



Frequently Asked Questions for Providers – Part 2

The 15 hours of childcare a week, available for all 3 and 4 year olds, is referred to as the **universal entitlement**. The additional 15 hours of funded childcare a week, for the working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, is referred to as the **extended entitlement**.

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Q1. When can parents apply for 30 hours?

Parents who meet the eligibility criteria and:

- whose child is turning 3 can apply for 30 hours free childcare up to 16 weeks before their child's third birthday.
- whose child is already 3 or 4 (and not in reception class), can apply for 30 hours.
- have taken up employment or are returning to work, can apply for a 30 hours code with 31 days of expecting to be in work.

● Q2. When can a child eligible for 30 hours begin accessing the funding?

A parent can claim for 30 hours the term after both of the following conditions are met (whichever is later):

- The child's third birthday
- The date they apply and receive a 30 hour eligibility code from HMRC

For example, a parent whose child turns 3 in November applies for a 30 hours in September and receives an eligibility code will be able to start claiming the funding from January (provided that the parent still meets the eligibility criteria in January).

Q3. A parent has given me a code, what do I do now?

Once a parent has their 30 hour eligibility code they will need to take this to the childcare provider of their choice with the following:

- national insurance number (this can be of either parent on the application)
- proof of their child's date of birth (e.g. passport, birth certificate)

Before you can confirm a 30 hour place you will need to have the code validated, which can be done via the [Provider Portal](#). Parent(s) will need complete and sign the [parent declaration form](#) to provide

the information listed above and give consent for you to validate the code. You will then need to enter this information onto the eligibility checker, via the provider portal. This process will validate the codes for you and you can then confirm the 30 hour place with the parent(s). If you do not have access to the portal you will need to contact early.years@achievingforchildren.org.uk to get set up.

Q4. How do I claim for the extended entitlement funding?

The process of claiming the funding will be done via the [provider portal](#) in the same way that the universal 15 hours are claimed. Changes have been made to the portal to enable childcare providers to claim for up to 30 hours a week.

If you do not have access to the provider portal and would like to start claiming funding, you will need to contact early.years@achievingforchildren.org.uk to get set up.

Q5. In the case where parents are splitting the 30 hours between two or more providers, how do we know where parents are taking the universal entitlement and the extended entitlement?

A parent who ceases to meet the eligibility criteria is able to choose which childcare provider they continue to take up the universal 15 hour entitlement with for their child. Parents will need to identify this in advance when completing the parent declaration form. Please note, a parent cannot choose to take up the extended 15 hours with a provider that has chosen to fully opt out of offering the extended entitlement.

Q6. Do I need to offer the full 30 hours?

Providers do not need to offer the full 30 hours, providers can offer anything up to 30 funded hours. The 30 hours can be delivered through a variety of models. Providers will need to be clear and transparent with parents on the pattern of funded hours they are able to offer.