



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Claiming Early Education Funding Guidance Notes

Maintained Schools and Nurseries claiming Early
Education Funding for **3 and 4-year olds** from
Oxfordshire County Council

April 2022 - March 2023

IMPORTANT - Please read these guidance notes carefully. If you have any queries regarding the guidance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Early Education Funding Team
Access to Learning
County Hall – Fourth Floor
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND
Email: earlyeducation@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01865 894811

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A. General

These notes outline the claims and payments process for maintained schools and nurseries who have access to the Early Years Provider Portal. It is best read on a computer as it contains hyperlinks to other important documents.

Where the word 'parent' is used in this document it refers to parents and caregivers who have a legal responsibility for a child accessing Early Education Funding

The website <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/formsandguidance> has the following documents (there is a link to this webpage within the Provider Portal).

Termly Documents:

- **Funding Timeline** – key dates for the term. **Please save or print a copy for easy reference**
- **Privacy Notice**
- **When is my Child Eligible** – indicates the date of birth range for the different funding ages
- **Guide on valid 30-hour code dates** – what the different dates mean for a 30-hour code; can it be used in current term. Not all codes are eligible, you need to look at the specific dates on this guidance.

Guidance notes for using the Provider Portal

All claims are done online via the provider portal. Therefore, access to a private computer or tablet is essential.

The first place to look for help when completing claims via the Provider Portal are the following Portal Guidance Notes, available via a link on the announcements page of the portal (or on the website link above):

- Head Count Portal Guidance Notes
- Thirty Hour Checks Portal Guidance Notes
- Disability Access Funding Portal Guidance Notes
- SEN Inclusion Funding Portal Guidance Notes
- Early Years Pupil Premium Portal Guidance Notes
- Self-Update Portal Guidance Notes

You can choose whether to deliver the 30-hour extended funding which will be bound by the same terms and conditions as the universal 15-hour funding.

If you don't wish to take 30-hour children, be aware that a child could be sharing with another provider for 30 hours

A child meets the required age for 3-year-old funding the term after they turn that age.

Turn 2 or 3 years old between	Can start to access the 2 or 3-year-old funding at
1 Jan to 31 Mar (inclusive)	The start of the school summer term funding period (April)
1 April to 31 Aug (inclusive)	The start of the school autumn term funding period (Sept)
1 Sept to 31 Dec (inclusive)	The start of the school spring term funding period (Jan)

If you are a maintained nursery that also takes funded 2's under governors' powers or an age range extension, then please refer to our *PVI guidance notes*.

Payment is based on the set pattern of 38 weeks per financial year.

- **Summer Term** 12 Weeks
- **Autumn Term** 14 Weeks
- **Spring Term** 12 Weeks

B. 3 & 4-Year-Old Funding

Universal entitlement:

- The funding rate is £4.35 per hour (for financial year 2022-23)
- The supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools is an additional £1.99 per universal hour (for financial year 2022-23).
- All 3 and 4-year-olds in Oxfordshire are eligible for the universal 570 hours free early education the term after they turn three (see chart in section A).
- There are no eligibility criteria or codes required

Extended entitlement (30 hours):

- The funding rate is £4.35 per hour (for financial year 2022-23).
- Some 3 and 4-year-old children of working parents may be eligible for the extended 570 hours (in addition to the universal hours).
- Parents can find information, eligibility criteria and application process on Childcare Choices website <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
- Or they can call the Childcare Services Interaction Centre on 0300 123 4097. If they choose this option, they will then also have to reconfirm each time via phone.
- **Parents are advised to apply for the 30 hours in plenty of time e.g. by July, November, and February).**
- Parents must reconfirm their code every 3 months through Childcare Choices to remain eligible

A parent with a valid code, can only claim for the 30 hours in a term if:

- their child has turned three at least the term before (refer to chart in section 1)
- and they received and/or reconfirmed their eligibility code with Childcare Choices **the term before** they wish to use it.
- Might not be able to claim for the first time if the code is in its grace period

Eligible families will receive an 11-digit code, beginning with a 5 (most families), 4 (foster families) or 1 (temporary code). The parent needs to give you this code.

You must validate the code on the Provider Portal **before** offering the extended 15 hours. Please see the *Provider Portal Guidance - Extended Hours Checking System* notes for more information on how to validate codes in the Provider Portal.

