

30 Hours Funded Childcare

Guide for Parents



You may be able to get up to 30 hours free childcare over 38 weeks, if your child is 3 / 4 years old.

Eligibility

Your eligibility depends on:

- if you are working
- how much you earn
- your child's circumstances
- your nationality

You can find out more and make an application through the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

You can watch this [video](#) for step by step guide to applying online. Alternatively you can phone the Childcare Choices helpline on 0300 1234 097.

You can receive the 30 hours of childcare in the 'funding period' **after** your child's third birthday

When your child turns 3 years	When they can get 30 hours from
1 September to 31 December	1 January
1 January to 31 March	1 April
1 April to 31 August	1 September

When to apply

You can apply for a 30 hour code, from when your child is 2 years and 36 weeks old.

You must apply for a 30hr code the funding period **before** you want to take your entitlement.

When you want to start taking your 30 hours	Recommended time to apply for a 30hr code	Deadline for applying for a 30hr code.
Spring Term	15 October to 30 November	31 December
Summer Term	15 January to 28 February	31 March
Autumn Term	15 June to 31 July	31 August

You must be attending your early years childcare provider by the headcount date, otherwise you will not be able to claim funding until the following term.

Taking Up the 30 Hours of Childcare

If you are eligible you will be issued with a 30 hour code that you can take to your childcare / early education provider to arrange your 30 hours.

The 30 hours childcare:

- must be with an approved childcare provider
- stops when your child starts in reception class (or reaches compulsory school age, if later)

You must **renew** your code every 3 months using your Childcare Choices account.

You must have a live code on the first day of the funding period if you are starting a new childcare provider or taking up your 30 hour place for the first time. Make sure you renew your code if you have applied early for your 30 hour code.

Term you are taking up a 30 hour place	Date on which you must have a valid code
Spring Term	1 January
Summer	1 April
Autumn	1 September

Charges and Payments

Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional activities.

Parents can therefore expect to pay for any meals offered by the provider alongside their free entitlement. Parents can also expect to pay for other consumables or additional activities offered by the provider, such as nappies or trips.

However, providers must offer alternative options for parents. This could include, for example, allowing a parent to bring in their own consumables or a packed lunch, where the meal offered is not suitable for children with specific dietary needs or the parent prefers a lower cost option.

All parents should have the same rights to access a free entitlement place, regardless of whether they **choose** to pay for additional hours of provision, additional activities or meals.

Providers should ensure that they are completely clear and transparent about which hours / sessions can be taken as free provision and this should be consistent for all parents taking up free hours.

Providers should also ensure they have clear invoicing structures in place for parents.

To ensure that parents can make informed decisions on their choice of childcare, providers should publish a statement of how they deliver the free entitlement and any additional charges for optional activities outside of the entitlement.

This should set out clearly the charges for meals, additional activities or additional hours.

No longer eligible

If your child is attending a funded 30 hour place and your family's circumstances change, which means you are no longer eligible for the 30 hour entitlement, you will continue to receive the full 30 hours for a period of time known as the 'grace period'. If a parent's circumstances change again during this period, they may reapply to HMRC and continue to receive the extra hours. If you do not manage to renew your code by the end of the grace period, you will only be able to receive the universal 15 hours of funded childcare the following term.

If you fall out of eligibility and cannot renew your code before your child starts a 30 hour funded place, you cannot take up the 30 hours place. You will still be eligible for the universal 15 hours however.