



Happy Days

Where Children Shine

Help with the Cost of Childcare

**A guide to the support available to help with
the cost of childcare**



Welcome.....

Here at Happy Days Nurseries & Pre-Schools we believe every child deserves the best possible start in life and we pride ourselves on providing a service to enable parents to work and live their daily lives knowing their children are cherished and cared for to the highest standard.

We understand the cost of childcare represents a significant proportion of your outgoings and we want to ensure all our families are receiving the support they are entitled to.

Several government programmes support parents with the cost of childcare and whilst we aim to explain these in more detail in this guide, everybody's circumstances are different and we therefore encourage you to visit: [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Free Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#) or www.gov.wales/help-paying-childcare for parents living in Wales, to understand what support is available to you.

That said, this guide will provide you with an overview of the help available and how that impacts on the fees payable at your Happy Days Nursery.



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Funding Available: At a Glance

***Childcare Vouchers have been discontinued and you can no longer apply for these but if you are an existing user you can still use them at our nurseries to pay for your childcare fees. Please note, all information below was correct at time of publication.**

	Early Years Education Entitlement for working parents with children aged 9mths - 23mths (starts from Sep 2024)	Early Years Education Entitlement for working parents with children aged 2 Years Old (starts from April 2024)	Early Years Education Entitlement for 2 Year Olds	Early Years Education Entitlement for 3 & 4 Year Olds	Early Years Extended Education Entitlement for 3 & 4 Year Olds	The Childcare Offer For Wales for 3 & 4 Year Olds	Tax Free Childcare
Eligibility	For working parents in England where you, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) with a child(ren) aged 2. From 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 2nd birthday	For working parents in England where you, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) with a child(ren) aged 2. From 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 2nd birthday	For families in England, receiving some forms of support with children aged 2 From 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 2nd birthday	For all families in England with children aged 3 & 4 From 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 3rd birthday	For working parents in England where you, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) with a child(ren) aged 3 & 4 From 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 3rd birthday	For parents living in Wales, with children ages 3 & 4. Each parent's gross income must be £100,000 or less per year. In addition, parents must also meet one of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> employed and earn at least, on average, the equivalent to working 16 hours a week at National Minimum Wage or Living Wage. on Statutory Pay and Leave (Sick, Maternity, Paternity, Parental, Bereavement or Adoption Leave) enrolled on a further or higher education course that is at least 10 weeks in length If you have a partner who lives with you, they must also meet one of these employment or education criteria. To be eligible during term time and school holidays, your child must be one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 years old and eligible for early education in line with the school admissions policy in your local authority (this is normally the term after your child turns 3 but may be later) If you are able to access early education before this you will not be eligible for the Offer until the term after your child turns 3 4 years old and not eligible for a full-time education place in the local authority in which you live If your child is 3 or 4 years old and eligible for full-time education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> you will not receive the Childcare Offer during term time you may be still be eligible for the Childcare Offer during school holidays 	Working families earning under £100,000 per year and at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) Your child is less than 12 years old (or less than 17 years old if they are disabled)
Exclusions	It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as wipes or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions Free Extended Entitlement for 9mths – 23mths is not available to you if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more	It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as wipes or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions Free Extended Entitlement for 2 year olds is not available to you if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more	To be able to take up 15 hours of free childcare for your two-year-old you or your child must meet the eligibility criteria. Please visit GOV.UK for further information It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as wipes or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions	It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as wipes or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions Free Extended Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds is not available to you if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more	It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as wipes or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions Free Extended Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds is not available to you if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more	If you do not use all 30 hours in one week, you cannot use them in another week. You cannot swap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> early education hours for childcare hours childcare hours for early education hours If your child is 3 or 4 years old and eligible for full-time education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> you will not receive the Childcare Offer during term time you may be still be eligible for the Childcare Offer during school holidays The funding from the government is for the education and care the professionals within the setting provide. It does not include food, transport or off-site activities that incur an extra charge and providers will be able to charge you for these.	Cannot be used in conjunction with Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Childcare Vouchers
Support	15 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks which equates to 570 hours of early years education a year	15 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks which equates to 570 hours of early years education a year	15 hours of free childcare or early education for 38 weeks which equates to 570 hours of early years education a year	15 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks for all parents which equates to 570 hours of early years education a year	30 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks which equates to 1140 hours of early years education a year	Up to 30 hrs per week, for 48 weeks of the year, made up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 10 hours of early education up to 20 hours of childcare All children are entitled to early education (known as Nursery Education for 3 and 4 year olds) from the term after their third birthday. All local authorities provide a minimum of 10 hours per week of early education, this could be in a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> local school playgroup day nursery Cylch Meithrin During term time, this early education will be part of the Offer's 30 hours. During the school holidays when there is no early education the Offer provides 30 hours a week of childcare for up to 9 weeks of the year. Parents will need to self-fund the remaining 4 weeks.	Receive up to £2,000 per child per year (a maximum of £500 per child, every 3 months)
Additional Info	You can 'stretch' the hours, using fewer hours per week over more weeks	You can 'stretch' the hours, using fewer hours per week over more weeks	You can 'stretch' the hours, using fewer hours per week over more weeks	You can 'stretch' the hours, using fewer hours per week over more weeks	You can 'stretch' the hours, using fewer hours per week over more weeks		

