

Early Education Funding: Information for Parents/Carers



1. All parents/carers claiming Early Education Funding:

- are responsible for ensuring that their child uses the funded hours agreed with their provider on a regular weekly basis and understand that funding may be withdrawn with regular non-attendance.
- must notify their childcare provider of their child's absence and the reason will be recorded in the register. Providers will be paid where parents withdraw their child, for instance to go on holiday, for **up to 2 weeks** (or **3 weeks** for children claiming a stretched offer) per funding cycle. The childcare provider **may charge** parents/carers for any additional week's absence, where part of their terms and conditions.
- should be aware that, once a Parent/Carer Declaration form is signed, if a child leaves the setting or cancels their reserved place without giving the required notice, stated in the contract between parents/carers and a provider, it may affect the Early Education Funding claim with a new provider, **except** where there are safety or quality concerns for which a formal complaint has been made to Ofsted and substantiated.
- should be aware that in the event of any concerns regarding a child's Early Education Funding, they should attempt to resolve this with their childcare provider in the first instance. If their concern cannot be resolved, they should then contact the Local Authority.

2. Parents can start claiming funded hours the funding period following the point that their child turns:

- 9 months old for working family expanded entitlement
- Two for eligible two-year-olds (both working family and parents on certain benefits)
- Three for 15 hours universal entitlement and 30 hours extended entitlement.

Child's birthday	When funding can start
1 January – 31 March	Funding period (term) starting on or after 1 April
1 April – 31 August or turns 9 months old 1 June – 31 Aug	Funding period (term) starting on or after 1 September Funding period (term) starting on or after 1 September
1 September – 31 December or turns 9 months old 1 Oct – 31 Dec	Funding period (term) starting on or after 1 January Funding period (term) starting on or after 1 January

3. Working families – Parents must apply for an eligibility code using the [online Childcare Service](#) before the start of the term they wish to claim their child's place. Ongoing entitlement must be reconfirmed every 3 months.
4. Early Education Funding ceases at the end of the published summer funding term following the child's fourth birthday if they are registered to attend the reception class of a publicly funded school (or academy). Schools receive government funding from 1 September and **are legally obliged** to provide an education for children from the first day of term. Some schools, however, operate a phased entry where the children's first day may start after their enrolment at the school. The local authority will not provide Early Education Funding for a phased entry period, therefore, any issues regarding phased entry must be directed to the school. Parents that choose to access a childcare place for the period their child is not in school from 1 September will need to pay the full costs of that place to their childcare provider. This is because their child's entire funding entitlement for a full-time place is being received directly by the school or academy regardless of the exact first day the child physically attends. Children that have deferred entry to school for a year can continue to receive Early Education Funding until the funding period following their fifth birthday, as can children that attend reception class at an Independent School.
5. Providers can set what times of day they will accept government funded hours. For instance, some may choose 9am to 3pm and charge privately for early morning or late afternoon care. All providers should be able to offer at least 15 hours per week of funded early education and share an admissions policy where places are limited. Early Education Funding can be provided, where available, between 6am and 8pm, with no session longer than 10 hours and no more than two childcare providers any one day.
6. Government funding is intended to cover the cost to deliver up 15 or 30 hours a week of free high quality, flexible early education. It is not intended to cover the cost of meals, consumables, additional hours or additional services. Parents can therefore expect to pay for any meals, consumables or services offered by the provider, alongside their funded early education entitlement.

Where parents are unable or unwilling to pay for meals and consumables or services, providers that choose to offer the funded entitlements are responsible for setting their own policy on providing parents with options for alternatives to additional charges. The provider must be transparent about any additional charges that may be incurred before a parent registers their child to attend, enabling the parent to make an informed choice.

7. Providers can charge parents a deposit to secure their child's place but should refund the deposit in full to parents within a reasonable time scale.
8. Children claiming the Early Education Funding are entitled to receive a maximum of 570 hours (1,140 hours for some working families) over **three** funding periods (terms). There are three ways a provider may offer funded hours: Term Time (38wks), Funding Period Stretch (up to 51wks) or All-Year-Round Stretch (up to 51wks). Please note that an All-Year-Round stretch may mean a small loss of funded hours over the course of a year (for example 11 hours per week over 51 weeks = 561 hours). Please speak with your provider for further details on these offers available in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
9. All-Year-Round stretch limitations include two groups of children. An All-Year-Round stretch is, for some age groups, complicated but does require full three funding periods to be effective.

Therefore, a child can only access an All-Year-Round stretch from the funding period *following* their first birthday. If they have an entitlement prior to that (9-months-olds), for that one funding period, only the standard offer of term-time or funding period stretch can be claimed by your provider before fully commencing an All-Year-Round stretch.

4-Year-Old Funding - Children that turn 4 years old between 1 September and 31 March who are due to begin school the *following* September, therefore cannot access a full years' worth of an *All-Year-Round* stretched offer.

Children who turn 4 between 1 September and 31 December and going to school from September will be entitled to receive a maximum of 360 hours (720 hours if claiming the 30 hours funding) between January and August. Children who turn 4 between 1 January and 31 March and going to school from September will be entitled to receive a maximum of 195 hours (390 hours if claiming the 30 hours funding) between April and August. The above totals are then stretched by number of weeks providers are open.

		Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn
Child's Birthday	1 Sept - 31 Dec		1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families			4YO max 360 hrs + additional 360 hrs for working families		School
or 9 months old before 1 January but not 1 yet			9Mn max 165 hrs + additional 165 hrs from Sept 25 for working	1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families			4YO max 195 hrs + additional 195 hrs for working families	School
Child's Birthday	1 Jan - 31 Mar			1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families			4YO max 195 hrs + additional 195 hrs for working families	School
or 9 months old before 1 April but not 1 yet			9Mn max 195 hrs + additional 195 hrs from Sept 25 for working	1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families				School
Child's Birthday	1 Apr - 31 Aug			1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families				School
or 9 months old before 1 September but not 1 yet		9Mn max 210 hrs + additional 210 hrs from Sept 25 for working	1YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			2YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs from Sept 25 for working families			3YO max 570 hrs + additional 570 hrs for working families			4YO max 360 hrs + additional 360 hrs for working families		School