There is also a video guide:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YGaxAyp0&feature=youtu.be>

Dates relating to a 30-hour code:

There are three dates that apply to a 30-hour code:

- ‘Eligible From’ date - when the code is issued/valid from, **BUT** this isn’t the date that the child can start their 30 hours funding (see table below).
- ‘Eligible To’ date - the date the parent needs to reconfirm with Childcare choices by. The code falls into its Grace Period the day after this date.
- ‘Grace Period End’ date - **potential** date that the child could be funded up to if they fall out of eligibility. It starts the day after the ‘Eligible To’ date.

Eligible From Date – any date up to and including	Eligible To Date – any date on or after	Actual point allowed to start taking 30 hours funding
31 st Dec 21	1 st Jan 22	Spring Term 2022
31 st Mar 22	1 st April 22	Summer Term 2022 (Starting April 25th 2022)
31 st August 22	1 st Sept 22	Autumn 2022

For more detail refer to the termly documents *Thirty-hour codes*.

Audit Dates and Grace Periods

Parents are required to reconfirm their code every three months with HMRC through childcare choice website <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

If they are no longer eligible, the extended hours will cease at the end of their grace period. We will inform you which families are in their grace period at the beginning of the term and at half-term points.

The grace period enables parents to retain their childcare if they become ineligible for 30 hours and will take them up to the end of term.

The grace period will not apply if the child didn’t claim 30 hours the previous term or if the child is trying to move providers in the grace period.

A grace period will not continue beyond the age that a child has achieved compulsory school age (the term following their fifth birthday).

You are advised to monitor parents’ codes to see that they are reconfirming by using the Expiration Dashboard on the Provider Portal.

C. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Deprivation Supplement

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) gives providers extra funding to support eligible children to develop, learn and ensure they are 'school ready'.

- An extra £1.07 per hour for universal hours. It is made up of 60p EYPP and 47p deprivation supplement (for financial year 2022-23)
- The deprivation supplement is also applied to the extended 15 hours (if eligible) at the rate of 47p per hour.

3 and 4-year-olds in funded early education will be eligible for EYPP funding if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

Their family gets one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (provided they have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £7,400, assessed on up to three of the parent's most recent Universal Credit assessment periods.)

Or

- They have been in local authority care for one day or more in England or Wales
- They've left care under a Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangements Order or Adoption Order.

Four year olds in primary school **reception classes** who already receive the school-age Pupil Premium are **not eligible** for Early Years Pupil Premium funding.

Children will be eligible from the term after their third birthday, in line with the universal entitlement to free early education for 3- and 4-year-olds.

You can claim EYPP via any Headcount Task by adding parent details to the child's record. You will need the parent's National Insurance number and the parent's date of birth.

The Early Education Funding team will run a check and inform the provider whether the child is eligible or not during the headcount task.

You will receive EYPP payments in your **main** and/or **amendment** payments.

D. Disability Access Funding (DAF)

Designed to help children access learning activities and promote inclusion.

- The DAF funding is a non-transferable lump sum of **£800 per year** (for financial year 2022-23) and the parent must nominate which provider will receive the funding.

If the child moves to another funded provider during the year, the DAF funding is **not** transferable to the new provider.

Criteria:

- the child is currently in **receipt** of child Disability Living Allowance
- **and** the child receives early education funding.

Apply for DAF via the Provider Portal and attach the child's DLA letter.

You will receive DAF funding with your **main** or **amendment** payments.

E. Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children who would be in receipt of this funding would meet the criteria for SEN Support and this would be indicated where the child's needs:

- Meet descriptors in the "Special Educational Needs Support in Oxfordshire's schools and settings." <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/guidance-and-procedures-support-providers>
- Are evidenced by clear tracking of their developmental levels which show a need to provide some additional provision/ planning for the child.
- Are considered by setting staff/class teacher, SENCo and parents to require this level of intervention and specific planning.
- May have required external agencies, such as speech and language therapists to be involved to offer advice and support which can be implemented with some small adaptations and interventions.
- Are claiming early education funding.

The amount paid is £38.50 per week

To claim you need to select a 'K' in the 'SEND Status' box, within the child's record on either Headcount Task.

