



Parent Guide to Early Education & Childcare Funding

2025-2026

Early Education and Childcare (Early Years) funding is available for eligible children aged from 9+ Months to 4 years old who attend an Early Years Provider (Provider) that is registered either with Ofsted or a Childminder Agency who is additionally registered with London Borough of Havering Council as an 'approved' provider.

It is a requirement that all Early Years Providers follow the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) curriculum.

Where can I access funded early education and childcare?

Those that are located in, and registered with London Borough of Havering (in-addition to Ofsted or Agency) can deliver funded early education and childcare.

These provider types include:

- Childminders
- Day Nurseries
- Preschools
- Schools (Academy, Free, Maintained and Independent)
- Out of School Clubs

You can find a list of providers on the Havering Family Service Directory (FSD). Information available (but no limited to) includes opening / closing times, voluntary charges, Ofsted grades and more. Please visit www.havering.gov.uk/earlyyears for further information.

How long is Early Years funding available throughout the day?

Early Years funding is available between 6am and 8pm. No session must be longer than 10 hours per day, and funding can be used at a maximum of two providers in one day. Families must be able to access their funded hours in continuous blocks with no artificial breaks inserted throughout the day.

What entitlements are available?

The following entitlements are available for eligible families:

9+ Month Entitlement (Under 2's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year.• 20/22 hours per week stretched up-to 52 weeks of the year.
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2 Year Old Families Receiving Additional Support Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year. 10/11 hours per week stretched up-to 52 weeks of the year.
2 Year Old Working Families Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year. 20/22 hours per week stretched up-to 52 weeks of the year.
3&4 Year Old Universal Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year. 10/11 hours per week stretched up-to 52 weeks of the year.
3&4 Year Old Extended Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year. 20/22 hours per week stretched up-to 52 weeks of the year.

When can children start accessing a funded place at an early years provider?

Eligible children can start at an early years provider from the term after they turn either nine months old, or their second / third birthday. This depends on the offer they are accessing. All four year olds that are not in a reception class are eligible for early years funding.

A child born in the period	Will become eligible for a place from
01 April to 31 August	September (Autumn Term)
01 September to 31 December	January (Spring Term)
01 January to 31 March	April (Summer Term)

Eligibility Criteria

(In order of Working Families, 2YO and 3&4YO)

Working Families Entitlements: (9+ Month Entitlement, 2 Year Old (2YO) & 3 and 4 Year Olds (3&4YO): (30hrs)

- Parents must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage)
- If you, or your partner are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you may still be eligible.
- Parents are unable to get 30 hours free childcare if one, or both, each individually expect to earn £100,000 adjusted net income or more.
- Parents are automatically eligible for this offer if they are already accessing Tax-Free Childcare.

To make an application, you must visit the Best Start In Life website on: [Homepage | Best Start in Life](#) – If you are eligible, you will be provided with an 11-digit code. You



will need to take this to your provider along with any evidence required (such as ID, child birth certificate).

Important Note: These codes require renewing each and every term. Failure to renew your code may result in losing access to your entitlement.

2 Year Old Entitlement for Families Receiving Additional Support (15hrs)

Applications for this entitlement available for eligible 2 Year Olds must be made online at www.havering.gov.uk/earlyyears. If you are eligible, you will receive a voucher code from the Local Authority which you will need to provide to your early years provider.

Families will be eligible for 15 hours free childcare if:

- Parents are claiming Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or income-related Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)
- Parents are claiming Tax Credits with an income of less than £16,190
- Parents are claiming Universal Credit with an income of less than £15,400
- Children is looked after by a Local Authority, with special guardianship, child arrangement or adoption orders in place following a period of time in Local Authority care.
- Children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Children has an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)
- Children of Zambrano Carers
- Children of a subset of failed asylum seekers (supported under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 – ‘the 1999 Act’)
- Children of eligible families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) (*please see below for further information*)

I feel that I meet the above criteria, but my application has been returned as ‘Not Eligible’ – What do I do?

If you have submitted an application for the 2 Year Old Families Receiving Additional Support Entitlement, and you have been advised you aren’t eligible; you must contact the Early Years Admissions Team so they can carry out a manual assessment to determine your eligibility status. You can email the team on:

earlyyearsadmissions@havering.gov.uk

I have ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’, how do I apply for the 2 Year Old Families Receiving Additional Support Entitlement?

If you are a family that have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and wish to apply for the 2 Year Old entitlement; you must contact the Early Years Admissions team directly (earlyyearsadmissions@havering.gov.uk). An application form will be sent to you which will detail evidence that will be required in order for the Local Authority to determine your eligibility status.

Information can be found below on eligibility criteria:



- Children of families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private / family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Have a household income below £34,500 if they have one child; or
- Have a household income below £38,600 if they have two or more children.

3 and 4 Year Old Universal Entitlement (15hrs)

No application for funding is required to access this entitlement. All three year olds from the term after their third birthday and all four year olds (not in a school reception class) are eligible.

