

Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) Support Toolkit

A guide for childcare providers who have joined the Directory of Early Years Providers or staff members that are new to FEEE Administration

General Information

To enable you to offer government funding you must be:

- Ofsted registered
- Have charitable status or be registered as a business at Companies House.

Provider Agreements (PA)

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

The PA confirms a commitment to adhere to the local authority's terms and conditions in relation to the receipt of funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The person signing the PA must be the person recorded as the Ofsted 'responsible person', as per the Ofsted registration certificate. If the setting is run by a committee or a governing body, the Chair of that responsible body is required to sign the PA.

If a valid, signed, PA is not in place, government funding cannot be released. The PA must be signed, dated, and returned to us as soon as possible via Anycomms+ or by email to FEEE@leics.gov.uk by the deadline date given, so that your first payment can be paid promptly.

FEEE Guidance Documents

To enable you to understand what is required in terms of FEEE administration, please familiarise yourself with our [FEEE Guidance](#) which details the processes involved.

Childcare Funding Offers

There are several streams of government funding that parents can access, and providers can offer:

- **Universal entitlement (15 hours funding)** – All 3 & 4 year olds (the period after their 3rd birthday) are eligible for 15 hours per week of government funding for 38 weeks of the year, this is known as the Universal Offer. This offer equates to a maximum of 570 hours per year. For more information visit our [website](#).
- **Extended entitlement (30 hours funding)** - Eligible working parents of 3 & 4 year olds (the period after their 3rd birthday) may be able to access up to 1140 hours of government 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 our [website](#). 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 each Period.

The start date of the 30 hour code 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 code needs to be prior to the 1st September. If you

submit a claim with a start date that is after the period commencement date, extended hours will not be paid. Please view our 30 hour code fact sheet [here](#), and our [user guide](#) on how to validate a 30 hour code.

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. Whilst this is ultimately the parents' responsibility, please do provide them with regular reminders to complete their reconfirmation as it helps avoid issues for you and the parents.

- **2-year-old funding (15 hours 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 2 year old funding.

Eligible parents of children (the period after their 2nd birthday) can access up to 570 hours of government funded hours annually, which is broken down into 15 hours per week for up to 38 weeks per year. Not every 2-year-old is eligible for government funding. For more information about the eligibility criteria please visit our [website](#). Once eligibility is confirmed it will remain, even if a family's circumstances change.

When parents/carers apply for 2 year Old Funding, they will be issued with a CURN code from the local authority whether they are eligible or not. Please do not accept the code without the valid email the parent/carer will have received to confirm the child is eligible for funding. It is extremely important that you ask the parents for the email confirmation, as funding will not be paid unless it is an eligible code.

If the parent/carer applied for 2 year old funding through another local authority we will need a copy of the official confirmation email/letter of eligibility uploading via AnyComms+. This should contain the child's name, the date of eligibility and the 2 year old code. Please view our 2 year old fact sheet [here](#).

- **Disability Access Fund** - The Disability Access Fund (DAF) is designed to support children with disabilities or special educational needs (SEND). The DAF aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting childcare providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings to enhance access and inclusion for all children. The funding aims to facilitate childcare providers to:
 - make reasonable adjustments to support children with physical disabilities or SEN
 - access specialist training
 - to facilitate purchasing specific resources to support the child

Children at your setting that are claiming government funding and are eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a single, one off payment of £800 per year. For more information regarding eligibility, please visit our [website](#). Please view our DAF fact sheet [here](#).

- **Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)** - This is an additional supplement of 0.60p per hour (on universal hours) for eligible children and this applies to 3 and 4-year-old funding only. For more information regarding EYPP, please visit our [website](#). Please view our EYPP fact sheet [here](#).
- **Deprivation Supplement** – Some children are eligible for a deprivation supplement. This funding is based on their home postcodes and this applies to 3 and 4-year-old government funding only. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

FEEE Eligibility

Children will be eligible for government funding at the beginning 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 3rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the autumn period after their 2nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st September . |
| 1 September and 31 December | The start of the spring period following their 3rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the spring period after their 2nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st January . |
| 1 January and 31 March | The start of the summer period following their 3rd birthday, or if eligible, the start of the summer period after their 2nd birthday, until statutory school age. From the 1st April . |

Information for Parents

- Your FEEE offer needs to be fully transparent and supplied to parents prior to their child taking up a space. Information to parents on matters relating to FEEE must be clear including how you offer government funding, the weeks you are open and any additional costs that may be applicable. Additional charges must be optional and not a condition of taking up a government funded place. For more information on making your offer clear, please view our Fact Sheet [here](#).
- The local authority produces an information leaflet for parents/carers which we ask you to display in your setting or include in your prospectus. You will find this under the section called 'FEEE good practice' on our [website](#).

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 can claim in one day.

How many weeks funding do I get?

