



Members identified that availability and cost of childcare were a major barrier to business growth in the region in the North-e Business Week Survey 2013.

## Why is childcare an important issue in the North-east?

Currently, all Scottish 3- and 4-year-olds and disadvantaged 2-year-olds are entitled to 600 hours of part-time free childcare per year (12.5 per week). The Scottish Government has stated they will double the government-funded hours of childcare places to 30 per week for these same age groups.



The Conservatives would prioritise extending funded hours for disadvantaged 1- and 2-year-olds. They would then expand part-time hours gradually to all 1-4 year-olds.

They want to allow parents to use their entitlement at any point during the year.

Labour want the same entitlement extensions as the SNP, but they also want the entitlement to be "flexible, all-age, year-round and wrap-around".

They want to provide more language development support.

The Lib Dems want to extend the funded hours to all 2-year-olds and increase access to graduate-qualified professionals and free meals.

They also want local authorities to map where free childcare is provided to give parents more information.

The SNP pledged to double the free hours of childcare and provide free meals for the age groups mentioned above.

They would invest £500 million a year to create 600 new early learning and childcare centres and create an induction programme for childminders.

The **Green party** wants to place a GTCS qualified teacher in every nursery and give 20 hours early-years education per week.

**UKIP** does not mention childcare in their manifesto.

## Further information

## Important Updates

**What does North-east business want from the next Scottish government?**

Read it here [bit.ly/1Ddlo5l](http://bit.ly/1Ddlo5l)

*These papers have been drafted by the AGCC policy team using the information publicly available on date. More information will be added as and when it becomes available.*