

Early Years Funding Information for Parents/Carers – 2025/2026

What is Early Years Funding (EYF)?

Early Years Funding is a government scheme administered by local authorities to offer funded early learning and childcare places to all children aged [3 and 4](#) and some [2 year olds](#) meeting certain criteria. This includes the [extended entitlement](#) for working parents and foster carers. Details of all entitlements can be found in the table on the back page.

Government funding is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional services. It is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible early education and care. Providers can charge for consumables, meals and snacks, extra activities and additional hours provided they are not mandatory charges or a condition of accessing a place. You should be able to find clear details of these charges on your provider's website or on our Childcare Directory, found at [Cambridgeshire Online | Results](#) (from January 2026).

The Early Years Funded hours can be offered, subject to the following standards:

- No session to be longer than 10 hours
- No minimum session length (subject to the requirements of registration on the Ofsted Early Years Register)
- Not before 6am or after 8pm
- A maximum of two sites in a single day
- No more than 15 or 30 (if eligible) funded hours to be delivered in any one week
- A provider open for fewer than 38 weeks of the year, can offer 15 or 30 hours a week during fewer weeks

Funded 2s

Children in families with a low income or in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to 15 funded hours of childcare or early years education. You can apply online at [Funded hours for eligible 2 year olds - Cambridgeshire County Council](#) or by phoning the Education Welfare Benefits Team on 01223 703200. You will need the National Insurance Number, date of birth and surname of the person in receipt of the qualifying benefit.

Working parent entitlement

If you are eligible for extended/expanded entitlement as a working parent, you will be directed to the HMRC webpage to apply and will be issued with an 11-digit eligibility code which you should give to your early years provider.

The eligibility code will allow you to access the entitlement, and the application deadline dates are as follows:

- Autumn funding period (1 Sep – 31 Dec) – application deadline **31 August**
- Spring funding period (1 Jan – 31 Mar) – application deadline **31 December**
- Summer funding period (1 Apr – 31 Aug) – application deadline **31 March**

Please apply in good time ahead of the deadlines. Your childcare provider will check the validity of the eligibility code before you take up your place.

You will be reminded every three months by HMRC to confirm your details have not changed. You could lose your extended/expanded entitlement if you do not reconfirm your code as required.

Eligibility for Early Years Funding

The entitlement is spread evenly over the year and a maximum is set for each funding period. The table below shows the maximum hours that can be claimed for either non-stretched (term time) or stretched. The funded hours entitlement is tracked from the period of eligibility.

| Funding period | Non-stretched (term time) | Stretched |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Autumn (1 Sep-31 Dec) | 210 hours (14 weeks x max 15 hours) | 182.4 hours (16 weeks x max 11.4 hours) |
| Spring (1 Jan-31 Mar) | 165 hours (11 weeks x max 15 hours) | 148.2 hours (13 weeks x max 11.4 hours) |
| Summer (1 Apr-31 Aug) | 195 hours (13 weeks x max 15 hours) | 239.4 hours (21 weeks x max 11.4 hours) |
| Total | 570 hours = 38 weeks @ 15 hours | 570 hours = 50 weeks @ 11.4 hours |

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I find additional childcare?

If you need help to find additional childcare, more information on available childcare funding including [Tax-Free Childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk), and/or childcare costs please contact the Families Information Service (FIS): Email fis@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or telephone 0345 045 1360.

What do I have to do to take up my funded hours?

You must complete the *Parent/Carer Declaration*. A guide is available [1.How to complete the Parent Declaration \(cambridgeshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) and your provider can support you. You must provide an original copy of your child's identity and date of birth (e.g. a passport or birth certificate) and agree when you will take up your funded hours. Your provider cannot claim funding for your place without this form.

If you have signed a *Parent/Carer Declaration* and either decide not to take up your place or to change provision partway through the funding period, you will need to discuss this change with your current provider. They will need to agree a change before you can be funded at another provider. It may be that you will need to pay the new provider until the following funding period.

What is Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)?

EYPP provides additional funding to providers to support the quality of early education for eligible children taking up early education and childcare entitlements.

Is my child eligible for EYPP?

Your child will be eligible if they are accessing funded hours, and you meet qualifying criteria. Your information may be checked on a secure government benefits system and your provider will be notified whether your child is entitled. If your child qualifies, a payment will be made directly to your childcare provider. For more information on EYPP please go to: [Early Years Pupil Premium funding \(EYPP\) - Cambridgeshire County Council](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

My child is starting school on a part-time basis, can I claim funded hours until they are in school full-time?

Once your child has started their reception year at school you are no longer entitled to access EYF. If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium funding, this funding will also go to the school. For more information please see [A guide to reception admissions | Cambridgeshire County Council](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk).



