

# Free For 2 (FF2) Team, Management Information Information for Early Years Providers

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## FREE Early Education FOR 2 Year Olds (known in Kent as the FF2 Scheme)

- KCC pay £5.68 per child per hour and will fund any eligible child attending a Kent provision regardless of where they live.
- FF2 funding is available to eligible families for up to 570 hours per year. It can be taken as 15 hours per week over 38 weeks or for fewer hours a week up to 52 weeks per year as a stretched offer, in accordance with the date of birth (dob) range chart shown below:

Child's 2nd birthday	When they can claim from
1 January to 31 March	the beginning of term on or after 1 April
1 April to 31 August	the beginning of term on or after 1 September
1 September to 31 December	the beginning of term on or after 1 January

- The offer can be delivered sessionally or flexibly. There is no minimum session length, and the maximum will be 10 hours per day. Places can be taken between the hours of 6.00am and 8.00pm.
- Parents do not have to take the full 15 hours if they feel it is too long for their child.
- Families have the option to split their hours between multiple registered FF2 childcare providers but no more than two sites in a single day
- If you do not have the full hours available, you may offer less, and the remaining hours can be taken with another KCC registered FF2 childcare provider.
- Families cannot be charged for accessing the FF2 Scheme. However, if a family wishes their child to attend for more hours per week than they are entitled to, charges can be made. In these cases, to avoid any misunderstanding, please ensure the family is made aware of the charges from the outset.
- Always ask parents if they have already claimed at another provision for the current term. Funding for the term will be based on the first claim received and will not be transferred by KCC if a child moves from one setting to another. However, providers can transfer the funding amongst themselves if they wish to do so. If the total termly hours have not been utilised, you may claim the remaining weeks/hours. Parents do have a right to appeal and should contact the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) on 03000 412323
- Once they have taken up a place, eligible 2-year-olds remain entitled to this place until the 3-year-old funding starts, even if the family's circumstances change.
- The Kent Provider Agreement provides the framework which outlines the mutual commitments on delivering free early education for 2-year-old and 3-4-year-olds.

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## How it works

To offer a FF2 place, you must first be registered with Management Information (MI) to offer the 3 and 4-year-old funding. If you are a childminder, you must be designated as an Eligible Childminder. In the first instance you should contact The Education People childminding team at [childminding@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:childminding@theeducationpeople.org) or call **03301 651 220** for more information.

- Once you are registered as a FF2 provider, you will appear on the FF2 Registered Provider List held by Children's Centres and Kent Children Family Information Services (CFIS). It is used to direct parents to FF2 registered provision in their area.
- Let us know of any changes to the information you provide. Without your most up-to-date email address, we cannot let you know about any changes to the scheme, and you risk not receiving payment.
- Parents can apply when their child is 1 year 10 months and will now be required to create an account, using an email address. Once the parent/ carer has created an account, there is a four step process to complete a FF2 Application <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/childcare-and-pre-school/free-childcare>
- EY Providers will **no longer** be able to 'apply' on behalf of a parent\carer using the setting email address. The parent\carer must create an account using their own email address as the portal is shared with the school admissions team. Parents\Carers will use the same account to complete their school admissions applications. Please use the guidance document when supporting parents\carers to complete an application. Once the parent\carer submits the application, they will receive an immediate email informing them of the result. If the parent does not have access to an email, please contact Management Information directly.

Parent\Carer information required to complete an application:

- Parent date of birth and National Insurance number (NINO) or National Asylum Seeker Service reference number (NASS)
- Proof of Disability Living Allowance for the 2-year-old (if applicable). This should be the most recent Award Notice

**Please note: Completing an online application will give an immediate online result for economic claimants only.**

### **For applications under the Special Educational Needs/ Care & Adoption criteria / non-UK Citizens who cannot claim benefits criteria**

A 'not found' result will be emailed to the parent\carer. They will then receive an email asking them to confirm which criteria they wish to apply under. Once the parent\carer has responded to this email, Management Information will carry out an eligibility check and will let them know the result by email.

