

EARLY EDUCATION

Information for Parents / Carers

Introduction

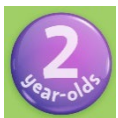
Research shows that having access to high quality early years provision has a significant impact on life chances for children and improves their chances of gaining well paid employment. Alongside educational outcomes, there are wider benefits to families and communities where early years provision offers an opportunity to access effective early help. In Norfolk we have high aspirations for every young child to make good progress in their development and learning from birth in order to have the best opportunities in life.

Funded Early Education and Childcare

Funded Early Education and Childcare is an entitlement to all families who meet certain national criteria. This entitlement is Government funded and is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week (to a maximum per year) of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or optional activities. These costs may be charged by your chosen provider, and families should expect to pay these voluntary charges.

What funding is available for my child?

2 year old funding entitlement



Some 2 year-olds can get 570 hours of funded early education and childcare if they meet the date of birth criteria for the claim period and the parents receive one of the [following](#):

- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- ✓ income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- ✓ Universal Credit - if you and your partner have a combined income from work of less than £15,400 a year after tax
- ✓ tax credits and you have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- ✓ the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- ✓ support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- ✓ the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

or if any of the following apply to the child:

- ✓ they're looked after by a Local Authority
- ✓ they have a current statement of [special education needs \(SEN\)](#) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- ✓ they get [Disability Living Allowance](#)
- ✓ they've left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

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To find out if your family or child meet the criteria for a 2-year-old funded childcare place at a childminder, nursery, playgroup or pre-school, there are **3 basic steps** –

1 Complete an eligibility check

If your child is at least 21 months old, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/neo to create or sign in to your existing Norfolk Education Online (NEO) account and add/select your child's details to complete a check.

It is possible to create your NEO account at any time in readiness, but the best time is the school term in which your child is 2-years-old, or the week when your child has their 2nd birthday.

2 Eligibility is confirmed

If eligibility is confirmed, you will be emailed an eligibility code. The code must be shown to your chosen childcare provider as proof of eligibility.

If the result is “Not Found”, please check your account details and click “Restart”.

If the automatic check result continues to be “Not Found”, we can complete a manual check for you, if some documentary evidence is attached (uploaded) to your child's record to show that your family meets the criteria.

Suitable evidence that can be uploaded:

- Take Home Pay (stated on universal credit statement)
- Earnings Reported by Employer (stated on universal credit statement)
- Adoption Certificate
- Special Guardianship Order / Court Order
- Child's DLA statement / award letter
- EHC plan letter that states the plan is agreed or issued
- Letter stating immigration status

If you need some help call Family Information on 0344 800 8020.

3 Find a childcare provider

We recommend that you visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/neo to -

- read our guide **Choosing quality early education and childcare** to help you choose childcare that works for you and your child, before searching
- our online **Norfolk Community Directory** where you can easily browse through information about childcare providers in your area

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3 and 4-year-old funding entitlement (UNIVERSAL OFFER)



All 3 and 4-year-olds in England can receive 570 hours of funded early education and childcare per year, until they either start reception class in a maintained/free school or academy or reach compulsory school age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.

3 and 4-year-old funding entitlement (EXTENDED OFFER)

Some 3 and 4-year-olds in England can receive an additional 570 hours of funded early education and childcare per year, until they either start reception class in a maintained/free school or academy or reach compulsory school age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.

You (and your partner, if you have one) will need to meet the [national criteria](#) in order to be eligible for the additional hours of early education and childcare:

- ✓ in work
- ✓ on sick leave or annual leave
- ✓ on parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave
(if you are on parental leave, you cannot apply for the child you're on leave for)
- ✓ receiving certain benefits if your partner is working
and
- ✓ each will expect to earn over the next 3 months at least the [National Minimum Wage or Living Wage](#) for 16 hours a week on average

This earnings limit does not apply if you're self-employed and started your business less than 12 months ago. If you are self-employed and do not expect to make enough profit in the next 3 months, it is possible to use an average over the current tax year.

If you foster your child, please speak to your social worker, for more details about applying for this funding.

