

Free childcare for 3 & 4 year olds +15 hours toolkit

+15 hours free early education for 3 & 4 year olds

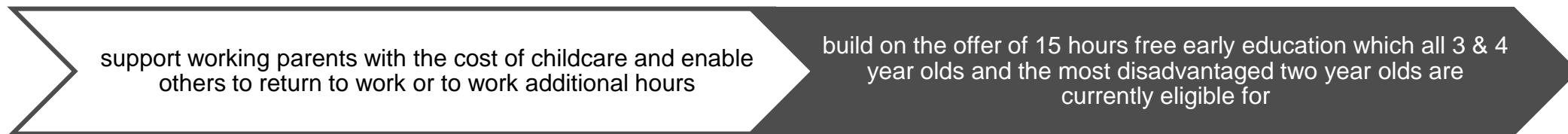
This toolkit will help early years professionals plan for the implementation of +15 hours. It aims to support you identify the demographics of your local area that are likely to influence the demand for +15 hour places and the impact that will have on Free Early Education for Two year olds (FEET) and the existing universal offer of 15 hours of Free Early Education for 3 & 4 year olds.

This tool kit will be updated regularly as new information becomes available, it will be available online soon at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/childcare-professionals/funding-for-childcare-professionals/providing-free-early-education>

What is +15 hours?

From September 2017, some working parents of 3 & 4 year olds will be eligible to get an extra 15 hours of free childcare per week. This is in addition to the current 15 hours of free early education per week which all 3 & 4 year olds are entitled to.

The reason the government is introducing +15 hours is to:



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Department for Education (DfE) consultation 3 April 2016 states:

"This government is delivering on its commitment to double the amount of free childcare for working parents of three and four year olds."

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and that's why all three and four year old children and the least advantaged two year olds can already access 15 hours a week of high quality early education to prepare them for school and to improve their life chances."

"But we know that the main reason families struggle to get out of poverty is a lack of sufficient income from parental employment."

"Our commitment to improve life chances and social justice means that we are giving working parents 30 hours per week of free childcare for their three and four year olds."

The plan is to implement the extended free entitlement +15 hour from September 2017 for all eligible families that apply.

Who's eligible?



What we already know

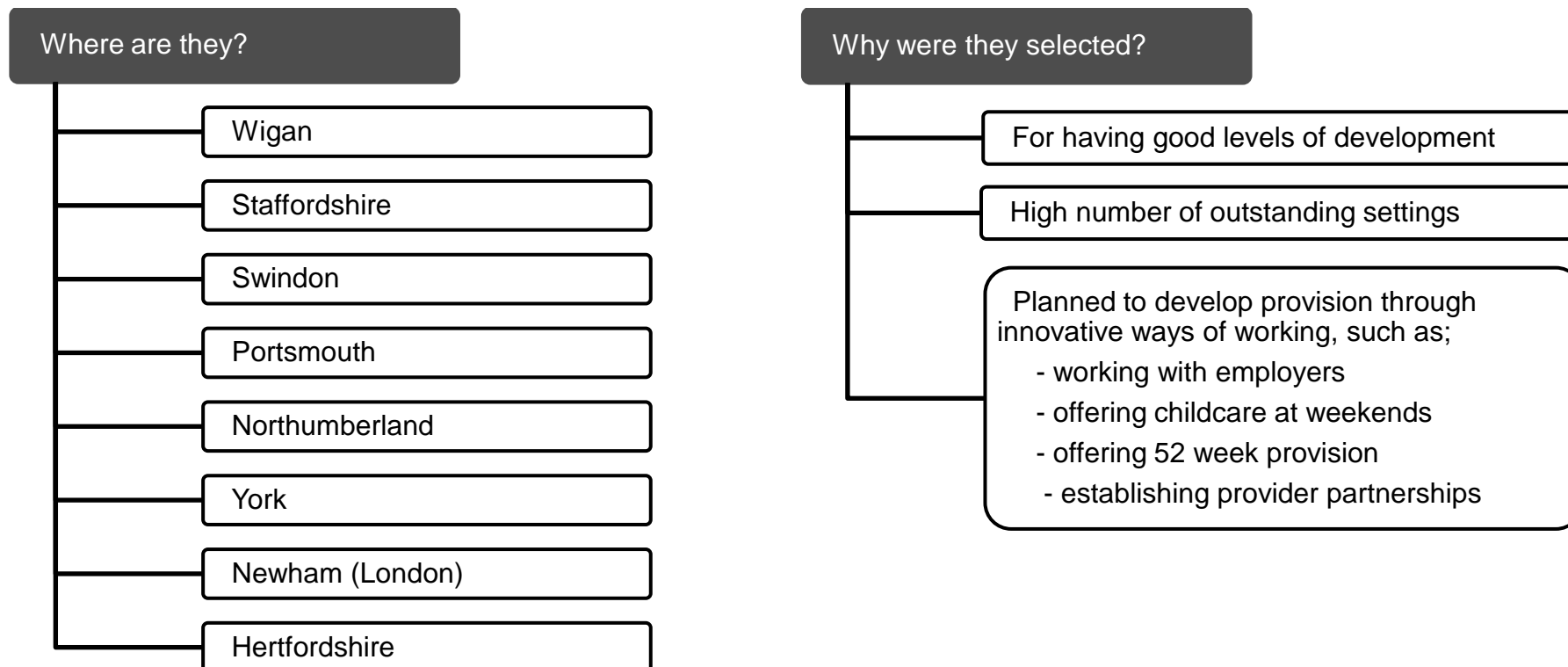
Page 49 We know that the majority of working families with 3 & 4 year olds already use more than 15 hours of childcare per week. Government figures indicate that just over 20% currently take 25 hours or more. This means that many 3 & 4 year old children will already be attending a setting for more than 15 hours and won't need additional places, although they may want to increase the hours they take or use another provider to access additional hours.

