

Funding FAQ's

We hope you find this section of the website useful. It is here to explain how the funding is allocated by Lancashire County Council, and what that means for you as parents/carers. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

All council funding is allocated in terms. These terms are the same as the terms used by Schools. The Autumn term runs from 1st September – 31st December; the Spring term runs from 1st January – 31st March and the Summer term runs from the 1st April – 31st August. Understanding these terms is important in understanding when your child will become eligible for the funding.

What is Early Years funding and how does it work?

Early Years funding is offered in 3 ways.

2 year funding – this is means tested, and you must apply for it. It entitles the child to 570 hours funding from 1st September-31st August, the term after their 2nd birthday. The reason it is referred to as '15 hour' funding, is due to the fact that 15 hours a week multiplied by 38 weeks equals 570 hours ($15 \times 38 = 570$). 38 weeks is used because that is how many weeks schools are open each year.

3 year funding – all children are entitled to this, from the term after their 3rd birthday and you do not need to apply for it. It equates to 570 hours funding from 1st September-31st August. It can also be referred to as '15 hour' funding. This is due to the fact that 15 hours a week multiplied by 38 weeks equals 570 hours ($15 \times 38 = 570$). 38 weeks is used because that is how many weeks schools are open each year.

Extended funding (30 hours) – this is means tested and you must apply for it. It entitles the child to 1140 hours from 1st September-31st August, from the term after their 3rd birthday. As this funding is means tested, parents/carers must reconfirm their eligibility every 12 weeks, and if your circumstances change, the funding will be withdrawn. It is calculated the same as the other funding types, whereby 30 hours a week, multiplied by 38 weeks equals 1140 hours ($30 \times 38 = 1140$). 38 weeks is used because that is how many weeks schools are open each year.

As a setting, we cannot claim the full amount of funding in September. Instead, there are limits we can claim per term. Please see below table for information on this.

	2 Year Funding	3 Year Funding (Universal)	3 Year Funding (Extended)
Autumn Term	210	210	420
Spring Term	165	165	330
Summer Term	195	195	390
	570	570	1140

If your child becomes eligible for funding in Spring, the total amount of funding we can claim is either 360 or 720 hours (depending on funding type). If they become eligible in the Summer, the total amount of funding we can claim is either 195 or 390 hours (depending on funding type).

When can my child get government funding?

Some 2 year old's (means tested), and all 3 year old's are entitled to the funding commonly referred to as '15 hours'. Depending on your home/work situation, 3 year old's can also access additional

funding, commonly referred to as '30 hours'. All funding can only be accessed **the term after** their relevant birthday. Please see below for examples;

- If a child's birthday is 3rd June, they will not qualify for funding until 1st September.
- If a child's birthday is 16th September, they will not qualify for funding until 1st January.
- If a child's birthday is 1st January, they will not qualify for funding until 1st April.

When can I apply for funding?

You must apply for the funding before the term starts and you must leave enough time that your application will be accepted before this date.

For Autumn term funding places, the funding must have been approved by 31st August.

For Spring term funded places, the funding must have been approved by 31st December.

For Summer term funded places, the funding must have been approved by 31st March.

You can apply for funding before your child's birthday. For example, if your child turns 3 on the 31st August, then you can apply for the extended funding before this to ensure it gets approved in time for the September start date.

For the '30 hour' funding, you will need to reconfirm your code every 12 weeks. If you do not do this, your funding will cease. This is your responsibility, and you should receive an email reminder directly from the funding team.

If my child gets 2-year funding, do I need to apply for the 3-year funding?

If your child is in receipt of two year funding and you will not be entitled to the extended funding '30 hours' then you do not need to do anything. The universal 3 year funding is automatically applied. If your child is in receipt of two year funding and you think they should be entitled to the extended funding '30 hours', then you must apply. You must make sure you apply in advance of the deadline, so the funding is approved before the start of the term.

Is the funding free?

This is a question often asked and difficult to answer as everyone's situation is different. Funding is offered by the government as a way to ensure as many children as possible can access quality childcare before the age of 5. The hourly funding rate settings receive from the government is less than the hourly funding rate we charge, due to the fact that this sector is underfunded by the government. If you choose to only use your funded hours, then there will be nothing additional to pay. However, if you wish for your child to attend more than their funding allowance, any additional hours will be charged at £6.50 per hour*.

Can my child attend whenever I want?

All our spaces are offered in line with our sessions. A morning session is 08:00-11:30, an afternoon session is 12:30-16:00. Children can also attend for a longer afternoon from 12:30-17:30, a short day 08:00-16:00 and a long day 08:00-17:30.

How often can my child attend without me having to pay?

If your child's funding entitlement begins in September, then the following usually applies:

For a child in receipt of '15 hours' they can usually attend for 3 sessions a week. This equates to around 10.5/11 hours a week. You may also prefer them to attend for a full day instead.

Children in receipt of '30 hours' can usually attend for around 21 hours a week before having anything to pay. This equates to 2 full days.

If your child's funding entitlement begins in January or April, then the total number of 'free' hours per week will be slightly less. This will be discussed with you when they start, but they may need to do slightly less sessions until their full allowance renews in September.

My child attends for more hours than the funding covers. How will my bill be calculated?

We calculate our invoices the following way.

All funded children are given a breakdown of the days and hours they attend. This will be given out in September, or at the start of the term when the funding begins. This breakdown will show how many days in total they attend and how many hours. Please see below for an example from September 2022-August 2023.

"Joe attends on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 08:00-16:00. He is 3 years old and his parents have successfully applied for the Extended Funding for 3 & 4 year old's.

There are 46 Mondays, 51 Tuesdays and 51 Thursdays – this totals 148 days.

Joe attends for 8 hours per day.

148 days x 8 hours = 1184 hours

The total funding allocation for the year is 1140 hours. This leaves 44 hours to be paid for, at a cost of £6.50 per hour.

44 x £6.50 = £286 in total or £23.83 per month".

Please note, that as the funding is worked out for the whole year, if you become ineligible for this funding, a new breakdown would be created. In this case if you did not reduce the child's sessions, your invoice would increase.

*£6.50 is our standard hourly rate up to 31st March 2023. This is subject to change after this date.