You're not eligible if:

- ✓ your child does not usually live with you
- ✓ either you or your partner has a [taxable income](#) over £100,000
- ✓ you're from [outside the EEA](#) and your UK residence card says you cannot access public fund



To determine eligibility for these additional hours, you will need to apply and receive a unique code from HMRC via a Government's Online Childcare Service.

For more information visit <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

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When best to apply for your unique code –

When your child turns 3	They can get 30 hours from	Time to apply
1 Sept to 31 Dec	1 Jan	15 Oct to 30 Nov
1 Jan to 31 Mar	1 Apr	15 Jan to 28 Feb
1 Apr to 31 Aug	1 Sept	15 Jun to 31 Jul

It is possible to apply outside of these dates but there is a risk that you might not receive the code in time. A valid code **MUST BE** received by the end of the month before a new claim period starts.

Claim Period	Code must be valid as at
1 Sept to 31 Dec	31 Aug
1 Jan to 31 Mar	31 Dec
1 Apr to 31 Aug	31 Mar

Once a code has been issued by HMRC, you **MUST** reconfirm your eligibility **every 3 months** using your HMRC online account. If you applied more than 3 months before the claim period starts, it will be necessary to reconfirm **BEFORE** your child starts receiving the additional hours.

If you have a NEO account, it is also possible to check the status of your code here. Visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/neo to create or sign in to your existing account and click Childcare/Applications to view the code details.

Norfolk Education Online

Account Management

[My Details](#)
[Childcare/Applications](#)
[Documents](#)
[Notifications](#)
[Account Security](#)



My 30 Hours HMRC Code Status

Below is a list of eligibility checks that you completed along with their status

Name	Status	Details	Date Checked

If you are separated, you and your ex-partner must decide who should apply where there is joint responsibility for your child. Both of you can apply separately, if a decision cannot be made, but HMRC will then determine who gets a childcare account.

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If it is likely that your child(ren) will be eligible, it is recommended that you check with your chosen provider that they offer the extended entitlement to families, as it is not compulsory for them to do so. It is possible to access your universal and extended entitlement from more than one provider as long as they are registered to offer Early Education as an approved provider in Norfolk.



It is also possible to check which funding a provider offers by searching for their details on the Norfolk Community Directory at

<https://communitydirectory.norfolk.gov.uk/>

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

EYPP is an additional sum of money paid directly to providers (£0.53 per hour) for children of families in receipt of certain benefits. The funding if received, must be used to enhance the experience your child has at their childminder, preschool or nursery by improving the teaching and learning, facilities, and/or resources, so that there is a positive impact on your child's progress and development.

If your provider is inspected by Ofsted, they will also need to evidence the impact of this funding on children's progress, how effectively leaders use the additional funding and measure its impact on narrowing gaps in children's outcomes.

To claim this funding, it is necessary for the main benefit holder (parent/carer) to provide the following details on the parent/carer claim form (Section Four).

- Parent/Carer Forename, Surname and Date of Birth
- National Insurance (NI) Number / National Asylum Support Service (NASS) Number

The information provided in Section Four will be passed to the Local Authority to check and verify eligibility using the Eligibility Checking Service (a service provided by the Department for Education). The outcome of the check will be shared with your provider.

Eligibility checks will be carried out at least once.

PLEASE NOTE: The outcome of the check or your decision to not provide your details does not affect your child's entitlement to receive early education funding.

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The eligibility check will confirm that the main benefit holder has met at least 1 of the following:

- ✓ The child's family gets 1 of the following:
 - [Income Support](#)
 - income-based [Jobseeker's Allowance](#)
 - income-related [Employment and Support Allowance](#)
 - support under [part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#)
 - the guaranteed element of [State Pension Credit](#)
 - [Child Tax Credit](#) (provided they're not also entitled to [Working Tax Credit](#) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
 - [Working Tax Credit](#) run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - [Universal Credit](#)
For places starting on or after 1st April 2018, if a parent is entitled to Universal Credit they must have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £7,400, assessed on up to three of the parent's most recent Universal Credit assessment periods
- ✓ the child is currently being looked after by a Local Authority in England or Wales
- ✓ the child has left care in England or Wales through:
 - an adoption
 - a special guardianship order
 - a child arrangement order

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

This funding is for providers to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. It is intended to aid access to early years places by supporting providers to make reasonable adjustments to their environment.

