

# Information for Parents & Carers

Free Entitlements for 2, 3 & 4 Year Olds:  
Universal 15 Hour Offer and  
Extended 30 Hour Offer

All children who meet the eligibility criteria are able to take up the free entitlement in the funding period following their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday until they reach statutory school age (which is the funding period after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday).

Please see table below for when your child may receive their free entitlement (if age eligible)

Children born between	Funding will start from
1 April and 31 August	September
1 September and 31 December	January
1 January and 31 March	April

Please see table below to identify what funding you may be eligible to claim:

2 Year Funding – up to 15 Hours per week	
<p>To claim, families must meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income Support</li> <li>Income based Jobseeker's allowance</li> <li>Income-related Employment and Support allowance</li> <li>Support under part 6 of the immigration and asylum act</li> <li>Guaranteed element of the state pension credit</li> <li>Child tax credit with an annual gross household income of no more than £16,190</li> <li>Working Tax Credits and earn no more than £16,190</li> <li>Working Tax Credit 4 week run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop)</li> </ul>	<p>Apply online at <a href="http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare">www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare</a></p> <p>If the application is successful, a voucher code will be emailed to you, and must be shown to the Early Years Provider.</p> <p>Parents are required to complete a parental declaration with the Early Years provider to enable them to make a claim. This declaration will be expected to last the year unless you tell your provider otherwise.</p> <p>Provide a copy birth certificate/passport to the Early Years Provider.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>qualifying for working tax credit</li> <li>• Universal Credit</li> </ul> <p>Or, the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is looked after by the local authority</li> <li>• Has been adopted from care</li> <li>• Has left care through adoption, residence order or special guardianship</li> <li>• Has a current statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care plan</li> <li>• Is in receipt of disability living allowance.</li> </ul>	
<b>3 &amp; 4 Year Old Funding (Universal Offer) - 15 Hours per week*</b>	
<p>All children are able to claim up to 15 hours per week from the funding period after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday (see table above)</p> <p>*15 hours per week term-time only (38 weeks per year)</p>	<p>Parents must complete a parental declaration with the Early Years provider to enable them to make a claim. This declaration will be reviewed with your early years provider either on termly or yearly basis, or if there are any changes to your situation.</p> <p>Provide a copy of the child's birth certificate/passport to the Early Years Provider.</p>
<b>3 &amp; 4 Year Old Funding (Extended Offer) - 30 Hours per week*</b>	
<p>For families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each of you (or the lone parent) must earn, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW) and less than £100,000 per year.</li> <li>• This includes employed and self-employed parents as well as parents on zero hours contracts who meet the criteria above.</li> <li>• This also includes where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, who are treated as if in paid work.</li> <li>• Where one parent (in a couple household) is entitled to specific</li> </ul>	<p>Parents apply directly to HMRC via: <a href="https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/">https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>Applications to HMRC must be completed before the start of the funding period the parent wants to start their claim. For example, to start claiming funding from September, applications to HMRC must be completed before 31<sup>st</sup> August.</p> <p>If application is successful, the parent will receive an 11-digit voucher code. The parent must take voucher code to Early Years Provider, who will validate the code.</p> <p>A list of providers who are able to offer the extended offer can be found at <a href="http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare">www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare</a></p> <p>Parents are required to complete a parental declaration with the Early Years provider to enable them to make a claim. This declaration will be reviewed with your early years provider either on</p>

<p>benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly self-employed parents do not need to demonstrate they meet the income criteria for the first 12 months (start-up period).</li> </ul> <p>Please note that all families will remain eligible for the universal 15 hours per week offer regardless of their eligibility for the extended offer.</p>	<p>termly or yearly basis, or if there are any changes to your situation.</p>
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**Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)**

<p>Early Years providers can claim up to an additional £302.10 per year to spend on supporting children in their setting.</p> <p>Child must be an eligible 3 or 4 year old an the parent in receipt of at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income Support</li> <li>• Income based Jobseeker’s allowance</li> <li>• Income-related Employment and Support allowance</li> <li>• Support under part 6 of the immigration and asylum act</li> <li>• Guaranteed element of the state pension credit</li> <li>• Child tax credit with an annual gross household income of no more than £16,190 (provided not also entitled to Working Tax Credit)</li> <li>• Working Tax Credit 4 week run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for working tax credit)</li> <li>• Universal Credit</li> </ul> <p>Or, the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is looked after by the local authority</li> <li>• Has been adopted from care</li> <li>• Has left care through adoption, residence order or special guardianship</li> </ul>	<p>Parents are required to complete the EYPP section on the parental declaration with the Early Years provider to enable them to make a claim. If eligible this will last for a year, after which it will be checked again.</p> <p>Childcare settings will have to demonstrate to Ofsted how the funds have been used to improve your child’s education.</p>
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<b>Disability Access Fund (DAF)</b>	
<p>Annual one-off payment made to the Early Years Provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child must be an eligible 3 or 4 year old; and,</li> <li>• Child must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).</li> <li>• Cannot be split across two providers; if attending multiple providers, one should be nominated</li> </ul>	<p>Parents are required to complete the Disability Access fund section on the parental declaration with the Early Years Provider to enable them to make a claim</p> <p>Parents must provide evidence to the Early Years Provider that the child is in receipt of DLA.</p>
<b>Tax-Free Childcare</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For working families, including the self-employed, in the UK</li> <li>• With children under 12 (or under 17 if disabled)</li> <li>• For every £8 you pay in, the government will add an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child - that's up to £500 every three months</li> </ul>	<p>Working parents open an online account to pay for registered childcare.</p> <p>Parents can only make payments from their tax-Free childcare accounts to Early Years providers who have signed up to the scheme.</p> <p>Delivered via HMRC; further details available at <a href="https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/">https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/</a></p>

