

Thomas Eaton Primary Academy

Part of The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust

Established in the Queen's Jubilee Year 2012

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2019-2020 Academic year

Childcare information for 2 year olds/3 year olds/4 year olds

Dear Parents/Carers

Free childcare for children aged two, three and four:

There are currently three separate government funded childcare schemes that offer free childcare for children aged two, three and four. Each of the free childcare schemes has different eligibility rules so it's important to check which of the schemes is right for you. If you live in England:

- 15 hours free childcare for 2-year-olds (available for families in receipt of low-income benefits)
- 15 hours free childcare for all 3 & 4-year-olds
- 30 hours free childcare for 3 & 4-year-olds (available for eligible families in work)

15 hours free childcare for 2-year-olds (free early-years education)

This scheme is only available to families living in England, although similar schemes are available in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In order to be eligible for free childcare for your two-year-old you must either be in receipt of a qualifying benefit or your 2-year-old child must fit into one of the categories of children who have additional needs.

The qualifying benefits are:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit – if you and your partner are on a low income from work (this usually means a combined income of less than £15,400 a year after tax)
- tax credits and your family have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

Even if you are not receiving a qualifying benefit your 2-year-old can still get free childcare if any of the following apply:

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- they're looked after by a local council
- they have a current statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- they get Disability Living Allowance
- they've left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

Once you have been accepted as being eligible for free early years education (15 hours free childcare for two-year-olds), your child will continue to receive free childcare even if you have a change of circumstances, such as no longer qualifying for benefits.

The earliest you can apply is at the start of the term in which your child turns 2, but the childcare will not actually start until the beginning of the term after you apply. It is important to note that the funding will go directly from the local council to TEPA.

15 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds:

This scheme is only available in England, similar schemes are available in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This scheme is open to all 3 and 4-year olds. There are no earnings or work requirements. You should be able to start receiving the childcare from 1 January, 1 April or 1 September following your child's 3rd birthday.

30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds:

To be eligible for 30 hours free childcare for your 3 or 4-year-old, you, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) the equivalent of working 16 hours a week at your national minimum wage (£131.36 at the National Living Wage (£8.21 per hour April 2019 – March 2020), less if you are under 25 and on the National Minimum Wage). This earnings requirement will not apply if you are self-employed and you started your business less than 12 months ago.

You will still be treated as meeting the earnings requirement if you or your partner are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave – this applies whether you are single or a couple.

If you are a couple, and one of you meets the earnings requirements through qualifying paid work but one of you is unable to work because you have a disability or you are a carer, then you will be exempt from the earnings requirement. In this circumstance, one of you **MUST** be working and the other would need to evidence that you are unable to work by showing that you are receiving Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance.

You will not be able to use the scheme if either you or your partner has a taxable income over £100,000.

Check if you're eligible for free childcare:

You can check if you're eligible for the 15 hours free childcare for 2 year olds or the extended 30 hours for 3 and 4 year olds using this website: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-learning/extended-entitlement-30-hours-childcare-for-working-parents/>

If you qualify, you will **receive an authorisation code, which you need to give** to the school and to discuss taking up a place. The authorisation code can be used at more than one provider and is valid until the term following your child's third birthday.

How do I sign up for the 30 hours?

You can **apply for both the 30-hour offer and tax-free childcare via a single application online** using the Childcare Choices website <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>.

To complete the application, you provide your name, address and national insurance number, as well as whether you expect to meet the income requirements over the next three months and whether you are in receipt of any benefits. If you live with a partner, you will need to provide the same information for them as well. This will enable HMRC to decide whether your child is eligible for the 30 hours (as well as tax-free childcare).

If you are eligible, you will be given **an 11-digit code that you will need to take to your childcare provider along with your national insurance number and your child's birth certificate.**

Your provider will then use the government's eligibility checking system to check the code is valid. If it is, they will be able to book your child's place. You will need to reconfirm your eligibility every three months and will receive a reminder text message or email from the government before the deadline.

If you give false information about your eligibility, you could be fined up to £3000.

If I'm not eligible for the 30-hour offer, can I still get my 15 hours?

Yes. The 15-hour offer is still universal so if you're not eligible for a 30-hour place, you will still be eligible for the 15-hour offer.

To book sessions please use the separate booking form to indicate the sessions you wish your child to attend Pre-school AND RETURN THE SLIP TO THE **SCHOOL OFFICE.**

Morning sessions will run from 08:45am-11:45am; lunch sessions are from 11:45am-12:15pm and the afternoon sessions will run from 12:15pm-3:15pm. Please note that sessions will only run if there is sufficient demand for them and will fluctuate termly. *All places will be offered on a first come, first served basis.*

School Office