3 and 4 year old children who are in receipt of the child Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and receiving some or all of their funding entitlement are eligible for DAF. DAF is paid to the child's nominated provider at a fixed annual rate of £615.00.

Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children. The LA has encouraged providers to speak to parents/carers to find out who is eligible for this funding.

To claim DAF, parents/carers are required to provide a copy of the award letter issued to them by the Department for Work and Pensions. Parents/carers should attach this to their parent/carer claim form and complete Section Five of this form.

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Where a child attends more than one provider, the parent/carer must nominate which provider will receive the annual funding payment.

Nominating a provider is a requirement of the Department for Education (DfE).

Once nomination and eligibility is confirmed by the LA, the DAF will be paid to the provider approximately 6 weeks after the application is received. The 6-week delay allows for children to settle at their childminder, preschool or nursery. It also means that if the childcare arrangement does not work out, the funding can be paid to another provider.

Once the funding has been paid, the LA cannot take back the funding and pay elsewhere, therefore if a child moves from one provider to another within 12 months of the first payment, the new provider will not be eligible to receive any DAF until 12 months has passed and new provider has been nominated and eligibility re-confirmed.

How the Local Authority offers the funded early education entitlement to parents/carers?

The funded early education and childcare is offered to parents/carers over 3 claim periods.

For each claim period there is a recommended maximum number of hours available to claim to ensure there are sufficient hours available throughout the year.

Parents/carers may choose to exceed the number of recommended hours in a claim period. If more hours are required, these must be agreed with the provider, and there must be sufficient hours remaining for the 12-month cycle of eligibility. National rules must always be adhered to (eg. no more than 15 or 30 hours per week).

Parents/carers must be aware that once the maximum limit in a year is reached, additional hours (where funding cannot be claimed) will incur a cost, and the provider will charge fees in accordance with their charging policy and/or the parental contract in place.

It is recommended that families keep a note of the hours claimed each claim period so that they are aware when they are likely to exceed the maximum limit based on their child's attendance and therefore when fees will apply.

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When can my child receive their funded early education entitlement?

A child can receive their entitlement from the term following their 2nd and 3rd birthday

Born on or between	15 Hours Funding From:	Eligibility Code obtained for the Extended Offer	Additional 15 Hours Funding From:
1 st Apr and 31 st Aug	1 st Sept	Before 1 st Sept	1 st Sept
		On or after 1 st Sept	1 st Jan
1 st Sept and 31 st Dec	1 st Jan	Before 1 st Jan	1 st Jan
		On or after 1 st Jan	1 st Apr
1 st Jan and 31 st Mar	1 st April	Before 1 st Apr	1 st Apr
		On or after 1 st Apr	1 st Sept

Your child's entitlement to the funding will end once they either start reception class in a maintained/free school or academy or reach compulsory school age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.

Where can my child access their funded early education entitlement?

The entitlement can be offered by a range of providers as long as they deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in full and are listed as an approved provider by the Local Authority. An approved provider will have signed a Local Authority Funding Agreement. This will be on display for parents/carers to see. By signing this agreement, providers have agreed to adhere to the conditions to offer the entitlement to families in Norfolk.

How many hours can I claim for my child?

Your childcare provider will advise how many funded hours are available each claim period.

The hours offered will be dependent on a combination of –

- ✓ the funding criteria met
- ✓ previous hours claimed
- ✓ cycle of eligibility (1st, 2nd or 3rd claim)
- ✓ remaining hours available
- ✓ pattern of attendance
- ✓ how the entitlement is offered to families

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Unused hours in one claim period can be carried forward to the next within the same cycle of eligibility **unless** they are unused additional hours received as part of the extended offer. Any unused additional hours are lost when the grace period ends.