We have a duty to ensure that all funding is allocated in an effective and equitable manner. SEN data will be regularly reviewed, trends analysed, and you may be contacted for a discussion to understand if data falls outside of expected trends. Children in **receipt** of this funding will be supported through SEN outcomes planning and reviewing. *You must be able to show how you have used this funding to offer the child an enhanced provision to support their access to appropriate developmental and learning opportunities and aid their progress.*

If any child in receipt of SEN Inclusion Funding goes on to have higher needs and is awarded Additional SEN funding (RAF) then the SEN funding would cease.

For information about Additional SEN Funding see:

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/guidance-and-procedures-support-providers>

F. Payment Process

At the beginning of the financial year:

We will send an indicative budget to all schools. It shows your termly funding based on what you received in the previous financial year. It will also indicate the amount we will pay you for your estimated payment for 3 and 4-year olds (see below).

Each term you will receive:

An Estimated/Interim Payment - This is paid at the beginning of each term.

- An estimated payment will be made for 60% of the total hours from the equivalent term from the previous financial year. This value is shown on your 'Indicative Budget', issued at the beginning of the financial year.

If you feel this figure is not a true reflection on your current records, you can send us your revised hours, via the Self-Service area of the Provider Portal. (see *Provider Portal guidance - self update*) Look for the 'Additional Information' tab. You will only see this tab if we have requested you to submit your estimated hours. It will not be available after the estimated hours submission deadline.

A Main Payment – the main payment is based on your Actual Headcount Task submission via the Provider Portal for the term, less your estimated payment.

Your claim includes the total hours and weeks children attend in the current term and any start and/or end dates.

You can indicate a K for SEN Inclusion Funding and add parents details so that an EYPP check can be performed.

All data, including children and parents' details must be entered. You can amend and submit the Headcount Task again up to the deadline. Tasks cannot be re-opened after the deadline date has passed. No payment will be made if the Task has not been submitted.

Please see the document *Headcount Portal Guidance Notes* for a full walk through of how to submit your headcount claims.

Amendment Payment - use the Amendment Headcount Task to make any changes that have occurred since the main headcount claim and payment, e.g. new starters; changes in hours; or early leavers during the term. You can also rectify any mistakes or omissions that were made when submitting your Headcount Task. Lastly, you can apply for EYPP or SEN Inclusion funding which was not included in the first submission/payment.

The Amendment Task will show the hours and weeks that you have claimed through your main claim. Use the 'Edit Headcount' button to make the necessary changes and submit the information.

You can amend and submit the Headcount Task again up to the deadline. Tasks cannot be re-opened after the deadline date has passed. No payment will be made if the Task has not been submitted.

If you do not have any amendments, you can ignore the Amendment Task.

Provider statements - Issued via the Provider Portal for both the Main and Amendment Payment. Statements can be found in 'Payment History' under the Headcount Menu.

Your provider statement will indicate:

- The payments you have received during the term
- A child level breakdown that will include splits for Early Years Pupil Premium, Deprivation Supplement, SEN Inclusion Funding and Disability Access Funding payments. **These funds must be used for those specific children**

G. Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I find help to use the Provider Portal?

We have created on-line tutorials for you to watch.

How to check a 30-hour code:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4YGaxAyp0&feature=youtu.be

How to create a Headcount task:

<https://vimeo.com/269156981/df15893bd4>

How to use your Dashboard:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuNvTY1By54&feature=youtu.be>

2. Do providers have to offer 15 hours or 30 hours and nothing in between?

You can offer **up to** 30 hours to eligible parents. If you are offering fewer than the 30 hours, you should ensure that the parent is aware of their full entitlement.

3. A parent wants their child to access early education funding after the Headcount deadline. Can I claim for funding for that child?

Yes, you can. You should claim for these children on your Amendment Task.

4. How many hours per day can be offered to parents?

The Terms and Conditions allow for maximum flexibility so providers can claim up to 10 hours per day for eligible children.

5. Can a child whose parent(s) is visiting be entitled to funding?

All 3 and 4-year olds living in England are entitled to the universal entitlement irrespective of the immigration status of the child or their parent(s). However, if a family is only visiting, they are not entitled to funding.

H. Useful Contact Information

Early Education Funding Team (funding and portal queries)	earlyeducation@oxfordshire.gov.uk	01865 894811
Family Information Service (parent queries)	fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk	01865 323332
Early Years Team (safeguarding forms)	Early.years@oxfordshire.gov.uk	0845 6042346
Early Years SEN Team	EYSENFunding@Oxfordshire.gov.uk	
Childcare Service 30 Hour funding Helpline (Gov) for parents	https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/	0300 123 4097