Information Service offers parents advice on choosing childcare and provides accurate, up to date information on the childcare providers in the area directly from CSSIW and the childcare settings.

Newport FIS is available for parents to access information on the support available to them and how they can make the best of childcare for their situation.

Childcare Settings in Newport can be approached by businesses to purchase childcare places and / or negotiate corporate / employee discounts. Newport FIS can help you to identify those that would be willing to create business connections.

As an Employer, your staff could be reminded at various points during the year to arrange childcare for busy periods where they may forget or leave making arrangements too late thus impacting on productivity and increasing leave. Peak times of the year particularly for those with school aged children are Easter, Half Terms and Summer Holidays. Newport FIS could provide you with leaflets that could be distributed to your staff as a reminder to make timely arrangements for childcare during these periods to ensure that they are not caught off guard. It could also help to inform them of the benefits of choosing registered childcare which enables them to claim the childcare element of the working tax credits or redeem childcare vouchers.

There are a variety of childcare voucher schemes available and these can easily be found on the internet by searching “**childcare vouchers**” or by visiting the HM Revenue & Customs website: www.hmrc.gov.uk/childcare

For childcare options and advice in Newport
contact **0800 328 84 83** or visit
www.newport.gov.uk/fis