Tax Free Childcare...

What is Tax Free Childcare?

Tax Free Childcare is a government programme to help your family with the cost of childcare and will support you into work or to increase your hours at work, should you wish.

You may be entitled to support of up to £2,000 per child, per year (that's up to £500 every three months) towards your childcare costs.

If you get Tax-Free Childcare, you'll set up an online childcare account for your child. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider.

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 15 or 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both.

You cannot get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as claiming Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers.

Do I qualify?

You can apply for Tax Free Childcare if:

- You and your partner (or the sole parent in a lone parent family) are in work with each parent earning, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage (NMW) or National Living Wage (NLW) and not more than £100,000 each per year
- Your child is less than 12 years old (or less than 17 years old if they are disabled)
- The child you are applying for usually lives with you
- You work in the UK

If you are self-employed and started your business less than 12 months ago, you can earn less and still be eligible for Tax-Free Childcare.

The scheme will be available to parents on paid sick leave and paid and unpaid statutory maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

If you are unsure if it is right for you visit: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Which scheme you're better off with depends on your situation. Use the childcare calculator to work out which type of support is best for you.



Tax Free Childcare: How do I claim?

Step 1: Check you are eligible

Visit www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare for more information

Note: You cannot use Tax-Free Childcare together with: Tax Credits, Universal Credit, Childcare Vouchers

Step 2: Apply for Tax Free Childcare

Apply at www.gov.uk/apply-for-tax-free-childcare

If eligible, you'll get an online childcare account.

Step 3: Select Happy Days Nurseries & Pre-School as your childcare provider

We are all set up to receive Tax-Free Childcare payments

Step 4: Pay money into your childcare account

You can deposit money into your childcare account using a debit card, but it's quicker by standing order or bank transfer. For every £8 you pay in, the government will automatically add £2, up to the value of £2,000 per child per year (or £4,000 for disabled children.) You can use this money when it shows as 'available'.

Note: Anyone can make payments into your account on your behalf and, if your circumstances change or you no longer wish to pay into the account, you can withdraw the money you have built up. If you do, the government will withdraw its corresponding contribution.

Don't forget! You must sign in every 3 months and confirm your details are up to date.

Step 6: Reconfirm

To continue receiving the government top-up, you'll need to confirm your details are up to date every 3 months. But don't worry! You will receive a text and/or email 4 weeks before your reconfirmation deadline. This will prompt you to log into your childcare account.

Step 5: Pay your fees

Use the money in your childcare account, including the government top up, to pay your fees. Please ensure fees are paid on or before the first of each month and, as fees are charged on an actual basis, the correct amount is paid each month.

Note: You will be provided with a reference number per child which you must provide to us (by email to your Nursery Manager) in order for us to allocate the payment against your childcare fees



Early Years Education Entitlement for 3 & 4 Year Olds in England...

What is Early Years Education Entitlement for 3 & 4 Year olds?

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to a total of 15 hours of early years education for 38 weeks, or stretched for the equivalent number of hours across more weeks, per year.

This is a universal entitlement for all children and applies until they reach the compulsory school age.

