13 November 2017

Dear Parent / Legal Guardian

**Important Notice**

**Closure of the University’s Childcare Voucher Scheme (CCV) to new joiners and changes for existing members**

Please note you are receiving this communication as you have ordered childcare vouchers and / or have been on maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave within the last 5 years.

**Background**

Earlier this year the Government introduced a new Tax Free Childcare (TFC) scheme for parents with children under the age of 12 (or 17 if disabled) and this is currently being rolled out in phases.

With the introduction of the TFC scheme, the University’s salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme (CCV), operated in conjunction with Computershare Voucher Services, must close to new joiners and the official date for closure is expected to be no later than 5 April 2018.

TFC is only available through the appointed Government body (National Savings & Investments) and not through the University.

**What is the difference between the two schemes?**

The Government’s childcare choices website contains comprehensive information on the types of childcare support available and you must consider which scheme you wish to be part of. The eligibility for TFC is different to childcare vouchers. TFC requires that both parents have to be working to be eligible for TFC (unless you are a lone parent).
I am already registered with Computershare, how will I be affected?

If you are already registered with Computershare you may continue ordering vouchers as long as you meet all of the eligibility criteria.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) state that you must also order at least one voucher in every rolling 12 month period (minimum order £20). For example - one order of at least £20 must be placed in the period April 2017 to March 2018 to maintain your registration for April 2018.

If you do not meet this requirement your only option will be to join the new TFC scheme, if eligible.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you adhere to the rules of your scheme.

Can I be part of the new TFC scheme and the University’s CCV scheme?

No. If you leave the University’s CCV scheme for TFC you are not permitted to rejoin at a later date.

It is not possible for one parent to be in the University’s CCV scheme and one parent in TFC.

Do I need to switch to TFC by April 2018?

No, you can make the switch from childcare vouchers to TFC at any time, even after April 2018.

What happens if my employment contract ends but I recommence work with the University or another employer within a 12 month period?

You will be classed as a new joiner and unable to join the CCV scheme if you recommence after March 2018, even if you are still registered with Computershare.

Can I join the CCV scheme before my first baby is born?

No, you must be a parent/legal guardian to join the CCV scheme.

If your child is born before April 2018 and you wish to join the scheme please register by 31 March 2018. If you are on maternity leave you can place an ‘advance order’ for a date up to 12 months in advance.

If your first child is born after 31 March 2018 then TFC may be you only option. This will depend on the exact date that the scheme closes to new joiners, expected to be 5 April 2018.
I am on maternity / paternity / adoption or shared parental leave but have insufficient salary to sacrifice for a childcare voucher, what should I do?

Please contact Jane Elliott-Simm, HR Adviser (jane.elliott-simm@ncl.ac.uk) so that the details of your case can be considered in more detail.

How do I sign up to the University’s salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme?

You need to register at www.computersharevoucherservices.com using Scheme Reference 10348 (University of Newcastle). More information on our scheme is available at www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/childcare-vouchers.php

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent / Carer deadline for new orders, amendments and cancellations:</th>
<th>Salary reduction to take place on:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 5 December 2017</td>
<td>29 December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 9th January 2018</td>
<td>31 January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 6th February 2018</td>
<td>28 February 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 7th March 2018</td>
<td>29 March 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Friday 6th April 2018</td>
<td>30 April 2018</td>
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* Please note that this deadline date is after the expected closure date of the scheme and therefore any new parents registering after 31 March 2018 may not be permitted to join the scheme.

Useful websites

www.giveyourselfachoice.com  
www.computersharevoucherservices.com  
www.childcarechoices.gov.uk  
www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/childcare-vouchers.php

Please keep up to date with the University’s childcare voucher scheme changes on the University’s website listed above.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully

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