Disability Access Funding (DAF)

If your child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, your early years provider may be able to obtain DAF. DAF supports eligible, disabled children's access to the entitlements.

My relative is a childminder and childminds my son when I work. Can EYF be claimed for my child?

Section 18 of the Childcare Act 2006 states that "childcare" does not include care for a child provided by a parent or stepparent of a child, a person with parental responsibility for a child, a relative of a child, or a foster parent of a child. "Relative" in relation to a child is defined in the Act as a grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother or sister, whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership.

How do I complain about how my funding is being applied?

Please follow your early years setting complaint's policy. If you are not satisfied with the response, please call 0345 045 5200 or access our website [Feedback policy for compliments, complaints and suggestions - Cambridgeshire County Council](#) for details on our complaints procedure.

How will my data be used?

The Data Protection Act 2018 (the Act) puts in place certain safeguards regarding the use of personal data by organisations, including the Department for Education, local authorities, schools and other early education providers. The Act gives rights to those about whom data is held (known as data subjects), such as pupils, their parents 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 disclosed

Should you have any concerns relating to how your information or the information relating to your child/ren is being or will be used, please contact your provider or Cambridgeshire County Council. Please note that information about whether a child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance is, under the Act, Special Category Data which should be handled appropriately. Providers are asked to pay particular note to advice from the Information Commissioner's Office on holding personal data including sensitive personal data available at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/training-videos/handling-more-sensitive-information/>

We collect your details to process your application for Early Years Funding and to contact you about related Early Years Funding issues and tasks in accordance with the Early Years Funding Agreement.

In addition, we can be required to share information with our partners, for example health organisations and Children and Families Centres, to improve the wellbeing of children in the Cambridgeshire area as required by the Childcare Act 2006. Information shared between partner organisations is proportionate and only given when it is necessary to help those partner organisations with their legal obligations.

We are required to provide statistical data to the Department of Education. We also use statistical data for our own internal research, statistical analysis, or statistical surveys to help manage our service provision, and share data with academic institutions or independent researcher with a legitimate need for information for their research. All Early Years Funding application data is stored securely and maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Cambridgeshire only systems that are publicly available for entry of person application data are regularly independently tested to assess risk of penetration and to guard against unauthorised entry for access to personal or other data. This includes ensuring that usernames and passwords meet industry standards.

Further information about how we collect and use data, and your rights around this, can be found on the Privacy page on our website [Privacy notice - Cambridgeshire County Council](#). Our Data Protection Officer can be contacted via data.protection@cambridgeshire.gov.uk





Early Years Funding Entitlements from September 2025

| Funding Period | | Dates child turns eligible age |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|
| 1 January – 31 March | Spring | 1 September – 31 December |
| 1 April – 31 August | Summer | 1 January – 31 March |
| 1 September – 31 December | Autumn | 1 April – 31 August |

| Name of funding | Funded Two's | Universal | Working Parent |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Age at start of funding period | 2 years old | 3-4 years olds | 9 months + 3 – 4 years old |
| Max no of hours | 15 hours | 15 hours ^ | 30 hours 15 hours ^ (^ 30 hours in total) |
| Where to apply | Cambridgeshire children Cambridgeshire Education Welfare Benefits Team or through Settings Establishment Portal (ask your setting for further details) Children outside Cambridgeshire need to apply through their home LA | N/A | Childcare Choices website |
| Eligibility code | Codes issued by Cambridgeshire start EWB Other LA's are in a different format | N/A | WP 11-digit code starting 11 or 50 For children in care see * below |
| Eligibility information | Entitlement is from the funding period after the child turns 2 years old No need to reconfirm code Eligibility continues until the child can access their 3+ years universal entitlement (regardless of any change to circumstances) If a parent/carer has an authorisation code (EWB) and an eligibility code (WPE), the child can access up to 30 hours of funding. The Department for Education advises the Funded 2 hours (EWB) are claimed first and then the WPE is used for the remaining hours up to a maximum of 15 hours. | Entitlement is from the funding period after the child turns 3 years old | Entitlement is from the funding period after the child turns 9 months old Application to Childcare Choices deadline dates: 31 December for Spring funding 31 March for Summer funding 31 August for Autumn funding Code needs to be re-confirmed with Childcare Choices (Childcare Choices will send reminders every 3 months) |

* **Guidance for children in care of the local authority for Working Parent funded hours:**

- Social worker makes an application to the County Council's Education Welfare Benefits team to get an eligibility code starting 40 which should be checked in the portal.

For more information please look at our webpage [Early years funding | Cambridgeshire County Council](#).