Children will qualify for an education entitlement place the term after their third birthday. Your nursery manager will provide you with the necessary forms to enable you to access this place.

Child born between	Entitled from
1 April and 31 August	Start of Autumn Term after their third birthday until they go to school
1 September and 31 December	Start of Spring Term after their third birthday until they go to school
1 January and 31 March	Start of Summer Term after their third birthday until they go to school

What is Early Years Extended Education Entitlement?

In addition to the 15 hours universal education entitlement, working parents of 3 & 4 year olds can access an additional 15 hours extended education entitlement for 38 weeks, or stretched for the equivalent number of hours across more weeks, per year.

How do I apply?

You can apply for the extended education entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds if:

- You and your partner (or the sole parent in a lone parent family), are in work with each parent earning, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage (NMW) or National Living Wage (NLW) and not more than £100,000 each per year
- This includes self-employed parents and those parents on zero contracted hours who meet the criteria



Early Years Extended Education Entitlement (30 hours) in England: How do I apply?

Step 1: Check you are eligible

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare> to find out if you are eligible

Step 2: Check if it is right for you

Receiving 30 hours education entitlement might affect how much you get in tax credits.

Use the Childcare Calculator at <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator> to find out how much you could get towards approved childcare

Step 5: Reconfirm

You must sign into your childcare account and confirm your details are up to date every 3 months or your code will expire

Step 4: Present your code to your childcare provider

You will need to give the code in your childcare account to your Nursery Manager along with:

- Your National Insurance number
- Your child's date of birth

Step 3: Apply for 30 hours childcare

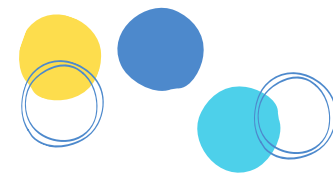
There's one application for 30 hours education entitlement and Tax-Free Childcare. As part of your application, you will find out if you can get both.

Apply online here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare>

If you're eligible you'll receive a childcare account and a code for 30 hours education entitlement



Early Years Education Entitlement for 2 Year Olds in England ...



What is Early Years Education Entitlement for 2 Year olds?

Some 2 year olds may be entitled to 15 hours early years education for 38 weeks or stretched for the equivalent number of hours across more weeks, per year.

Eligible 2 year olds can receive their education entitlement from the term after their 2nd birthday for a maximum of three funding periods

Parents should apply at the start of the funding period in which the child's second birthday occurs. Once approved the 2 year education entitlement lasts until the child moves onto the Early Years Education Entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds even if your financial circumstances change.

Child born between	Entitled from
1 April and 31 August	Autumn Term
1 September and 31 December	Spring Term
1 January and 31 March	Summer Term

Do I qualify?

You can qualify if you live in England and receive any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit, and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit (or both), and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

2-year-olds can also receive early years education if they:

- are looked after by a local authority
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- get Disability Living Allowance
- have left care under an adoption order, special guardianship order or a child arrangements order



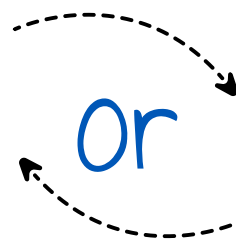
Early Years Education Entitlement for 2 Year Olds in England...



How do I apply?

If you are eligible you should receive a letter from the local authority informing you of this, simply take this to your Nursery Manager who will help you with the next steps to take.

If you feel you are eligible and have not received a letter, you can use the Childcare Calculator: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>



Speak to your Nursery Manager who will provide you with the number to call to contact the local authority. You will need:

- Your name
- Address
- DOB
- Name and age of child
- National Insurance Number

You should be informed immediately during the conversation if you are eligible.

If you are eligible, you will be issued with a reference number which you should give to your Nursery Manager along with completing a declaration form (which your Nursery Manager will provide).



Early Years Education Entitlement for Working Parents of 2 Year Olds in England (starts from April 2024)

When can I apply??

You can apply for this new 15 hours entitlement from when your child is 1 year and 36 weeks

Your child's birthday	When they can get their hours from	Recommended time to apply
1 September to 31 December	Term starting on or after 1 January	15 October to 30 November
1 January to 31 March	Term starting on or after 1 April	15 January to 28 February
1 April to 31 August	Term starting on or after 1 September	15 June to 31 July

You must have a valid code by the end of the month before a new term starts.

