

## Universal offer

All 3 and 4 year old children are entitled to a 15 hour early education place, the term after their 3rd birthday this entitlement consists of 570 hours per year which can be used in a variety of ways, the childcare provider of your choice will inform you of their offer.

## Extended offer

Working parents/carers will be entitled to a further 15 hours of childcare in addition to their universal offer if they meet the criteria, this entitlement consists of a further 570 hours per years increasing the offer to 1140 hours which can also be used in a variety of ways where childcare providers have space to do so.

## Application

To find out if you are eligible for 30 hours childcare or Tax Free Childcare you must apply via the Childcare Choices government website

**[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)**

If you are a Foster parent/carer please contact your child's Social Worker.



## Tax Free Childcare

Tax free childcare is a new government scheme to help working parents with the cost of childcare.

Parents will be able to open an online account, which they can use to pay for childcare from a registered provider.

For every £8 a parent pays in, the government will pay in an extra £2. Parents can receive up to £2,000 per child, per year, towards their childcare costs, or £4,000 for disabled children.

The scheme will be available for children up to the age of 11, or under 17 for children with disabilities.

## Application

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**[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)**

For more information contact Family Connect  
tel. **01952 385385** email. **[familyconnect@telford.gov.uk](mailto:familyconnect@telford.gov.uk)**



# Talking Early & Years Childcare



Early Education and Childcare  
places for all 3 and 4 year olds



## Eligibility for the extended offer

- Both parent/carers are working (or sole parent in a lone parent family) and each parent earns on average: a weekly minimum wage the equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW) and less than £100,00 per year each
- Both parents are employed but one or both is temporarily away from the workplaces on parental, maternity, paternity, adoption leave or statutory sick pay
- One parent is employed and the other parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring.
- One parent is employed and one parent is disabled/incapacitated based on specific benefits
- Foster parents who are in paid work outside their role as a foster parent  
You do not need to actually work 16 hours per week but your earnings must meet the minimum equivalent of national minimum or living wage.

## Access/Flexibility

Parents/carers can choose to take their 15 or 30 hour places across a whole day if their provider can accommodate this. Any additional charges for example meals must be agreed with the parent/carer before they take up their child's place. Providers must also ensure that parents are given the option of providing a packed lunch if it is more affordable.

Providers should offer flexible package of care for all eligible children. The local authority and providers have agreed the minimum and maximum it considers acceptable:

- no minimum session length
- no session longer than 10 hours
- no session on offer before 6am and after 8pm
- a maximum of 2 providers in any one day

Children are eligible at the start of the term following their third birthday until statutory school age, so a child born between:

- 1 April to 31 August Autumn Term** (Starts September)  
**1 September to 31 December Spring Term** (Starts January)  
**1 January to 31 March Summer Term** (Starts April)

\*\* Although the actual term dates vary from year to year to accommodate national holidays such as Easter, which moves each year, term dates to determine eligibility remain constant.

## The details of the scheme

Parents must be able to choose to take the free entitlement of 15 hours or 30 hours a week for 38 weeks a year flexibly. There is nothing to prevent parents from taking up less free entitlement at the provider of their choice, as providers will be funded accordingly.

The local authority is able to make available for any parent that wants it, access to their 570 or 1140 hours over more weeks per year. This is known as the 'extended' offer. This can be:

- Up to 15/30 hours per week** across 38 weeks per year (term time only)
- Up to 12/23.75 hours per week** across 48 weeks per year (stretched offer)

**Not all providers may be able to offer the stretched offer,** the full 30 hours per week or the particular pattern of provision that you require however, you can split your entitlement across more than one provider. Therefore flexibility options will need to be discussed with your chosen childcare provider as availability will vary across the borough.

Providers are required to take any three or four year old or eligible two year old whose parent chooses that provision for a free place, if there are vacancies. This will only apply if no additional staffing is required to meet the minimum staff/child ratios as set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Providers cannot charge for any part of the provision of the free universal entitlement.

Providers are not permitted to charge 'top-up' for any part of the universal entitlement as this is free to the parent at the point of delivery. A locally agreed rate of funding is given to the provider by the local authority for each eligible child in their provision.

**It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure all codes are valid and kept up to date as per the requirement from Childcare Choices. It is not the responsibility of the Local Authority or the childcare provider. Failure to update your codes regularly will lead to the loss of funding.**

