

Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) Support Toolkit

A guide for childcare providers who have joined the Directory of Early Years Providers

General Information

To enable you to offer the funding to childcare providers you must be Ofsted registered and have charitable status or be registered as a business at companies house.

Provider Agreements (PA)

You will be issued with a PA once you have been approved to be on Leicestershire's Directory of Early Years Providers. You are expected to sign and return a PA even if you are not yet claiming for funding.

The PA must be signed, dated and returned to us as soon as possible and by the deadline date if given, so that your first payment can be paid promptly. The PA gives clear guidance about the expectations on providers to provide quality childcare.

Provider Portal

You will be issued a username and password to the Provider Portal once you have been approved to be on Leicestershire's Directory of Early Years Providers. This is where you will be able to complete and submit your claims to the local authority via the headcount and amendment tasks. You can also apply for DAF funding via the Provider Portal, as well as verify the 30 hour extended entitlement codes and assist parents and carers who wish to carry out a 2-year eligibility check. You will also receive payment breakdowns and initial payment notices via this system.

Anycomms+

Anycomms+ is a secure, internet based data transfer site that will enable you, members of the local authority and 3rd parties (such as health professionals) to securely share sensitive information.

Ofsted regularly make us aware of any new providers. Once we receive notification of a new provider, they will be set up with an Anycomms+ account.

If you forget your login details or password, or get locked out of your account please contact AM Admin Systems Support on 0116 305 7785 or email AMAdminSystemsSupport@leics.gov.uk.

For more advice and guidance on how to use Anycomms+ please visit our [website](#).

Childcare Funding

There are a number of different streams of funding which parents can access, and providers can offer:

- Universal entitlement – this allows all parents of children aged 3 and 4 to access up to 570 hours of funded hours annually, which is broken down into 15 hours per week for up to 38 weeks per year.
- Extended entitlement (30 hours funding) – this allows eligible working parents of children aged 3 and 4 to access up to 1140 hours of funded hours annually, which is broken down into 30 hours per week for up to 38 weeks per year. For more information about the eligibility criteria please visit the [website](#).
- 2-year-old funding - this allows eligible parents of children aged 2 to access up to 570 hours of funded hours annually, which is broken down into 15 hours per week for up to 38 weeks

per year. For more information about the eligibility criteria please see [2 year old funding FAQs](#)

- Disability Access Fund (DAF) - DAF is designed to support children with disabilities or special educational needs (SEN). Childcare providers who have free entitlement children who are eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a single, one off payment of £615 per year. For more information, please visit our website [here](#).
- Deprivation – this applies to 3 and 4-year-old funding only. Some children are eligible for this extra supplement as it is based on their home postcodes. For more information, please visit our [website](#) and scroll down for the IDACI postcode check section.
- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) - this applies to 3 and 4-year-old funding only. This is an additional supplement of 0.53p per hour (on universal hours) for eligible children. For more information, please see [click here](#).

Eligibility

Children will be eligible at the start of the funding period following their 3rd or 2nd birthday (where eligible) as detailed in the table below:

A child born between:	Will be eligible for a funded place from:
1 April and 31 August	The start of the autumn period following their 3 rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the autumn period after their 2 nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st September .
1 September and 31 December	The start of the spring period following their 3 rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the spring period after their 2 nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st January .
1 January and 31 March	The start of the summer period following their 3 rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the summer period after their 2 nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st April .

2 Year Old Funding

If you have not yet been inspected by Ofsted or have a ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ grade you can also support children who are eligible for the 2 year old funding. Not every 2-year-old is eligible for the funding. For more information on the criteria and for details on how to check if a child is eligible please visit the [website](#).

Extended Entitlement (30 hours per week)

Eligible working parents/carers can access up to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks or 1140 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.

Once a parent 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 every 3 months to ensure that the funding continues.

The start date of the DERN will need to be prior to the start of the next funding period that you want to claim in. For example, to be eligible for the autumn period (1st September – 31st

December), the start date of the DERN needs to be prior to the 1st September. If you submit a claim with a start date that is after the period commencement, extended hours will not be paid.

How can parents/carers access the FEEE?

- No session should be longer than 10 hours per day
- No minimum session length (subject to the requirements of the registration on the Ofsted Early Years Register)
- FEEE cannot be claimed before 6.00am or after 8.00pm
- Childminders are unable to claim for any child that is related to them, either by blood or marriage
- Parents can split their free entitlement between multiple providers though no more than 2 sites in one day.

How many weeks funding do I get?

