

# Information on funded childcare for 2, 3 & 4 year olds



# Funded Childcare

We know that the rules around the funded entitlement can be confusing for parents and childcare providers, and parents understandably have lots of questions about how the funding works.

It is really important that you know your childcare entitlement and what you can expect from your childcare provider—whether that’s a nursery, playgroup or childminder. This leaflet will provide you with more information about how and when you can claim your funded childcare and your rights when accessing your funded place.

Funded childcare is awarded using the following birth dates

Birthday falls between	Term Funding Starts
1st April—31st August	September
1st September—31st December	January
1st January—31st March	April

## Free Childcare for 2 year olds

Your 2-year-old can get funded early education and childcare if you live in England and get one of the following benefits:

- 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)

A child can also get funded early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

- they're looked after by a local council
- 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

If you're eligible the funded early education and childcare:

- must be with an [approved childcare provider](#)
- starts from the term after your child's 2nd birthday

For Parents; <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

## Free Childcare for all 3 and 4-year-olds

Every child is entitled to receive 15 hours of free nursery funding from the term after their 3rd birthday and this will remain in place until the start of their Reception Year at school.

### What You Can Expect

- Each child accessing the 15 hours of childcare is entitled to a total of 570 hours funded education during a year.
- You can take your FUNDED hours either termly (15 hours a week over 38 weeks) or stretch over the full year (570 over 50 weeks), if available at your chosen childcare provider.
- Sessions cannot be more than 10 hours in any one day between the hours of 6 am and 8 pm, but may vary depending on the sessions available from your provider.
- You have the choice to only take the FUNDED entitlement hours if that is all you want, and this is completely FREE to you.
- Your child can take a packed lunch if you do not wish to purchase a meal from your provider.
- You can choose to use your FUNDED hours at one provider or split the hours between two e.g. a Childminder and a playgroup,

## Additional 15 hours of Funded Childcare for Working Families (30 hour entitlement)

.You may be able to get up to 30 hours funded childcare (1,140 hours per year, which you can choose how you take).

If you're eligible for the extra hours, you sign up online to get a code to give to your childcare provider to reserve your place. You'll get the extra hours once the next term starts.

This code needs to be checked to retain eligibility and the onus is on the parent to ensure they carry out this action, if you fall out of eligibility and the grace period, you will be liable for the full fees

To be eligible for the additional hours, you (and your partner if you have one), must be working and earning the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the National Living Wage, live in England, and expect to have an income of less than £100,000 a year (£200,000 per couple). Full details about eligibility and exceptions to the above can be found by visiting [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or [www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk).

Families claiming the additional 15 hours **must** reconfirm their eligibility every 3 months. Failure to do so **will** result in parents having to meet the full costs.

There is more information available about free childcare entitlement at

[www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk)

If you have any questions about the funding, contact the Family Information Service on **01452 427362**

## Payment and your bills

- If you buy extra childcare hours, any bill/invoice you receive should be clear and should **NOT** show the funded hours deducted from the total bill.
- Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) pays your chosen provider(s) directly for the **Funded** hours you receive.
- You **DO NOT** have to buy additional hours or services such as lunches or uniform to receive the funded hours. However, if you have decided to purchase additional services, these should be clearly shown on your invoice.
- You **DO NOT** have to pay towards any **Funded** hours. Providers are not allowed to charge you for any difference between their regular prices and the payments they receive from Gloucestershire County Council.
- Government funding is intended to deliver 15 to 30 hours a week of high quality flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional services.
- Providers are able to charge for meals and snacks as part of a funded entitlement place and can also charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips and yoga. however, these charges must be voluntary for the parent

# Tax Free Childcare

Tax-Free Childcare is a Government scheme to help working families with their childcare costs <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/tax-free-childcare>

Parents will be able to open online childcare accounts to pay their registered childcare providers directly. For every £8 parents pay in to these accounts, the Government will add £2, the total amount in the account can only be spent on childcare. Parents can receive up to £2,000 in Government support per child, per year, or £4,000 for disabled children. Providers need to have signed up for Tax Free Childcare to be able to receive payments from any parents via the scheme.

The system will be quick and simple for parents and childcare practitioners to apply for and use.

Parents wishing to find out more or register to claim Tax Free Childcare can visit [www.Gov.uk](http://www.Gov.uk)

## Changes to childcare vouchers

From October 2018, childcare voucher schemes will close to new applicants. You may be able to get [Tax-Free Childcare](#) instead.

You can keep getting vouchers if you've joined a scheme and get your first voucher before the scheme closes in October 2018, as long as:

- you stay with the same employer and they continue to run the scheme
- you don't take an unpaid career break of longer than a year

## Gloucestershire's Family Information Service - featuring the 'Local Offer'



*Free, impartial information, advice and support for families with children and young people aged 0-25.*

*familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk*

Direct Line: 01452 427362

Call: 0800 542 02 02

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm  
(answering machine at all other times)

 @GlosFIS

 Family Information Service - Gloucestershire

*www.glospfamiliesdirectory.org.uk*

**The Key**—*Disabled children's and young people's register*

*thekey@gloucestershire.gov.uk*



**If you don't know who  
to ask....ask us!**

Apr 2018



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL