

FACTSHEET – EARLY LEARNING FOR TWO-YEAR-OLDS ENTITLEMENT

What is the Early Learning for Two-Year-Olds Entitlement?

The Early Learning Programme (ELP) for two-year-olds is a government initiative that provides funded childcare for eligible two-year-olds. A funded two-year-old place is available for families in England who receive some form of support. Once eligibility is confirmed it will remain until the child becomes eligible for three- and four-year funding, even if a family's circumstances change.

Eligible two-year-old children will receive:

- 15 hours of free childcare or early education for 38 weeks.
- A total of 570 hours per year, which can be used flexibly with one or more childcare provider.
- Some providers will allow children to 'stretch' their hours over 51 weeks, using fewer hours per week. (For those providers who open across 52 weeks of the year and if the child is not a school leaver, you are able to still stretch over the final unfunded week in August. You should stretch the funding over 52 weeks (internally) if you wish to do so but will need to ensure that when it comes to submitting the claims on Synergy you stretch the funding over 51 weeks.)

When parents / carers apply for the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding, if they are eligible, they will be issued with a voucher code from the local authority. Please do not accept the code without the valid letter / email the parent / carer will have received to confirm the child is eligible for funding. It is extremely important that you check your two-year-old code is valid before claiming funding, otherwise you will not be paid.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can parents check if they're eligible?

This can be done online by the parent / carer directly, using [Leicestershire's Parent Portal](#). If the parent is struggling with completing the application; does not have access to the internet; or are applying through the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) route, they can call the two-year helpline on 0116 305 6208 or email childcare@leics.gov.uk. Parents / carers can find further information about how to apply themselves by visiting our [Funded Childcare Places page](#).



The parent / carer has applied but the result is ‘Not Found’, however looking at the criteria they feel they should be eligible?

If their circumstances have changed recently, it can take the DWP system up to 6 weeks to reflect any changes. Please ask the parent / carer to call the two-year helpline on 0116 305 6208 for further support.

When is the child eligible from?

Child’s 2nd birthday between:

1 January and 31 March

1 April and 31 August

1 September and 31 December

When you can claim

From the 1 April following their 2nd birthday

From the 1 September following their 2nd birthday

From the 1 January following their 2nd birthday

How can I check that a two-year-old code is valid?

You will need to see sight of the official email / letter that states the child’s name / date of eligibility / two-year voucher code and the outcome of the check or alternatively, you should contact the two-year helpline on 0116 305 6208.

What is the code effective date?

The code effective date will be the date provided on the letter that the parent receives from the local authority. The child cannot claim FEEE before this date, even if they are of eligible age.

What documents do I need before I make a claim?

You will need a copy of the following information before making a claim:

- A copy of the email / letter confirmation that the parent / carer would have received to confirm 2-year eligibility of the child
- A copy of each child’s birth certificate / passport or medial card
- A signed and dated Parental Statement of Undertaking (PSOU) which clearly states how many hours the parent / carer wants to claim.

How do I claim?

You will need to complete the relevant headcount / adjustment task for the period on the Provider Portal. When checking the parents / carers two-year confirmation prior to adding the child onto the headcount or adjustment tasks, check to see which Local Authority has issued the code.





For children who have been issued with a voucher code from Leicestershire: Please note you will need to ensure that you record the voucher code on the headcount / adjustment by clicking on 'Enter EY Voucher' when adding a new child. It is very important that you check the code is valid prior to entering the child onto the task. You must not add a child to your roll and promise funding to parents / carers if you have not checked the code is valid first, otherwise there is a risk that you will not be paid. If this is the case, parents / carers would be asked to pay which would cause upset. Once filling out the fields on the 'Enter EY Voucher' search, if the child's details return successfully, such as their name, address and parents' details etc, then the code is definitely a valid code and has been "found".

For children who have been issued with a voucher code from another local authority: Please do not click on the 'Enter EY Voucher' button if the code is from a different local authority to Leicestershire, as the system will not recognise it. In these instances, you should click on the 'Add Child' button and enter all mandatory fields. You will also need to upload a copy of the child's two-year funding code from the other local authority by clicking on the 'Documents' tab in the child's record. Please note that if the evidence is not uploaded, your claim for that child will be rejected. However, once the headcount is released, all settings have the capability of running a 2-year check for families in receipt of additional support in the Provider Portal. Therefore, you may find it easier to follow this process.

Does the two-year code need re-validating every 3 months?

No – once a child is eligible for this two-year-old entitlement and is issued with a voucher code from the local authority there isn't a requirement to re-validate the code every 3 months. **This is a requirement for children eligible for the working parent entitlement eligibility code only.**

What happens if a parent's / carer's circumstances change after successfully applying for the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds?

Once a child is eligible for this two-year-old entitlement and the parent / carer has been issued with a valid two-year-old code (Voucher Code) from a local authority, funding can be claimed until the child is eligible for the three- and four-year-old entitlement - even if their circumstances change. It's at this point, that you should advise the parent to check if they are eligible for the Working Parent Entitlement, as they may be entitled to claim an additional 15 hours if they are now working.