Each eligible 2, 3 and 4-year-old child can access 15 hours (or 30 hours if eligible for the extended entitlement) of funding over 38 weeks. A total of 570 / 1140 hours per year.

Parents/carers may wish to take less hours in the week and use their funding for more weeks of the year or save hours for holiday periods. This is called the 'stretched offer' or the banking of hours. We encourage providers to work flexibly to meet the needs of their parents wherever possible, but whether you operate a stretched offer is completely up to you. Please visit our [website](#) for full details on the stretched offer.

If children attend your setting for more than their FEEE hours, any non-funded hours should be charged for at your advertised rate.

Funding Periods

The local authority can pay providers up to 6 times per year, 2 times per period.

Funding Period	Funding Dates
Autumn	1 st September – 31 st December
Spring	1 st January – 31 st March
Summer	1 st April – 31 st August

What documents do I need prior to making a claim?

You will need to keep the following for each child:

- A copy of each child's birth certificate, passport or medical card. You must not claim for a child until you have a copy of the relevant information. Please ensure the legal name as stated on the birth certificate or equivalent is entered onto the headcount/amendment tasks. You should not be inputting 'known as names', e.g. Jimmy for James.
- Parental Statement of Undertaking form (PSOU). A template is available on the [website](#). This form should be completed and signed by the child's parent/carer. Please note that this form only needs to be completed once, unless the parent/carer wishes to change their hours in the future. If this is the case a new form should be completed, signed, dated and attached to the old PSOU.

Please note that these documents do not need to be sent to the local authority unless requested. They should be securely stored and be available to view if one of our officers carries out a routine monitoring visit.

How do I claim?

For every period you will need to complete a headcount task via the Provider Portal which will ask you to detail all eligible 2 (where applicable), 3 and 4-year olds who wish to claim the funding from your setting in that current period.

You will be asked to calculate the total number of hours you want for each child in the current period. There will also be the opportunity to complete an amendment task for those children who may be joining you later on in the period, or who leave part way through a period (and therefore accessing less hours), as well as for children who may be increasing and decreasing throughout the period (perhaps as part of a staggered induction).

You must ensure you submit your headcount task by the deadline date in order to receive your funding. You only need to submit an amendment task if you have any changes to the original headcount.

Please note we do not backdate funding for children or tasks that were not submitted in the correct period. It is your responsibility to ensure that the headcount task is fully completed, and the payment breakdown is checked for any inaccuracies. If there is a mistake, this can be rectified on the subsequent amendment task to ensure you receive the correct payment. Owners who delegate the completion of headcount or amendment tasks to their employees **must** quality assure their work before the final submission is sent via the provider portal.

When do I get paid?

For full details on headcount /amendment payment dates please visit the funding payments calendar on our [website](#). This includes all the important dates for the forthcoming academic year that you will need to be aware of and adhere to.

An advance payment (called the initial payment) is made at the end of the previous period, along with any amendment task payments that you may have submitted. The initial payment is based on the eligible claims that you were funded for in the previous period and looks at the children who would continue to be eligible in the following period – you will receive 100% upfront.

A final payment is made halfway through the period. This is the sum of the total funding claimed via the headcount task minus the amount received at the initial payment paid in the previous period.

In your first term of claiming, all newly FEEE registered providers will receive their first payment on the final payment date. Following the final payment date, we will upload a payment breakdown on the Provider Portal.

What the local authority pay

Funding is made up of a flat rate per hour per child for 3 and 4-year olds and a deprivation supplement of either £0.04 or £0.08 per hour is available for each eligible child dependent on the address and IDACI rating of that address. Not all children will receive a deprivation supplement. The deprivation supplement is paid as a lump sum with the final and any amendment payments.

The local authority pays an enhanced flat rate per hour per child for 2-year-old funding.

You will be sent an annual indicative budget (usually during March) which breaks down your rate and estimates the amount of funding you may receive in the following financial year. This is based on the previous year's take up.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Some children will also be eligible for additional funding known as an Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). This funding equates to an additional £0.53 per hour (only on universal hours, so 15 hours per week as a maximum) claimed for each eligible child.

The new [PSOU](#) allows parents to confirm that they are happy for the setting to receive EYPP and provide the relevant information.

The EYPP is checked on the headcount / amendment task if parental / carer details are entered.

For more information on EYPP and the evidence you are required to keep, please visit our [website](#).

The Census

Every year during the spring period, you will be asked to complete a mandatory Early Years Census.

Failure to complete the census will result in you being removed from the Directory.