No code is required to access this entitlement.

I am a foster carer, how can I apply for a 30 hours code?

If you are a foster carer, you will need to contact the responsible Local Authority (where the child originates) and liaise with your Social Worker. They will need to complete an application form with you which will need to be processed by the Early Years Team in the responsible Local Authority for approval.

Conditions

What conditions must parents meet before accessing the entitlements?

Two conditions must be met by parents before they can access the early education and childcare entitlements. These are as follows:

- **Condition 1 – Code issued:** The parent must have received a valid 11 digit code from the Best Start In Life Service by the end of term before the code is to be used.
- **Condition 2 – Child's age:** Children must be in the term after their 9+ Month milestone, second or third birthday. If aged 4, they must not be in a School reception class.

Conditions 1 & 2	Term in which code can be used
01 April – 31 August	September – December (Autumn Term)
01 September – 31 December	January – March (Spring Term)
01 January – 31 March	April – August (Summer Term)

Other Conditions:

- A Grace Period has been put in place by government to assist parents whose employment circumstances change. During this Grace Period families cannot start at a new provider, unless approved by the Local Authority.



- Parents must log-in to their childcare service account every three months to reconfirm their details for the working family entitlements to ensure it remains in place.
- Parents must provide their early years provider a valid 11 digit code, their name, date of birth and National Insurance number to validate and secure their place.
- Parents must sign the New Child and Parent Declaration Form issued by the Local Authority. (*your early years provider will provide this to you*).
- Parents must ensure that they do not overclaim on their entitlement; otherwise the Local Authority ensure action is taken to recover funds.
- Parents must ensure that in the event of changing their provider; that they adhere to the notice period outlined (4 weeks). Another provider cannot claim for hours during a notice period.
- Parents must ensure that they do not submit any fraudulent applications, otherwise the Local Authority will ensure action is taken.
- Parents are to be aware that there should be no mandatory charges in connection with them accessing their entitlement. Any charges must be voluntary, or alternatives must be provided.

Tax Free Childcare

Should parents want to apply for Tax Free Childcare, they can do so via the Best Start In Life Service on: [Homepage | Best Start in Life](#)

Tax Free Childcare supports working parents with the costs of childcare. For every £8 that you pay into an online account; the government will top this up by £2 giving the parent a total of £10 to spend on the costs of childcare.

How much can we save?

- For children aged 0-12, this equates to: £2,000 per year
- For children aged 0-17 (children with disabilities), this equates to: £4,000 per year.

Parents (single or both in a couple) must work on average 16 hours per week and earn less than £100,000 each per year to be eligible. Parents will remain eligible if one parent is working and the other has a disability or substantial caring responsibilities or is away from work temporarily (sick leave, maternity/paternity/adoption leave).

- Families cannot receive Tax-Free Childcare if they also receive Tax Credits, Universal Credit or Childcare Vouchers
- Parents must login to their childcare service account every three months to reconfirm their details for the Tax Free Childcare to be reconfirmed and remain in place.



What additional funding is available for my early years provider?

With parental consent, early years providers will be able to apply for additional funding from the Local Authority to support your child to meet their potential and/or purchase additional resources to support the child whilst in their care. These are:

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Families may be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) if they receive certain income related benefits or have a low income. They may also be eligible if the child has previously been in Local Authority care for 1 day or more, been adopted from care or have a special guardianship order or residence order in place.

Providers will be able to confirm with you how they will intend to utilise EYPP payment to support educational outcomes. All funded children from 9 months up to 4 years old can access EYPP if they meet the eligibility criteria. A provider can only check your eligibility for EYPP with your consent; and this consent must be outlined on your declaration form.

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

In order for a provider to receive Disability Access Fund (DAF) to support the needs of a child in their care, the child must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). All funded children aged 9 months up to 4 years old can access DAF if in receipt of DLA. 4 Year olds in a reception class are unable to access DAF.

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) is not means tested and can only be used at one provider per year. It is not transferrable, and is funded at a flat rate of £938 per year. If parents are looking to access more than one provision, they must decide which setting will receive the DAF payment. Should a child leave a provider after a DAF payment has been made; this payment will not be recouped by the Local Authority.

How do I register a place for my child to access early education and childcare?

In order to access your entitlement, you will be required to contact your chosen provider directly and follow through their own admissions process.

- 1) Visit the Havering Family Service Directory to find providers near you (www.havering.gov.uk/earlyyears)
- 2) Contact the provider and complete their admissions process.
- 3) Provide your child's full name and date of birth (birth certificate or passport)
- 4) Provide your full name and address (recent utility / council tax bill)
- 5) Provide your contact details (telephone and email address)
- 6) Sign the New Child Registration & Parental Declaration Form (this will be where you provide the names of provider/s you intend to access your entitlement with)
- 7) Ensure that you complete the registration process.
- 8) If you provide consent for EYPP or DAF, you will outline this within the form.
- 9) Provide your early years provider with your valid childcare code (11 digits for working families accessing the 9+ month, two or three/four year old



entitlements) OR provide your voucher code (for families accessing the 2YO additional support entitlement).