What happens if a parent / carer is eligible for the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds and the Working Parent Entitlement at the same time?

There may be some circumstances where households meet the eligibility criteria for both entitlements. In these cases, when completing the headcount / adjustment tasks, as an example, a provider could claim up to 15 hours Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding and also claim up to the additional 15 hours provided by the Working Parent Entitlement.



What would happen if a parent / carer who was eligible for the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds (15 hours) and the Working Parent Entitlement (30 hours) at the same time tried to claim for 45 hours at different providers?

Synergy would flag this up to the FEEE Team. The provider who is trying to claim the Working Parent Entitlement will have their claim reduced as per the DfE rules. The provider would see the reason why in the 'Notes' tab on the child's record in the headcount or adjustment task and the parent / carer would need to be charged privately at your advertised rates for this.

If a child has been approved for the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding from another local authority, what do I need to do?

If a child has been approved by another local authority but wants to attend a provision in the County of Leicestershire, you will need to send us proof of the two-year-old entitlement confirmation that parents / carers would have been issued with from the relevant local authority.

We will need a copy of the official confirmation email / letter of eligibility. This should contain the child's name, the date of eligibility and the two-year-old code. Please send this information via the individual child's 'Documents' tab on the Provider Portal.

What happens if I upload the wrong evidence?

If you upload the wrong evidence which does not confirm that a child has received the two-year-old entitlement from another local authority, funding will not be paid – in this case, you may receive either a rejection notice that will appear once you log in to Synergy, or you should check the 'Notes' tab on the child's record which will state why the evidence is incorrect. Please ensure that the two-year-old confirmation you send includes all the necessary details, i.e., name of child, eligibility start date, outcome of check and two-year voucher code. If the claim is rejected on the headcount task, you can try to claim again on the adjustment task, ensuring that this time you upload the correct evidence.

If a child attends my provision and lives out of the County, which local authority pays for the funding?

Leicestershire children accessing the funding outside of Leicestershire will be paid by the local authority they take up their early years place in. Likewise, Leicestershire local authority will fund children taking up their place with Leicestershire Childcare Providers who live out of the county.

How much funding will I be paid?

Providers will be notified of the current two-year-old rate via the emailed FEEE updates. If there is a change to the current amount paid, providers will always be notified by email.





Do parents / carers have to use all their hours?

No, parent's / carer's do not have to use all their 15 hours per week. However, if a child attends a setting for more than the 570 hours a year, the parent / carer will be charged for these additional hours privately, unless they are also entitled to the Working Parent Entitlement which will provide the family with an additional 15 hours per week, taking them to 1,140 hours a year.

Can the Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding be stretched?

Yes, a parent / carer cannot insist on this opportunity, but if you can accommodate a parents / carers request and it will benefit the child, we would recommend you doing so.

Do children claiming the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding also qualify for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)?

Yes, if eligible.

Can eligible Two-Year-Olds in receipt of the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding claim DAF if the child is in receipt of DLA?

Yes, if eligible.

If a child is claiming the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding has now turned 3, what do I need to do?

The child will be eligible to claim the two-year-old funding until the period after their 3rd birthday. Once the child becomes eligible for the 3- and 4-year-old funding entitlement, Synergy will automatically roll the child forward onto the relevant headcount. Once the headcount opens, you will then need to record how many FEEE hours the child will be using over the period and add any additional details needed, i.e. a working parent entitlement code.

Can parents / carers continue to claim tax credits once they take up a funded place?

Once a child takes up a funded place, they cannot claim child tax credits for childcare that they are getting through the entitlement. If the child attends for more hours that are not government funded, then they will be able to claim on these additional non-funded hours. Parents should contact HMRC for advice.

Can I offer the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funding if I am newly registered and do not have an Ofsted grade yet?

Yes. However, once you are inspected, if you receive a grade of 'needs attention' or 'urgent improvement' in leadership and governance or 'not met' in safeguarding, you will be removed from the list of providers able to offer the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds entitlement and funding may be withdrawn as soon as practicable.



What if my Ofsted grade changes? Can I continue to offer Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds funded places?

If you receive a grade of 'needs attention' or 'urgent improvement' in leadership and governance you will be removed from the list of providers offering the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds entitlement. Any existing children already accessing the funding at your provision will continue to be funded, however you will not be in a position to take any new children until your Ofsted grade for leadership and governance reflects 'expected standard', 'strong standard' or 'exceptional'.

In addition, if you receive a 'not met' grade in safeguarding, you will be removed from the list of providers offering the Early Learning for 2-Year-Olds entitlement and the working parent's entitlement as well. Please view our [Removal of FEEE funding policy](#).

If a child receives a valid voucher code in the holidays, can they start claiming straightaway?

No, if the child receives a voucher code during a school holiday period, the child will not be able to claim the funding until after the half term break or the start of the following period, whichever is first. For example, if the parent successfully applies during the summer holidays, the earliest that a setting could claim for any FEEE hours would be at the start of the autumn period.



Leicestershire County Council, Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service
County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire, LE3 8RF

For more information see: [FEEE information for Providers](#)