

GUIDANCE FOR EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE FUNDING ENTITLEMENTS 2024



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Introduction

Welcome to the Guidance for Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements.

This document is aimed at highlighting the funding processes involved in making claims for the Early Years Funding Entitlements and should be read in conjunction with the Warwickshire County Council Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements 2024.

Access to Information

All of the up to date information required to claim the Early Education Funding Entitlements for providers can be found on our website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/early-education-funding-entitlements) All termly information letters, Parental Declaration Forms, guidance documents and leaflets, including translated versions for parents/carers can be found on page 2.

Information about the Early Education Funding Entitlements for parents and carers can be found on the Warwickshire website: [Help with childcare costs – Warwickshire County Council](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs) with links to useful services.

Information about all government help with childcare costs can be found on the website: [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/childcare-choices)

The Early Years Entitlements

The entitlements are for 570 hours per year, delivered over a minimum of 38 weeks of the year (equating to 15 hours a week). Children may stretch their entitlement over more than 38 weeks (and up to 52 weeks). This means taking fewer hours per week, subject to a maximum of 570 hours a year until the child reaches compulsory school age (the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday). Children entitled to the Extended Entitlement (30 Hours funding) may claim a maximum of 1140 hours per year.

The framework for delivering the entitlements set by the DfE are:

- No session longer than 10 hours
- No minimum session length (subject to the requirements of registration on the Ofsted Early Years Register)
- Not before 6.00am or after 8.00pm
- A maximum of 2 sites in a single day (separate provision on a school site is counted as one site)

Determining Eligibility for the Entitlements

Reference: Section 2.1. – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

In accordance with the Statutory Guidance: -

- A 2-year-old child a child will be entitled to the 2Help funding entitlement when **both** of the following criteria are met: (1) from the term after the child has attained the age of two and (2) the child or parent meets the eligibility criteria, and a successful application has been completed. They continue to receive a place until they become eligible for the universal entitlement (from the term following their third birthday). The child remains eligible even where the child or parent ceases to meet these criteria at a later date - once a child has been given a funded place, they will keep it.
- **ALL** 3- and 4-year-old children are eligible for the 15 hours Universal funding entitlement from the beginning of the term following their 3rd birthday, until they reach compulsory school age.
- A 3- or 4-year-old child of working parents will be entitled to the extended 30 hour entitlement from the term after **both** of the following conditions are satisfied: (1) the child has attained the age of three: (2) the child's parent has a current positive determination of eligibility from HMRC i.e. a valid eligibility code, until the child reaches compulsory school age, the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday or where the child is taking up a full time school place in reception, whichever is the earlier.

- From April 2024, a 2-year-old child of working parents is entitled to the expanded 15 hour entitlement for working parents from the term after **both** of the following criteria are met: (1) the child has attained the age of two and (2) the child’s parent has a current positive determination of eligibility from HMRC i.e. a valid eligibility code.
- From September 2024, a child is entitled to the expanded 15 hour entitlement for working parents of children 9 months old and above from the term after **both** of the following criteria are met: (1) the child has turned 9 months old and (2) the child’s parent has a current positive determination of eligibility from HMRC i.e. a valid eligibility code.
- 3- and 4-year-old children in foster care are eligible for the extended 30 hour entitlement providing that they meet **all** of the following criteria: (1) the term after the child has attained the age of three; (2) that this is consistent with the child’s care plan; (3) the foster parent is taking up paid employment outside of their fostering role.
- From April 2024, 2-year-old children in foster care will be eligible for the expanded 15 hours entitlement providing that they meet **all** of the following criteria: (1) the term after the child has attained the age of two; (2) that this is consistent with the child’s care plan; (3) the foster parent is taking up paid employment outside of their fostering role.
- From September 2024, children from the age of 9 months in foster care will be eligible for the expanded 15 hours entitlement providing that they meet **all** of the following criteria: (1) the term after the child has attained the age of 9 months; (2) that this is consistent with the child’s care plan; (3) the foster parent is taking up paid employment outside of their fostering role.

Eligibility Start Dates

Reference: Section 2.1. – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The following table shows when a child is eligible to receive the 3- and 4-year-old Universal and Working Parent (Extended) entitlements (all dates are inclusive):

A child born between:	Will be eligible for a funded place from:
<i>1st January and 31st March</i>	<i>The start of the Summer Term following their 3rd birthday until statutory school age</i>
<i>1st April and 31st August</i>	<i>The start of the Autumn Term following their 3rd birthday until statutory school age</i>

1st September and 31st December	<i>The start of the Spring Term following their 3rd birthday until statutory school age</i>
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From April 2024, the following table shows when a child is eligible to receive the 2-year-old 2Help funding entitlement (where eligible), the 2-year-old Working Parent (Expanded) entitlement (where eligible), and 3- and 4-year-old Universal and Working Parent (Extended) entitlements (all dates are inclusive):

A child born between:	Will be eligible for a funded place from:
1st January and 31st March	<i>The start of the Summer Term following their 2nd birthday until statutory school age</i>
1st April and 31st August	<i>The start of the Autumn Term following their 2nd birthday until statutory school age</i>
1st September and 31st December	<i>The start of the Spring Term following their 2nd birthday until statutory school age</i>

From September 2024, the following table shows when children from the age of 9 months are eligible to receive the Working Parent (Expanded) entitlement (where eligible) (all dates are inclusive):

A child turning 9 months between:	Will be eligible for a funded place from:
1st January and 31st March	<i>The start of the Summer Term following the date of turning 9 months old until statutory school age</i>
1st April and 31st August	<i>The start of the Autumn Term following the date of turning 9 months old until statutory school age</i>
1st September and 31st December	<i>The start of the Spring Term following the date of turning 9 months old until statutory school age</i>

Eligibility Criteria

2Help Entitlement for 2-year-olds:

Reference: Section 2.1.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

2Help is the name for the entitlement for eligible families receiving some additional forms of government support, such as certain benefits or credits or those meeting other criteria as detailed below.

2-year-olds are eligible for the 2Help entitlement of 15 hours of early years provision, from the term after the child's second birthday, if the parent(s) claim one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit, with an annual household income of less than £16,190 before tax
- Working Tax Credit, 4 week run on
- Universal Credit - a parent has an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £15,400 assessed on up to three of the parents most recent Universal Credit assessment periods

OR

- The child is looked after by the local authority
- The child has left care through adoption, special guardianship or a child arrangement order
- The child has a current statement of Special Educational Need, or an Education and Health Care Plan
- The child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance

OR

If a parent's immigration status says they have 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF), they may be able to access a funded childcare place for their 2-year-old if they:

- live in England and their annual household income is no more than:
 - £26,500 for families outside of London with one child
 - £30,600 for families outside of London with two or more children
- have no more than £16,000 in savings or investments

Additional Information:

- Each child's place is approved on an individual application basis. Families must meet the specific criteria as above and set out in the ['Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for local authorities'](#)
- Families can apply for the 2Help funding online at [Help with childcare costs – Warwickshire County Council](#) or a paper application is available if the parent does not have access to the internet, and can be requested from 2help@warwickshire.gov.uk
- If a parent does not have access to the internet, they can contact their local Children and Family Centre for help. For more details visit: [Children and family centres – Warwickshire County Council](#)
- The earliest that a parent's eligibility can be checked is the term that the child turns 2, for their place to start from the term after their second birthday. If an application is received before this time, it will be held and their eligibility checked at the start of the term that the child turns 2
- If a family is eligible, they will be sent a Funding Confirmation letter via email or post by the Early Years Entitlements Team. This letter includes the EY Voucher Code that the provider will need to enter on to the Access Synergy Provider Portal to match with the records of eligibility
- The provider **MUST** see a copy of the Funding Confirmation letter before offering a (2Help) 2-year-old funded place
- The EY Voucher Code on the letter will need to be entered on to the EY Voucher box on the Parental Declaration Form (PDF) and in the Access Synergy Provider Portal
- All parents accessing a 2Help funded place must complete the current Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)
- Once a child's eligibility is confirmed via the application process, they will be entitled to keep their funded hours until they become eligible for 3- and 4-year-old Universal Entitlement funding and parents **do not** need to reconfirm their code on a termly basis

- Where the family circumstances improve or change, the place will not be removed
- If an eligible child starts after the Headcount date the funding entitlement can be claimed using the Online Adjustment process
- Where a setting offers 2Help funding, the setting's details are added to a list of 2-year-old funded Providers. This list is sent to parents with their funding confirmation letter
- Where eligibility has been confirmed by a Local Authority outside of Warwickshire, a copy of the confirmation letter will need to be attached to the funding application using the Document Upload facility in the Access Synergy Provider Portal

3- & 4-year-old Universal Entitlement:

Reference: Section 2.1.2 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

ALL 3- & 4-year-olds are entitled to the 15 hours Universal Entitlement the term following their third birthday until the child reaches compulsory school age, the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, or where the child is taking up a full time school place in reception whichever is the earlier.

