

## **Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)** **A guide for Parents and Carers**

### **What is FEEE?**

FEEE is a national government scheme which allows all parents/carers of children aged 3 and 4 to be able to access up to 570 hours of FREE early learning and childcare annually, usually split as 15 hours each week for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Your child will be eligible at the start of the school term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday as detailed in the table below:

<b>A child born between:</b>	<b>Will be eligible for a free place from:</b>
1 April and 31 August	The start of the autumn term following their 3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday, or if eligible, the start of the autumn term after their 2 <sup>nd</sup> birthday, until statutory school age.
1 Sept and 31 December	The start of the spring term following their 3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday, or if eligible, the start of the spring term after their 2 <sup>nd</sup> birthday, until statutory school age.
1 January and 31 March	The start of the summer term following their 3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday, or if eligible, the start of the summer term after their 2 <sup>nd</sup> birthday, until statutory school age.

There is also funding available for some 2 year olds. For further information [click here](#).

Some working parents may also be entitled to an additional 15 hours of funded hours per week or 1140 hours annually. This entitlement is available from September 2017. Further information will be released nearer the time.

### **Why should I use the FEEE?**

When your child attends an early year's provider they will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is a play based curriculum. Children will learn how to develop their social, physical, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and will learn through mathematical and creative activities. Access to high quality early education and childcare can give your child the best possible start and prepares them for starting school. Your chosen setting will create a learning journey detailing their progress and achievements, this should be shared with you throughout their time at the provision and can be used to aid transition into school or between providers.

### **Where can I access FEEE?**

There are different types of provisions available including full day care nurseries, pre-schools, playgroups and childminders. Staff are trained and qualified to care for your child, helping them to learn and develop.

All providers offering the FEEE will be registered with Ofsted and be on the Local Authority's Directory of Early Education Providers.

Leicestershire's Family Information Directory is a free and impartial service that can help you choose the right kind of place for your child and provide you with the contact details of settings in your area. For more information contact them on 0116 305 6545 or access their online directory [here](#).

**Although you have a choice of providers as detailed above, you may not always be offered the full entitlement at the times you want or at the provider of your choice.**

## **Are there any restrictions on accessing the funding?**

Although early years providers will try to meet your individual needs, when accessing your 15 hours of FEEE the following rules apply:

- you can't take more than 10 hours in any one day
- you can't use less than 2.5 hours in any one day
- you can access your 15 hours between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm
- you can spread your 15 hours between a maximum of 2 providers.
- your child must be in attendance for all of the funded time claimed for by your early year's provider, unless there is a valid reason such as illness or holiday.

Please be aware that although you can split your 15 hours over more than 1 provision, if there is a combined claim for more than 15 hours the local authority will decide how to pay each provider and you may find that you are charged for any additional hours taken over and above the free entitlement.

## **What do I need to do to get the funding?**

Once you have decided which provision you would like your child to attend and have negotiated the hours, you will be asked to complete and sign a Parental Statement of Undertaking (PSOU) for the setting and provide the setting with proof of your child's age i.e. a document such as birth certificate, passport or medical card. The provider will then claim for the funding on your behalf. The information you provide on the PSOU will be used by the local authority and when relevant it's partners. Your personal information will be held securely and will be used only for local authority purposes.

Your child must also be registered and regularly attending your chosen provision before the dates shown in the table below. If your child is not in attendance (due to holidays or sickness or a late intake) but is registered with the provision and is able to take up their place prior to the end of term, then you can still receive your free entitlement from the date they start at the provision.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Headcount return date</b>
Autumn 2016	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2016
Spring 2017	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2016
Summer 2017	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2016

## **Do I need to pay anything upfront?**

No. Your FEEE hours are totally free and you should not be asked to pay any costs towards it. However, if you need to use the setting for more than the maximum of 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the academic year, you should agree the charges for these directly with the setting, preferably before you take up your place.

In addition you should discuss any further costs, i.e. meals (funding does not cover this element), nappies, wipes, drop off and collection charges and dance or music classes etc, prior to your child taking up their place at the provision.

Whilst the funding does not cover services such as the food / snacks etc. you should, if only attending 15 hours per week or less of funded time, be given the opportunity to provide your own snacks / lunches / nappies etc. in order that the place remains completely free of charge.

You are not required to pay a retainer fee (i.e. to secure your place from term to term) or a deposit (prior to starting at the provision), if only attending FEEE hours, however in some cases, providers may not be able to guarantee your child a place if these are not paid. In most

cases, the retainer or deposit will be refunded once the place is taken up.

The local authority is unable to dictate what a provider charges for any additional hours taken or services offered outside of the free entitlement

### **Can I access the FEEE in the holiday periods?**

If you do not wish to take up all of your 570 hours free entitlement during term time and you attend a setting which is open for more than 38 weeks per year, you may be able to utilise some of your hours during the holidays – this is called a stretched offer. Not all providers can offer this flexibility, so for more information on how to access this ‘stretched offer’ please speak to your provider.

### **Is there any additional support for my child if they have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)?**

If your child has SEND and attends Sketchley Hill, Wigston Menphys Centre’s or Beacon Academy you may be able to access up to an extra 6 hours of FEEE per week. If this is the case you should speak to your provider about claiming for this time.

### **What about starting school?**

Legally, your child does not have to start school until he or she is of compulsory school age which is the term after your child turns 5. You can still receive the FEEE until this point. For entry into a school from the 2017/18 Academic year parents/carers must request a full time 4+ place for their child born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013, with the closing date for applications being 15 January 2017. You can also defer your child’s place, however this is a request negotiated directly with the school concerned once having secured a place. The maximum period a child can defer entry is to the start of the Summer Term in the academic year in which a place was secured through the first-time co-ordinated admission process.

All schools under the control of Leicestershire County Council have a single entry point, i.e. Autumn term, for first time admissions at 4+. However parents must ensure they have secured full-time education for their child from compulsory school age.

When you apply for a school place before your child has reached compulsory school age, you may be offered a part time place in a nursery or reception class at primary school, when he or she is four years old. This place will be free except for meals and trips.

Once your child is attending school (even on a part time basis), your childcare provider will no longer be eligible to claim for the FEEE on your behalf. This also applies to out of county schools who may take children at different entry points.

<b>Child born between:</b>	<b>Leicestershire’s school admission date for children aged 4+</b>
1 Sept 2011 to 31 August 2012	Autumn term 2016
1 Sept 2012 to 31 August 2013	Autumn term 2017 Parents must apply for a place prior to 15 January 2017

For more information on schools admissions please visit:

[www.leics.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.leics.gov.uk/admissions)