The DfE estimates that nationwide 29.7% of children will be eligible for the additional 15 hours, which is around 8457 in Surrey. We know that many families use family members to allow them to work more hours without additional costs but it's hard to predict how many of these families will want to use formal childcare instead, if they become eligible. We are carrying out research to identify key areas where there will be eligible families.

It will be necessary to create many additional places and we need to make sure that capacity is in the right location to meet demand and available at the times that working parents will need it. You'll probably already have a feel for what the local need for +15 hour places will be and we produce a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment that shows where future places are likely to be needed. [This document is available on our website](#) just search for it at www.surreycc.gov.uk

Early implementers:

A small number of early implementer areas began delivering the +15 hours entitlement for 12 months from September 2016.



What do you need to consider when planning to implement +15 hours

This section will explore the information that you may need to consider when planning to implement the +15 hours. It is important to recognise that this will vary based upon your own provision and your local demographics, so consider:

- consultation and research
- reflection and analysis
- partnership working
- premises
- admissions
- information
- staffing
- delivery model.

Consultation and research

In order to plan effectively you should consider

- How many of your children will qualify for +15 hours?
- How many children will take up some or all of these extra hours?
- What patterns of access are they mostly looking for?
- Are parents aware they can spread their free hours over up to three different types of provider, and over a full year?

Tasks to consider

- Send a questionnaire to parents both current and those on the waiting list.

Look outside of your usual partnerships

- Additional local parent survey.
- Visit parent and toddler groups or soft-play groups.
- Contact larger local employers to identify demand for additional places when their eligible staff become entitled to additional childcare.
- Speak to your local children's centre to see what their analysis of local demand is.
- Consult local school maintained nurseries which may have to reduce the overall number of children they can accommodate due to the take-up of more sessions.
- What are other nearby providers doing? Ask them at the local area forums.
- Look at other setting's websites to see what they are doing and how they are promoting it.
- Consider offering something different or unique, such as extended hours of opening, different number of weeks or forest school activities and include these possibilities in your questionnaire.
- Make sure your questionnaire helps to evaluate your present business, whether any changes are needed or if parents are looking for different services.

Useful web pages



Childcare business team guidance notes [Questionnaire guidance](#)



What parents say about Childcare in Surrey (available soon on www.surreycc.gov.uk)

Reflections and analysis

Now review the responses to your research

- What hours, days, sessions do most parents say they want?
- What changes or additional services are needed locally and what can you do to help meet this need or fill this gap?
- How will you change your business model to meet identified need whilst keeping a balance between 30 hour, 15 hour, fee paying and FEET funded places?

Consider the patterns of delivery

- Do parents want longer or additional sessions, for instance:
 - a) Could you open earlier, such as starting 30 minutes earlier?
 - b) Could you offer extended sessions such as finishing 30 minutes or an hour later?
 - c) Is there any demand for a funded early drop-off or breakfast session?
 - d) Is there a need for later pick up times or after school facility?
- Can you extend your hire hours at the premises, what are the barriers to this and can they be overcome?
- Do parents want more flexible or stretched childcare across the year?
- Would parents consider using other forms of childcare such as combining sessional care with home-based childcare, holiday playschemes or weekend childcare?
- Is there local demand for holiday playschemes, this could range from one to three weeks during school holidays to full holiday playscheme provision?
- Is there demand for weekend childcare? Does anyone provide this locally and would the premises be available?
- If you could offer more than 38 weeks a year at the setting, what is the effect on rent, staff costs and other overheads, remembering that opening for more weeks each year will reduce the number of funded hours available per week (see table below)?
- Do you have problems filling afternoon sessions? If so consider a different business model such as a 2.5 day model (see page 15) which could be expanded fairly easily to a 30 hour model.
- Consider what the impact might be if other local settings offer extended hours and you don't or you offer it first. Will you lose or attract more business?
- If you can't change your offer due to premises or give parents what they want, could you make informal links with another provider and offer a joined-up, stretched service? (see page 8 for ideas under partnership working).