There is NO application process or eligibility code required for the Universal Entitlement. The funding is claimed by their chosen early years provider once the parent completes a Parental Declaration Form.

Working Parent Entitlements:

Reference: Section 2.1.3 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

To be eligible for the Working Parent (Extended and Expanded) Entitlements above parents must meet one of the following criteria:

- the parent (and partner where applicable) should be in qualifying paid work. Each parent (or the single parent in a lone parent household) will need to expect to earn the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national living wage over the forthcoming quarter
- where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work
- where one parent in a two-parent household is in receipt of specific benefits relating to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work

If either or both parents' income exceeds £100,000, they will not be eligible for the extended and expanded entitlements.

Immigration status

In addition, the parent (and partner where applicable) must have a National Insurance Number and at least one of the following:

- British or Irish citizenship
- Settled or pre-settled status, or have applied and waiting for a decision
- Permission to access public funds, as shown on your UK Residence Card

Additional Information:

- To check for eligibility and to make an application, parents should visit the HMRC website: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
- It is the responsibility of the setting to check the details of each child, including date of birth. To ensure eligibility, this must include sight of an original birth certificate or other identifying documents e.g., passport, medical certificate, or Health records and be recorded on the Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)
- Children must remain in the setting until the 'Headcount Day' in order to be eligible for the funding. Should parents choose to remove their child before this qualifying period, it is the provider's responsibility to make the parent aware that they may be liable for any costs in line with the providers contractual arrangements
- If a child starts after the Headcount date who does not meet the specified criteria stated in Section 2.3.11 of the Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements, they will not normally be entitled to funding until the start of the following term. The provider **MUST** contact the Early Years Entitlements Team to review if funding can be claimed due to exceptional circumstances prior to making a claim using the Online Adjustment process
- Providers should have a written agreement between themselves and their parents/guardians, setting out agreed hours of attendance and the funded hours to be claimed
- All parents accessing Funded Entitlement places must complete the current Parental/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)

Working Parent Entitlement Eligibility Code journey for Parents

Reference: Section 2.1.3.4 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

In order to receive the eligibility code for the Working Parent Expanded and Extended Entitlements funding, the parent **MUST**:

- have applied through the HMRC's website: [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#) the term before they want the Working Parent Entitlements funding to start
- have a current confirmation of eligibility from HMRC via their Gateway account
- be issued with an 11 digit code starting with 50, to give to their childcare provider to verify eligibility. If a permanent code cannot be issued, parents must have a temporary code beginning with 11
- have a valid code for the term in which they want to start the Working Parent Entitlements funding
- ensure the code is renewed, as required by HMRC, usually every 3 months

Where a parent requires further guidance, they should contact the Customer Interaction Centre at HMRC on 0300 123 4097.

Where the parent does not agree with the eligibility outcome, there is an appeal process available. The review and appeals process is managed by HMRC. Their complaints form is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complain-to-hm-revenue-and-customs>

Local Authorities do not have any involvement in the application process for the Working Parent Entitlements eligibility code.

Working Parent Entitlement Eligibility Code Journey for Providers

Warwickshire County Council must comply with the DfE's guidance for the working parent entitlements funding:

Parents are only legally entitled to start claiming a working parent entitlement place for their child the term following the date they receive a decision (eligibility code confirmation) from HMRC and the term after they reach the age of 9 months for 9 months – 2 Year Olds, the term after their 2nd birthday for 2 Year Olds and the term after their 3rd birthday for 3- & 4-Year Olds, whichever is the later.

The DfE's term start dates are:

Autumn Term	1 st September
Spring Term	1 st January
Summer Term	1 st April

Common Eligibility Code Issues:

- During the Headcount period, there are a more than expected number of queries regarding eligibility codes that cannot be accepted for funding because the validity dates of the eligibility code are outside the accepted dates for funding for the term
- Parents have not re-confirmed their eligibility code at the validity end date or by the end of the grace period and they have not acted on the prompt by HMRC
- Providers are not aware of the end dates of the eligibility codes for their funded children and have reminded the parent too late to re-confirm their code, usually after the term has started
- Providers are not aware of the accepted eligibility code dates for the term
- This causes problems for providers as they will not receive the funding they are expecting and for parents, as they will have to pay for childcare that they thought they would be funded for

To avoid these problems providers should:

- On receipt of the Termly Information letter, emailed 3 weeks before the end of term, note the funding eligible dates for eligibility for funding for the coming term
- Check the Access Synergy Provider Portal for codes in their Grace Period
- Check new eligibility codes for funding in the following term to make sure that the end date is after the start of term

Eligibility Code Process

The following process will support providers to meet the requirements for accepting eligibility codes:

- The parent applies for an eligibility code via the government website [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs |](#)

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) If they are successful, they will be issued with an eligibility code starting with 50 or 11 if a temporary code, to their Gateway account

- Foster carers applying for an eligibility code for a child in their care, apply through the responsible LA and are issued with an eligibility code starting with 40
- The parent must give the details of the eligibility code for validating, together with their NI number and child's date of birth
- You **MUST** obtain written consent from the parent(s) whose details are being checked, Part 2 of the Parental/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF) should be completed
- Validate the code using the Eligibility Checker on the Access Synergy Provider Portal as soon as possible after receiving it to confirm the validity dates of the code before a start date for the extended or expanded entitlement funding is agreed with the parent, preferably the term before funding will start
- You must make a note of the validity start date, end date and Grace Period end date to be aware of the expiry dates
- **DO NOT** accept the **Found** result as proof of eligibility for funding for the term. This confirms a match of the details
- **ALWAYS** check the **Code start date** and **Code end date** to make sure that they match the **eligible dates** for funding for the term as stated in the Termly Information Letter

The screenshot shows the 'Eligibility Checker' section of a web portal. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Home', 'Funding', and 'Sufficiency'. Below these are sub-tabs: 'Summary', 'Estimates', 'Actuals', 'Adjustments', and 'Eligibility Checker'. The main content area has a yellow background and displays a message: 'The details provided have been found:'. Below this message, the following details are listed: 'Eligibility Code: 50000000000000000000', 'Code Start Date: 12-Mar-2024', 'Code End Date: 12-Dec-2024', and 'Grace Period End Date: 31-Mar-2025'. A red oval highlights the 'The details provided have been found:' message, and a red arrow points from the 'Code start date' in the list to the 'Code start date' mentioned in the text above. Below the details, there is a section titled 'Eligibility Checker' with instructions: 'Use this area to check if a child is eligible for extended hours. Please click the button below and provide the details as required.' and a 'Data Protection Notice - a record of the check is maintained for monitoring purposes. The information supplied is NOT stored by the system.' At the bottom of this section is a blue button labeled 'Eligibility Check'.

For new eligibility codes for funding at your setting:

You must make sure that the validity start date is valid for the term in which the parent wants to start the Working Parent Entitlements funding. The code must have a validity start date on or before the last day of the previous term as shown below, unless the Early Years Entitlements Team advise otherwise:

Autumn Term
Code start date on or before 31 st August Code end date on or after the term start date following 1 st September
Spring Term
Code start date on or before 31 st December Code end date on or after the term start date following 1 st January
Summer Term
Code start date on or before 31 st March Code end date on or after the term start date following 1 st April

Note: Grace Period end dates **CANNOT** be used for **new** eligibility codes for funding at your setting.

