

MY CHILD IS 9-MONTHS OLD CHILDCARE FUNDING EXPLAINED

We know that many parents have been looking forward to the time when they can claim childcare funding for their 9-month old child. As of September 2024, families of 9-month-olds can receive funding to support up to 570 hours of childcare each year from the start of the term after they turn 9 months old. We have put together this helpful factsheet to explain how the childcare funding scheme works, how Wise Owls Childcare applies the funding and when you can expect to start receiving childcare funding after your child turns 9-months.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR 15 HOURS FUNDING?

Eligible working parents will receive 15 hours (570 free hours per year) of funded childcare from the term after their child turns 9-months old. Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to check your eligibility and for details on how to apply.

DOES THIS MEAN MY CHILDCARE WILL BE FREE?

No, our nursery is open 51 weeks of the year and government funding is only applicable for 38 weeks of the year. Because of this, we spread your funding out across 51 weeks and you will receive your full entitlement of 570 hours across these 51 weeks. There are still childcare fees to pay for the hours outside of the funded hours plus a consumable fee that covers meals and incidentals.

DO I NEED TO BOOK A MINIMUM NUMBER OF SESSIONS?

We have a minimum booking requirement of 2 full days. If you would like to change your child's booking to receive your full funding allocation, please contact our bookings team at admin@wiseowlschildcare.co.uk. Please do this as soon as you can to check availability, ensuring you give 2 months' notice for any changes to your child's booking as per our T&Cs.

You may opt to use your funding at a different setting, if this is the case then full fees are payable or you can split the funding between the two childcare settings. Please indicate this on your funding form correctly if you will take this option. If you need any help further please contact our office team.

WHEN WILL MY FUNDING START?

This depends on when your child is 9-months old. The local authority has three funding cycles. If your child is at least 9-months old between:

- 1st April - 31st August, your funding will commence from **September 2024**
- 1st September - 31st December your funding will apply from **January 2025**
- 1st of January – 31st of March your funding will begin in **May 2025**

WHY DON'T MY FEES CHANGE IN APRIL?

We split the funding over 4 months including 1st Sept – 31 Dec (Autumn Term), 1st Jan – 30th April (Spring term), 1st May – 31 August (Summer term). Your funding is divided over 51 weeks of the year and we make the claims in September, January and April.

APPLYING FOR FUNDING

To find out if you are eligible and to apply for this funding, you must obtain a Reference Code directly from HMRC. This will need reissuing every 3 months and this is your responsibility. If you don't do this, you will lose your funding.

Make sure the validity of your reference code starts before the funding period commences (outlined above) and it doesn't expire until after the funded period has started. If your funding code is not valid at the time the funding period starts, we will not be able to claim funding for you until the next funding term, and full fees will be payable.

I HAVE MY CODE, WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Your nursery will send you a digital funding form to complete in advance of claiming funding. You will need to record your HMRC reference code on these forms. It is very important that these forms are completed and returned to the nursery by the due date or we will not be able to make a claim and full fees will be payable. You also need to show your key worker your child's ID, this can be a passport or full birth certificate, to verify their date of birth and full name.

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE EMAIL [INFO@WISEOWLSCHILDCARE.CO.UK](mailto:info@wiseowlschildcare.co.uk)