Important reminders when undertaking your reflections and analysis

You **don't** have to offer 38 weeks, consider 40 weeks, 42 weeks, 46 weeks or 50 weeks a year, and spread the +15 hours a week (+570hours) over a longer period at fewer hours a week?

You **don't** have to offer all 30 hours, a few extra may be all that is needed, 20 or 25 hours a week may suit parents?

You need to remain viable and profitable, so you also need to **keep some places for children that are not entitled** to +15 hours, and FEET children moving into Free Early Education for 3 & 4 year old sessions.

Stretched funding table

This table shows how the universal free early education offer of 15 hours per week over 38 weeks can be spread over more than 38 weeks per year.

| | Universal offer of 570 hours per year e.g. 3 hrs a day, 5 days a week | Universal offer plus 190 extra funded hours per year e.g. 4 hrs a day, 5 days a week | Universal offer plus 380 extra funded hours per year e.g. 5 hrs a day, 5 days a week | Universal offer plus 570 extra funded hours per year e.g. 6 hrs a day, 5 days a week |
|----------------|---|--|--|--|
| weeks per year | hours per week | total funded hours per week | total funded hours per week | total funded hours per week |
| *38 | 15.00 | 20.00 | 25.00 | 30.00 |
| 40 | 14.25 | 19.00 | 23.75 | 28.50 |
| 42 | 13.57 | 18.10 | 22.62 | 27.14 |
| 44 | 12.95 | 17.27 | 21.59 | 25.91 |
| 46 | 12.39 | 16.52 | 20.65 | 24.78 |
| 48 | 11.87 | 15.83 | 19.79 | 23.75 |
| 50 | 11.40 | 15.20 | 19.00 | 22.80 |
| 52 | 10.96 | 14.62 | 18.27 | 21.92 |

***You have to offer free early education for a minimum of 38 week per year unless an exemption has been granted.**

The first two columns show how the universal free early education offer of 15 hours per week over 38 weeks could be spread over a longer period.

The next three columns show examples of how you can spread extended hours over a different number of weeks depending on the total number of extended hours you are offering.

If a parent takes up more hours than the total funded hours you're offering, they will need to pay fees for any unfunded time.

Partnership working

The government is keen to see

- More informal working arrangements.
- Joint approaches to offering the +15 hours.
- Who you can team up with if you can only offer the universal 15 hours? In this case parents who need +15 hours still come to your setting for their universal 15 hours and go to someone else for the +15 hours.

Partnership considerations

- Up to three providers can claim funding for a single child but you will need to agree with parents and partners which are the universal hours, which are the +15 hours and who is claiming for what.
- The +15 hours could be withdrawn if a child becomes ineligible.
- Will you work closely with local childminders? Can you offer parents a joint arrangement that involves the nursery and childminders splitting the universal and +15 hours?
- Can you offer extra weeks during school holidays as part of holiday provision?
- Can you liaise with an after school club to pick children up or for your staff to take them there? That way the parent can split their funded hours over a longer period; for example three hours a day with you and three with them. Find out what age they cater for and what hours they're open, typically 3 - 6.30pm.
- Can you liaise with a breakfast club, these typically run in schools from 7.30am – 8.45am. If appropriate, can you offer four or five hours a day in addition to their one hour a day?
- Can you liaise with playgroups, which typically run in community buildings, church and sports halls. Can you partner with a playgroup to split the +15 hours between you?
- Can you liaise with a full day care, private or chain day-care nursery, which may not offer the universal 15 hours? You may be able to split the free sessions between you to the advantage of both of you. Day care settings often open 51 weeks per year, so may offer stretched funding, which would be around 21.92 hours each week over 51 weeks, but not all day care settings do this.

Partnership examples

Example A

15 hours per week term time over 38 weeks at a *pre-school and +15 hours at a holiday playscheme

- Offers parent 15 hours a week term time (570 hours) and typically 30 hours per week x 10 weeks per year = additional 300 hours at playscheme.
- Benefits: No change for pre-school which still offers 570 hours per year. Holiday playscheme does not charge parents for their first 30 hours of care each week, which over 10 weeks allows parents to access 300 of their additional 570 hours childcare. That leaves 270 hours per week available, which they could use with a childminder or after school club during term time.