Eligibility codes that can be accepted if the code was previously funded for any age range in the previous term at your setting:

- The eligibility code must have a Code **start** date as above **and** a Grace period on or after:

• Autumn Term	• 31 st December
• Spring Term	• 31 st March
• Summer Term	• 31 st August

- Only AFTER checking that the code matches the eligibility dates for the term, should you offer the Working Parent Extended Funded place for 30 hours for 3- & 4-Year Olds or the Working Parent Expanded Funded place for 15 hours for 9+ months and 2 Year Olds.**
- If the code **does not** match the eligible dates for the term as stated in the Termly Information Letter or above, the Access Synergy Provider Portal will not accept the code and the place will **not** be funded for the Working Parent Entitlement hours. **A 3- & 4-Year-Old child will still be entitled to 15 Universal hours.**
- If a child is moving from one funding age range to another, e.g. from 2 year old funding to 3 & 4 year old funding, the code can continue to be funded if it is in a grace period if the code was funded at your setting in the previous term

Eligibility codes that cannot be accepted:

- Codes with a start date on or after 1st of the month following the cut off date **will not** be accepted. They are eligible for funding from the following term
- The **ONLY** exception to the code start dates stated above would be if the parent applied **before** the deadline and the code was issued by:


Autumn Term	14 th September
Spring Term	14 th January
Summer Term	14 th April

AND where evidence can be shown such as copy of correspondence with HMRC or phone records showing a call made to HMRC dated before the deadline. This evidence will need to be emailed to the Early Years Entitlements Team at: eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk

- If a funded code is not or cannot be re-confirmed by the validity end date, the code will fall into a Grace Period, the grace period end date is the date when funding will end if the code is not re-confirmed. If the code is not re-confirmed before the end of the Grace period end date, the code will not be eligible for funding in the following term. The Grace period should **NOT** be used as the deadline date to re-confirm the code.
- If a new parent applies for their code early (more than 3 months before their child can take up a funded place), it is likely that they will have to re-confirm their code, usually every 3 months, before taking up a place. The code must be within a valid date at the start of the term in which funding is to be first claimed. **Grace periods CANNOT be used for codes that are new to funding.**

Eligibility Code Re-Confirmation Process:

- Parents are reminded by HMRC that they will need to re-confirm their code, **usually every 3 months**, 1 month then 2 weeks before the code validity end date and at the Grace period end date, via their Gateway account or via their nominated email/text alert
- Each term, the LA audit eligibility codes that are in their database on or around 1st September, January and April and around each half term. The code details are then updated in the Access Synergy Provider Portal

- The LA will remind providers, using emails and the Newsletter, to check their Access Synergy Provider Portal for eligibility codes showing in their Grace Period
- It is requested that providers also check their Access Synergy Provider Portal during the second half of each term for eligibility codes that are showing as being in their Grace period and contact their parents to prompt them to re-confirm their code. A yellow warning triangle will be shown next to the child's name 
- The provider should notify the parent that their extended funding will cease at the end of the Grace Period, unless they are able to re-confirm their code **before** the 'cut off' date at the end of each term
- The LA will notify providers at the start of each term of children whose codes have not been reconfirmed and where their grace period expired at the end of the previous term. **A 3- & 4-Year-Old child will only be eligible for 15 universal hours funding in that term.**

Eligibility code Queries:

- **Warwickshire County Council do not have any discretionary funding. We are unable to fund codes that fall outside of the eligible funding dates for the term, as advised by the DfE**
- Providers should make parents aware that the LA will **not** be able to override the DfE's criteria for eligibility dates, unless the parent can prove that they had applied before the 'cut off' date
- When parents contact HMRC to query the eligibility of their eligibility code, HMRC may advise them that they have a valid code. However, they are advising them that their code is valid in their system, they are not advising them that the code is valid for funding for the current term
- HMRC's Customer Care Line will refer parents to their LA suggesting they have discretion to fund a code outside of the eligible dates, **we don't**. This can give parents false expectations
- If parents wish to make a complaint about HMRC's process or for delays in issuing their eligibility code, they should contact them at: [Complain about HMRC - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-hmrc) or call the childcare service helpline on 0300 123 4097
- If a code shows as 'Not Found' when checked on the Eligibility Checker on the Access Synergy Provider Portal, this usually means that the details entered do not match the

details behind the code. The following details must be checked with the parent, preferably requesting documentary evidence:

- The eligibility code number
 - The child's date of birth
 - The parent's National Insurance number
-
- If the above details are correct and a 'Not Found' result still shows, contact the Early Years Entitlements Team at: eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk or childminderfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk

Working Parent Entitlement Eligibility Code Process For Parents And Providers



1) PARENTS APPLY FOR AN ELIGIBILITY CODE THE TERM BEFORE THEY WANT A FUNDED PLACE

- Go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
- If eligible they will receive a code starting with 50



2) PARENT GIVES THE ELIGIBILITY CODE TO THEIR CHILDCARE PROVIDER(S)

- The code must be passed to the provider as soon as possible after it is issued.

3) PROVIDER TO COLLECT THE CODE DETAILS THE TERM BEFORE THEY OFFER A FUNDED PLACE

- Consent and code details to be completed on the Parental Declaration Form

4) PROVIDER TO VALIDATE CODE VIA THE PROVIDER PORTAL

- Check the code start and end date match the eligible dates for the term to be funded

6) PARENTS TO RECONFIRM THEIR CODE AT THE VALIDITY END DATE, USUALLY EVERY 3 MONTHS

- Via their childcare account at: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

5) PROVIDER TO OFFER A FUNDED PLACE TO THE CHILD

- Only when they know the Eligibility code is eligible for the term to be funded

Scan below for more information and to apply:



Working Parent Entitlements for Children in Foster Care

Reference: Section 2.1.4 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Children in foster care can receive the Working Parent Entitlement if the following criteria are met:

- Accessing the funded hours is consistent with the child's care plan **and**
 - In single parent foster families, the foster parent engages in paid work outside their role as a foster parent
 - In two parent foster families, partners engage in paid work outside their role as a foster parent. If one partner is not a foster parent, then they must be in qualifying paid work and earn a minimum of the equivalent to 16 hours per week at national minimum/living wage

There is no requirement on the type of work or number of hours that foster parents must work to access the funded hours and there is no minimum earnings limit (although they must be engaging in paid work). The maximum income threshold is £100,000.

To make an application, foster carers should apply directly to the responsible Local Authority, who will allocate an eligibility code to the foster carer, as the Government Childcare Service will not be able to make the relevant checks.

Other than the application, reconfirmation process and the minimum income requirement, all other eligibility criteria and provision set out above apply to children in foster care taking up the working parent entitlements in the same way as they do to all other children.

Application Process:

Foster carers caring for child where Warwickshire is the responsible local authority – The carers must contact the Early Years Entitlements Team for an application form, email eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk. When completed, it is to be signed by the child's Social Worker and sent with evidence of their paid income e.g. current payslip or P60 and returned to the Early Years Entitlements Team to arrange for it to be authorised and countersigned by the Designated Officer from the Fostering Team.

Once the signed application form and evidence of paid income has been received by the Early Years Entitlements Team, a code will be generated by the DfE and the details will be sent to the foster carer by secure email. The email will show details of the code validity start date, validity end date and re-confirmation date.

Foster carers caring for a child where the responsible local authority is outside of Warwickshire – the carers must contact the child's Social Worker for an application form. This form must then be completed with the child's Local Authority, who are responsible for issuing an eligibility code where the carers are eligible.

The code, starting with 400, is to be treated in the same way as a standard eligibility code and will need to be re-confirmed every 3 months with the issuing Local Authority. The foster carer will need to contact either their own or the child’s social worker to request re-confirmation every 3 months on or around the re-confirmation date specified.

Details of working parent entitlements for children in foster care can be found on the Warwickshire website: [Help with childcare costs – Warwickshire County Council](#)


The Grace Period

Reference: Section 2.1.5 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Local Authority will continue to fund a place for an existing funded child whose parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria or do not re-confirm their code at the validity end date, until the end of a **Grace Period**. The end date of the grace period is shown on the Eligibility Checker.

During the grace period they should continue to receive the 15 hours a week working parent entitlement, or fewer if the entitlement is being stretched, over the equivalent of 38 weeks of the year.

If the parent has not been able to re-confirm their code before the end of the grace period, the funding will cease for the Working Parent Entitlement hours at the Grace Period end date, and they will not be funded for them in the following term.

When a code falls into the grace period, a yellow triangle with an exclamation mark () will be displayed next to the child’s name on the Access Synergy Provider Portal. This is to prompt providers to contact the parent to re-confirm their code.

The table below shows the grace period dates where a child is no longer eligible. The Local Authority will send reminders to the provider when a code falls into the grace period asking them to remind parents to re-confirm their code before the end of the current term. This is to avoid parents and providers from losing their Working Parent Entitlement funding in the following term.

Date Parent receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation:	LA audit date:	Grace Period End date:
1 Jan – 10 Feb	11 February	31 March
11 Feb – 31 March	1 April	31 August

1 April – 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September – 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	1 January	31 March

Children claiming the 3- and 4-year-old Working Parent (Extended) Entitlements of 30 hours between more than one setting

- The parent must complete the termly table on the Parental Declaration Form (PDF) to nominate how the funding will be allocated between settings
- The parent must decide which setting will be claiming the 15 Universal hours and which setting will be claiming the Extended hours and detail how these hours are going to be split on the termly table of the Parental Declaration Form (PDF)
- The hours should be entered on to the Synergy Provider Portal by the settings as they are shown on the PDF
- If the family do not have a valid eligibility code for the term or the Grace Period has ended, the child will only be entitled to claim the 15 Universal hours at the setting where they have nominated to receive the Universal hours

Please note: the 15 Universal hours should be fully used first before a parent claims the Extended Entitlement hours.