Each eligible 2, 3 and 4-year-old child (the period after their birthday) 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 pro-rata, depending on when a child turns 2 or 3 years old.

Parents/carers may wish to take less hours per week and use their funding for more weeks of the year or bank 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 parents wherever possible, but whether you operate a stretched offer is completely up to you. Please visit our [website](#) and/or [fact sheet](#) 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.

The FEEE funding rate should not be shared with parents.

What documents do I need prior to making a claim?

You will need to keep a copy of the following documents for each child - you must not claim government funding for a child until you have received a copy of this information:

- **A copy of each child's birth certificate, passport or medical card.** 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. 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.

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 compliance officers carries out a routine compliance visit.

Funding Periods

| 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 |

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 government funding from your setting in that current period. You will be asked to calculate the total number of hours you are claiming for each child in the current period.

- **Headcount Task** - Completion of a headcount task allows providers to inform the local authority of eligible children on roll at their setting during the funded period. All children to be claimed for should be on register at the provision on or prior to the submission of the headcount task.

If there aren't any children at your setting that require government funding in the current period, and you didn't receive an initial payment there is no need to send a nil return. Providers should note that where a headcount task is not submitted, no funding will be paid for the final payment and you may receive an invoice for monies paid in the initial payment. Please view our headcount fact sheet [here](#).

- **Amendment Task** - The amendment task is available on the Provider Portal and is opened approximately one month after the headcount closes. This gives Providers an opportunity to complete information that was missed or changed from the headcount submission. Providers can add new children who may have joined later on in the period, input an end date for children that are leaving in the current period, and amend details for children who may be increasing and decreasing their hours throughout the period (perhaps as part of a staggered induction). You only need to submit an amendment task if you have any changes to the original headcount submission or if you forgot to submit the Headcount Task. Please view our amendment fact sheet [here](#).
- **Late Adjustments** - The late adjustment is the final time within a period that changes can be made to your headcount/Amendment claims. Shortly after the amendment task has closed on the Provider Portal, we will email the late adjustment form to all providers. We will only process legitimate late adjustment claims that occur after the amendment task deadline. Late adjustments usually arise when a child starts, leaves, or changes their hours at your setting, after the amendment task has closed. Full details of any additional children starting your setting, or changes to children's hours currently at your setting should be sent to us on the late adjustment form via Anycomms+. Any late claims for children who are at your setting before the amendment task closes will not be funded. Be aware that we do not backdate funding to previous periods. Please view our late adjustment fact sheet [here](#).

We do not backdate government funding for children or tasks that were not submitted in the correct period. Please do not to submit a headcount if you do not have any FEEE children on roll at your setting.

Provider Portal

You are required to complete and submit your FEEE claims on the headcount and amendment tasks via our Provider Portal. This system also enables you to submit Disability Access Fund (DAF) claims, verify 30 hour extended entitlement codes and assist parent and carers who wish to complete a 2 year old eligibility check. You will also receive payment breakdowns, EYPP eligibility reports and initial payment notices via this system. 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.

[Provider Portal Login Page](#)

[Provider Portal Guides](#)

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, 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](#) and/or view our fact sheet [here](#).

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.

Each period there are 3 payment points: an initial payment, a final payment, and an amendment payment. Depending on the information you submit at the headcount task or amendment task you will receive an exact payment, an underpayment, an overpayment (which will be recouped) or no payment at all.

Late Adjustment payments are paid separately on an ad hoc basis and are for legitimate claims made after the amendment task deadline.

- **Initial Payment** - An initial payment is a 100% advance payment for the forthcoming period. The payment is calculated by:
 - carrying forward any children eligible for the funding in the following period, based on the information supplied in the current period.
 - the number of hours claimed for, in respect of those eligible children.
 - calculating the amount by taking the above number of hours, multiplying it by the number of weeks (term time) available and by the current rate (not including the deprivation supplement).

You will then be paid an advance of the total expected funding for that period. If you know a child will not be in your setting in the following period, you must complete the end date section of the headcount/amendment task.

- **Final Payment** - your final payment is calculated based on the total number of the eligible children on register during the period being claimed for at headcount, multiplied by the number of hours claimed in respect of each child, multiplied by the amount payable per child, minus the Initial Payment sum. If the initial payment was greater than the total amount payable for the period, the shortfall will be clawed back from the next amendment/initial payment.

A final payment will not be made unless you submit a headcount task by the return date. A payment breakdown will be released after every final payment. These details should be checked to ensure all eligible children have been funded correctly.

