

Early Years Funding – Key Information

In 2024/25, the Government will be introducing several new programmes of early years funding for eligible children.

What funding is now available?

The nursery delivers the Early Education Funding for the following age groups:

- 30 hours for eligible working families for 9 months to 4 years
- 15 hours for disadvantaged 2YOs
- 15 hours free universal entitlement for 3&4YOs for all children (term after 3rd birthday)

When could my child become eligible?

Children become eligible for age-specific funding in the term following their relevant birthday (or month, in the case of 9 month olds). Term start dates are typically 1st January, 1st April and 1st September each year. There may be variations at specific nurseries, so to confirm, please speak to your nursery manager.

How can I check if I'm eligible?

To find out if you're eligible, head to: <https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/>

How does it work?

As with the pre-existing funding for 2 & 3 year olds, all of the newly announced Government funding is for 38 weeks of term time. Depending on your agreed plan, you may still receive a monthly charge even when claiming funding.

This will be a combination of:

- The additional hours that your child attends at N that is not covered by the 38 weeks of funding. We are open 51 weeks a year and so the funding is 'stretched' from 38 to 51 weeks per year. In practice this means that the 15 hours of government-funding covers 11.18 hours per week, or 22.35 hours in the case of 30 hours funding.
- Depending on what sessions you have selected, you will need to pay for the remaining hours on our standard hourly rate - you can see the cost of this by looking at the nursery's fee sheet.
- Additional charges which are explicitly not covered by the Government funding, should you choose to pay for them.

Nurseries are open 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday, for 51 weeks per year. Eligible families are able to attend for the funded hours only, depending on the nursery's availability. We offer funded hours in 10 hour-blocks, starting when the nursery opens, with the remaining hours occurring on agreed ad hoc days throughout the year. For families using 11.18 hours, this would occur as 1 full day per week, and 6 full ad hoc days on mutually agreeable days spread across the year. For families using 22.35 hours, this would be 2 full days per week, and 12 full ad hoc days. Families must take one adhoc day per month for 22.35 hours funding.

For funded only children, any missed days due to a Monday or Friday bank holiday will be re-allocated in agreement with nursery & parent depending on availability.

For families attending for additional private hours alongside their funded hours, these funded hours are allocated as follows: for a 11.18 hour place, 10 hours funding is allocated on day 1, and for the first 1 hour and 11 minutes on day 2. For a 22.35 hour place, 10 hours funding is allocated on day 1, 10 hours funding is allocated on day 2, and for the first 2 hours and 21 minutes of day 3. Any additional hours are paid for by the family.

The Nursery Manager will agree the booking pattern of hours with the family depending on the nursery's availability.

What are the additional charges for?

Additional charges are for the essential items that we need to operate the nursery, and they include all food and drink, formula milk, nappies, wipes, sun cream, and extracurricular activities provided by N, such as our daily N Extras, forest school and trips.

Government funding does not cover the cost of these items, nor is it intended to. Parents wanting a funded-only place do have the ability to 'opt-out' of our extras and associated charges.

We believe these items enhance children's learning experiences in readiness for school, and their overall wellbeing. We have a fully inclusive approach to what is offered to all children in the nursery, and we want all children to have exactly the same experience.

That being said, if parents wish to opt out, they may do so by bringing in their own meals and consumables adhering to our Family-Provided Meals and Voluntary Extras Policy. This Policy ensures the safety of our children and team with severe allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements, as well as our conformity with Environmental Health standards.

Opting out will mean no additional charges, and allow eligible families to access a funded-only place (subject to availability) at the nursery for free.

Tax free childcare

Tax free childcare is a method of paying childcare costs (including your nursery invoice) which provides a significant saving each month. It can be used alongside both 15 and 30 hours of funding.

The eligibility criteria closely follows that of 30 hours funding. However, unlike 30 hours funding, it is available to all nursery age children. Full details of eligibility can be found [here](#).

To apply for tax free childcare please follow the instructions [here](#).

Bursaries

Through our Positive Futures programme, we have a number of fully-funded places for qualifying 2-5 year olds across our nurseries. This is separate to the 15 and 30 hour government funding. These places are for disadvantaged local children, for 3 full days per week, all year round, and N covers the cost of all additional hours, food, consumables and extras.

We hope that by removing the challenges of accessing affordable, high quality early years education for these families, we can positively impact the futures of these children. Please note that bursary places are allocated to families that have been referred to us by the local authority.

Joining fees for funded-only places

Funded-only places are not required to pay our registration fee.

Families will be required to pay our £250 place acceptance fee deposit in order to secure their child's place - this is fully refundable and will be returned within one month of attendance.

Notice period for funded-only places

A notice period of four weeks is applicable for families accessing funded-only places.