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## Non-UK Citizens who cannot claim benefits criteria

If the parent/ carer has either a National Insurance number (NINO) or National Asylum Seeker Service reference number (NASS), please ensure that they continue to create an account via the above method. For those that do not, please ask that they complete the following form [https://www.kelsi.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/140103/FF2\\_Non-UK-Citizen-NRPF-Application.pdf](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/140103/FF2_Non-UK-Citizen-NRPF-Application.pdf)

For those that confirm under this criterion, the above form must be completed by the parent and returned to [miearlyyears@kent.gov.uk](mailto:miearlyyears@kent.gov.uk) with the supporting evidence.

## Eligible Results:

- If a parent is found to be 'eligible' the email will contain an EY Voucher Code comprising of a mixture of 6 numbers and letters i.e., 8BSYOW, 6PFTRQ, WBZK2X.
- The parent needs to give EY Providers with the EY Voucher Code as proof of eligibility. For the date eligibility was confirmed, please request a copy of the email from the parents.
- For parents where eligibility is confirmed immediately upon submission, the date the immediate email was sent is the date the child was confirmed as eligible. Management Information will no longer be sending eligibility emails stating the eligibility date in the body of the email.
- If a parent cannot find their EY Voucher Code, they can log into the FF2 Parent Portal at any time and copy it into a text message/email or write it down to pass onto their chosen provider.

## Not Found Results:

- If a parent's application has not been confirmed, known as 'not found', this does not mean the family are not eligible, but Management Information require more details from the parent/carers to investigate further.
- If 'not found' the immediate email response from the portal will not contain an EY Voucher Code and will state Management Information will email requesting further details.
- Parents/Carers will receive an email from Management Information the next working day and will need to reply to allow further investigation.
- Once investigated, if the parent/carers is confirmed as eligible, Management Information will send an eligible email containing a 6-digit EY Voucher Code. In some cases, the date of eligibility may be in the body of the email. Where this is not stated, the date the email was sent from Management Information is the date the child was confirmed as eligible.
- If a child is not eligible at this time, Management Information will send them an email explaining why and the parent/ carer may wish to reapply if circumstances are to change.

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## **Please Note:**

- All applications submitted to Management Information have to be imported into Synergy. This is completed every day for the previous days applications. This means the EY Voucher code will only be available to use to make a funding claim the next working day after the parent/carer has applied. Please bear in mind weekends and bank holidays will extend this process.
- Never accept a child under the terms of the scheme until you have seen a copy of the email with the EY Voucher. Management Information cannot fund a child if they have not been confirmed as Eligible within Kent.
- The EY Voucher does not require validation. Codes provided by Kent County Council are only valid for Kent settings. Codes provided outside of Kent are not valid and the parent/carer must re-apply through the Kent parent portal.
- The funding can only be claimed from the start of the week during which eligibility has been confirmed. It cannot be backdated.
- A Parental Declaration Form must be completed and signed by a parent at the start of each new term and must be kept for audit purposes. We cannot process your payment unless you are in receipt of this document. This can be found on KELSI.

## **Claiming FF2 Funding**

- Claims for funding are made via the Synergy FIS Provider Portal. You would have been sent your username and password when you registered as a FF2 provider.
- You will be required to enter the EY Voucher code to bring up the child's record and complete the funding details for the term in which you are claiming.
- If you are submitting your claim in time for the first payment run, you would submit it as an "Actual" on the provider portal. For all other payment runs that term, you would submit your claim as an "Adjustment." Guidance on how to use the provider portal to submit your claim can be found on KELSI.
- The FF2 Payment Schedule outlining the deadlines that claims need to be submitted by and payment dates can also be found on KELSI.

If you have any questions, please email: [miearlyyears@kent.gov.uk](mailto:miearlyyears@kent.gov.uk)