Check with your childcare provider to find out the exact date your early years education entitlement starts.

How do I apply?

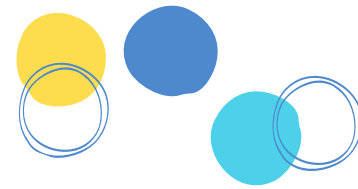
To be eligible you, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage).

If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.

You can't get this early years education entitlement if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 adjusted net income or more.

To check if you are eligible and to apply visit: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

The Childcare Offer in Wales



Parents and guardians of children in Wales can apply for childcare and early education for up to 30 hours a week. Foster carers and kinship carers (relative or friend who is not a child's parent) can also apply.

The 30 hours a week is made up of:

- at least 10 hours of early education
- up to 20 hours of childcare



The amount you receive depends on how many hours of early education your local authority offers. Your nursery manager will be able to advise how many funded hours you will be entitled to.

You can choose how much of the 30 hours you use for up to 48 weeks of the year. If you do not use all 30 hours in one week, you cannot use them in another week.

You cannot swap:

- early education hours for childcare hours
- childcare hours for early education hours

Before applying check if you're eligible for the Childcare Offer for Wales here: <https://www.gov.wales/check-eligibility-childcare-offer>

To apply for the Childcare Offer for Wales, visit: <https://www.gov.wales/get-30-hours-childcare-3-and-4-year-olds/apply>

One lead parent needs to complete the application, even if you have shared custody of the child.

If you are applying for multiple children, for example twins, add more children to the same application.

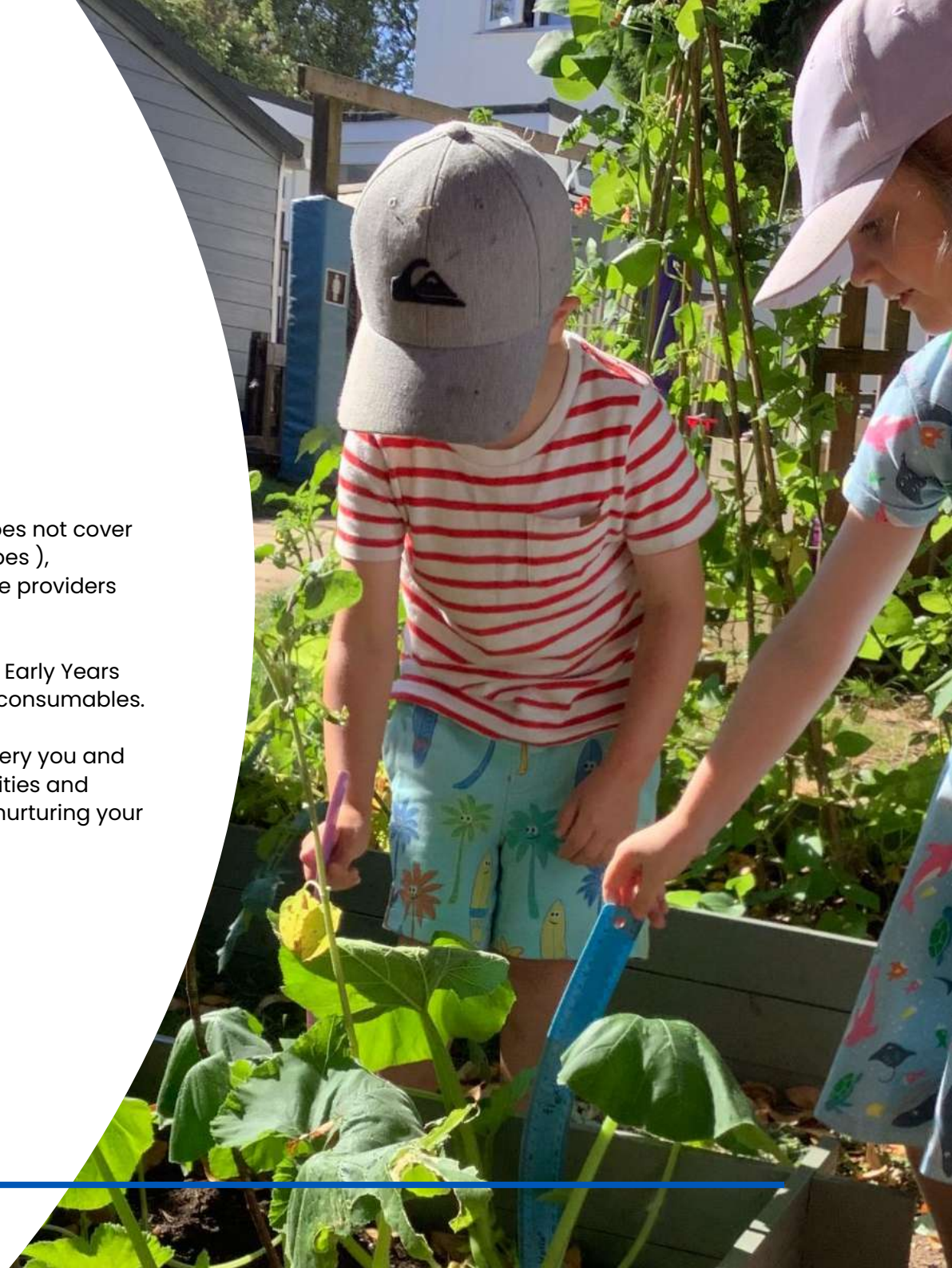
Our Fees...