All hours claimed must adhere to the rules concerning the maximum hours available per day, week and annual entitlement. Any hours not claimed within a cycle of eligibility will be lost.

The rules when claiming the funding entitlement

- Not before 6.00am or after 8.00pm
- A maximum of two sites in a single day
- 2 YR OLD & UNIVERSAL ENTITLEMENT: Maximum Hours per Week – 15
- 2 YR OLD & UNIVERSAL ENTITLEMENT: Maximum Hours per Year – 570
- EXTENDED ENTITLEMENT: Maximum Hours per Week – 30
- EXTENDED ENTITLEMENT: Maximum Hours per Year – 1140 (subject to eligibility)
- Maximum Hours per Day – 10
- No Minimum Hours per Day but subject to the requirements of registration on the Ofsted Early Years Register

If parents/carers accept a term time only childcare contract with their provider, the early education and childcare entitlement will be offered as no more than 15 or 30 hours a week over 38 weeks of a year (cycle of eligibility). However, it is possible to accept an all year-round childcare contract which means claiming less funded hours per week over more weeks of the year. This is often referred to as “a stretched offer of entitlement”.

Examples:

2 YR OLD & UNIVERSAL ENTITLEMENT	EXTENDED OFFER ENTITLEMENT
Term Time Only: 15 hours per week x 38 weeks = 570 hours	Term Time Only: 30 hours per week x 38 weeks = 1140 hours
All Year Round: 12.5 hours per week x 45 weeks = 562.5 hours 11.5 hours per week x 48 weeks = 552 hours 11 hours per week x 50 weeks = 550 hours	All Year Round: 25 hours per week x 45 weeks = 1125 hours 23 hours per week x 48 weeks = 1104 hours 22 hours per week x 50 weeks = 1100 hours

Where the total hours fall short of the maximum available, it may be possible for your provider within the rules to offer extra hours so that your child receives their full entitlement.

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The total number of hours that will be available to claim will be dependent on the pattern of attendance. Parents/carers **should not** assume that claiming 15 hours or 30 hours per week will equate to the recommended hours available.

To determine the number of hours to claim, it will be necessary to count the actual number of days a child will attend in the claim period, then deduct any days where the child will be absent.

In the examples below, both children will receive 15 funded hours per week, term time only, however their actual days of attendance means the total number of hours to be claimed will be different.

Examples:

- ① Child attends Monday, Tuesday and Friday for 5 hours each day term time only

September					October					November					December					Number of days	Funded Hours	Total Hours	
m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f				
				1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3					1	Mo	14	5	70
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	Tu	14	5	70
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	Fr	13	5	65
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	Total Hours to Claimed			205
25	26	27	28	29	30	31				27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29					

- ② Child attends Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for 5 hours each day term time only

September					October					November					December					Number of days	Funded Hours	Total Hours	
m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f	m	t	w	t	f				
				1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3					1	Mo	14	5	70
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	Tu	14	5	70
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	We	14	5	70
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	Total Hours to Claimed			210
25	26	27	28	29	30	31				27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29					

If needed, your provider can help you to calculate the hours that can be claim.

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How to claim for your child's early education and childcare entitlement

Your chosen provider must be registered and approved to offer the entitlement in Norfolk and –

2 year old funding	3 and 4 year old funding
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Create or sign in to your NEO account ② Complete an eligibility check ③ Give your unique code to your provider <p>Once your child's eligibility has been confirmed, your provider will give you a parent/carer claim form to complete and sign.</p> <p>They should also talk to you to explain how they offer the funding and if there are any voluntary fees or additional costs that will be charged as part of your contract with them.</p> <p>Your provider can help you to create a NEO account to complete the check or call Family Information for support.</p> <p>If your family receives a letter from the Local Authority advising that your child may be eligible to receive the funded entitlement, please follow the instructions provided.</p>	<p>Universal Offer (15 hours)</p> <p>When your child is eligible, your provider will give you a parent/carer claim form to complete and sign.</p> <p>They should also talk to you to explain how they offer the funding and if there are any voluntary fees or additional costs that will be charged as part of your contract with them.</p> <p>Extended Offer (15 additional hours)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Create an online HMRC account ② Complete an eligibility check ③ Give your 11-digit code to your provider <p><u>Please remember:</u></p> <p>The date that you applied to obtain a code will determine when the additional hours can be claimed from.</p>

Your parent/carer claim form will inform your provider how many hours you wish them to claim on your behalf from the Local Authority, and provide consent for them to share the information.

