

# FACT SHEET – THE WORKING PARENT ENTITLEMENT CODE

## What is the Working Parent Entitlement?

Eligible working parents / carers can access up to 15 or 30 hours per week for 38 weeks or 570 or 1,140 hours annually of funded childcare. It is a parent / carer's responsibility to check their eligibility for this funding. They can apply by accessing [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) and logging in or creating a gateway account.

Once a parent / carer has successfully completed an eligibility check, they will be given a Department of Education Reference Number (DERN) which you will need to validate via the Provider Portal. Please note that parents / carers will need to reconfirm their eligibility via [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) every 3 months to ensure that the funding continues. If parent / carers are having difficulty completing an eligibility check or have a query about the result, they should contact HMRC on 0300 123 4097.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### When do parent / carers need to apply for the Working Parent Entitlement code?

Parent / carers need to apply for the code in the period following their child's eligible age. Please see below:

- Currently children aged 3 and 4 years old can receive up to 30 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, the period following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, i.e., a child turns 3 in March, will be able to receive 30 hours from the 1<sup>st</sup> April onwards.
- From April 2024, children aged 2-years-old can receive up to 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, the period following their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday, i.e., a child turns 2 in October, will be able to receive 15 hours from the 1<sup>st</sup> January onwards.
- From September 2024, children aged between 9 and 23 months old can receive 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, the period after the child turns 9 months old, i.e., a child reaches 9 months old in May, will be able to receive 15 hours from the 1<sup>st</sup> September onwards.
- From September 2025, children aged 9 months old up to school age can receive 30 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, the period after the child turns 9 months old.

Please see the [FEEE Calendar](#) for all key dates relating to deadlines for the Working Parent Entitlement codes for each period.

## **If a parent / carer applies for the Working Parent Entitlement code early, do they receive their funding early?**

No, a parent / carers' Working Parent Entitlement code will only be activated once the child reaches eligible funding age.

## **How do I obtain a Working Parent Entitlement code?**

A parent / carer can obtain a Working Parent Entitlement code by visiting [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk). Once a parent / carer has successfully completed an eligibility check they will be given a Department of Education Reference Number (DERN) which providers will need to validate via the Provider Portal. Parents / carers must reconfirm their details every 3 months for funding to continue – please remind them to do this.

## **How do I validate a Working Parent Entitlement code when it is headcount / adjustment task time?**

See our [Guidance on how to Validate a Working Parent Entitlement Eligibility Code](#).

## **Where do I input the Working Parent Entitlement code on the headcount / adjustment task?**

If a child is new to your setting, from the 'Funding' tab in the top toolbar, click on which task is currently open, either Actuals or Adjustments and choose the age relevant task.

### **2-year-old children:**

If a child is eligible for the 2-year funding for families receiving some additional form of government support (the Disadvantaged funding), the parent should have provided you with confirmation of their voucher code. For children who have received their voucher code from Leicestershire, you will need to choose the 'Enter EY Voucher' button, which will then automatically show you the child's details. If the parent gives you a voucher code from another local authority, you will need to press the 'Add Child' button and manually enter the child's details, and upload a copy of the evidence letter from the other local authority in the 'Documents' tab. On the 'Funding Details' tab, you will need to select 'Disadvantaged Funding'.

If a child is eligible for the Working Parent Entitlement for 2-year-olds, the parent should have provided you with confirmation of their 11-digit eligibility code. You will need to press the 'Add Child' button and manually enter the child's information on the 'Child Details' and 'Parent / Carer Details' tab. Ensure that you tick the consent box under 'Working Family Eligibility'. On the 'Funding Details' tab, you will need to select 'Working Family Funding'. You will then be given a box to input the

Working Parent Entitlement code. Input the code's details and then press the blue box called 'Check Eligibility Code' – this will let you know if the code is correct and if it is valid for the period, or not.

### **3- & 4-year-old children:**

If a child is eligible for the Working Parent Entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds, the parent should have provided you with confirmation of their 11-digit eligibility code. You will need to press the 'Add Child' button and manually enter the child's information on the 'Child Details' and 'Parent / Carer Details' tab. Ensure that you tick the consent box under 'Working Family Eligibility'. You will then be asked to input the funded hours. Input the code's details and then press the blue box called 'Check Eligibility Code' – this will let you know if the code is correct and if it is valid for the period, or not.

If the child is existing, you can edit the current details held.

Please note that the system will not let you add any extended funded hours if the Working Parent Entitlement code has not been validated first or is not valid. As long as you have no additional documents you wish to add to the child's record, you can click on Save. Please refer to our [dedicated webpage](#) and view our user guides on how to complete the headcount / adjustment tasks.

### **I am inputting the Working Parent Entitlement code to validate, but it is coming back as ineligible, what do I do?**

Check that all the information has been inputted correctly e.g., legal name / date of birth marries up exactly to what is stated on the birth certificate.

Check that the National Insurance Number is correct. If on the portal you have only inputted one parent's NI number, and this is not the parent / carer that applied for the Working Parent Entitlement, then it may come back as invalid. Try both parent / carer's details. If it is still not working, ask the parent / carer to contact the HMRC helpline on 0300 123 4097 to see if they hold the correct details on their system.

Check the code was issued prior to the period you want to use it. If it issued after the eligibility cut-off date, we will not be able to fund Working Parent Entitlement hours for that period.