Applicable at all sites in England

The government funding pays for a limited number of hours and does not cover the costs of meals, other consumables (such as sun cream and wipes), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips) and therefore providers may charge for these additions.

Here at Happy Days we charge a sustainability fee for every hour of Early Years Education Entitlement your child attends to cover the cost of these consumables.

Along with these consumables, whilst attending a Happy Days Nursery you and your child will have access to a number of unique enrichment activities and support to enable us to provide inspiring childcare and education, nurturing your child to become a learner for life, enabling their future success.



What does our sustainability fee cover?

Every Day Consumables such as sun cream, wipes and administrative supplies



Enabling Environments with state of the art equipment and resources



Meals, drinks and snacks. Our menus are approved by a specialist in Early Years nutrition.

When attending a full day all children receive breakfast, lunch and dinner plus a morning and afternoon snack.



Our unique, ambitious, broad and balanced Early Years Curriculum. Where Children Shine, which provides opportunities for children to learn, explore and discover, whilst attending a Happy Days Nursery. There are several programmes within the curriculum such as Sing & Sign, Let's Cook and Eco Schools, that all children participate in.

Learn more about our curriculum here:

<https://happydaysnurseries.com/curriculum/>



Colleague Value Programme. Our colleagues are our most valued asset and through our Colleague Value Programme we acknowledge and reward our colleagues to ensure they feel valued and motivated. We invest in training and development to deliver the best for our Colleagues and our families.



Preparing Children for a Positive Transition to School

Our exclusive Journey to a Positive Transition to School uses a road map to identify when each child has achieved a step which will support their positive transition to school. The steps are based on the skills, knowledge and attitudes that reception class teachers highlight are important for children to achieve so that they are confident to start school independent, curious and ready to learn.

Find out more about our Journey to a Positive Transition to School here:

<https://happydaysnurseries.com/curriculum/positive-transition-to-school/>

School



How can I use my Early Years Education Entitlement in our settings in England?



Here at Happy Days you can access your Early Years Education Entitlement over 38 weeks of the year or stretch your hours over 51 weeks of the year.

For parents that require childcare all year round, stretching your funding is the perfect solution:

- Your child will receive consistent care and education throughout the year
- It allows you to balance work and other commitments
- It will assist you to budget consistently throughout the year

For parents accessing 15 hours Early Years Education Entitlement, you will receive 11 hrs per week.

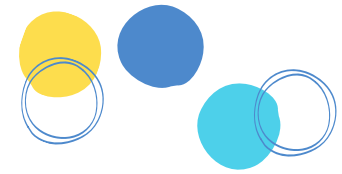
For parents accessing 30 hours Early Years Education Entitlement, you will receive 22 hrs per week.

The maximum number of funded hours your child can attend in one day is 10.