Additional Premiums

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Reference: Section 2.2.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding, £1.00 per hour from April 2025, the equivalent of £570 for the financial year 2025/2026, paid termly, based on the funded hours claimed, to providers who have children receiving the 3 & 4 year old Universal Entitlement, the 2 year old 2Help and Working Parent Entitlements and the under 2's Working Parent Entitlements, up to a maximum of 15 hours per week **and** where the child's parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits or other qualifying criteria is met.

Providers are able to use this extra funding to support each eligible child to improve outcomes for them. Detailed information for each child should be kept about what the funding was used for, how the decision was made to use it, and how outcomes for each child have been improved – Ofsted may ask providers about how they have supported eligible children when they inspect the setting.

A child will be eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium if:

- Their parents are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits or credits
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
 - Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit – if the parent is entitled to Universal Credit, they must have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £7,400, assessed on up to three of the parent's most recent Universal Credit assessment periods

Or

- The child has
 - Been Looked After by the local authority for at least one day
 - Been Adopted from care
 - Left care through Special Guardianship
 - A Child Arrangement order

Additional Note: Warwickshire Looked After Children (LAC) will automatically have the EYPP weighting added. To add EYPP for a LAC from another LA, providers will need to send supporting information either: Adoption Birth certificate, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders to the Early Years Funding Team via the Document Upload facility in the Synergy Provider Portal.

How to claim:

To claim for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), providers should advise parents that they must fully complete the EYPP application in section 2 on the PDF (Parental Declaration Form) and sign the Declaration.

The parent **MUST** sign the Declaration before EYPP can be claimed as this is the parent's agreement to use their personal details to check for eligibility using the Government's Eligibility Checking Service (ECS).

Their details should then be entered on to the Parent/Carer tab on the Access Synergy Provider Portal with the termly Headcount claim and the consent to check for EYPP box must be ticked.

EYPP payment will be made with the Actual payment for the term. Providers **must** check the Access Synergy Provider Portal after the Headcount week to make sure that all children are present on their claim and to check that those children that applied, have been allocated the EYPP funding. This will be shown in the **Weightings** column.

Following the processing of the funding claims, where a child **has not** had EYPP added as expected, it will mean that eligibility could not be confirmed using the ECS or the required supporting information was not added to the Access Synergy Provider Portal.

Where this is the case providers must: -

- Check the information added to the Access Synergy Provider Portal for accuracy e.g. errors in the National Insurance number or date of birth etc. and advise the Early Years Entitlements Team of any changes that need to be made
- Contact the parent, where the details are confirmed as correct to request additional supporting information, including a Job Centre letter confirming income-based benefits

or credits or Universal Credit full service statement

- Copies of the additional supporting information must be sent to the Early Years Funding Team, via the secure Document Upload service on the Access Synergy Provider Portal
- Information / changes must be received by the Early Years Entitlements Team by the submission end date for the current funding term via the Headcount or Online Adjustment process
- Information will be reviewed by the Early Years Entitlements Team and eligibility determined
- Providers must recheck their Access Synergy Provider Portal where any additional allocations will have been added to the Weightings column

Important Note:

It is recommended that all children that may qualify complete the EYPP application. Where eligibility is confirmed, this may provide additional support for a child when making their application for a primary school place. The Primary Schools admissions policy 2023/2024 Academic Year states:

If a Warwickshire Community or Voluntary Controlled primary school is oversubscribed, then the following oversubscription criteria will be used when allocating places:

- *Children who are in receipt of the Early Years Pupil Premium, with no more than 14% of the places available to be allocated under this category. The child must be in receipt of the premium at the time the application is made.*

Deprivation Factor (DF)

Reference: Section 2.2.2 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Deprivation Factor (DF) is an additional premium of 68p per hour from April 2025, paid to the provider based on children living in a postcode that falls within the most deprived 30% of postcodes as determined by IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index). **The DF is paid automatically to the provider.**

If this has been added to the child's funding base rate, 'DF' will show in the **Weightings** column next to the child's name on the Synergy Provider Portal.

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Reference: Section 2.2.3 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Equality Act 2010 offers protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and applies to statutory and non-statutory early years organisations. Local authorities must comply with the provisions of the Act in finding suitable provision for eligible disabled children.

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) was introduced to support disabled children's access to the entitlements. Providers receive £938.00 per eligible child per calendar year. The funds could be used, for example, to support providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or helping with building capacity, either for the child in question or for the benefit of children as a whole attending the setting.

Children will be eligible for DAF if they meet the following criteria:

- the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

and

- the child receives the Universal early education funded entitlement (15 hours)

Please note that children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education funding that they are entitled to in order to receive DAF. Children will be eligible where they take up any period of funded entitlement and receive DLA.

Four-year-olds in primary school reception classes are not eligible for DAF funding.

All early years providers who are eligible to receive funding for the early years entitlements, qualify to receive DAF payments if they have eligible children.

Local authorities must fund all settings providing a place for DAF eligible children at a fixed annual rate of £938.00 per eligible child. The DAF is payable annually as a lump sum and will not be reduced if a child does not take up their full 15 hours entitlement.

Local authorities should distribute DAF funding in its entirety to providers, and DAF funding should not be offset against any other funding which the local authority may ordinarily be providing for children eligible for the DAF.

If a child is in receipt of the 2Help Funded Entitlement due to being in receipt of DLA, DAF will be paid automatically to the provider the child attends.


If a child eligible for the DAF is splitting their funded entitlement across two or more providers, the local authority will ask parents to nominate the main setting. This setting will receive the full DAF payment for the child.

If a child receiving DAF moves from one setting to another, the new setting is not eligible to receive DAF funding for this child until the anniversary of the first payment has passed. DAF funding received by the original setting will not be reclaimed.

Where children are still eligible for the DAF; the provider where the child is attending should receive a second payment the term after the 12 month anniversary of the first payment.

In cases where a child who lives in one local authority attends a setting in another local authority area, the local authority where the setting is based is responsible for funding the DAF for the child and eligibility checking.

How to claim:

- Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children and should prompt parents to sign the Declaration on the Disability Access Fund (DAF) in section 2 of the Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)
- Providers will need to check eligibility by seeing evidence of the child's Disability Living Allowance (DLA) award letter
- DAF is claimed for via the Synergy Provider Portal
- A copy of the DLA award letter must be sent to the Local Authority using the secure **Document upload tab** on the Synergy Provider Portal during the Headcount or Online Adjustment period
- The following symbol will show next to the child's funding details if a document was attached 
- Where a copy of the DLA award letter is not attached to the Document upload tab, the claim for DAF cannot be approved
- If a child is in receipt of the 2Help Funded Entitlement due to being in receipt of DLA, DAF will be paid automatically to the provider and a copy of the DLA award letter is not required
- Payment is made as an adjustment with the termly final (actual) payment and can be seen in the Adjustment Payments in the child's and provider's Summary tab in the Synergy Provider Portal

Entering Funding Claims

Reference: Section 2.3 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Patterns of Payments, Headcount Dates and Payment Dates

In Warwickshire, the 38 weeks of Early Years Entitlements are paid termly as a set number of weeks. They are the same every year. Please be aware they do not always fit with the school term dates.

Autumn Term	14 weeks
Spring Term	11 weeks
Summer Term	13 weeks

Early Years Providers (excluding Childminders)

Reference: Section 2.3.2.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

PVI Providers, Academies and Maintained Nursery Schools and Classes are paid twice termly as follows:

- An **Interim** payment is made at the start of term, following submission of **WEEKLY** hours entered onto the **Estimates** tab on the Access Synergy Provider Portal and sent before the submission deadline date, as notified in the Termly Information letter. The interim amount is 70% of the estimated payment amount for the term
- The Access Synergy Provider Portal will open 2 weeks before the start of term for the setting to enter the Estimate hours
- **Where the submission deadline is missed by the provider, the interim payment will not be made, the provider will receive the full term's funding in the Actual payment**
- An **Actual or Final** payment is made after the Headcount figures have been calculated following submission of **HEADCOUNT** hours entered onto the **Actuals** tab on the Access Synergy Provider Portal and sent before the submission deadline date, as notified in the Termly Information letter. This is the remaining 30%, or balance of funding minus the interim payment already paid
- An **Adjustment** payment is made at the end of the term if an adjustment is added via the **Adjustment** tab, by the submission deadline date as notified in the Termly Information letter, after the Headcount has closed
- Any overpayment of funding following the removal of a funding claim or change of claimed

hours will be carried forward and will be taken from the interim payment, if there is one, or the final payment of the following term.