If the Working Parent Entitlement code is ineligible, the system will not let you claim the 15 or 30 hours on the headcount or adjustment tasks.

Eligibility codes can only be used during their grace period if the child has claimed the Working Parent Entitlement in the previous period at the same provider. A child cannot begin funding when their code is in its grace period. This is because the grace period is there for continuity of funding. Therefore, if this code is not successfully renewed by the parent, then we will not be able to fund them.

## **If I apply and have an eligible Working Parent Entitlement code midway through a period, when can I start claiming?**

- If a parent / carer applies and the start date of the Working Parent Entitlement code is between the 1st January – 31st March, then they will be eligible from the summer period (1st April onwards).
- If a parent / carer applies and the start date of the Working Parent Entitlement code is between the 1st April – 31st August, then they will be eligible from the autumn period (1st September onwards).
- If a parent / carer applies and the start date of the Working Parent Entitlement code is between the 1st September – 31st December, then they will be eligible from the spring period (1st January onwards).

## **If a Working Parent Entitlement code has a start date after the period has commenced but a parent / carer applied before this date, what can be done?**

Where parents have applied for an eligibility code by the deadline (31<sup>st</sup> August, 31<sup>st</sup> December or 31<sup>st</sup> March) and HMRC requires some more information to make a decision, they may receive a decision after the start of the period. In such cases, if HMRC are able to make a decision in the first 14 days of the period the parent wants to start claiming, the eligibility code will be backdated by HMRC to allow the code to be used in the current period and you will be able to add the child onto the headcount task after validating the code in Synergy. For example, a parent applies on the 25<sup>th</sup> March for 30 hours to use for the summer period, but HMRC needed to assess their income, and did not make a decision until the 5<sup>th</sup> April. The eligibility code will automatically be backdated to the 31<sup>st</sup> March to allow them to start claiming their entitlement in the summer period.

If a parent applies for their eligibility code by the deadline (31<sup>st</sup> August, 31<sup>st</sup> December or 31<sup>st</sup> March) and receive a decision by HMRC **after** the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the new period they will not be able to use the eligibility code at your setting in the new period as per the Statutory Guidance, therefore you will need to let the parent know and inform them that they may wish to consider applying for compensation from [HMRC's Claim Compensation for Childcare Service Issues](#).

## **The Working Parent Entitlement hour code has expired, what do I do?**

If the code has expired, you will need to advise the parent / carer to reconfirm their eligibility via their Gateway account and if they are having difficulty reconfirming the Working Parent Entitlement code, they should contact HMRC on 0300 123 4097. You will need to make it clear to the parent / carer that they may have applied too late for the current period and will only be able to claim the universal 15 hours (only applicable to 3- & 4-year funded children only) if they have not reconfirmed their code

in time. If they choose to still attend for the additional hours, they will be charged at your private rate.

### **What is a grace period?**

There is a grace period to enable parent / carers to retain childcare for a short period, if they become ineligible for the Working Parent Entitlement. If a parent / carer is still eligible, their claim must be reconfirmed every three months. Once a parent / carer goes past the grace period end date, funding will cease. We will continue to pay funding until the grace period has expired. Please note that a child cannot claim the Working Parent Entitlement at a new setting if they are in their grace period, as the grace period is only there for continuity of funding.

### **The Working Parent Entitlement code has expired but the grace period is still in date, can I still claim?**

Yes, the child will still receive funding until the end of the grace period, irrespective of the Working Parent Entitlement code end date. Codes will automatically expire at the end of the grace period. Funding will not be received after the grace period unless the code is reconfirmed.

Please note that a child cannot claim the Working Parent Entitlement at a new setting if they are in their grace period, as the grace period is only there for continuity of funding.

### **One of my parent / carer's cannot locate their Working Parent Entitlement DERN code, what should I advise?**

If parents / carers are having difficulty locating their Working Parent Entitlement code, they should log into their gateway account at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk), or contact the HMRC on 0300 123 4097.

### **Can the Working Parent Entitlement code be used for wrap around care and be split between providers?**

Yes – the Working Parent Entitlement code can be used for wraparound care and can be split between providers. If a parent / carer is splitting their hours between two or more providers, it is important that parent / carer's do not exceed their allocated number of funded hours per day / week / period. This must be made clear to parents / carers and advice given to them on charges for additional hours etc. You will need to get the parent / carer to be explicit on which setting should be claiming the universal hours and which will get the extended hours or if it is a mixture of both at each provider.

### **A parent / carer has given me a code beginning with '114'. Is this a valid code?**

Yes, this is a valid temporary Working Parent Entitlement code that is given by the HMRC when they are still assessing the parent / carers income. The temporary codes will still need to be validated through the Provider Portal as per above. Please note that when the parent / carer reconfirms the code, they will be issued a new Working Parent Entitlement code beginning with '50'. If eligible, you will need to ensure that the new code is updated on the headcount / adjustment task in the Eligibility Code box.

### **A parent / carer has reconfirmed their eligibility, what do I need to do?**

Before submitting the headcount / adjustment tasks, you should ensure that you have re-verified the child's Working Parent Entitlement code in the Provider Portal.



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**For more FEEE information for Providers, please visit the [FEEE Website for Providers](#)**