If you choose for your child to receive their entitlement from more than 1 provider, the combined hours claimed must not exceed the maximum available and must meet the rules of the entitlement. Parent/carers **must** inform each provider how the combined hours will

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be shared between them to avoid an overclaim. An overclaim will most likely result in a charge to you by your provider.

It is important that parents/carers inform providers when their child will be absent as soon as possible, this will allow the provider to adjust the number of staff required for the day/week and for them to amend the funding claim where applicable.

Funding can only be claimed for **actual attendance**. For short term absences, for example family holiday, sickness, medical appointment, a family emergency, transition events for school readiness, occasionally arriving late or leaving early, funding will not be withdrawn and can be claimed.

If the absence exceeds two weeks, your provider **must** notify the Local Authority. The Local Authority will use its discretion by taking into account the reason for the absence to determine if funding can be claimed where the absence is recurring or is for an extended period. An adjustment to the number of funded hours claimed will be made if it decided that funding cannot be claimed. Your provider may charge for these unfunded hours.

When funding cannot be claimed, it may be possible to transfer these hours to another claim period or alternative day. It is best to speak with your provider to determine the options available.

Although attendance at a provider is not mandatory, there is an expectation that where hours are claimed, attendance will be on a regular weekly basis. As part of an Ofsted inspection, inspectors will explore how well providers work with parents to promote children's good attendance, especially the attendance of children for whom the provider receives the Early Years Pupil Premium.

It is recommended that if you change providers, that you inform the new provider of the number of funded hours claimed to date so that fees and new claims are calculated accurately. Where a notice period has not been complied with, the Local Authority will use its discretion to decide where the funding, if any, will be paid.

How to complete a claim form

The claim form has 7 sections. The sections to be completed will be dependent on your family's circumstance and the funding entitlements to be claimed.

Entitlement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2 year old funding – 15 hours	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
3 and 4 year old funding - 15 hours (UNIVERSAL)	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
3 and 4 year old funding – 30 hours (EXTENDED)	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓

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All sections must be completed in full. Incomplete or inaccurate information will affect the ability to claim funding.

- **Section 1 – Child Details**

Parents/Carers must supply documentation to confirm their child's date of birth. This is only required when funding is initially claimed, the record is sufficient thereafter. With consent, a provider may wish to take a copy for their records.

Acceptable forms of documentation –

- Passport
- Birth Certificate
- Child's Health Book "red book"
- Adoption Certificate
- NHS medical card

- **Section 2 – Two Year Old Entitlement**

The eligibility code must be included, parent/carer details, together with noting which criteria has been met.

- **Section 3 – Three and Four Year Old Extended Entitlement**

Eligibility code obtained from HMRC, together with parent details.

- **Section 4 – Early Years Pupil Premium**

Parent/carer details, together with noting which criteria has been met. It may be necessary for evidence to be provided initially, so that the Local Authority can confirm eligibility for children meeting the following criteria –

- they're looked after by a Local Authority
- they've left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

- **Section 5 – Disability Access Fund**

Nominated provider details, together with a copy of award letter for eligible children only when claiming for the first time or renewing a claim 12 months later.

- **Section 6 – Provider and Attendance Details**

Details of providers and attendance details. It is important that parents/carers share these details with all their providers where funding is split to be certain that the maximum number of hours are claimed on behalf of their child.

Whilst it is possible to split funding between providers, this cannot be across more than two sites in one day. This will be monitored by the Local Authority, together with the pattern of attendance to be certain the rules of funding are met.

- **Section 7 – Parent/Carer Declaration**

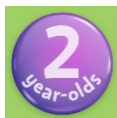
Please tick each statement to acknowledge acceptance and sign / date the form before returning it to your provider.

