



Tiny Toes Guide to Getting Funding for Childcare



The TT Guide to Getting Funding for Childcare

We try to make the cost of childcare as affordable as we can.

- We don't charge for bank holidays or for the Christmas week when we are closed.
- We help parents with childcare funding options and apply savings from government schemes in full to parents in reduced fees.
- Our fees are fully inclusive, there are no extra charges for meals, consumables, trips or externally provided extra-curricular sessions.

There are several schemes that we participate in to help with your childcare costs.

New Funding for Childcare announced in Budget 2023

Recently the government has extended the entitlement for "free" childcare hours, meaning there is new funding being made available for parents to pay for childcare for children in different age bands. The funding covers the basic cost of childcare, and you may still have to pay for extra costs like meals, nappies, or trips.

More information on the extended entitlement can be found at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

Free childcare hours (Current)

Currently, all parents of 3- to 4-year-old children qualify for 15 hours of funded childcare per week, for 38 weeks per year, from the start of the new term after their 3rd birthday. (Parents/Carers do not need to make an application to receive the 15 hours funded childcare. Your nursery will make the necessary arrangements if you provide them with ID verification and your child's NHS number).

In addition parents who work more than 16 hours a week and earn less than £100,000 are entitled to **30 hours free childcare** a week for children aged three to four. You will need to provide your childcare provider with a free childcare code for them to claim this. Applications for the additional 15 hours funding for 3- to 4-year-olds are made on-line to HMRC at: www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare.

15 hours of funded childcare is available for some 2-year-olds who face disadvantages that meet eligibility criteria. Applications for 15 hours funding for 2 year olds are made on-line on the Herts County Council Website at

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/childcare-and-advice-for-parents/free-early-education-and-childcare/childcare-and-free-early-education.aspx#two

Free childcare hours from April 2024

- From **April 2024**, working parents of two-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours of free childcare. Parents can make applications for funding of child care between April and August NOW!
- From **September 2024**, 15 hours of free childcare will be extended to all children from the age of nine months. Parents can make applications for funding of childcare between September and December from about mid June.
- From **September 2025**, working parents of children under the age of five will be entitled to 30 hours free childcare per week.

Parents need to re-apply for childcare funding before the start of each term to obtain a new funding code for each term to pass in to their child care provider.

Childcare Vouchers

We accept payments from a range of childcare voucher companies. However, the childcare voucher scheme is no longer accepting new applications, so if you are not already on a childcare voucher scheme with your existing employer, you will not be able to join one.

Tax-free Childcare Accounts

(for working parents/carers who earn less than £100,000 p.a.)

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both. You apply on-line to HMRC at:

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

To get Tax-Free Childcare, you'll set up an online childcare account. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider. There is a maximum benefit of £2,000 p.a. **per child**, to get this maximum you would need to put in £8,000 per child per year.



You will first need to set up a government gateway account to complete an application, which you can do from the same website if you haven't already got one. During the application, you will be requested for information such as National Insurance and Passport numbers to verify your ID. You will be asked to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria i.e. that you earn more than £125 per week but less than £100,000 per year (this applies to both partners in a couple).

Before you complete the application, you will also be informed that you will cease to receive any childcare support previously received via:



UNIVERSAL
CREDIT



TAX
CREDITS



CHILDCARE
VOUCHERS

If your application is successful, a tax-free childcare account is set up for you to pay money into. You can then make on-line payments directly to your nursery, by linking them to your tax-free childcare account.

The benefits of tax-free child care account are:



For every **£8** you put in to the account the government adds **£2**, so the government is paying for **20%** of your childcare costs.



There is a maximum benefit of **£2,000 p.a.** per child, to get this maximum you would need to put in **£8,000** per child per year.



If you have a number of children and/or have high childcare costs over **£9,336 p.a.**, this scheme is more generous than childcare vouchers (the maximum saving with vouchers is **£933** per parent/carer).



15 and 30 hours free childcare (for children over 3 years old)

- All children qualify for **15 hours** of free childcare per week, for 38 weeks per year, from the start of the new term after their 3rd birthday. Parents/Carers will not need to make an application to receive the 15 hours free. Your nursery will make the necessary arrangements as long as you provide them with ID verification and your child's NHS number.
- The **30 hours** free childcare funding scheme has the same eligibility criteria as for tax free childcare accounts i.e. working parents/carers who earn less than **£100,000 p.a.**
- You apply on-line to HMRC at the following website:
www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare.
- If you haven't already got one, you will first need to set up a government gateway account, which you can do from the same website. During the application you will be requested for information such as National Insurance and Passport numbers to verify your ID. You will be asked to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria i.e. that you earn more than **£125** per week but less than **£100,000** per year (this applies to both partners in a couple).
- Once your application is successful, you are provided with a code which is required by your County Council that manage the local scheme. You will then need to complete a Council Funding Form provided by your nursery using this code. Your nursery will then use this form to make the necessary arrangements with the Council.
- Your funding only lasts for a single term so you have to repeat the application process each term and this has to be done within set timeframes before the beginning of each term.
- For **15 and 30 hours** funding, your nursery are able to 'stretch' the 38 week free hours over the whole year, this equates to approximately 11 and 22 hours per week respectively, in this way your monthly fee remains fixed if you need childcare all year round.
- The funding is for educational hours only and does not cover the cost of consumables such as meals, snacks, nappies, wipes etc. so you will still be charged a fee to cover consumables where your nursery provides these
- **15 hours** of free childcare is available for some 2-year olds who face disadvantages that meet eligibility criteria. Applications for 15 hours funding for 2 year olds are made on-line on the Herts County Council Website at
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/childcare-and-advice-for-parents/free-early-education-and-childcare/childcare-and-free-early-education.aspx#two

Childcare Benefits

For those who are eligible, support is available for childcare costs through the following benefits:



UNIVERSAL CREDIT

(www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/universal-credit)

You must be in work and receiving Universal benefit, you can claim back up to 85% of your eligible childcare costs for children under 16. As of April 2023, you can get up to £951 a month for one child, or £1,630 for two or more paid upfront.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU CAN'T USE THE TAX FREE CHILDCARE SCHEME AT THE SAME TIME AS USING UNIVERSAL CREDIT FOR CHILDCARE BUT YOU CAN USE UNIVERSAL CREDIT TO PAY FOR ANY FEES CHARGED BY YOUR CHILDCARE PROVIDER FOR THE FUNDED HOURS OR FOR ADDITIONAL HOURS TO THE FUNDED ENTITLEMENT



WORKING TAX CREDITS AND CHILD CREDITS

(www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit)

This scheme is not accepting new applications. For this already on the scheme you can claim back up to 70% of your eligible childcare costs for children under 16.



CARE TO LEARN

(www.gov.uk/care-to-learn)

Help for parents who are also full-time students up to £180 per week.

Contact us if you have any questions:

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tel: 01992 450437