

Fees and Funding Information

Government Funding at Dukes and Duchesses FAQ's

From September 2025, children from the term (January, April, or September) after they turn 9 months, are eligible for 30 hours a week (38 weeks a year) of funded early education if their family meet the eligibility criteria.

Some 2-year-olds are eligible for 15 hours per week (38 weeks per year) funding for families in receipt of additional Government assistance.

All children from the term after their 3rd birthday are eligible for 15 hours per week (38 weeks per year) funding, this is called Universal Funding.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know if I am eligible? You can check your eligibility and apply at beststartinlife.gov.uk

When do I apply for the 30-hour code? If you are using Tax Free Childcare, you will be eligible for 30 hours and can apply for your code when you reconfirm your account in the period before eligibility starts. If you are starting work, you can apply 31 days before you start. If you become eligible after your child has turned 9 months, you can apply at any time, In all cases funding will start from the start of the term after you get your code as long as you have applied before the end of the term before you become eligible.

What else do I need to do? When you apply for the 30-hour code, you will set up an online account via HMRC. You will receive a code beginning with 50 this needs to be shared with nursery along with your national insurance number. We will email you a Parental Declaration from Liverpool Council for you to complete via funding loop, this will provide us with all your details and consent to share your information with them to validate your code and a contract from us. We cannot claim any funding for you if you do not return the Parental Declaration. You must reconfirm you code every 3 months via your HMRC childcare account.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their code stays valid. The nursery will be unable to claim funding if the code becomes invalid.

What happens if my circumstances change, and I am no longer eligible for the 30 hours? If you fall out of eligibility for the 30 hours, you will go into a grace period:

When your grace period ends you will still receive the Universal 15 hours if your child is over 3. If your child is under 3 you will lose all funding unless you become eligible for 2-year-old funding for families in receipt of additional Government assistance. If you become eligible for the 30 hours again later, you can apply for another code and funding will start from the following term.

What happens if I cannot work? If you can't work, you will get Universal funding from the term after your child turns 3. You may still be eligible for 30 hours or 15 hours 2-year-old funding for families in receipt of Government Assistance. You can check at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

What if I am self-employed? The earnings criteria don't apply if you started your business in the last 12 months.

What if I reduce my hours of work? As long as you still earn the equivalent of 16 hours at National Minimum Wage you will remain eligible.

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Can I use Childcare Vouchers, Tax Free Childcare or apply for Universal Credit alongside the 15/30 hours?

Yes, you can, see beststartinlife.gov.uk for more information on help with childcare costs.

How does Dukes and Duchesses administer these hours? Funding is paid during school term times (38 weeks per year) The maximum number of hours for the academic year (September to August) is 1140 hours. We are open 51 weeks per year, so we stretch these hours like this:

Eligible from

15 hours				
Eligible from	Total Funded hours available	Total weeks of attendance remaining	Funded hours per week	Monthly funded hours
September	15 hours x 38 funded weeks = 570	51	570 / 51 = 11.17 hours	47.5 hours
January	15 hours x 24 funded weeks = 360	35	360 / 35 = 10.28 hours	45 hours
April	15 hours a week x 13 weeks = 195	22	195 / 22 = 8.86 hours	39 hrs

30 hours				
Eligible from	Total Funded hours available	Total weeks of attendance remaining	Funded hours per week	Monthly funded hours
September	30 hours x 38 funded weeks = 1140	51	1140 / 51 = 22.35 hours	95 hours
January	30 hours x 24 funded weeks = 720	35	720 / 35 = 20.57 hours	90 hours
April	30 hours a week x 13 weeks = 390	22	390 / 22 = 17.72 hours	78 hours

Why isn't it 15/30 hours a week every week? Funding is only paid during school term times (38 weeks per year). We are open 51 weeks, so we stretch funding over those weeks so that your invoice remains the same each month if starting with us in September. January and April starts funding slightly differs due to amount of weeks the funding is spread, nursery will let you know what your monthly invoice will be.

Do you charge a Registration Fee or Deposit? A £200 deposit is required to guarantee your child's place with us, the deposit is refunded if you are accessing a funded only place.

Can I have my funded hours whenever I want them? All places are subject to our set sessions and our occupancies as we have statutory ratio and space requirements. Parents who opt out of the enhanced package may be required to change their days subject to notice.

What does my child get in their funded hours? Funding covers the delivery of the Early years Foundation Stage it is not intended to pay for the things that as a full day care provider we provide such as: home cooked meals, forest school, toiletries, creams, emergency medication, consumables, and an online learning journey. Our voluntary additional services fee is £1.45 per hour (subject to review) brings funded places in line with our fully inclusive provision. This is broken down below. Parents who are unwilling or unable to pay will be entitled to opt out and receive the basic EYFS package.

Why am I being asked to pay Additional Services Fees when the Government call this free childcare? The Government state that childcare must be free, but funding is not intended to cover everything else that we provide so our voluntary additional services fee ensures that we can continue to deliver high quality provision with everything your child will need during their day.

Can my child attend on a Term Time only basis? No, we are an all-year-round provider open for 51 weeks per year.

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Can I split my hours between different providers? You can split your funding between 2 providers. You must let us know if your child will be with any other setting so we can work out how funding will be split. Failure to do so may result in you being charged at our standard fees in the case of an over claim of funded hours.

The law says I do not have to agree to extra hours or additional services to get my funded hours? That's right, delivery of these hours is legislated for in the Statutory Guidance and providers cannot make it conditional that families buy extra hours or services in order to get funded hours, the guidance states that we do not have to offer funded hours. Our decision to offer stretched funding with a voluntary additional services fee has been explained above but we make families aware that this is our policy and other settings may deliver these hours differently to us.

What if you do not have my preferred days available? You can join our waiting list or start on the days we have available then switch when your preferred days are available.

What if my child is ill or we go on holiday? Occasional, short-term absence such as illness or a family holiday is permitted. Where extended absences occur Liverpool Council decide whether they will continue your funding or not.

What about in exceptional circumstances? We strive to be as flexible and family friendly as possible, we always consider exceptional circumstances and temporarily adjust our policies to help where we can.

How long do you retain my information? Liverpool City Council require us to keep your Parental Declarations and funding documents for 6 years, to be shown in the event of an audit. Dukes and Duchesses is registered with the Information Commissioners Office

What if I want to change my childcare provider? You can change provider subject to giving us 4 weeks' notice. Funding may only be transferred mid-term with exceptional circumstances, a transfer funding form must be completed and approved by the early years funding team before a transfer can be completed. It is at the discretion of Liverpool City Council to transfer funding to a different provider.
Please contact eyfunding@liverpool.gov.uk

Where can I get more information? You can visit beststartinlife.gov.uk or speak to us.

Additional Services Packages Breakdown

Meals	Non- consumables	Enhanced provisions
Breakfast Dinner Afternoon tea	Nappies, wipes, nappy sacks, formula milk, sun cream, nappy disposal, emergency medication Learning journey and daily care diary	Artist in focus, book of the month, clay, woodwork, floral project, trips and outings, music sessions, cookery club, dance sessions, intergenerational sessions Forest school, Beach school, Talking time, Concept cat, P.E Bilingual sing Bikeability Parental engagements, Festivals and celebrations, Christmas parties, graduation

This list is not exhaustive as we tailor additional sessions according to the needs of the children and families at that time.