All Early Years providers who are registered for the funding will have a unique offer to parents. You will need to discuss with the early years provider how you can claim your funded hours with them.

**Frequently asked questions**

**Where can I claim the funding from?**

The free entitlement is offered by most pre-schools, playgroups and nurseries, some childminders, local authority schools with a nursery class, academies and some nursery classes attached to independent schools.

To find an early years provider in your area, you can search on [www.escis.org.uk](http://www.escis.org.uk)

If your child is eligible for 2 year old funding, the funding is only available with Early Years Providers who are either newly registered with Ofsted, or have received an Ofsted outcome of good or outstanding. For a full list of providers offering 2 year old funding, this can be found at [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childcare)

**Are the hours really free?**

Yes. You will not be expected to pay for any additional services if you are taking the free hours. The provider may make a charge for meals and snacks as part of a funded place and they may also make a charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trip. You will need to discuss these options with your provider.

Early Years providers:

- **Must not** charge parents “top-up” fees (the difference between a provider’s usual fee and the funding they receive from the local authority to deliver the free places.
- **Must not** require parents to pay a registration fee as a condition of taking up their child’s free place.
- **Can** charge a deposit to secure a free place, however, the deposit must be refunded in full to the parent within an agreed timescale once the child has started claiming their funding.
- **Must** ensure that their invoices are clear, transparent and itemised to enable parents to clearly identify that they have received their child’s free entitlement completely free of charge, and be able to understand fees paid for any additional hours or services.

### **I have received my 30 hour 11 digit voucher code, what happens next?**

Parents must apply and receive their 11 digit voucher codes before the start of the term they wish to claim; see table below for information.

Parents who have received a voucher code for the extended 30 hour offer must present this to their Early Years Provider to be validated before they can start claiming funding.

See table below for when funding can be claimed:

<b>Parent applies and receives 11 digit voucher code from HMRC*</b>	<b>Funding can be claimed from*</b>
<b>Autumn Funding Period</b>	
Any time up to 31 <sup>st</sup> August	September 2017
After 31 <sup>st</sup> August	January 2018
<b>Spring Funding Period</b>	
Any time up to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	January 2018
After 31 <sup>st</sup> December	April 2018
<b>Summer Funding Period</b>	
Any time up to 31 <sup>st</sup> March	April 2018
After 31 <sup>st</sup> March	September 2018

\*Child must be age eligible

Parents must ensure that they reconfirm their eligibility with HMRC approximately every 3 months in order to remain eligible for the extended offer. In the event parents’ eligibility expires without being re-confirmed, they will enter a grace period, after which they may no longer claim the extended 30-hour entitlement for their child/ren. This does not affect parent’s entitlement to the universal 15 hour offer.

East Sussex will notify Early Years Providers when a voucher code is due to expire.

### **What is “Headcount Day”?**

East Sussex collect information on children attending Early Years Providers 3 times a year, and this is called “Headcount”. Children must be registered with a provider before the headcount date (see table below) in order for the provider to claim funding on their behalf.

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>Term Dates fall between</b>	<b>Headcount Date</b>
Autumn (terms 1&2)	1 September to 31 December	21 September 2017
Spring (terms 3&4)	1 January to 31 March	18 January 2018
Summer (terms 5&6)	1 April to 31 August	18 April 2018

### **Why must my child be registered with a Provider before ‘Headcount Day’?**

Your provider will be able to claim the maximum number of weeks of funding.

### **Can I still receive the free entitlement if I miss the ‘Headcount Day’?**

Yes. Your provider will submit a late claim. Your funding will be reduced to the number of weeks left in the funding period.

### **How many hours can be claimed?**

A maximum of 15 hours per week (Universal Offer), or 30 hours per week (Extended Offer) can be claimed.

### **Do I have to take the full 15 hours (universal offer) / 30 hours (Extended Offer)?**

No. You can choose any combination of hours that are available with your provider. Once your claim has been submitted, it is not possible for you to increase the funded hours until the start of the next funding period.