Example B

*Pre-school extends by 5 weeks per year: (1 week at Easter, May and autumn half term and 2 weeks in summer holidays).

- Open an additional 6 hrs per day, 5 days a week x 5 weeks = 150 hours, which still leaves parents more than 400 hours to take elsewhere.
- Benefits: The pre-school earns an additional 150 funded hours for each child and offsets the cost against items such as the additional rent and overall staff costs.

Example C

*Pre-school sets up an informal arrangement with a home-based

- Collect children when pre-school finishes, to provide extended day facilities for three hours per day (3pm-6pm) term time only.
- Benefits: No additional costs for pre-school, but can now offer eligible parents their full 30 hours entitlement by accessing their universal 15 hours per week, and through a partnership arrangement, up to a further 15 hours a week, term time at the after school facility or home-based childcarer.

Example D

*Pre-school or home-based childcarer links up with a local

- If the local school cannot offer nursery 3-4 year olds more than 15 hours a week, collect them from school nursery at 3pm and provide funded extended day facilities up to 3 hours per day
- This makes up the full 570 hours per year. (3 hrs per day x 5 days per week x 38 weeks a year)
- Benefits: Where the pre-school or home-based childcarer has premises available, and capacity, this would earn an additional 15 hours a week income from each child for 38 weeks per year, which needs to be offset against the additional staff and other overheads.

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*or nursery

Premises

Challenge the places at your current provision

- Check capacity and if floor space allows can you offer additional places?
- Is a building an extension possible?

Things to consider

- You must allow 2.3 sq metres for each 3-5 year old and 2.5 sq metres for each 2 year old (Statutory Framework, section.3.57). Ofsted no longer registers a setting to take a specific number of children, but settings must comply with these space requirements, and we still recommend a toilet and washbasin for every 10 children.
- If you can expand your premises to take additional children, find out if you need planning consent.
- Consider neighbours, traffic, drop-off and pick up times or potential clashes with schools and other businesses working hours which should be avoided?
- Are your premises available outside of your existing hours?
- Are you allowed to extend opening times under terms of your lease?
- Are there any local planning restrictions or actual ones on your premises?
- What would be the effect on your rent?
- Will you need any additional equipment such as changing tables or extra storage?
- Do you need to include rest or sleep areas?
- Does the building have a facility to provide lunches?
- If you can't extend sessions where you are now, are there other nearby premises available for part of the week for you to expand into such as sports halls, Scout or Guide huts or village halls? Is there an opportunity to offer Forest School?

Important reminders when reviewing availability

- If you make changes to your capacity or facilities, let your insurance provider know the details.
- Notify Ofsted of all changes ([Statutory Framework section 3.77](#)).

Admissions

Review your existing admissions policy

- Make sure your admissions policy reflects any changes you make and that it's easy for parents to understand.

Things to consider

- Will you keep a certain number of places for local children, FEET places and 2 year fee-paying places?
- How can you offer +15 hours while still offering enough universal 15 hour Free Early Education (FEE) places for those that don't qualify for +15 hrs and enough Free Early Education for Two year olds (FEET)?
- How many hours of each will you offer?
- How will you prioritise and deal with requests from parents; will you have separate waiting lists?
- How will you record which are the universal hours and which are the +15 hours sessions, so you can easily identify them in case of a dispute, or the parents want to split them between more than one provider?
- What happens if a child no longer qualifies for +15 hours funding?
- What happens when an existing universal hours child becomes eligible for +15 hours?
- How do your opening dates compare with other settings and schools? Do they allow parents to seamlessly access +15 hours across both your and other providers' settings?
- Do you need to change your application process such as your calendar, deadlines and timings?
- Is there a process for appeals?
- When will you update these changes on your web pages?

Important reminders when reviewing your admissions

- Review and revise your application forms and parental contracts showing requests and offers for universal hours and +15 hours separately.
- You won't be able to meet the needs of **all** parents.

Information

What?

- What parent information needs to be changed or developed? How soon can you do this?
- How will parents find you and your offer?
- Be clear and concise.




Identify and promote your unique offer!

- It's worth spending time updating your:
 - a) website, see guidance on web site marketing
 - b) social media
 - c) all other marketing materials such as prospectus, leaflets and banners, see guidance on marketing
 - d) notice boards
 - e) application forms
 - f) adverts
 - g) wording on parent contracts, including what happens if they no longer qualify for +15 hours.

Who else?

