

How Government Funding Works

1. Government Funding – The Details

Alongside being here to give every child the very best start in their early years, we're also here to offer support and guidance to parents. It can be tricky to get to grips with all the details, so we've put together this guide to help you. There are three government funding schemes (which are now on stream), that can help your child to join us, for less. In a nutshell we enable you to make the most of either 15 or 30 funded hours per week available through the Government schemes, depending on your circumstances.

a) Universal Funding for 3 & 4 year Olds

This funding goes towards 15 hours of childcare across 38 weeks. All parents of 3- and 4-year-olds can utilise this scheme and **All** 3- and 4-year-olds qualify for this scheme.

- Our parents usually need their child to spend longer in nursery than funding covers, but that's no problem. We offer additional, non-funded hours to fit in with your schedule.
- You might be eligible for 15 hours' funded childcare at the same time as other government schemes or incentives. To find out more, visit gov.uk/browse/benefits

b) Working Families Funded Childcare

This scheme is for qualifying working parents, the number of hours available and age at which you can access this funding is as follows:

Families can receive 30 hours of funded childcare for children 9 months to 2 years and 15 hours for children age 3 & 4 (in addition to 15 hours of Universal Funding).

The Government scheme provides funding for 38 weeks and, if you're living with your partner, you'll need to apply together.

To qualify, parents:

- Should be working at least the equivalent of 16 hours a week at minimum wage,
- Can be on sick leave or parental leave,
- Must each earn less than £100,000 a year,
- Might still be eligible while claiming benefits.

You can read more about this on the government website: childcarechoices.gov.uk/

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c) For Families Receiving Some Additional Government Support - Children aged 2 years (Known in Kent as "FreeFor2")

We also offer this scheme to some 2-year-olds already in receipt of government support, if:

- Parents are receiving certain benefits including Universal Credit - more details are available [here](#)
- The child has Disability Living Allowance or Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) needs
- The child has a kinship or guardianship order
- The child is being looked after by a local authority.

Our 15 hours funded places for 2-year-olds under this scheme are limited. To find out more, please speak to us.

d) Summary of Types of Funding

Types of Funding

From September 2025		9 months to 2 years	2 Years	3-4 Years
Entitlement	All Parents ("Universal")			15 Hours
	Working Parents	30 Hours	30 Hours	15 Hours
	FF2		15 Hours	

Note: FF2 is FreeFor2 Funding for parents in receipt of certain Entitlements and/or meet certain income thresholds (details [here](#)).

Applying for Funding.

You might be wondering at what age your child will be able to use the 15 and 30 hours of Government Funding. It's all down to when their birthday falls, so make sure you plan ahead. Children born between:

- 1 April and 31 August will receive their funded entitlement from September – apply between 15 June and 31 July and no later than 31 August,
- 1 September and 31 December will receive their funded entitlement from January – apply between 15th October to 30th November but no later than 31 December,
- 1 January and 31 March will receive their funded entitlement from April – apply between 15th January to 28th February but no later than 31 March.

For Working Parent Entitlement, you'll need to apply online for an eligibility code through the digital childcare service not through your local authority or us. HMRC is responsible for checking whether a parent is eligible and issuing an eligibility code. We **MUST** have the code prior to being able to confirm a funded place.

All children can claim up to 15 hours per week from the funding period ("Term") after their 3rd birthday.

Universal Credit

Parents may be entitled to claim the childcare element of Universal Credit against payment for nursery costs, you will need to check with Universal Credit what you are entitled to **before** accepting a place at Little Pickles.

All Parents must:

- complete a parental declaration using our on-line system – "Funding Loop".
- provide us with their child's original birth certificate or passport.

Little Pickles Nursery
January 2026