

Government Funding Guide

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Funding Scheme	Who is eligible?	Hours Available	Income / Work Criteria	How to Apply
Working Families Funding (9 months to school age)	Children from 9 months old until they start school	Up to 30 hours per week (term time)	Each working parent (or sole parent) must usually earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours per week at National Minimum/Living Wage, but less than £100,000 adjusted net income per year each. Some parents on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or receiving certain benefits, may also qualify.	Visit Best Start in Life - Apply for Working Families Childcare to check eligibility and apply. Once approved, you'll receive a childcare code to give to your nursery.
Universal 15 Hours (3 & 4 year olds)	All children aged 3 and 4 years	15 hours per week	No income or employment criteria. Every child qualifies from the term after their 3rd birthday.	No online application is required. Simply speak to your chosen nursery and provide proof of your child's date of birth. (Best Start in Life)
Working Parent Additional Hours (3 & 4 year olds)	Working families with children aged 3 & 4 years	Additional 15 hours (making 30 hours total)	Same working parent criteria as above (minimum earnings threshold and under £100,000 adjusted net income per parent). Available if parents receive qualifying benefits such as Universal Credit (net earnings below the current threshold), Income Support, income-based JSA, income-related ESA, Pension Credit, certain Tax Credits, or if the child meets other qualifying criteria (e.g. Disability Living Allowance, looked after, adopted or under a Special Guardianship Order).	Apply through Best Start in Life - Apply for Working Families Childcare and give your eligibility code to your nursery.
Funded 2-Year-Old Places (Families Receiving Additional Support)	Eligible 2-year-olds	15 hours per week		Parents in Leicester City can apply through the Leicester Family Hub or use the Best Start in Life Childcare Checker to check eligibility and apply.

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Tax-Free Childcare(helps towards childcare costs - not free hours)	Children under 12 years (or 17 years if disabled)	Government pays £2 for every £8 you pay into your childcare account (up to the maximum allowance)	Same work and income rules as the working family childcare offer (minimum earnings threshold and under £100,000 adjusted net income each). Cannot usually be claimed at the same time as Universal Credit childcare costs.	Apply through Best Start in Life - Tax-Free Childcare.