



Dawpool Church of England (Aided) Primary School

30 hours childcare: what parents need to know

What is 30 hours funded childcare?

From September 2017, three- and four-years olds of working parents in England will be entitled to 30 hours per week of government-funded early education and childcare during term time (38 weeks of the year). This amounts to 1,140 hours per year in total which can be 'stretched' across the year to include school holidays and weekends.

Am I eligible?

To qualify, each parent (or the sole parent in a single parent family) needs to be working and earning, on average, at least the equivalent of 16 hours on the national living/minimum wage per week (£120 per week for those aged 25 or over), and no more than £100,000 per year. The number of hours worked is less important than the money earned, so you could be working only a few hours per week and still be eligible. For more information, see www.gov.uk/government/publications/30-hours-free-childcare-eligibility.

How do I sign up?

You must apply for the 30-hour entitlement through the Government's childcare service the term before you plan to start receiving it. You will need to confirm your eligibility and will then receive a unique 11-digit code to take to your chosen provider. You can find more information at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. **please note that you will have to keep reapplying, depending on your circumstances (usually every three months)*

Which childcare providers can I use?

You can take up a funded place with any provider on Ofsted's Early Years Register, including childminders, day nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools and nursery schools. You cannot take up your funded place with a nanny (even an Ofsted-registered one). Your provider should have a 'good' or 'outstanding' grade from Ofsted. New providers awaiting a full Ofsted inspection with an Ofsted judgment of 'met' will also be able to offer funded places. Providers with a lower grade will only be able to provide free places at the discretion of their local authority.

Can I use more than one provider?

You can split your funded hours between up to two different providers per day, for example between a childminder and sessional nursery or pre-school. When can I take up my funded place? It is up to your provider when they offer funded places, but in theory they can be delivered any day of the week, even weekends, any time between 6am and 8pm. There is no minimum session length, and a single session cannot exceed 10 hours. You do not have to take up your full entitlement, and can take as many funded hours up to 1,140 per year as you wish.

Why is my provider charging me for food and extras?

The rate that your childcare provider receives for delivering funded places does not include consumables (meals, snacks, nappies, wipes, etc.) or additional services (outings, classes, emergency cover costs, drop-offs and pick-ups, etc.). Your childcare provider may charge you for these.

I have heard that many providers won't be offering 30 hours – why is that?

The main reason some providers are not offering 30 hours is that in many parts of the country, the rate that your provider receives from the local authority is lower than their private rate. This means that they may be losing money by providing a free place. Funding for the scheme is also fixed until 2020, even though the costs that childcare providers face – like food costs, staff wages and other business costs – are increasing. It is completely up your provider whether they offer funded places or not. PACEY has joined other early years organisations to call on the Government to provide sustainable funding for childcare and early education places, so the extension to 30 hours can be delivered to all working families who need it. For more information about your childcare options and other funding (including tax free childcare), go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk