

Government Funding Guidelines



Children Aged Three and Four Years

The government gives funding to local councils to support the provision of free part-time early learning for all three and four years old. This funding is accessible the term after their third birthday. This means:

A child born between	Is eligible from
1 st September – 31 st December	Spring Term
1 st January – 31 st March	Summer Term
1 st April – 31 st August	Autumn Term

Eligible children are entitled to up to 15 hours of funding per week over 36 weeks of the year and you can take as little or as much of it as you wish. Parents who wish to take up more than 15 hours will be required to pay for the additional care. Children living in Wokingham Borough can take up their funding in another borough if this meets the needs of the family better.

Children moving to England from other countries are entitled to funding on the same basis as any other child regardless of whether they have British citizenship.

Little Learners offers the funded hours in the following ways:

- 3 hour sessions i.e. 9am-12pm or 1:30-4:30pm
- 5 hour sessions (charged for food during this time) i.e. 8am-1pm
- 7.5 hour sessions (payable 1.5hours over lunch) i.e. 9am-4:30pm

Whilst we aim to provide flexibility with funded hours there are a few restrictions. These are:

- The full 15 hours entitlement must be used over a minimum of three days per week.
- If you choose to use the funded hours over two days, the maximum hours allowed to be accessed is 12.5 hours.

Note: To discuss flexibility further please see a member of the management team.

Parents can choose to split their funded hours between two settings, however they are still only able to access a maximum of 15 hours.

Other Information

Funded hours are automatically taken into account when raising invoices. This may be before the necessary paperwork has been completed by the parent/carer.

The Nursery issues an operating calendar each academic year which details the weeks in which funded hours can be accessed.

Funded sessions missed due to bank holidays and planned nursery closure days can be carried over and used at the end of the summer term. These dates are set and detailed on the Nursery operating calendar.

The Nursery is required to record the presence and absences of children who access funded hours. Parents of the children who do attend a funded session will be contacted to determine a reason for their absence. In the event that a child is continually absent or is absent for a long period the Nursery must discuss this with Wokingham Borough Council and funding entitlement will be reviewed.

How to Apply

- 1) On registering for the free funded hours you must provide the Nursery with official evidence of child's date of birth. This will normally be the child's birth certificate, however if this is not available we can accept the child's passport.
- 2) The Nursery will request you complete the funding form provided by Wokingham Borough Council (Provider/Parents Contract). This will need to be updated each term. This can only be completed by a parent/carer who has legal parental responsibility.
- 3) If you are splitting your funded hours between two settings you must inform both provisions. Any changes made to sessions which impact on your entitlement must also be communicated.

Children Aged Two Years

Wokingham Borough Council provides 15 hours of free funding for two year olds from low income families. This is available for families who meet the following criteria:

- 1) Benefits Criteria – You must be in receipt of one of the following benefits
 - Income support
 - Income based job seekers allowance
 - Income based employment and support allowance
 - Child tax credit (but not entitled to working tax credit) and have an annual taxable income as assessed by HMRC and does not exceed £16,190.
 - Guarantee element of state pension credit

- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act of 1999.
- 2) Income Criteria – you must be claiming working tax credit with an annual income of less than £16,190.
- 3) Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) Criteria – Your child must have an Education, Health and Care Plan or you are claiming Disability Living Allowance.
- 4) Special circumstances – The child is in the care of the local authority or has left the care system through a special guardianship or an adoption order.

This funding is accessible the term after the child turns two. This means:

A child born between	Is eligible from
1 st September – 31 st December	Spring Term
1 st January – 31 st March	Summer Term
1 st April – 31 st August	Autumn Term

Eligible children are entitled to up to 15 hours of funding per week over 36 weeks of the year and you can take as little or as much of it as you wish. Parents who wish to take up more than 15 hours will be required to pay for the additional care. Children living in Wokingham Borough can take up their funding in another borough if this meets the needs of the family better.

Children moving to England from other countries are entitled to funding on the same basis as any other child regardless of whether they have British citizenship.

Little Learners offers the funded hours in the following ways:

- 3 hour sessions i.e. 9am-12pm or 1:30-4:30pm
- 5 hour sessions (charged for food during this time) i.e. 8am-1pm
- 7.5 hour sessions (payable 1.5hours over lunch) i.e. 9am-4:30pm

Whilst we aim to provide flexibility with funded hours there are a few restrictions. These are:

- The full 15 hours entitlement must be used over a minimum of three days per week.
- If you choose to use the funded hours over two days, the maximum hours allowed to be accessed is 12.5 hours.

Note: To discuss flexibility further please see a member of the management team.

How to Apply

If you meet one or more of the criteria listed above, you will need to complete an application form. Application forms are available from the Nursery, Children's Centre and your child's Health Visitor. Once the form has been completed it must be sent to the address detailed at the bottom of the form. Wokingham Borough Council will then be in contact.

If you are granted two year old funding you will need to do the following:

- 1) On registering for the free funded hours you must provide the Nursery with official evidence of child's date of birth. This will normally be the child's birth certificate, however if this is not available we can accept the child's passport.
- 2) The Nursery will request you complete the funding form provided by Wokingham Borough Council (Provider/Parents Contract). This will need to be updated each term. This can only be completed by a parent/carer who has legal parental responsibility.

Other Information

Funded hours are automatically taken into account when raising invoices. This may be before the necessary paperwork has been completed by the parent/carer.

The Nursery issues an operating calendar each academic year which details the weeks in which funded hours can be accessed.

Funded sessions missed due to bank holidays and planned nursery closure days can be carried over and used at the end of the summer term. These dates are set and detailed on the Nursery operating calendar.

The Nursery is required to record the presence and absences of children who access funded hours. Parents of the children who do attend a funded session will be contacted to determine a reason for their absence. In the event that a child is continually absent or is absent for a long period the Nursery must discuss this with Wokingham Borough Council and funding entitlement will be reviewed.