Fees, Charges & Consumables - Requirements for Early Years Providers

The Early Education and Childcare Entitlements will only cover the provision of Early Education and Childcare as outlined within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the national curriculum from birth to 5. All providers must:

- Deliver the Working Families, Families Receiving Additional Support & Universal Entitlements free at the point of delivery
- Advise parents of any fees and charges in advance of the offer of a place
- Not have any mandatory charges in relation to families accessing their entitlement (costs must be voluntary, or alternatives provided).
- Allow parents to make alternative arrangements such as providing a packed lunch or allow parents to confirm that they do not want to participate in optional additional services.
- Return any deposits in relation to funded hours within four weeks of the child's start date
- Cap the maximum notice period for children who only access a funded place to four weeks.
- Not deliver a basic two-tier service forcing parents to opt in/out of all charges with no flexibility to pick and choose what additional extras they wish to access.
- Provide clearly itemised invoices which display what the parent is being charged for. This must be broken down into the following:
 - Funded hours,
 - Private hours,
 - Food,
 - Non-food consumables
 - Additional activities.
- Not force parents to pay for additional hours to access their entitlement at the provision.
- Ensure that they do not over-claim in funding for children.
- Ensure that all families accessing their entitlement have signed the New Child Registration & Parental Declaration Form.
- Provide parents with a copy of their signed Parental Declaration Form from the Provider.
- Ensure that there is no 'Artificial Break' and a family can access their funded entitlement hours in continuous blocks (i.e. must not tell families to collect children during lunch hour, or charge families for lunch supervision).

Where families are unable or unwilling to pay for consumables (such as nappies, sun cream) or food; an alternative solution must be found between parent and provider – this could be in the form of reduced costs or parents providing their own consumables.

Any resources required to ensure the meeting of the requirements outlined in Early Years Foundation Stage are not chargeable.



What do I do if I want to change my early years provider and transfer funding?

Funding will be transferred to your new provider once the notice period (maximum four weeks) is provided. Should you provide notice, this must be in the form of the correct written, emailed notice as required in your contract of admission. The provider will then confirm in writing the last day of your notice period.

If you leave your provider before your notice period has ended, you will be required to privately fund for any hours with your new provider until the notice period has finished. The Local Authority will ensure that sufficient notice is adhered too, and the funding is distributed in accordance with the requirements.

Should you leave a provider whilst you are in a Grace Period (as provided from Government), you will be unable to start accessing funded hours at the new provider; unless you have approval from the Local Authority. Should you start at a new provider without approval, you will not be able to access the entitlement and you will need to privately fund any hours accessed with your new provider.

Should you leave a provider and have had a DAF Claim made to support your child, this cannot be transferred to a new provider; and you will have to wait until 3 terms after the payment was made for your provider to apply.

What happens if there is a overclaim in funding?

The Local Authority will contact the providers directly, and ask the providers to work out the funding allocation to resolve any overclaim in funding. Should a family have claimed too much funding, they will be invoiced by either of their provider following discussions.

In the event that the overclaim in funding cannot be resolved between providers, the Local Authority will review contracts and decide where to allocate funding accordingly. The Local Authority will not be responsible for any loss of funding to parent (we will advise providers to generate an invoice); and therefore families must ensure that they do not overclaim in hours.

Applying for a School Reception 2026

3 and 4 year old children born between 01 September 2021 – 31 August 2022 will start School in September 2026. Parents must apply for their child's Reception place between 01 September 2025 and 15 January 2026.

For information, advice and guidance on applying for school places, please go to www.havering.gov.uk/admissions / email schooladmissions@havering.gov.uk / call 01708 433600 (Monday to Friday 12noon – 5pm).



Who should I contact if I have a concern?

If you have a concern about your child's access to their Early Years place or funding, please speak to the provider in the first instance. They will know you and your child and will want to resolve any issues that you have directly with you.

To raise any other complaints about Early Education and Childcare in Havering, please contact www.havering.gov.uk/complaints

Early Years Term Dates from 2025-2026

The Early Years Term dates are based on a financial calendar year and run from 01 April – 31 March with a maximum of 38 weeks of funding available in the early years calendar.

The maximum funding available for each financial year is:

- Up to 570 hours per year for 2 year olds (additional support) and 3&4 year olds (universal entitlement) – this is 15 hours per week term time (38 weeks), or 10/11 hours per week stretched up to 52 weeks.
- Up to 1,140 hours per year for working families entitlements (9+ month, 2 year old and 3&4 year olds) - this is 30 hours per week term time (38 weeks), or 20/22 hours per week stretched up to 52 weeks.

Funding can be taken either on a term-time only basis or a stretched offer basis. Please speak with your provider to find out what type of offer they deliver.

School and Early Years term dates can be found at: www.havering.gov.uk/termdates