- Community information:
 - a) let local children's centres know what you are offering
 - b) put adverts in local papers, community or church newsletters
 - c) share information on your notice board,
 - d) promote your offer at places like soft play centres and leisure centres
- Tell Ofsted about any changes to your opening hours, - check if you need to register on an additional or different register?
- You should let Surrey Early Years & Childcare Service, Children's Centre, Surrey Family Information Service, Netmums and your borough's community information team know about any changes to your opening times.

Important reminders when thinking about information you want to share:

-  Update your website as a priority.
-  Be clear about your social media, see Surrey Early Years & Childcare Service's social media marketing guidance.
-  If you share information **early on**, you might capture a greater share of the market.

Staffing

Consider the effect of changed hours on staff requirements

- Do you need to revise your staffing model, such as recruiting additional staff for lunch cover or extended hours?
- Can you maintain staff roles and ratios for extended hours such as for DLs and SENCOs?
- Can you recruit staff on a short term basis for holiday playschemes?
- Have you considered recruiting students to work in holiday playschemes?
- Do existing staff want to extend their working hours?
- Do you have a robust recruitment process in place?
- Remember existing staff going for new roles in the setting should still go through your normal recruitment procedures.
- Make the most of opportunities to recruit staff, remember that parents will be able to access more free childcare and get rewarded for taking part time or full time paid employment and might consider a career in childcare.
- Consider returning maternity leavers who may well be able to afford more childcare and return earlier.

Financial implications for staffing

- What is the effect on wages?
- Will you need to identify extra money for additional staff responsibilities, additional holiday pay, training budget for staff undertaking continuous professional development and qualifications?
- What is the effect on staff holiday requests; do you need to change your policy regarding leave entitlement and will this change their holiday pay calculation?
- Will this bring them into automatic workplace pension entitlement?
- Does this affect your insurance policy?

Staff working hours

- If you are looking at changing staff contracts or working patterns you will need to consult with staff.
- Be clear about notice period requirements in staff contracts.
- Consultation should be offered and undertaken on an employee by employee basis.
- You may find the *ACAS: Changing staff terms and conditions and our *Contract of employment guidance and template useful.

*See links on page 14

Qualifications

- If you are extending your hours can you meet child: staff ratios and meet qualification requirements?
- Do staff wish to undertake additional qualifications?
- Are staff aware of sources of funding for qualifications?
- Are you still meeting the EYFS requirements for paediatric qualified first aiders?

Training

- Will staff need to do additional training if so, which training and when?
- Do you have a training budget set aside?
- Do you have a training agreement in place?
- Remember to update your staff training and development plan regularly and to include safeguarding training for all staff.

Useful web pages when reviewing staff requirements

| | | |
|---|------------------------|---|
| ● | Staff requirements | Childcare Jobs Recruiting Childcare Professionals, Retaining Childcare Professionals |
| ● | Financial implications | holiday pay entitlement calculations automatic workplace pension entitlement |
| ● | Staff working hours | ACAS: Changing staff terms and conditions Contract of employment guidance and template |
| ● | Qualifications | Department for Education Early Years Qualification List Early Years Foundation Stage |
| ● | Training | Department for Education Early Years Qualification List Staff Training and Development Plan and guidance |

Delivery model**Cohorts**

- How many of the following children do you need in each group for optimum succession each year?
 - a) Fee paying 2 year olds
 - b) FEET
 - c) Universal 15 hours
 - d) +15 hours

Financial forecasting

- Taking all the following into consideration:
 - a) prepare financial cash flow forecasts with different times, days and numbers of children
 - b) see what effect using different scenarios such as occupancy levels might have
 - c) gauge the most cost effective solution
 - d) identify possible financial issues early on

2.5 day model

- Consider a 2.5 day model. It involves offering just two options: 6 hours Monday, 6 hours Tuesday and 3 hours Wednesday as one option. Or 3 hours Wednesday, 6 hours Thursday and 6 hours Friday as the other option. You could offer parents the option of buying an additional half week.
- Retaining a certain number of 15 hours only places for FEET funded children and fee paying 2 year olds could help make sure that you have a core number of children staying with you for the following academic year.

Important reminders when reviewing your delivery model:

Many children won't be entitled to +15 hours, including FEET funded children who often benefit most from professional childcare. How will you make sure you treat these children fairly?



To remain viable each year, you need to work out your occupancy to keep some FEET and fee paying 2 year old places within the mix, to make sure you have a core of existing children moving to three year old places each September.

Useful weblinks and contacts

Business Team

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FEET Team

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Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service

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Free Entitlement Team

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Playwork Team:

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Home-based Childcare Team:

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