For parents wishing to access their Early Years Education Entitlement for 38 weeks of the year only, these places are limited and must be accessed in 10 or 5 hour sessions only. Please speak to the Nursery Manager if you wish to access your Early Years Education Entitlement over 38 weeks.

How are my fees calculated at our settings in England?



Your Early Years Education Entitlement hours will be allocated to your booking pattern first, any hours over and above the funded hours will be charged for at the nursery standard rate. Remember, the sustainability fee will be added to your Early Years Education Entitlement hours, so your total invoice will be:

Early Years Education Entitlement Hours x sustainability fee PLUS additional hours at the standard nursery fee rate

NOTE: We do not offer hourly rates or sessions. All our nurseries offer standard morning, afternoon and full day sessions as displayed on their fee sheet. Some settings may offer early and late sessions, depending on their location – these are charged for separately. When referring to additional hours, we mean the additional hours in the session that the Early Years Education Entitlement does not cover, along with any additional standard sessions required.

For example:

A child accessing 15 hours Early Years Education Entitlement and attending three days per week, stretching their free entitlement over 51 weeks of the year, will be invoiced each week for:

11 x hourly sustainability fee



One day with 1 hour of Early Years Education Entitlement



One day at the standard nursery fee rate



The nursery Early Years Education Entitlement Fee Sheet will set out the fees for each session and the hourly sustainability fee.

Our Fees...

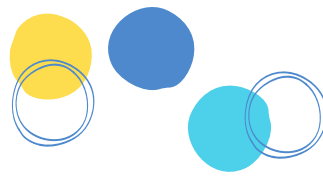
Applicable at all sites in Wales

The government funding is for the education and care the setting provides and does not cover the costs for meals, transport, off-site activities that incur an extra charge or additional hours and therefore providers will be able to charge you for these.

Here at Happy Days we charge a collection and drop off fee for those children we take to school along with a charge for all snacks and meals your child has access to during their session.



How can I use my Childcare Offer for Wales in our settings in Wales?



During Term Time you can choose to use your childcare hours at our setting. If you are eligible, and use the early education hours at one of our feeder schools, we do offer drop off and collection (charges apply).



During the school holidays if you are eligible for the Childcare Offer you will be entitled to 30 hours a week of childcare for up to 9 weeks for each full academic year you are eligible.



You will be provided 3 holiday weeks each term (9 weeks total for a full school year) for use during school holidays. This applies even if your child is offered a full-time education place. You cannot use holiday weeks in advance, but any unused holiday weeks may be rolled forward and used while you remain eligible.

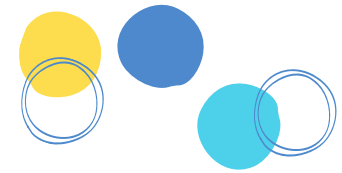


You will be allocated your entitlement for the current academic year when you join the Childcare Offer and this will update at the start of the following academic year, if you are still eligible.



Speak to your nursery manager for more information.

How are my fees calculated at our settings in Wales?



Your childcare hours are allocated to your booking pattern first, any hours over and above the funded hours will be charged for at the nursery standard rate. We will add your meal, snack and transport charges per day as applicable.

NOTE: We do not offer hourly rates or sessions. All our nurseries offer standard morning, afternoon and full day sessions as displayed on their fee sheet. Some settings may offer early and late sessions, depending on their location – these are charged for separately. When referring to additional hours, we mean the additional hours in the session that the Early Years Education Entitlement does not cover, along with any additional standard sessions required.



Frequently Asked Questions...

Can I only use my Early Years Education Entitlement Hours at Happy Days?

No, you can use your Early Years Education Entitlement between a maximum of two childcare providers

What if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change and you are no longer eligible for Extended Free Entitlement you must inform your Nursery Manager immediately and ensure your fees are paid in full on the first of every month

Can I bring a packed lunch?

No, unfortunately, for the safety of all our children, we do not allow any food to be brought into nursery. Our nursery chefs provide nutritious meals for all children, including those with allergies, dietary requirements and special diets

Can I apply for Tax Free Childcare and the Extended Free Entitlement?

Yes, there's one application for 30 hours Early Years Education Entitlement childcare and Tax-Free Childcare. As part of your application, you will find out if you can get both.

Apply online here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare>

All information correct as of date of publication.



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