



A Guide to Early Years Education Funding



Giving
disabled children
a brighter future



From the school term after their 2nd birthday some children will be eligible for 15 hours free early years education. All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours early years education and care. This can increase to 30 hours depending on your circumstances.



Parents can check their eligibility through the Childcare Choices website.
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)





2 Year Olds

Families in England, receiving some form of support with a 2 year old child are entitled to 15 hours free childcare or early education for 38 weeks. This is a total of 570 hours per year, which can be used flexibly with one or more childcare provider. Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks, using fewer hours per week.

To be eligible parents must be receiving on of the following:


- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- Tax credits and have an annual income under £16,190 before tax
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

A child may also qualify if they're looked after by the local council, have special educational needs, get disability living allowance or if they've left care under a special guardianship, child arrangements or adoption order.




3 - 4 Year Olds

Every child is entitled to Early Years Education Funding from the start of the first school term after their third birthday. Terms are defined as the start of the official autumn, spring or summer terms, so children's whose birthday are in the first half of a term can't start until the next full term begins. Funding stops when a child starts reception class or when they reach compulsory school age, if later. Compulsory school age is on the 31st December, 31st March or 31st August following their fifth birthday – whichever comes first.



All families in England with 3 and 4 year old children are eligible for 15 hours of free early years education for 38 weeks. This is a total of 570 hours per year, which can be used flexibly with one or more child care provider. Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks using fewer hours per week.



Working families in England with 3 and 4 year old children are eligible for 30 hours of free childcare of early education for 38 weeks. This is a total of 1,140 hours per year that can be used flexibly with one or more childcare providers. Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks using fewer hours per week.

The meaning of working is that both parents or a lone parent:

- Earns at least £115 a week or works more than 16 hours at the National Living Wage
- Expect to earn at least £61.92 a week if you are under 18, £84.80 a week if you're ages 18-20 or £52.80 a week if you're an apprentice (either under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship)
- Live in England
- Expect to have an income of less that £100,000 each year.



Tax Free Childcare 0 – 11 years old (16 if disabled)

Working families, including the self-employed, who are earning at least £139 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) and under £100k each, who aren't receiving Tax Credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers, with children aged 0 – 11 (or 16 if disabled). For every £8 you pay into an online account for childcare, the government will add an extra £2 up to £2,000 per child per year.


Child Tax Credits for 0 – 15 year olds (16 if disabled)



Working families in the UK with children under 16 (17 if disabled) can have up to 70% of childcare costs paid, up to a cap.

Universal Credit for 0 – 16 year olds

Working families claiming Universal Credit with children under 17 and who aren't claiming tax free childcare can have up to 85% of eligible childcare costs paid.





Early Years Children with Special Educational Needs

Childcare providers meet the needs of most children without additional funding. However if a child's needs cannot be met from that budget, and they do not have an Educational, Health and Care plan, childcare providers can request a top-up from their local authority. This would come from the Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund. The aim of this fund is to support settings in providing enhanced provision and intervention that will positively impact on the children's progress and outcomes.


This funding may be spent on additional staff to provide one to one support for a child however this is not always necessary. The funding may also be spent on training, physical or sensory adaptations, small group or targeted support.

An Early Years Childcare setting may also be able to apply for Disability Access Funding (DAF). This is funding for early years providers to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. It enables access to early years places by Childcare providers to make reasonable adjustments to their settings.

A childcare provider will be eligible to apply for DAF if they have a 3 or 4 year old who:

- is in receipt of the child Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and;
- access the funded entitlement at the early years provider.

4 year olds accessing a primary school reception class are not eligible for DFA.



If you feel your child may benefit from additional provision within the child care setting speak to your child's key worker or the SENDCo. SENDCO stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator, their role includes ensuring parents are closely involved with decisions regarding a child's progress and intervention, liaising with outside professionals, advising and supporting early years staff on implementing the SEND code of practice.

The SENDCo may implement a SEND Support. This plan will clearly outline what assessments and outside professionals (such as Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy) who will conduct these assessments. The plan will outline what interventions will be put in place, how often they will happen and by whom. It will set clear outcomes for the child and set a date for when the plan will be reviewed. This is the **'assess, plan, do, review'** cycle.



If a child is still not making progress, the childcare provider or parent of the child, can apply for an Education, Health and Care plan needs assessment. When deciding to carry out an assessment, and during an assessment, the local authority will request information from the early years setting. For children who are not attending a setting, the local authority should collect as much information as possible before deciding whether to assess. For children under compulsory school age an assessment should take place if the child has SEND, are likely to have SEND when they reach compulsory school age, or would do so if special educational provision were not made for them.

Children aged under two are likely to need special educational provision in accordance with an EHC plan where they have particularly complex needs affecting learning, development and health and are likely to require a high level of special educational provision which would not normally be available in mainstream settings. (SEND Code of Practice 9.145)

Please see our guide on Education, Health and Care Plans for more detailed information

You can find more information and guides at www.kids.org.uk/sendiaass



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