

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE/EYEE)

Currently, the government funds up to 570 hours of free childcare each year for all 3- and 4-year-olds, eligible working parents of 9 months to 3-year-olds and some parents of 2-year-old children may also be entitled to childcare support, if they receive some additional forms of government support.

Although this is 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 47.5 weeks we spread these hours to cover the weeks we are open, resulting in an allocation of 12 hours per week for 47.5 weeks (12hrs x 47.5 wks. = 570hrs).

In addition, some families of 3-4 year olds may be eligible to the '30hrs' funding, which is an additional 15 hours of funding for eligible working families of 3 and 4 year olds. This amounts 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).

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, eligible working parents of 9 months to 3-year-olds and some parents of 2-year-old in receive of some forms of government support, are entitled to a total of 570 hours per year through the Local Education Authority (LEA).

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to this 'universal' offer from the term **after** their third birthday. Term start dates are 1st September, 1st January and 1st April. Honeycroft spreads these funded hours across the weeks we are open.

In addition, you some working parents of 3 and 4 year olds 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)
- 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 the term your child turns three.

To find out if you are eligible go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk and follow the required steps.

2. Why is 47.5 weeks – when does Honeycroft close?

Honeycroft is open for a total of 47.5 weeks, and we spread the funding to cover all the weeks we are open. To get this calculation Honeycroft is closed as follows;

- 2 staff training days, (one at the start of September and the second at the end of August closure)
- for all 8 bank holidays,
- an additional 3 days between Christmas and New Year and for approx. nine days at the end of August.

In total, Honeycroft is closed for approx. 22days (4.5 weeks) per year when childcare cannot be provided, not including weekends.

3. Is it really ‘free’ or are there hidden costs?

Yes! As long as you select one of the free options and attend for 47.5 weeks of the year.

If you select sessions which fall during lunch time (12 to 1pm) then you will be 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 options given below in question 3. Any additional hours outside of these are payable at Honeycroft’s advertised rate.

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

The weekly EYEE funded hours can be used between 9am and 6pm Monday to Friday as explained in the options below.

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

- A) Two six-hour days (9am to 3pm) – hot lunch is charged for each day,

OR

- B) Two morning sessions (9am to 12pm) and two afternoon sessions (1pm to 4pm) – there is no charge for these sessions,

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

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

Or

- B) Three eight hour days (3 x 9am to 5pm) – hot lunch charged for each day,

Or

- C) Five afternoon sessions (4 x 1pm to 6pm & 1 x 1pm to 5pm) – there is no charge for these sessions

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

A minimum of 2x 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.

5. 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. For those eligible for working 9 months to 3 years and 3 to 4 year old 30 hours funding – you will need to apply for funding the term before you use it and should refer to the Childcare Choice website for guidance <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

6. 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.

7. When is my child entitled to Universal 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.

8. 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.

9. What if the EYFE 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 at our advertised hourly rate. An invoice for booked sessions will be issued at the start of each month. Any additional one off or short-term extra sessions will be invoiced the following month.

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

In the Spring Budget 2023 the Chancellor announced by September 2025, working parents of all children over the age of nine months will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare. To allow for this major expansion, it is scheduled to roll 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.

For more information or to keep up to date for each phases, go to

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

11. How do I make a payment?

Invoices are issued at the start of each calendar monthly. You can pay your fees by bank transfer, Tax Free Childcare account, cash or work based childcare voucher schemes. All payments should be received by the 27th of each month.

Bank Transfer One of the easiest ways to make and track payments. The information you need to make a transfer are as follows;

Bank: Metro Bank

Account name: Honeycroft

Sort code: 23-05-80

Account number: 3973 3902

Reference: **please use your child's name**

Honeycroft does not accept responsibility for any payments not being credited to our bank account, please ensure you clearly reference your payments using your child's name. If we cannot identify who has made the payment your child's account cannot be credited.

Debit card or credit card You can pay using our Zettle by Paypal app in person with a debit or credit card. You can select a receipt via email or to your mobile, which should be kept as proof of payment should it be required.

Cash You can pay at drop off or pick up directly to your Service Manager. Please ensure your receipt is correct and kept as proof of payment should it be required.

Childcare Vouchers – Salary Sacrifice Schemes We accept a variety of childcare vouchers and will happily register with any new ones if need be. If you wish to pay with vouchers, please ask your employer which provider they use then contact us for our account details with that particular provider. Please be aware that salary sacrifice may affect your entitlement to tax credits. You can calculate if you will be better or worse off for doing so by using the HMRC calculator.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmrc-tools-and-calculators>

Tax-Free Childcare Account Parents can use Tax-Free Childcare alongside the 15 and 30 hours free childcare schemes but can't use Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as they receive childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits. For every £8 a parent pays into their childcare account, the government will pay in an extra £2. Parents can get up to £2,000 government support per child per year towards their childcare costs. They can then use this money to pay their childcare provider.

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>