

**If the provider is term time only, how can funded hours be taken?**

Some providers offer funded hours as term only, over 38 weeks. How the hours will be offered should be discussed with the provider. Funded hours could be offered up to a maximum of 10 hours in a day between 6am – 8pm.

The standard 15 hours can be offered over no less than 2 days. Parents who are eligible for the 30 hours could be offered them across no less than 3 days in a week.

**Can I spread the funded hours over more than 38 weeks?**

Some providers are open all year and may offer parents the option to 'stretch' funded hours. This means parents will have less funded hours per week but it would be spread over more weeks of the year (i.e. across school holidays).

**Can I take funded hours at more than one provider?**

Yes, Parents can split funded hours between multiple providers, but no more than two sites in one day. This can be between any types of provider. Parents will need to decide how many hours their child attends for at each setting as both providers must agree to this.

**What if I want to change provider?**

If you wish to change provider, you can do so and the funding will follow your child. Be sure you inform the provider your child is leaving and check the notice period length. The new provider can then claim for your child from the start date.

**You must sign a Privacy Notice.**

Parents must sign a Privacy Notice at the provider. The Privacy Notice will declare the agreed amount of funded hours parents wish the provider to claim for their child. Children must attend for the agreed amount of hours.

**For more information visit:**  
[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/eef](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/eef)  
or contact the Family Information Service on

**Tel: 0300 111 8007**  
or via email  
[fis@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@staffordshire.gov.uk)



**Staffordshire**  
County Council

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**Early Education Funding**  
for 2, 3 and 4 years olds.

Funded childcare to support your child's best start in life



**Staffordshire**  
County Council

### Why take up early education funding for your child?

The first years of a child's life are very influential and pre-school experiences can play a huge part in their early education and childcare. Children learn best of all through play and early learning. Childcare can help develop language, communication and social skills and prepare children for school. It really can help to give children the best start in life!

### What's on offer for 2 year olds?

More than a third of families with a 2 year old are now eligible for a maximum of 15 hours of early education per week (over 38 weeks, or 570 hours across the year), this is known as Think2. Families must meet the eligibility criteria.

To find out more about the Think2 places and making an online application please visit: [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/think2](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/think2)

### What's on offer for 3 & 4 year olds?

All 3 and 4 years olds are entitled to a universal entitlement of 15 hours of early education per week (over 38 weeks, or 570 hours across the year) at a registered or approved childcare provider.

### When does my child receive their place?

Think2 funding for eligible 2 year olds can start the term after the child's 2nd birthday (see table).

3 & 4 year funding for the universal 15 hours will start from the term after the child's 3rd birthday (see table):

Children born between:	Funded places can start from:
1st January - 31st March	Summer term (from 1st April)
1st April - 31st August	Autumn term (from 1st September)
1st September - 31st December	Spring term (from 1st January)

### 30 hours of funded early education for 3 & 4 year olds

Working parents who meet the earnings criteria could be entitled to an additional 15 hours of early education, making up a total of up to 30 hours per week (over 38 weeks, or 1140 hours across the year).

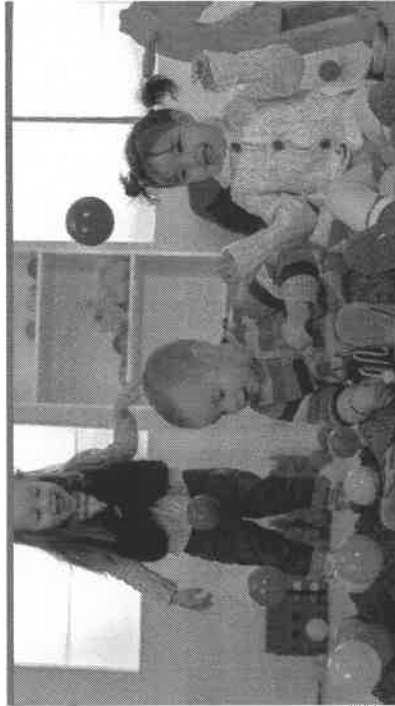
- Find out if you are eligible for the extra 15 hours of early education and apply online at the HMRC website: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

Successful applicants will receive a confirmation code from HMRC which will be sent to the parents new Gateway Account. Parents must pass the code onto their childcare provider to verify.

### When can I claim for 30 hours?

Families who are eligible will be able to claim for the additional 15 hours from the term after parents have received their confirmation code from HMRC, which is as follows:

- Code received between 1st September and 31st December (autumn term) – Additional hours start from 1st January (spring term).
- Code received between 1st January and 31st March (spring term) – Additional hours start from 1st April (summer term).
- Code received between 1st April and 31st August (summer term) – Additional hours start from 1st September (autumn term).



## Frequently asked questions

### How does my child receive the funded hours?

No money is passed to parents. The funding is paid directly to the childcare provider who will claim funding for your child's confirmed place. The funded hours are then provided to your child.

Your child can attend a childcare provider that is registered to provide funded places, so long as they have availability. Providers include

- Childminders
- Day Nurseries (private, voluntary, independent or academy/school site provision)
- Preschool Playgroups
- School Nursery Classes (from the September following a child's 3rd birthday).
- Out of school clubs / Holiday clubs on the Early Years Register

### Can I just attend for the funded hours only?

Yes, parents can choose that their child attends for just the funded hours, on the days and hours that are supplied by the provider and depending on availability. Parents are under no obligation to purchase additional hours, food, nappies, trips, clothing or any other consumable or service just to gain access to funded hours.

### What if I wish to take up extra hours or services at a Provider?

If your child does attend for extra hours that are not part of funded sessions supplied by the provider, you will be charged for these hours. Items such as food, nappies, trips clothing, other consumables and services, the provider is entitled to charge for if accessed by children.

### Can I still claim Tax Credits/ Tax Free Childcare?

Yes, however parents must inform HMRC that you receive the funded hours. Parents can claim Tax Credits or Tax Free Childcare on childcare that is paid for. For more information go to: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)