Actual payment dates, and Headcount dates set by the Department for Education for the Academic Year –2023/2024 and 2024/2025:

Term	Headcount Date	Deadline date for Headcount submissions	Interim Payment Date			Actual Payment Date		
			9M+	2 YO	3 & 4 YO	9M+	2 YO	3 & 4 YO
Summer Term 2023/2024	16 th May 2024	24 th May 2024	N/A	26/04/2024	24/04/2024		21/06/2024	19/06/2024
Autumn Term 2024/2025	3 rd October 2024	11 th October 2024	20/09/2024	20/09/2024	18/09/2024	22/11/2024	22/11/2024	20/11/2024
Spring Term 2024/2025	16 th January 2025	24 th January 2025	21/01/2025	20/01/2025	17/01/2025	11/03/2025	10/03/2025	07/03/2025
Summer Term 2024/2025	15 th May 2025	23 rd May 2025	25/04/2025	24/04/2025	23/04/2025	20/06/2025	19/06/2025	18/06/2025

Childminders

Reference: Section 2.3.2.2– Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

All childminders are paid monthly as follows:

- The **Interim** payment is calculated following submission of **WEEKLY** hours entered onto the **Estimates** tab on the Access Synergy Provider Portal and sent before the submission deadline date, as notified in the Termly Information letter. The interim amount is 70% of the estimated payment amount for the term
- The **interim** payment will usually be split into 3 monthly payments for the Autumn Term, 2 monthly payments in the Spring Term and 3 monthly payments for the Summer Term. The total interim amount is 70% of the estimated payment amount for the term
- The first 2 or 3* monthly payments will be calculated by dividing your total interim payment due by 2 or 3* equal amounts
- The Access Synergy Provider Portal will open 2 weeks before the start of term for the setting to enter the Estimate hours

- If the submission deadline is missed, the interim payments will not be made, the Childminder will receive the full term’s funding in the Actual payment
- An **Actual or Final** payment is made after the Headcount figures have been calculated following submission of **HEADCOUNT** hours entered onto the **Actuals** tab on the Synergy Provider Portal and sent before the submission deadline date, as notified in the Termly Information letter. This is the remaining 30%, or balance of funding minus the interim payments already paid
- If the numbers increase at the Headcount, the additional funding will be paid in the Actual or Final payment
- An **Adjustment** payment is made at the end of the term if an adjustment is added via the **Adjustment** tab, by the submission deadline date as notified in the Termly Information letter, after the Headcount has closed
- If there has been an overpayment of the interim funding, the Actual or Final balance will be a minus amount and an invoice will be sent to the setting for repayment or will be carried forward and taken from the interim payment of the following term, if one is due

The regular monthly payment dates for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 will be as follows:

Term	Headcount Date	Deadline date for Headcount submissions	Interim Payment Dates			Actual Payment Date
			1 st Payment	2 nd Payment	3 rd Payment	4 th Payment
Summer Term 2023/2024	16 th May 2024	24 th May 2024	15 th April 2024	15 th May 2024	14 th June 2024	15 th July 2024
Autumn Term 2024/2025	3 rd October 2024	11 th October 2024	16 th September 2024	15 th October 2024	15 th November 2024	16 th December 2024
Spring Term 2024/2025	16 th January 2025	24 th January 2025	15 th January 2025	14 th February 2025	-	14 th March 2025
Summer Term 2024/2025	15 th May 2025	23 rd May 2025	15 th April 2025	15 th May 2025	13 th June 2025	15 th July 2025

Funding Rates

The 2025/2026 Early Education Funding rates are as follows:

PVI settings and school run provision including maintained schools with nursery classes:

Early Education Funding Rates	2024 – 2025 £ - per hour	2025 – 2026 £ - per hour
Funding Rate for under 2's from September 2024 – Working Parent Entitlement hours	10.07	10.42
Funding Rate for 2 Year Olds – 2Help and Working Parent Entitlement hours	7.39	7.66
Funding rate for 3- & 4-year-olds -Universal and Working Parent (Extended) Entitlement hours	5.25 (5.22 + 0.03 Teachers Pay and Pension Grant)	5.50
Early Years Pupil Premium- allocated to Universal Hours for 3- & 4-year-olds, under 2's and 2-year-olds, up to a maximum of 15 hours per week	0.68	1.00
Deprivation Factor – allocated to all hours	0.68	0.68
Disability Access Fund – annual payment for eligible children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance	910.00	938.00

Maintained Nursery Schools only:

Early Education Funding Rates	2024 – 2025 £ - per hour	2025 – 2026 £ - per hour
Funding Rate for under 2's from September 2024 – Working Parent Entitlement hours	10.07	10.42
Funding Rate for 2-Year-Olds – 2Help and Working Parent Entitlement hours	7.39	7.66
Funding rate for 3-&-4-Year-Olds - Universal and Working Parent (Extended) Entitlement hours	5.25 (5.22 + 0.03 Teachers Pay and Pension Grant)	5.50
Maintained Nursery School Supplementary Funding paid for 3-&-4-Year-Old <u>Universal Entitlement Hours Only</u>	4.64	5.27
Early Years Pupil Premium- allocated to Universal Hours for 3-&-4-Year-Olds, under 2's and 2-Year-Olds, up to a maximum of 15 hours per week	0.68	1.00
Deprivation Factor – allocated to all hours	0.68	0.68
Disability Access Fund – annual payment for eligible children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance	910.00	938.00

Entering the Funding Claims

Reference: Section 2.3.4 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

A **Termly Funding Information Letter** is sent at the end of each term which includes all the important dates and deadlines needed to enter termly funding claims for the following term. The letter **must** be read fully and carefully as it contains all of the important information and dates for that term:

- Term dates
- Estimate hours deadline date
- Interim Payment date

- Headcount Day
- Headcount submission deadline date
- Adjustment tab Provider Portal opening and submission deadlines dates
- Sufficiency information submission deadline date (Summer term) if applicable
- Early Years Census Form submission deadline date (Spring term)
- Actual or Final payment date
- Childminders monthly payment dates
- Adjustment payment date

Providers are responsible for inputting their funding claim returns within the deadlines given by the Early Years Entitlements Team and to check the accuracy on completion at the end of each term.

A copy of the Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF) will be sent each term with the Termly Information Letter each term for completion by providers and parents of new children as directed.

A funding claim for a child can only be made where an up to date signed Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF) is received for the term.

Funding Claims Process

- The web address for the Access Synergy provider Portal, which is used to enter funding claims is: <https://admissions.warwickshire.gov.uk/synergy/providers>
- Sign in using the unique username and password issued by the Early Years Entitlements Team
- Where a provider has not used the system before, please contact the Early Years Entitlements Team for sign in details, username and password
- A copy of the **FIS Access Synergy Provider Portal Online Funding Guidance** is sent to all new providers and at the start of the Autumn term, it can also be found at: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/Early-Education-Funding-Entitlements-Education-and-Early-Years-providers)
- The **FIS Access Synergy Provider Portal Online Funding Guidance** should be referred to when entering funding claims as there may be changes to the system following an upgrade
- The Access Synergy Provider Portal opens 2 weeks before the first day of each term and closes one week after Headcount Day as detailed in the Termly Information letter
- Child details for children below school age are usually carried forward from the previous term's Headcount by the LA and can be viewed in the current term's list of

Actual children on the Synergy Provider Portal.

- Child details will be carried forward from the previous age range to the next age range where applicable e.g. from 2 year old funding to 3 & 4 year old funding age range, to allow the eligibility code details to continue. However, these children's details and hours **MUST** be checked as if they are a new child.
- Children's working parent Expanded hours carried forward from 2 year funding to 3 & 4 year old funding will be transferred to Universal hours funding. Extended hours funding will need to be added where required.
- Child details are **not** carried forward from Summer term to Autumn term for children who will be of **school age** or **for Childminders**.
- Childminders will need to notify the funding office of children continuing funding using the eligibility code who are moving from one headcount age range to another where their eligibility code is in a grace period at the start of a new term.
- Working Parent Entitlement hours claimed using an eligibility code are not always carried forward from term to term. This is because, at the point when the records are transferred, the code may be in a grace period that expires before the start of the following term
- The provider must enter all the children they are claiming funding for that term and the number of funded hours from the details on the signed Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)
- The provider must check that they enter the child's details on the Access Synergy Provider Portal accurately and in accordance with the legal name, date of birth and address, ethnicity and SEN type as shown on the PDF, and update details as necessary
- Only children with a completed Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF) and in attendance during the week of the specified Headcount date, can be entered on to the Headcount claim, this also includes children who are absent due to sickness or on holiday
- A claim should be made for the whole of the term, this allows the provider, where they agree, to pass a proportion of the funding to another Warwickshire provider if the child moves to another setting before or after Headcount. Refer to Section 3 of the Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements
- The Access Synergy Provider Portal closes for inputting on the Headcount submission deadline date, as notified in the Termly Information Letter. The Access Synergy Provider Portal will not allow any changes to be made to Headcounts after this date