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A provider cannot claim the funding if a completed and signed parent/carers claim form has not been submitted to them. This is because you have not consented to share your information with the Local Authority. Please return your form promptly/when requested.

Can my child's eligibility for funding stop?



2-year-old funding entitlement

Once a family has claimed the entitlement, a child will continue to receive funding until they become eligible for the 3 and 4-year-old funding entitlement.



3 and 4-year-old funding entitlement (UNIVERSAL OFFER)

All 3 and 4-year-olds living in England are eligible to receive this entitlement provided they meet the age criteria, or until they either they start reception class in a maintained/free school or academy or reach compulsory school age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.



3 and 4-year-old funding entitlement (EXTENDED OFFER)

The ability to claim the extended entitlement will be dependent on the family's circumstances and whether the details of the parent are kept up to date with HMRC. Where the eligibility code is no longer valid due to the parent(s) no longer meeting the criteria or there has been a lapse in updating details held by HMRC, a Grace Period will be applied.

HMRC will communicate with parents when it is necessary to renew their details. If you have chosen for HMRC to communicate via email, it is recommended that your "junk" folder" is checked to avoid missing any vital messages concerning eligibility checks. It is also possible to access reconfirmation detail via your online account or by creating a NEO account.



PLEASE NOTE: Access to the 30-hour entitlement will cease if the updating of your details has lapsed (reconfirmation deadlines are missed) and the grace period has ended. It means that although your family may continue to meet the eligibility criteria, the details held by HMRC are no longer "in date". This will mean that after the grace period date, only 15 hours funding will be available until the start of a new claim period (which commences after the date details are reconfirmed and eligibility is established).

It is not possible for the Local Authority to re-instate eligibility due to rules set nationally where reconfirmation has not been completed.

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It is strongly recommended that families schedule reconfirmation dates in a calendar (eg. creating an event in your smart phone calendar) to ensure that deadlines are not missed.

Missing the deadline to reconfirm eligibility whilst in a grace period **WILL** affect your ability to claim funding the following claim period.

If families can no longer claim the 30-hour entitlement a “Grace Period” may apply. This means that for a short period of time these hours can continue to be claimed unless the following applies –

- where a parent falls into the grace period before the child has started a 30 hours place;
- where a parent falls into the grace period whilst their child is in a 30 hours place, and the parent seeks to move the child to a different provider

This Grace Period has been determined by DfE.

Date Parent receives ineligible decision from HMRC:	Grace Period End date:
1 Jan – 10 Feb	31-Mar
11 Feb – 31 March	31-Aug
1 April – 26 May	31-Aug
27 May – 31 August	31-Dec
1 September – 21 October	31-Dec
22 October – 31 December	31-Mar

At the end of the Grace Period if a valid eligibility code has not been obtained then thereafter only the universal entitlement can be claimed.

The Local Authority will remind providers to check the details held concerning any grace period in place and communicate this detail to families. Families should seek advice from their childcare provider particularly if considering other childcare arrangements. It is also important that parents advise their provider as soon as possible when their eligibility for the 30-hour entitlement has changed to avoid receiving an invoice for hours that can no longer be funded by the Local Authority.

The Local Authority can consider extending the Grace Period set out above for a short time in very exceptional circumstances, if the parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment, for example, where the parent is a victim of domestic abuse or other serious crime.

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A parent can check / update their details by signing in to their online childcare account at – <https://www.gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account>

Will I have to pay for anything?

The hours that your child attends a provider and are funded by the Local Authority must be FREE. Providers cannot charge for the delivery of this entitlement or apply any top up fees or conditions in order for your child to receive the entitlement.

However, the provider can charge for meals, snacks, consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips and musical tuition. Parents should expect to pay for these items, although these charges must be voluntary for the parent. Where parents are unable or unwilling to pay for meals and consumables, providers who choose to offer the entitlements are responsible for setting their own policy on how to respond. It is recommended that parents/carers discuss with their provider the fees and the options available to them.

