

Applying for your 30 hours place at Sandy Hill Academy

How will parents know what to do? Parents can check whether they could be eligible for a range of government childcare offers, including 30 hours, via Childcare Choices at:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>, or the Childcare Calculator at: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>.

Those who could be eligible for 30 hours and/or Tax-Free Childcare will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

The eligibility criteria for 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare are broadly aligned. For a more detailed guide to the 30hours eligibility criteria see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/30-hours-free-childcare-eligibility>. Parents will be able to apply for both 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare at the same time by entering their details once. HMRC will check parents' eligibility for both schemes at the same time.

Parents will **not** need to apply through the digital childcare service if they only want to claim the universal 15hours entitlement for three and four year olds.

How will parents apply for 30 hours?

As part of the application process, parents will be asked to enter personal details including their name, address and National Insurance number and the same details for their partner (if they have one). They will also be asked whether they expect to meet the income requirements over the coming three months and whether they are in receipt of any relevant benefits. This information will help HMRC decide whether the parent (and their child) are eligible for 30 hours. At the start of the application process, parents will create a Government Gateway account if they don't already have one. If parents encounter any problems with the application process or accessing the childcare account, they should direct their queries to the childcare service Customer Interaction Centre on 0300 123 4097.

At the end of the application process, parents will have a childcare service account. In the "secure messages" section of their account, parents will receive messages regarding their eligibility. If parents are eligible for 30 hours, they will be given an 11 digit 'eligibility code' for their child. They will be asked to take this code (along with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth) to their provider to claim their 30 hours place. These codes normally start with '5000'. However, there are a small number of cases where parents might have a temporary code starting with '11'.

Parents can find their eligibility code in the '30 hours free childcare' section of their childcare service account.

Parents will be prompted every three months to reconfirm the details they entered on their application are still accurate. This is to check that they are still eligible. They will be prompted, via text message and/or email, four weeks before their reconfirmation deadline and again two weeks before the deadline if they still haven't reconfirmed. If their circumstances have changed, they will log into their childcare service account, amend their details and then resubmit their details. If their circumstances have not changed, they only need to reconfirm their details.

If parents miss the reconfirmation deadline, they will receive a message telling them that their eligibility has lapsed. Although they are no longer eligible, they may be able to retain their childcare place for a short period; this is known as a grace period. Parents are directed to speak to their childcare provider about this