- **Amendment Payment** – we also administer mid-period adjustments which give providers an opportunity to amend their claim after their headcount has been submitted and processed. This may mean telling us about leavers or children who have increased / decreased their hours as well as any new children who joined the setting after the headcount was submitted. Where a child is transferring between provisions in Leicestershire, both providers should complete the necessary headcount task, claiming accurately for the hours relevant to their provision. These adjustments must be entered onto the Provider Portal when the amendment task is open. From the information supplied during the amendment task, payments will be amended and reflected at the next payment point.
- **Late adjustments** - are for any changes that happen after the amendment task deadline date. We will only make amendments to legitimate claims that are after the amendment deadline date. Late adjustments are processed on an ad hoc basis and are usually paid in the following period. When the FEEE team have processed the claim, you will receive an

email stating when you will be paid. For those children who are rejected, this will be stated in the email with a reason why.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the headcount/amendment tasks are fully completed, and the payment breakdown is checked for any inaccuracies.

In your first period of claiming, all new 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. Please view our [Payments Fact Sheet](#).

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 £0.60 per hour (only on universal hours, so 15 hours per week as a maximum) claimed for each eligible child.

The 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 Compliance Process

Once you start claiming FEEE funding you will, at some point, be audited by one of our Compliance 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 e.g. Spring, Autumn, Summer). The local authority undertakes compliance visits to ensure that no fraudulent claims are being made and that the funding is being administered correctly. Providers should be aware that fraudulent claims could result in their removal from the Directory of Early Years Providers and possible legal action. The main purposes of the visit are to:

- Work in partnership with providers to ensure the requirements within the government guidance, local guidance and the Provider Agreement are being met.
- Ensure claims submitted by providers are accurate and reflect what has been signed and agreed by parents/carers.
- Identify areas where improvements, or additional information is required.
- Support providers with any queries or concerns they have around the administration of FEEE.

To view our compliance guidance in more details, please visit our [website](#).

Absence Management

Children should be in attendance for all the FEEE funded time claimed for unless there is a valid reason such as illness or holiday. Providers are expected to maintain accurate records of each child's attendance (including start and leaving times) and ensure they actively engage with parents where attendance is sporadic or consistently lower than the funded hours claimed, amending their claims when relevant. If attendance is consistently lower than the FEEE hours claimed due to high short-term absences e.g. consistent late drop offs and early pick-ups and/or unexplained days off, money will be reclaimed from the Provider.

If claims are considered to be inconsistent with the hours attended or there are doubts about the validity of the claim, money will be reclaimed from the provider. Additionally, if a child is taken out of the provision or does not attend for a period of time that equates to half the period or more, only the funded hours attended during that period should be claimed for. Arrangements for keeping the child's place open during long periods of absence are a private business matter and not something the local authority can comment on.

Providers must complete the headcount tasks accurately and ensure that they reflect the child's attendance. Please note where absence does not exceed more than half of the period, we will continue to fund the child's place and providers can continue to claim for the usual amount of hours the child would attend.

In the situation where a consistent pattern of late drop offs and/or early picks forms, this funding will be reclaimed as it should be addressed with the parent that the child should be in attendance for the full duration of their funded hours.

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 compliance visit is going to take place. To view an example of a PSOU form, please visit our [website](#).
- **Registers** – A reasonable period of time after a child has left your setting (e.g., until after the next Ofsted inspection).

Invoicing

If a child only attends the setting for their government funded 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.

To comply with the criteria of the agreement, the LA expects invoices and receipts to be clear, transparent and itemised. This allows parents/carers to see that they have received their government funding completely free of charge and understand any other fees incurred for additional hours, meals and extras. Government funding should not be shown as a monetary amount on the invoice and instead should be shown as free hours accessed.

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.

You can charge parents a deposit to guarantee the child’s place. If you do this, please ensure this is refunded by the time you receive your 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. Please view our invoicing fact sheet [here](#).

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.

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 on the [website](#).

You do not need to complete all aspects of the form - only the sections relating to your circumstances. The types of change of circumstances are:

Change of Ownership, Change of Premises, Change of Banking Information, Change of Setting Name, Change of Organisational Status, Change of Committee Representative or Registered Person, Change of Provider Portal user, Closure/Withdrawal from the FEEE Scheme.

Further Support

- **Provider Portal 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 – please click [here](#) to access the user guides.

- **FEEE Fact Sheets** are available to assist you with the administration of FEEE and can be accessed by visiting our [Website](#). The electronic forms are available below:
 - [2 Year Old Funding](#)
 - [30 Hour Code](#)
 - [The Stretched Offer](#)
 - [Headcount](#)
 - [Amendment Task](#)
 - [Late Adjustments](#)
 - [Payments](#)
 - [Unpaid Claims Notice](#)
 - [Invoicing Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Disability Access Fund \(DAF\)](#)
 - [Early Years Pupil Premium \(EYPP\)](#)

Helpline and Email Support - If your questions are not answered on the FEEE Website, by visiting our user guides or looking at our Fact Sheets, please email us at feee@leics.gov.uk or alternatively contact the FEEE Helpline on 0116 305 5788.

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.