

mindful nurseries

Government Funding for Childcare – What you need to know

What Funding is available?

There are several different entitlements available for parents in England, which have different eligibility criteria. These are set out below:

Entitlement/Funding	Child's Age	Eligibility	What you can receive	How to apply
Working Parents Entitlement	9 months – 5 years	For Working Parents *	15 hours per week over 38 weeks (Term Time) OR 11 Hours per week over 52 weeks (All Year - Stretched) <i>Can be combined with the Universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 & 4 Yr olds to make up 30 hours (22 hours all year)</i>	Apply for your code via the Gov.uk website. Submit your code to the nursery for verification via the nursery website.
For parents of 2 year olds receiving some additional forms of government support – Funding known as FEET or Disadvantaged 2 year old Funding	2 Years only	Based on the various benefits parents are in receipt of.	15 hours per week over 38 weeks (Term Time) OR 11 Hours per week over 52 weeks (All Year - Stretched)	Speak to your local council/authority for them to confirm the funding.
Universal entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds	All 3 & 4 Year olds	All children aged 3 – 4 years old are eligible	15 hours per week over 38 weeks (Term Time) OR 11 Hours per week over 52 weeks (All Year - Stretched) <i>Can be combined with the Working Parents entitlement for 3 & 4 Yr olds to make up 30 hours (22 hours all year)</i>	No application or code is needed for the Universal Funding

*Check if you are eligible here: <https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

From September 2025 the Working Parents Entitlement/Funding will increase to 30 hours (22 hours stretched) for all children in the age bracket. The combination of Working Parents Funding and Universal Funding for 3 & 4 Year olds will stop – your child will be eligible for one or the other.

At Mindful Nurseries we 'stretch' all the Funding to cover the whole year so you will receive either 11 or 22 hours per week of Funding.

Additional Funding is available for some children aged between 2 and 5 years who are eligible for the 15 hours Entitlement/Funding.

This Funding is called Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). This additional Funding will be used by the nursery to enhance your child's learning and development within the nursery.

There will be a section on the Parent Declaration Form to complete to give us permission to check for eligibility. If your child is eligible, you will be informed.

When can I use the funding from?

You can start using your entitlements/funding from the term after your child turns the relevant age to use that entitlement/funding.

The relevant age for the working parent entitlement is 9 months old.

When does your child reach the relevant age	When they can get their funding hours from
1 January to 31 March	Term starting on or after 1 April
1 April to 31 August	Term starting on or after 1 September
1 September to 31 December	Term starting on or after 1 January

For example: your child turns 9 months old on the 24th August so they will be able to use their funding from the September Term.

However, if they turn 9 months on the 1st September they will have to wait until the January term to use their funding.

How do I apply for the Working Parents Entitlement?

You apply online on the Gov.uk website to get your code.

You'll need to make sure you have the following information to hand before starting the application:

- your national insurance number (or unique taxpayer reference if you are self-employed).
- the date you started or are due to start work.
- details of any government support or benefits you receive.
- the UK birth certificate reference number (if you have one) for your child.

If you are a foster carer, there is a separate application process. Speak to your social worker to find out more.

When do I need to apply for the Working Parents Entitlement?

You will be able to take up your free hours from the term after you meet all the eligibility criteria for the entitlement you are applying for. These terms begin on 1 January, 1 April and 1 September.

You need to apply on Gov.uk before the deadline to receive a code for free childcare to give to your childcare provider.

The deadline is the day before the new term begins, but we encourage you to apply earlier, and recommend applying at least 6 weeks before the deadline.

We will require the code before confirming a Funded place or fees so please ensure you allow plenty of time to get the code and submit it to us.

The deadlines for applying for the code from Gov.uk are:

When you would like to use your entitlements/funding from	The deadline to apply for a code
1st January	31st December
1st April	31st March
1st September	31st August

If you do not apply by the deadline, you will not be able to use the entitlement/funding in that term!

