

Free early education and childcare for some two-year-olds



Information for parents



You are eligible if:

You are getting one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income not over £16,190
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Working Tax Credits and earn £16,190 a year or less
- Universal Credit

Or if your child:

- Is looked after by a local council
- Has a current statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education health and care plan
- Gets Disability Living Allowance
- Has left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

Plus, you are also eligible if:

- Your child can receive the home visiting service for children with additional needs (portage)
- One of the main carers is currently serving in the armed forces
- You are of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller heritage

If your child is eligible, you can start claiming after they turn two. The date you can claim will depend on when their birthday is.



Benefits of accessing the free 15 hours a week...

It helps your child

Children who enjoy good quality early education get a better start in life:

- They learn and develop through play, really benefit from playing with things they might not have at home and taking part in new experiences
- They get an opportunity to make friends developing their social and communication skills
- They build their confidence and develop the skills they are going to need throughout their life
- They will have help from qualified and experienced staff; the staff will know when your child may need extra help and will talk to you about this

It is always best to take your child to a provider currently graded 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.

Once you've got a place for your child it won't be taken away. Even if your circumstances change your child will have 15 hours of free early education until they start school.

The offer is flexible and can be taken how it fits best with you and your chosen provider. Check with your childminder, nursery, pre-school or school what they can offer. For example, you don't have to take the full 15 hours a week or you can use less than the 15 hours over more weeks of the year, if you want to.



It helps you

15 hours free childcare gives you the opportunity to:

- Become involved in your child's early education
- Get back to work
- Go on a training course or volunteer to gain the qualifications or experience you need for the future
- Give you the time for those jobs you are never able to do



To find out more call our friendly Family Information Service Team on **0800 195 0137**

Or visit **[lancashire.gov.uk/family](https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/family)** and complete our online checker to find out straight away if you are eligible.