A fee will also apply when funding cannot be claimed due to certain non-attendance. Any charge must be in accordance with the providers charging policy.

A provider may charge a deposit for a parent/carer to secure a childcare place at a later date. This deposit must be returned to the parent/carer no later than 6 weeks from when claiming the entitlement commences (provided no additional hours are taken).

Other charges may apply, please refer to your providers charging policy for more information or speak to your provider directly.

What can be claimed where providers offer a staggered intake/settling in period?

Parents/carers may be offered the opportunity to receive settling in sessions to be sure their choice of childcare is the right option for their child. Funding can be claimed for these hours provided a claim form is completed, alternatively, fees may apply in accordance with the providers charging policy.

Where a staggered intake takes place, the first date that funding can be claimed is the child's first intake day, which in some cases will not be the first day of the claim period.

Providers must agree with parents/carers in advance how their child will commence their early education and childcare place. Parents/carers should be given the opportunity to commence their child's entitlement at the start of their first claim period so not to place additional financial burden on them, and to enable their child to receive the full entitlement.

EARLY EDUCATION

Information for Parents / Carers

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

The Local Authority and providers must be aware of their duties in relation to the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010. Providers have a responsibility to ensure all children have full access to the early years foundation stage. They must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. This is called the graduated approach and should demonstrate clearly the approach to identifying and responding to the individual child's needs.

Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN they must work in partnership with parents /carers to establish the support the child needs. If it is agreed that additional funding or external third-party support should be sought, then the provider must obtain consent from the parent/carer to do this.

All providers will have a Local Offer which sets out what provision is offered by them for children with a disability or identified special educational need. This information can be obtained directly from them or may be located on the Norfolk Community Directory at – <https://communitydirectory.norfolk.gov.uk/>

The Local Authority also has a Local Offer which can be found at – <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/about-the-local-offer>

Data Privacy

The General Data Protection Regulation puts in place certain safeguards regarding the use of personal data by organisations, including the DfE, the LA, providers and schools. The Regulation gives rights to those (known as data subjects) about whom data is held, such as children, their parents/carers, practitioners and teachers. This includes –

- the right to know the types of data being held
- why it is being held, and
- to whom it may be communicated

A “privacy notice” is a good way to be able to meet data subject's rights. Notices should be readily available electronically or in paper format upon request by families.

Providers have also been asked to handle sensitive personal data appropriately, particularly when seeking information about whether a child is in receipt of DLA. They should also pay particular note to the advice from the Information Commissioner's Office on holding personal data including sensitive personal data.

EARLY EDUCATION

Information for Parents / Carers

Additional notes concerning the Funding Entitlement

- A claim period may not correspond exactly to the school term
- Providers can choose how the entitlement is offered to parents/carers to support their business
- Your provider may not be able to offer the entitlement in the manner you wish to claim
- Your provider may require notice if you are planning to alter your childcare arrangements
- The funding entitlement (hours) must be offered to you by your provider free of charge
- The claim form will be used to settle any dispute over funding between providers and therefore, it must be accurate and signed by you
- Providers can claim funding for short term closures, for example, because of local or national elections or damage to the premises. This will affect a child's ability to receive their full entitlement
- Families must provide consent to enable eligibility checks to take place and allow for your information to be shared with the Local Authority

Where should I look to find out more about childcare?

There are a number of online services and places to enquire about childcare.



- Family Information Service – www.norfolk.gov.uk/familyinformationservice
- Childcare Choices – www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/
- Norfolk Education Online (NEO) – www.norfolk.gov.uk/neo
- Norfolk Community Directory – www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkdiratory
- Choosing quality early education and childcare – www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-learning/childcare-advice-and-guidance/choosing-quality-childcare

Complaints

If you are unable to resolve with your provider a problem regarding the entitlement, a complaint can be made in writing to Mrs Jo-anne Lamb at

earlyyearsandchildcare@norfolk.gov.uk

or

Early Years Team, Woodside Centre Community Hub, Witard Road, Norwich, NR7 9XD.

Your complaint will be dealt with confidentially and you will be contacted prior to any investigation.