

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

Currently, the government funds up to 570 hours of free childcare each year for 3- and 4-year-olds, and some entitled 2-year-olds. Although this is often advertised as '15 free hours' the actual calculation works out as 15 hours during term time only (38 weeks of the year). As Honeycroft is open 48.5 weeks we spread these hours to cover as many weeks as possible resulting in an allocation of 12 hours per week for 47.5 weeks (12hrs x 47.5 wks. = 570hrs).

Frequently asked questions about the Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

1. How many hours is my child entitled to?

All 3- and 4-year-olds are entitled to a total of 570 hours per year through the Local Education Authority (LEA) from the term **after** their third birthday. Term start dates are 1st September, 1st January and 1st April. Honeycroft spreads these funded hours across as many weeks as possible.

In addition, you might be eligible for the '30hrs' funding, which is an additional 15 hours of funding, amounting to a total of 1470 hours per year. Again, we stretch this allowance to cover 24 hours per week for 47.5 weeks (24hrs x 47.5 wks. = 1470hrs)

To be eligible for 30 hours.

- You, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £125 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage)



Earnings per week, must be at least (national minimum wage*);

Age:	Amount (from 1 April 2023)
Over 23	£166.72
21-22	£162.88
18-20	£119.84

- If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.
- You can't get 30 hours free childcare if either you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more.
- Your child can start in their childcare place the term after they turn 3 years old and have received a valid 30 hours code, whichever is later. Term start dates are 1st September 1st January and 1st April.
- To keep your 30 hours free childcare place, you need to check your details are up to date every 3 months.

You must check your eligibility and apply for a special code which Honeycroft then needs to verify **BEFORE** we can confirm your funded hours. This can take a little bit of time, especially if you are self-employed, and we therefore suggest you check your eligibility and start the application process as soon as possible.

To find out if you are eligible go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk and set up an account and then follow the required steps. If you need any further assistance or get stuck call the help line **0300 123 4097**.

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

2. Is it really 'free' or are there hidden costs?

There is a shortfall of approx. one week during the summer term and all children who select sessions which fall during lunch time (12 to 1pm) are charged for a two-course homemade meal cooked onsite by our Food Supervisor.

So just to be clear, we spread the 570 funded hours across 47.5 weeks to allow for a maximum of 12 hours per week, totalling 570 hrs per year. Those families in receipt of the additional 570 hours (30 hrs) receive up to 24 hrs of funded childcare for 47.5 weeks (1140 hours in total).

Funded hours can only be used following one of the preferred options given below. Any additional hours outside of these are payable at Honeycroft's advertised rate.

Honeycroft is closed for 8 bank holidays per year, 3 additional days between Christmas and New Year and for approx. two weeks at the end of August. In total, Honeycroft is closed for approx. 20 days (4 weeks) per year when childcare cannot be provided, not including weekends.

As Honeycroft spreads the funding to cover 47.5 weeks of the year there is a deficit of maximum one, minimum half a week, at the end of the summer term which is not covered by the funded hours and is therefore chargeable to all parent/s regardless of when your child started or first became eligible for funding. This will be billed to parents at the start of August.

Alternatively, if parents do not want to attend and pay for the additional week and a half, we will give parents the option of giving notice on their child's place and then re-registering them to start again in September. However, this will come with a new enrolment fee. Those children who will be leaving us to start school in the September have the choice to not attend the unfunded week and instead finish a week early when their funding is used up.

3. Are there any restrictions on when I can use the funded hours?

The weekly EYEE funded hours can be used between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday, depending on availability of sessions, as outlined in the options below. Any hours before 9am are payable at our breakfast club rate and if booked sessions run over our lunch break then a hot lunch is charged.

EYF 15HRS (up to 570 hrs) Options – 12hrs for 47.5 weeks, depending on availability.

1. Two six-hour days (9am to 3pm) – hot lunch is charged for each day,
OR
2. Two morning sessions (9am to 12pm) and two afternoon sessions (1pm to 4pm) – *there is no charge for these sessions, however if you would like your child to stay for lunch (12pm to 1pm) then one hour and one hot lunch will be charged for each day as required.*

EYF 30HRS (up to 1140 hrs) Option – 24hrs over 47.5 weeks, depending on availability.

1. Four six-hour days (9am to 3pm) – hot lunch charged for each day,
OR

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

2. Five afternoon sessions (3 x 1pm to 5:30pm and 2 x 1pm to 6pm) – there is no charge for these sessions, however if you would like your child to stay for lunch (12pm to 1pm) then one hour and one hot lunch will be charged for each day as required.

Non-Funded hours – sessions paid for by parent / carer.

1. A minimum of two 3-hour sessions per week must be booked but there is no maximum or restrictions on morning or afternoon sessions from 8:00am to 6pm.

4. How do I claim my child's free hours?

You will need to complete a Parent Declaration Form which we will provide. It is mandatory that we receive this completed form with a copy of the child's birth certificate when you register with us.

5. Why do you need a copy of my child's birth certificate?

We need to confirm your child's date of birth falls within the dates of eligibility set by the LEA. We also need to retain a copy for our audit purposes.

6. When is my child entitled to LEA funding?

Your child is normally entitled to the EYFE from the term after their 3rd birthday. For example, if a child becomes 3 years old in February, EYFE starts in the Summer Term 1 April. Some families are entitled to two-year-old funding, you can complete the information here to see if you are eligible: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/childcare-and-family-support/free-childcare-two-year-olds>

7. If my child attends another setting, can I still use some of the EYFE hours at Honeycroft?

You can use your EYFE hours in a maximum of two settings, Honeycroft being one of them. However, you will need to confirm this on your Parent Declaration Form by telling us the number of hours you wish to claim from Honeycroft and from the other setting. The total hours that you claim across the settings however must not exceed the total allocated amount.

8. What if the EYEE hours are not enough for my needs?

Honeycroft will recover your funded hours directly from the LEA. Any additional hours can be booked and will be billed to your child's Honeycroft account and an invoice given at the start of each month. Any additional one off or short-term extra sessions which you require can be billed and paid for at the end of each extra session.

9. What notice period is required to cancel sessions?

We require 4 weeks' notice to cancel a child's session whether they are paid for by the parent or funded using the Early Years Entitlement Funding. This is so we can maintain our staffing levels, manage our waitlist, and ensure families have a fair and equal access to the sessions they require.

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

10. What about the Chancellor announcement in the Spring Budget 2023?

In the Spring Budget 2023 the Chancellor announced a revolution in childcare. By September 2025, working parents of all children over the age of nine months will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare. So that nurseries and childminders can prepare to deliver such a major expansion, it will be rolled out in phases as follows:

- From **April 2024**, working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours childcare.
- From **September 2024**, 15 hours childcare will be extended to all children from age of 9 months
- From **September 2025**, working parents of children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours childcare per week.