- The provider **must** check the Access Synergy Provider Portal when the Adjustment tab opens, to check that their Headcount claim is correct, this includes the child's personal information, claimed hours, for adjustments for DAF and weightings for EYPP and DF
- Any changes after the Headcount submission date should be made using the Online Adjustment process via the provider portal. Refer to Section 2.3.8 of the Requirements of Early Years Entitlements Funding
- After the Headcount information is submitted, a detailed breakdown of funding allocated to each child will be shown on the Actuals, child summary tab on the Access Synergy Provider Portal. The Universal and the Extended 30 hours for 3- & 4-year funding are shown separately. The 2Help and Working Parent Entitlements for 2-year-old funding are also shown separately

Please note that:

- The Early Years Entitlements Team are not able to make any changes to funding after the end of a term. Adjustments, where agreed, can only be made for the current term
- The Local Authority may reclaim funding that has been overclaimed relating to any terms if identified at audit
- Information from your Headcount may be shared to ensure effective safeguarding and promote the welfare and protection of children
- Payments may be delayed where returns remain outstanding

Payment Summary

Reference: Section 2.3.5 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Selecting the Summary page on the Funding tab for the term will show the details for the Estimate, Actual, Adjustments and Weighting payments for the selected term. Summary information for all terms from the start of the setting's records in the system can be checked. See Section 4 of the Access Synergy FIS Provider Portal Guidance , which can be accessed at the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/Early-Education-Funding-Entitlements)

Summer Term Sufficiency Return

Reference: Section 2.3.7 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Local Authority collects funded entitlements place and vacancy information from funded Early Years providers in the Summer Term during the Headcount period. The submission deadline date will be notified in the Termly Information letter.

The return is completed by selecting the **Sufficiency Tab** on the Access Synergy Provider Portal: <https://admissions.warwickshire.gov.uk/synergy/providers>

For details on how to complete the Sufficiency return please refer to the **Access Synergy Provider Portal Guidance**, which can be accessed at the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/early-education-funding-entitlements-education-and-early-years-providers)

Adjustment to Payments

Reference: Section 2.3.8 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

The Early Years Entitlements funding will normally be paid for the whole term to the provider the child attends on Headcount Day.

For children attending a setting on Headcount Day (or within the week of the specified Headcount date), a claim should be made for the whole of the term, even if they joined after the term started. This will enable the provider to pass a proportion of the funding to another Warwickshire setting if the child has already taken sessions with them, where agreed between the settings.

Where a child leaves a setting after Headcount, providers should make a private arrangement between themselves to agree to pass a proportion of the funding to the other setting for the remainder of the term. There is no obligation to do so. Refer to Sections 2.3.9 and 2.3.10 of the Requirements of Early Years Entitlements Funding.

Adjustment claims should only be entered via the Adjustment tab for a child where a claim has already been made at Headcount, when both settings have agreed to make corresponding online adjustments.

Note: It is Warwickshire's policy that funding claimed at Headcount must not be transferred to another setting outside of Warwickshire.

Where an arrangement is made by a setting from another local authority to transfer funding to a Warwickshire setting, the setting will be paid at the funding rate of the other local authority. This may be higher or lower than the funding rate paid by Warwickshire and no additional funds can be paid by Warwickshire e.g., to adjust a lower hourly rate.

To make any changes after the Headcount period has ended, the Adjustment process must be followed:

- Adjustments to the Headcount claim must be made using the Online Adjustment process via the Access Synergy Provider Portal:
<https://admissions.warwickshire.gov.uk/synergy/providers>
- Guidance on how to enter Online Adjustments can be found in the **FIS Access Synergy Provider Portal Online Funding Guidance**. It can also be found at: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers)
- Online Adjustments must be entered during the specific dates notified in the Termly Information Letter
- Adjustments can only be accepted if they meet the criteria detailed in Section 2.3.11 of the Requirements of Early Years Entitlements Funding
- Adjustment payments will only be made for the number of weeks remaining in the term from the date of the change or the child's start date
- Payments for any adjustments are made to providers in the last week of the funding term if they have not been added to the Actual payment

Please ensure that all parents/guardians sign their PDF each term, which sets out the hours and patterns of attendance for the funded entitlement that the parent and provider have agreed. The current PDF can be found on the website at: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers)

Please contact the Early Years Entitlements Team to discuss individual situations or for further advice.

Early Years Census

Reference: Section 2.3.15 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

- The Early Years Census information is collected using the Synergy Provider Portal in the Spring Term.
- The Census form will be found under the 'Forms' tab at the start.
- For guidance on completing the Census Form, refer to the **Access Synergy FIS Provider Portal Online Funding Guidance** found on the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers)
The online Census Form **MUST** be completed by the submission deadline date as detailed in the Termly Funding Information Letter for the Spring Term and in line with the requirements in the Provider Agreement,
- There may be a delay to final payments where a return is not completed.

Process for Private, voluntary, independent providers, schools running governor run provision and childminders:

Census Provider Details

- Information will be sent to each provider at the end of the Autumn Term giving the details of the Census Collection date (normally Headcount Day, the third Thursday in January, or a date advised by the Early Years Entitlements Team).
- The Early Years Census Form will be made available under the 'Forms' tab in the Access Synergy Provider Portal at the start of the Spring Term to complete the provider's Census details.
- The online form **must** be completed and submitted by the due date, in accordance with the instructions.

Individual Child Details

- The requirement to collect individual child details will be fulfilled using the Spring Term Headcount or a collection date advised to providers by the Early Years Entitlements Team.
- The child details are taken from the Spring term Headcount claim, taking the information providers have inputted on to the Access Synergy Provider Portal. This information must be taken from the Parent/Guardian Declaration Forms (PDFs).
- The '**Present during Census**' box **MUST** be ticked for all children that are on register and being funded during Census week.
- The child's ethnicity section **MUST** be completed in line with the information provided by the parent on the Parental Declaration Form.
- The child's Special Education Need **MUST** be completed in line with the Code of Practice Stage.
- The Early Years Census information is used to determine the funding allocated to Warwickshire County Council by the Department for Education. Any delays or errors in the data returns will affect the funding allocation for Warwickshire and may affect funding for individual providers too.

Process for Maintained Nursery Classes, Academies and Nursery Schools:

It is vitally important that schools keep their SIMS system up to date, as this will be used to create the statutory school census returns in October, January, and May. Registered pupils of the school (2, 3 and 4-year-olds depending on the statutory age range of the school) **must** continue to be included in these returns.

Please refer to the DfE Census Guide for Schools with Early Years provision for full details of how to complete the Early Years Census: [Early years census - Which children to include - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-census-which-children-to-include)

A summary is detailed below:

- Schools **must** be aware of their statutory age range to be able to decide which census their children should be added to
- Where the school has 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds as registered pupils (included in the school's age range) they will need to be included on the Schools Census via SIMS
- Children attending the school who are not within the statutory age range (not included in the school's age range as pupils) of the school need to be counted as attending a s27 state funded governor run provision and included in the Early Years Census, do not include them in the school census – an Early Years Census form must be completed via the Synergy Provider Portal in the Spring Term
- For schools who only have a maintained nursery class, (without a s27 state funded governor run provision), the children must be included in the School's Census via SIMS
- For schools who have a maintained nursery class and a s27 state funded governor run provision, the children who are pupils of the school (within the Published Admission Number (PAN)) must be added to the School Census (SIMS). Any children above the PAN will need to be counted as attending the s27 state funded governor run provision and included in the Early Years CENSUS (Synergy Provider Portal)
- Children may appear on the 2 different censuses where their funding entitlement hours are split between 2 different settings. In which case, the number of free entitlement hours for each child across all provision is limited to 15 hours or where eligible, 30 hours

Changes to Provider Details

Reference: Section 2.3.17 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Changes to your bank details:

If there is a change to your bank details, you will need to contact the Warwickshire County Council Exchequer Services Department, email: suppliermaintenance@warwickshire.gov.uk

Changes to your contact details:

If you make a change to your contact details, **especially your email address** or telephone number, please advise the following as soon as possible as most correspondence and information is sent to you electronically:

Early Years Funding at: eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk and earlyyearsadmin@warwickshire.gov.uk

Childminder Funding at: childminderfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk

Early Years Advisory Team at: earlyyearsadvisors@warwickshire.gov.uk

Exchequer Services at: suppliermaintenance@warwickshire.gov.uk

You must also contact Ofsted at: 0300 123 1231

Children of School Age

Reference: Section 2.4 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Children who have been admitted to primary school and are attending a state-funded or independent school reception class are not entitled to any additional free hours outside of their school reception class place. This includes the settling in period, prior to a child starting school in September.