When applying for your code please bear in mind that our invoices go out the week before they are due so if we do not have your code by that point your invoices will not reflect the entitlement/funding allocation.

Also, the nurseries are closed over Christmas and New Year so if you are wanting to use your entitlement/funding from January we will require your code before we close in December.

For parents applying for free childcare starting in September 2024:

It's important to remember that codes need to be reconfirmed every three months, so parents who applied any time before 1 June will need to reconfirm their code prior to the offer starting in September.

What happens once I receive my code?

Once you have received your code you will need to submit it to us via the nursery website: www.mindfulnurseries.com

On our 'Parents Corner' page there is a link to 'Submit a Funding Code' – follow these instructions. Direct Link: <https://mindfulnurseries.com/funding-form>

Once we receive the code, we will get it confirmed by the local authority and you will receive an email confirming this.

If there is an issue with the code confirmation you will be notified. Please ensure you contact Finance as soon as possible so they can go through with you what has happened and advise what to do next.

Once the funding is confirmed it will be allocated to your child's account starting from the 1st day of the term they are eligible from.

If you wish to know what the fees will be for your child with the funding, please contact Finance and they will be able to confirm the fees.

For us to claim the entitlement/funding for your child you will need to complete a 'Parent Declaration Form', this is a contract between you, us and the local authority that proves you have given us permission to claim the Entitlement/Funding.

They need to be completed every term at the moment (some local authorities will be changing that to once every school or financial year but we will let you know if this applies to you).

The Parent Declaration Form will be sent to you electronically via 'Funding Loop'. This is a system that takes the information we have for you and your child on Family and imports it onto the forms so that it streamlines the process of completing them.

The first time you receive the email with the link to the form it may go through to your spam/junk folder. Please make sure you mark that email address as safe to ensure you receive all future forms without any issues.

Please make sure you check the form and update any information, some information you won't be able to edit so you will need to contact Finance to get the details updated on Family.

Please bear in mind that your child's full name, as it appears on their birth certificate, has to be used for the form, the Funding Authorities cannot accept them if they are shortened or nicknames.

The Parent Declaration Forms will be sent out during the month before the Funding starts:

Parent Declaration Form Sent	Forms returns deadline	Funding Starts
December	31st December	January
March	31st March	April
August	31st August	September

We must have these forms completed, signed and returned before we can claim the funding. If we do not receive them back by the deadline then you will be charged full fees even if you have a valid code.

Allocation of the Entitlement/Funding at Mindful Nurseries

All nurseries and Childminders who accept the Government Entitlement/Funding are allowed to allocate the hours in anyway that works for them as long as it is not less than 3 hours per day or more than 10 hours per day.

At Mindful Nurseries the Funding is Stretched over the whole year so each child with Funding will get either 11 hours per week or 22 hours per week.

We allocate 5.5 hours per day to Funding. If your child attends a full day then they will have 5.5 hours funded and the remaining hours charged at standard rate.

All Funded Sessions have an Additional Charge which covers things like breakfast, snack, meals, extra-curricular activities, consumables, etc. All of which are included in our regular fees, but we are not allowed to use Funding for these. If eligible for EYPP, the consumables charge would be discounted.

Important information- please note

- You will have to reconfirm your details with HMRC every 3 months. They will send out reminders. If you fail to reconfirm in time or your eligibility changes then your child will no longer receive the funding. You will go into 'Grace Period' and will be informed of the end date for Funding. Your invoices after this date will reflect the changes.
- It is your responsibility to ensure you keep your details with HMRC up-to-date. We have no link to your Funding codes or HMRC accounts.
- You must ensure that we have your code and completed Parent Declaration form in time to apply for the funding at the start of each term.
- All Funded sessions will have an additional charge added as we cannot use the Government Entitlements/Funding for anything other than the actual childcare. Meals, consumables, extra activities, etc are not covered by the Funding.

*More information regarding the Entitlements/Funding can be found here:
www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.*

Any queries please email finance@mindfulnurseries.com.