### **Can I claim at more than one provider?**

Yes. You will need to ensure that you do not claim more than the maximum of 15 hours / 30 hours per week overall.

### **Are there any restrictions on how many hours can be claimed in one day?**

Yes. You can claim a maximum of 10 hours in one day, there are no minimum session lengths. You can take your free hours Monday to Sunday but not before 6am or after 8pm. You may attend a maximum of two providers in a single day.

### **Can I claim funding if my child’s start date to reception class is delayed?**

No. Funding cannot be claimed for children who have accepted a school place, even if the school implements a staggered start. If the staggered start causes you a childcare problem, you will need to discuss this directly with the school.

For families who have declined a reception place, funding is available until the child reaches statutory school age.

### **Can I claim funding from more than one Local Authority?**

Yes. You will need to ensure that you do not claim more than the maximum of 15 hours / 30 hours per week overall. Local authorities will check for any over claims on funding, and these will have to be repaid.

**I wish to change provider within the funding period, will my child continue to receive funding at my new provider?**

Once your child has been included on a headcount claim, you are able to move to another provider in East Sussex. In order for the funding to be transferred to the new provider, you must ensure that you have:

- Followed the terms and conditions laid out by your existing provider – for example give the correct notice and pay any outstanding fees.
- If the terms and conditions have not been followed, your existing provider does not have to transfer any remaining funding until the end of their advertised notice period (recommended 4 weeks, but maximum 6 weeks).
- It is not possible to increase the number of hours you originally claimed, and you will be expected to pay for any additional hours you choose to take up with your new provider.

**Due to my personal circumstances my child needs to leave, what notice am I required to give?**

If your child is receiving just the free hours, it is recommended that 4 weeks notice is required. The maximum notice that should be given is 6 weeks. If you have agreed to additional paid hours, you will need to check with your provider to see if there is a different notice period required.

**My child attends for less than the 15 hours (universal offer) / 30 hours (extended offer) per week, but I am still charged for some hours, why?**

All Early Years providers who are registered to claim funding on behalf of families will have a unique offer to parents. Providers should let you know on which days and times they offer the completely free hours (subject to availability). You will need to discuss the options available to you with your provider. You will also need to be aware that providers may make a charge for meals and snacks as part of a funded place and they may also make a charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trip.

**My circumstances have changed, and I now wish to claim more hours than my original claim, is this possible?**

Once a claim has been submitted by your provider, these hours cannot be changed. You will be able to increase the hours, but your provider will charge their normal hourly rate. At the start of the next funding period, you will be able increase your funded hours.

**My provider has offered me a stretched offer, what does this mean?**

If your provider is open for more than 38 weeks per year, the total funded hours can be 'stretched' across the whole year. If you are claiming the full 570/1140 hours per week, your weekly funded hours will be reduced, but your funding will cover the entire time the provider is open, for example:

Weeks per year open	Hours per week (2 Year Old and Universal 15 hour offer)	Total hours across the year (2 Year Old and Universal 15 hour offer)	Hours per week (Extended 30 hour offer)	Total hours across the year (Extended 30 hour offer)
38	15	570	30	1140

48	11.75	570	23.75	1140
51	11	570	22.25	1140

It is possible to stretch any of the funded hours, but your overall funding must not exceed 15/30 hours per week or 570/1140 hours per year.

For example, if you wish to claim 20 hours per week because you are eligible for the extended offer, this can be claimed as below:

20 hours per week x 51 weeks per year =1,020 hours. Your provider will submit a claim based on 38 weeks, therefore will claim 26.75 hours each funding period. You will have 120 hours left that could be claimed with another provider, but this will equate to approx. 3 hours per week x 38 weeks a year.

**Data Protection**

All information submitted on the Early Years Funding Team is held in compliance with the Data Protection Act. The information requested on the Parental Declaration is necessary in completing the Headcount claim at your child’s Early Years provider and for the claim of Early Years Funding from the Department for Education (DfE). Any information that you supply may be shared with other departments within ESCC, DfE and local NHS agencies.

**Complaints Procedure**

If you are not satisfied that your child/ren have received their free entitlement place or with any aspect in the way that they have received it, you can complain to East Sussex County Council. In the first instance contact:

Senior Early Years Funding Officer  
 Early Years Funding Team  
 Standards & Learning & Effectiveness Service  
 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, St Mark’s House  
 14 Upperton Road  
 Eastbourne  
 East Sussex  
 BN21 1EP

**Further information**

For general enquiries about the free entitlement, please contact Customer Relations on

Tel No. 0345 60 80 192

The line is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 3pm.

For general information, please go to the internet link below:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/childcare/>

**For all HMRC enquiries please go to:**

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>



or call the helpline on 0300 123 4097