Children who are delaying or deferring entry into reception class, as agreed by the Schools Admissions Team, who are not on the school roll, are entitled to Early Years Entitlements funding until they reach statutory school age, the term following their 5th birthday.

The setting the child of school age attends will have to undertake statutory monitoring. Before you offer a funded place, you are advised to contact the School Improvement Team for details of the requirements of this monitoring:

Telephone Elaine Smith on 01926 742089 or email:

edassessmentteam@warwickshire.gov.uk

The Stretch Offer

Reference: Section 3.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Be aware of the difference between the stretch option and averaging of funding.

Stretch and Averaging of Funding

Stretch option:

Annual Funded entitlement hours offered and attended by the child over more than 38 weeks per year - the number of funded hours per week attended multiplied by the number of weeks the setting is offering it per year **to enable the maximum take up of entitlement** e.g. 12 hours per week x 47.5 weeks per year. The number of funded hours will remain the same once agreed. Any additional hours taken in excess of the stretched number of funded hours per week / month are to be charged at the provider's published fee rate. These hours may vary each week/month, depending upon the agreement that is in place with the parent.

Stretch patterns must be reflected within the Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF), contracts and attended as specified.

Please note: the setting must be open for the number of weeks the funded hours are stretched over and the child's attendance must fit this pattern.

Averaging:

Funded hours offered for a specified number of weeks per year, usually 38 weeks. Any additional hours and additional weeks taken above the specified funded entitlement weeks are charged at the provider's published fee rate. Funded hours and paid-for sessions are totalled for a complete year and divided by the agreed number of months or weeks as per contract arrangements, to provide parents with a standard invoice each payment period. **Parents are able to spread the cost of childcare equally by paying the same amount each week, month or term throughout the year.**

Please note: Providers must ensure that the model of funded hours offered (and how this relates to invoicing and payment requirements) is clearly shown in writing to parents at the outset, and links to the invoices issued. If the child leaves before the end of the year, the number of funded hours taken will need to be calculated in relation to the 38 weeks entitlement. This is to ensure the child has received the correct number of funded hours and any outstanding charges due to the setting are identified.

Stretched Offer Guidance

Stretching funded hours

- The LA has a statutory duty to 'enable parents to take up their child's free place in patterns of hours that 'stretch' their child's entitlement by taking fewer hours a week over more weeks of the year, where there is provider capacity and parental demand'
- There is no requirement on any individual provider to deliver a stretched offer and parents do not have the right to demand one
- There are advantages and disadvantages of stretching – some entitlement may be lost by providers or parents or both – see **other considerations** below
- The maximum funded hours available are **570** or **1140** (38 weeks x 15/30 hours). The maximum weekly funded hours available are **15** or **30**
- You need to decide which period you are stretching funding over and for how many weeks:
 - 12 months/3 terms (up to max of 52 weeks)
 - 2 terms (35 weeks maximum for Spring and Summer)
 - 1 term (22 weeks maximum for Summer)
- Settings can only stretch funded hours over their published opening hours and weeks e.g. 48, 50 or 51 weeks.

Stretching process and examples:

1. Example stretching over 52 weeks (Autumn, Spring & Summer terms - equivalent to 38 weeks funding)

A	B	C	D
Maximum funded hours available	Weeks attending	Funded Hours per week <i>Col A / Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col B x Col C / 38</i>
570	52	10.96	15
1140	52	21.92	30

Child Attending 10 Hours per week

A	B	C	D
Weekly Hours attended	Weeks attending	Hours attended per year <i>Col A x Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col C / 38</i>
10	52	520	13.68
20	52	1040	27.37

2. Example Stretching over 35 weeks (Spring & Summer terms – equivalent to 24 weeks funding)

A	B	C	D
Maximum funded hours available	Weeks attending	Funded Hours per week <i>Col A / Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col B x Col C / 24</i>
360	35	10.29	15
720	35	20.57	30

Child Attending 10 Hours per week

A	B	C	D
Weekly Hours attended	Weeks attending	Hours attended per year <i>Col A x Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col C / 24</i>
10	35	350	14.58
20	35	700	29.17

3. Example Stretching over 22 weeks (Summer term – equivalent to 13 weeks funding)

A	B	C	D
Maximum funded hours available	Weeks attending	Funded Hours per week <i>Col A / Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col B x Col C / 13</i>
195	22	8.86	15
390	22	17.73	30

Child Attending a 10 Hours per week Stretch Model – WARNING - *There are a maximum of 195/330 funded hours for the Summer Term. Settings will have to charge for the additional hours attended at their standard fees.*

A	B	C	D
Weekly Hours attended	Weeks attending	Hours attended per year <i>Col A x Col B</i>	Funded Hours to be entered onto the portal <i>Col C / 13</i>
10	22	220	15 (1.92 hours to be charged at standard rate)
20	22	440	30 (3.85 hours to be charged at standard rate)

Other considerations:

- Depending on when a child starts in an academic year, not all children will attend for a full 52 weeks in their second year of claiming – when stretching over less than a 52 week period you will need to reduce the number of funded hours offered and shown on invoices
- Stretched funding for leavers is particularly difficult as it will vary depending on where a child is up to in their stretched cycle. If a child leaves and has stretched their funding, early education funding paid should match the funded hours allocated on your invoices. This may need to be adjusted according to when the child leaves in the stretched cycle.

For example, if a child leaves before Headcount in the 3rd term of an expected 3 terms stretch, you may have been paid more funding than would have been due for the whole

of the year because of accumulated funding from previous terms. You will need to contact the Early Years Entitlements Team to arrange for funding to be re-paid.

In the event that the funded hours are less than the hours allocated on your invoices for stretch i.e., a child starts in the Summer term and leaves at the end of the term, please be aware that you will need to charge the parents for the difference see example 3. (Maximum funding is dictated by the funding caps in place – Autumn 210/420, Spring 165/330 and Summer 195/390 hours).

Funding would have been accumulated in subsequent terms had the child stayed for 3 terms.

- Please be aware that there may be different funding implications for each term. It is the responsibility of the setting to notify parents of any charges that may apply
- The same Headcount rules will apply to children on a stretch offer as the term-time offer. A child must be on role for the hours that you are claiming for the whole of the term at the Headcount date, as advised by the LA. We will not be able to increase funded hours after the Headcount date
- If a child has moved settings and stretched their funding at their previous setting, please contact the Early Years Entitlements Team for confirmation of individual amounts available for funding as stretched periods may differ across the settings
- Stretch models must be clearly written into Fee information for parents with the specific models available stating number of weeks available, funded hours offered and cost for any additional services
- Parents may choose to vary their child's funded hours each term throughout the year. It is necessary to have robust systems in place to manage the calculations that will need to be made to ensure that claimed hours are correct and parents receive the correct number of funded hours for their child. Children must have accumulated sufficient funded hours
- Funding can be shared between a maximum of two sites in a single day. Communications may be required with the other settings to ensure that all settings are clear on who will be claiming which hours and how many
- Parental/Guardian Declaration Forms (PDF's) must show the correct number of stretched hours and include all providers and models on the form
- Averaging for invoicing purposes e.g., spreading annual funded hours and charges over equal monthly amounts is NOT the same as stretch

- Be transparent and consistent to ensure parents / carers are clear on how they are being charged and funded hours given. Fee information must be reflected on invoices
- Extended periods of absence may affect a child's funding and the stretch may need to be re-calculated
- Please ensure that as a setting the team dealing with funding, charging and invoicing fully understand the models that the service offers

Disclaimer: *This guidance is provided to support settings to develop a stretched offer. Settings can choose whether to use this guidance or develop their own offer and are responsible for ensuring their offer meets the statutory guidance.*

WEEKS PER YEAR	HOURS PER WEEK	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	38	76	114	152	190	228	266	304	342	380	418	456	494	532	570
	39	78	117	156	195	234	273	312	351	390	429	468	507	546	585
	40	80	120	160	200	240	280	320	360	400	440	480	520	560	600
	41	82	123	164	205	246	287	328	369	410	451	492	533	574	615
	42	84	126	168	210	252	294	336	378	420	462	504	546	588	630
	43	86	129	172	215	258	301	344	387	430	473	516	559	602	645
	44	88	132	176	220	264	308	352	396	440	484	528	572	616	660
	45	90	135	180	225	270	315	360	405	450	495	540	585	630	675
	46	92	138	184	230	276	322	368	414	460	506	552	598	644	690
	47	94	141	188	235	282	329	376	423	470	517	564	611	658	705
	48	96	144	192	240	288	336	384	432	480	528	576	624	672	720
	49	98	147	196	245	294	343	392	441	490	539	588	637	686	735
	50	100	150	200	250	300	350	400	450	500	550	600	650	700	750
	51	102	153	204	255	306	357	408	459	510	561	612	663	714	765
52	104	156	208	260	312	364	416	468	520	572	624	676	728	780	