The Monitoring Process

Once you start claiming for funding you may be audited by one of our Finance Officers. This will involve a visit to your setting.

You will be asked to provide information in relation to the previous periods funding (this is so that we can see evidence across the whole of a period). We will contact you with clear information around what is required and what paperwork you need to have available or submit to us directly.

Invoicing

If a child only attends the setting for their FEEE hours with no additional costs, then no invoice/statement is required.

If a child is accessing more than their funded entitlement or incurs additional costs that are not covered by the funding, i.e. lunch costs, you will need to issue an invoice to the parent/carer. The invoice should reflect charges agreed with the parent and published in your prospectus.

With regards to additional charges the National Guidance states the following: 'Ensure that providers are aware that they can charge for meals and snacks as part of a free entitlement place and that they can also charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips and yoga. These charges must be voluntary for the parent. Where parents are unable or unwilling to pay for meals and consumables, providers who choose to offer the free entitlements are responsible for setting their own policy on how to respond, with options including waiving or reducing the cost of meals and snacks or allowing parents to supply their own meals.'

Where practicable providers should consider whether other funding streams such as the EYPP or the deprivation supplement can offset some of the additional costs parents may face.

The funding should not be shown as a monetary amount on the invoice and instead should be shown as free hours accessed.

You can charge parents a deposit in order to guarantee the child's place. If you do this, please ensure this is refunded by the time you receive the final payment.

Where children attend for funded hours only, parents/carers should not be required to pay a registration or admin fee. However, if a child also attends your setting for non-funded hours, you can charge a registration/admin fee.

Monitoring Attendance

Daily registers should always be kept up to date and show the start and leave times of each child attending your setting. A clear key should be used in all registers.

We will continue to pay funding if a child is poorly or going on holiday, but there are limitations. As long as the child has attended your setting for over 50% of the period, we will pay for the whole period. However, where a child is absent for more than half the period (either in consecutive or accumulative weeks) we will only pay for the time they have attended.

If the parent wishes to keep their place open for the following period, the parent would need to negotiate this directly with you and possibly pay you at your advertised rate.

Reclaiming funding

We will, when auditing, recoup funding claimed in error.

If you are seen to be making fraudulent claims, or consistently administering the FEEE incorrectly, you may be removed from the directory and, if relevant, legal action will be taken.

Information for Parents

You should provide clear information for parents on matters relating to the FEEE including how you offer the free entitlement, the boundaries that apply, weeks open and any additional costs that may be applicable.

The local authority produces an information leaflet for parents/carers which we ask you to display in your setting or include in your prospectus. For the most up to date version please [click here](#). You will find this under the section called 'FEEE good practice'.

Retention of Paperwork

Birth certificates and PSOU'S – Providers are expected to keep children's individual documents until the end of the following period after the child has left. For instance, if the child leaves to go to school at the end of the summer period, then the information for that child will need to be retained until the end of the following autumn period, just in case a monitoring visit is going to take place.

Registers – A reasonable period of time after a child has left your setting (e.g. until after the next Ofsted inspection).

Change of Circumstance

If you have a change of circumstance relating to your business it may affect your access to the funding and it is important that you make the local authority aware as soon as possible. You can do this by completing the Change of Circumstance form that is available [here](#). You do not need to complete all aspects of the form - only the sections relating to your circumstances.

Further Support

User guides are available to assist you to complete the following:

- headcount / amendment tasks
- verifying the DERN's (30-hour codes)
- submitting a DAF application
- an assisted 2-year funding application

You can access these via the Provider Portal and clicking onto the 'About' section on the home page at the footer of the screen.

For telephone support, please contact the FEEE Helpline on 0116 305 5788 or alternatively email us at feee@leics.gov.uk.

Jargon Busting

Period: a period over which the funding is paid: Spring, Summer or Autumn.

Directory: the directory of early years providers – this is the list you will be added to once you have completed your FEEE application form.

Initial payment: This is an advance payment of 100% to support your cash flow for the following period.

Final payment: This payment is calculated from information supplied through the headcount task, minus the initial payment.

Amendment payment: This payment is calculated from the amendment task submitted with changes to the original headcount.

Headcount / Amendment task: How you claim for funding from the local authority.

Anycomms+: This is a web-based system that providers and the local authority use to send and receive confidential child data and information.

Provider Portal: This is the system that providers upload their children's data to and submit their headcount information through. It is also used to verify eligibility of the extended entitlement.

DERN: Department of Education Reference Number – this is an 11-digit code that eligible parents/carers receive for the 30 hours funding.

