



# Early Years Funding Newsletter

April 2026

## Introduction

Welcome to the April edition of the Early Years Funding Newsletter. We did not send a newsletter in the month of March. If you have any comments or topics you would like to be included, please contact us at [eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

You can access information relating to funding on our webpage [Early years funding | Cambridgeshire County Council](#) including various Guides and other supporting information to assist you, with your funding claims. These can be found in the documents section of the webpage.

Please scroll down for key task and payment dates.

## Reminders

Please be advised the deadline date for parents to have applied to HMRC (Childcare Services) for working entitlement expanded/extended hours for the Summer funding period was March 31. If a parent applied after this date, they may be issued a code because they meet the eligibility criteria but will not be able to use the code in the Summer funding period because the entitlement is not available.

If there are exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to make a discretion. Please contact the funding team [eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk), requests are considered on a case by case basis.

Please ensure that you remind parents to reconfirm their details with HMRC, when required, to keep their code valid. You can use the portal to validate codes at any time, not only when the tasks are sent to you.

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## Early Years Funding Entitlements – Recap

The table on the next page outlines the Early Years Funding entitlements available.

EY Funding Entitlement	Maximum Entitlement	Parent/Guardian Application	Further Information
Early learning and childcare places to two-year-olds (Funded Twos)	15 hours per week (38 weeks) from the funding period after the child turns two years old	Parent/Guardian to apply to the Council and receive a code/reference number	If eligible, they are entitled to this funding until the child can access the three years universal hours regardless of whether there is a change in the families' circumstances.
Combined Funding = Early learning and childcare places to two-year-olds (Funded Twos) and Entitlement for working parents	15 funded twos hours and 15 working parent entitlement hours (38 weeks)	Parent/Guardian to apply to the Council for funded twos and receive a code/reference number.  Parent to apply to: HMRC/ Childcare Services <a href="#">Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life</a>  for working parent entitlement and an eligibility code. (there are deadline dates set by DfE for application December 31, March 31 and August 31 for entitlement in the following funding period). NB: If the child is with a foster carer, the social worker should apply to the Council.	If eligible for both funding streams, the government promote claiming the combined funding as the funded twos element is guaranteed whereas the is working parent entitlement is based on remaining eligible and checked every three months by HMRC who apply the reconfirmation dates (a window of four weeks)
Entitlement for working parents from nine months to four years	nine months to two years old, 15 working parent entitlement hours for three and four year olds	Parent to apply to <b>HMRC/Childcare Services <a href="#">Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life</a></b>  (there are deadline dates set by DfE for application December 31, March 31 and August 31 for entitlement in the following funding period)  NB: If the child with a foster carer, the social worker should apply to the Council.	
Universal childcare for all three-four-year-olds	15 hours per week (38 weeks) from the funding period after the child turns three years old	No application to check eligibility and no code required	This is a universal funding stream for all children with an eligible DOB

## **Making Changes to Contracts and Claims Mid Funding Period**

Please note due to the implementation of our new funding system we will be unable to make amendments to your claim from 5 pm on Wednesday, 20 May 2026 until Monday, 8 June 2026. Amendments can still be sent to the team for action after this time, but we will be unable to adjust payments after 20 May 2026. Further information about the new system and its implementation will be shared in April.

Please try to get as many of your amendments to us, as possible, by Wednesday, 20 May 2026 so we can include them in your scheduled payment. We will be unable to make any additional payments until 15 June.

Please follow this link to our webpage: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Guidance-on-Changing-Contracts-Claims-Mid-Funding-Period.pdf>

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## **Knowledge Hub – Cambridgeshire Early Years Funding Group**

In preparation for the new funding system, we will be launching a new Early Years Funding Group on Knowledge Hub. Here you will be able to find guidance on using the new system and other useful information. We will be sharing updates and relevant documents to support the transition to EYES. We are in the process of setting up the site. Once it is ready we will send an email with a link to enable you to join the Cambridgeshire Early Years Funding group.

You may already have a login for Knowledge hub if you do not you may wish to register now. Please go to this link and register for an account [Home - Knowledge Hub](#).

If you have any queries, please email [eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

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## **Working Parent Entitlement**

The website formerly known as Childcare Choices, where parents can apply for Working Parent Entitlement, has been renamed [Homepage | Best Start in Life](#)

Here is a link to the Frequently Asked Questions that you may find useful:

[Frequently Asked Questions - Best Start in Life](#)

HMRC Childcare Services Helpline: 0300 123 4097

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## **Early Years Pupil Premium Reminder for children in care/been in the care of a Local Authority**

If you have a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or who has been adopted from the care of a Local Authority, please do not add parent/carer details in the portal for an EYPP check. You should select 'decline to provide' and contact the funding team.

Children meeting these criteria are automatically eligible for EYPP, we do not want to check EYPP eligibility based on economic status so please contact us [eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk).

## Diary Dates for Tasks and Payments

Please find tables below showing future task and payment dates.

### Portal Tasks

	Task Opens	Task Closes
Autumn Estimate Prep Live Register and Submission	Monday, 22 June 2026	Monday, 6 July 2026
Autumn Headcount Prep Live Register and Submission	Monday, 7 September 2026	Monday, 28 September 2026

### Payments

PVI Nurseries, Preschools and Schools	
Estimate and Headcount payments	Payment Date (week ending)
Summer Estimate Payment	Friday, 10 April 2026
Summer Headcount Payment	Friday, 12 June 2026

PVI Nurseries, Preschools and Schools	
Estimate and Headcount payments	Payment Date (week ending)
Autumn Estimate Payment	Friday, 28 August 2026
Autumn Headcount Payment	Friday, 7 November 2026

Childminders	
Split payments	Payment Date (week ending)
Summer Month 1	Friday, 24 April 2026
Summer Month 2	Friday, 22 May 2026
Summer Month 3	Friday, 19 June 2026
Summer Month 4	Friday, 24 July 2026

<b>Childminders</b>	
<b>Split payments</b>	<b>Payment Date (week ending)</b>
<b>Autumn Month 1</b>	<b>Friday, 21 August 2026</b>
<b>Autumn Month 2</b>	<b>Friday, 25 September 2026</b>
<b>Autumn Month 3</b>	<b>Friday, 23 October 2026</b>
<b>Autumn Month 4</b>	<b>Friday, 20 November 2026</b>