WEEKS PER YEAR	HOURS PER WEEK	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	38	608	646	684	722	760	798	836	874	912	950	988	1026	1064	1102	1140
	39	624	663	702	741	780	819	858	897	936	975	1014	1053	1092	1131	
	40	640	680	720	760	800	840	880	920	960	1000	1040	1080	1120		
	41	656	697	738	779	820	861	902	943	984	1025	1066	1107			
	42	672	714	756	798	840	882	924	966	1008	1050	1092	1134			
	43	688	731	774	817	860	903	946	989	1032	1075	1118				
	44	704	748	792	836	880	924	968	1012	1056	1100					
	45	720	765	810	855	900	945	990	1035	1080	1125					
	46	736	782	828	874	920	966	1012	1058	1104						
	47	752	799	846	893	940	987	1034	1081	1128						
	48	768	816	864	912	960	1008	1056	1104							
	49	784	833	882	931	980	1029	1078	1127							
	50	800	850	900	950	1000	1050	1100								
	51	816	867	918	969	1020	1071	1122								
52	832	884	936	988	1040	1092										

Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF)

Reference: Section 3.1.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Providers must adhere to the following when completing the Parent/Guardian Declaration Forms:

- A Parent/Guardian Declaration Form (PDF) must be fully completed, signed and retained for each child by the provider
- A copy of the current PDF can be found on the Early Years website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/EarlyEducation)
- The Parent/Guardian Declaration Form is formatted to enable electronic completion. This allows the provider to email the form to parents/guardians to complete and return electronically, without the need to print
- Only one PDF per child should be completed each academic year; and it must be updated and signed each term by the parents and the provider to confirm agreed attendance patterns
- PDFs must be retained by the setting for 6 years plus the current year (7 years) and should be available in the event of any queries and for audit purposes
- PDFs can be stored electronically in a secure file
- Do not send copies of Parent/Guardian Declaration Forms (PDF) to the Early Years Entitlements Team unless they have been requested
- Providers should establish an additional written agreement between parents and themselves to outline agreed hours of attendance and funded entitlement claimed. However, the standard PDFs must still always be completed

Please ensure that all parents/guardians are aware that:

- A child can only be funded if they meet the eligibility criteria for the funding type
- All hours attended by their child at all settings must be declared on the form, not just the funded hours
- If funding is being split between more than one provider, the parent must specify how the funding is to be split between all providers and does not exceed the maximum entitlements. If funding is being stretched over more than 38 weeks, the entitlements must be converted to the equivalent of 38 weeks.

- If their entitlement for 30 hours funding is being split over more than one setting, it must be clearly stated on the Parental Declaration Form which setting is to claim the Universal 15 hours (or proportion of) and which setting is to claim the extended entitlement of 30 hours (or proportion of), and that the overall claim does not exceed the maximum entitlements. If funding is being stretched over more than 38 weeks, the entitlements must be converted to the equivalent of 38 weeks.
- For the Working Parent Entitlements funding, the parent must have a valid eligibility code for the term to claim the Expanded or Extended funding. The eligibility code must be entered on the PDF
- The eligibility code must be re-confirmed by the parent every 3 months or as directed by HMRC
- If a parent is claiming the Expanded or Extended hours using an eligibility code, the details must be fully completed on the PDF to give consent to check eligibility using the ECS checking system
- For 2Help funding, the parent must have a funding confirmation letter or email with an EY Voucher Code. The code must be entered on the PDF
- The Local Authority will only pay for a maximum of 15 hours per week over 38 weeks per year for each entitlement
- The maximum number of hours payable per day is 10
- The 570 or 1140 hours annual entitlement must be taken over no fewer than 38 weeks per year
- The entitlements can be stretched by offering fewer hours per week over more weeks of the year up to the maximum entitlements
- Funding will only be paid for a child starting after Headcount Day that meet the specified categories. See Section 2.3.11 of the Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements
- The parent must make sure that their child regularly attends the funded hours they are claiming for including the full session e.g., 8am start and 6pm finish
- If a parent wants to claim for EYPP the correct section of the PDF must be completed to give consent to check eligibility using the ECS checking system
- If a parent wishes to claim Disability Access Fund (DAF), the correct section of the PDF must be completed and a copy of the Disability Living Allowance award letter provided to the setting
- Parents will be liable for the cost of any hours not covered by the funded entitlement, for example if a child leaves before the Headcount date or uses additional services

Local Directory of Providers

Reference: Section 5 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

Provider Agreement

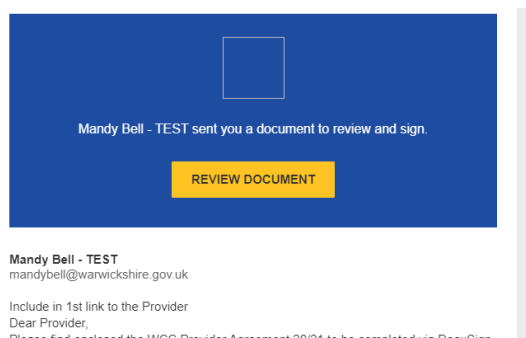
Reference: Section 5.1.1 – Requirements of Early Education and Childcare Funding Entitlements

All providers registered to claim early years entitlements funding must sign to agree to the annual Provider Agreement. This agreement is reviewed and reissued annually each academic year. All providers must have regard to the current ‘Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities’ and follow all Department for Education requirements.

A copy of the Provider Agreement can be found on the website at: [WCC Provider Agreement 24-25 \(PDF, 378 KB\)](#)

For existing settings on the Directory of Providers:

The annual Provider Agreement will be sent electronically from DocuSign EU usually at the end of the Summer Term. Providers will receive the following message via email:



- Click view document – then follow the on screen instructions to complete the form and sign electronically. Once submitted the completed Provider Agreement will be sent back to Warwickshire County Council
- On completion, recipients will get another email from DocuSign EU with a link to the completed document, this can be downloaded / printed for the providers own records

Full Guidance on how to complete and return the Provider Agreement will be issued to Providers with the DocuSign request and can be found on the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early-Education-Funding-Entitlements-Education-and-Early-Years-providers)

For new settings being added to the Directory of Providers:

To join the Directory of Providers a Provider Agreement must be requested and completed prior to offering places to parents.

You **MUST** have adequate equipment to access the internet as all funding claims and communications are made via the internet and email.

- The provider will need to complete and return the Provider Agreement via DocuSign (see instructions above)
- Full Guidance on how to complete and return the Provider Agreement will be issued to Providers with the DocuSign request and can be found on the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early-Education-Funding-Entitlements-Education-and-Early-Years-providers)
- The Early Years Entitlements Team will add your details to the list of funded providers on the Access Synergy FIS System
- Providers will be given a Unique Reference Number (URN) for the Local Authority, which is used for Census purposes (please note that this is a **different** number to the provider's Ofsted Registration Number)
- The Early Years Entitlements Team will set up the new provider with access to the Access Synergy Provider Portal:
 - A username, password and default security answers will be emailed to you
 - You will be requested to change the temporary password and security responses on first log in. You will need to do this within 3 days before the temporary password expires
 - You must keep a note of your username, password and security answers as these will be needed every time you log into the Access Synergy Provider Portal
- You will be sent Guidance on how to use the Access Synergy Provider Portal by email, this is also available on the website: [Early Education Funding Entitlements – Education and Early Years providers \(warwickshire.gov.uk\)](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/Early-Education-Funding-Entitlements-Education-and-Early-Years-providers) This guidance will give you step by step instructions on how to use the portal, make your funding claim and review your funding in the term summary

- A copy of the Termly Information letter for the current or new funding term will be emailed to you. It is important that you read this information carefully as it details all of the funding important dates and deadlines for the term
- The email will also confirm the action you need to take to proceed with making a claim for funding, if it is part way through the current term's process
- New Provider's details are added to the Agresso Finance System by the Early Years Entitlements Team
- Warwickshire County Council's Exchequer Services Department will send an email with a data capture form attached. This is to collect bank details to add the provider to the Local Authority's Finance system for the funding payments to be made. It will appear as suppliermaintenance@warwickshire.gov.uk **Funding cannot be paid until this form is returned and processed.**