

Funding Periods

	From	To
Autumn 2023	1 September 2023	31 December 2023
Spring 2024	2 January 2024	12 April 2024
Summer 2024	15 April 2024	31 August 2024

Please be aware that a child can claim a maximum of 570 hours of Free Early Education (universal entitlement) in a funding year and, if eligible, a further 570 hours of free childcare (extended entitlement). A child's funding year starts the term after their 3rd birthday in line with the table below:

Child First Becomes Eligible for Funding	Children Born in Period	Terms Included in the Funding Year
September (Autumn Term)	1 April to 31 August	Autumn, Spring & Summer
January (Spring Term)	1 September to 31 December	Spring, Summer & Autumn
April (Summer Term)	1 January to 31 March	Summer, Autumn & Spring

Date of Birth Range 2023/24

Term	3 Year Olds	4 Year Olds	Whole DOB Range
Autumn 23	01/09/2019 to 31/08/2020	01/09/2018 to 31/08/2019	01/09/2018 to 31/08/2020
Spring 24	01/01/2020 to 31/12/2020	01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019	01/01/2019 to 31/12/2020
Summer 24	01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021	01/04/2019 to 31/03/2020	01/04/2019 to 31/03/2021
Autumn 24	01/09/2020 to 31/08/2021	01/09/2019 to 31/08/2020	01/09/2019 to 31/08/2021

The funding base rate for providers in 2023/24 is **£4.55** with the possibility of additional funding being added for providers qualifying for the deprivation and qualified teacher status payments.

Funded Weeks

In line with the Kent Provider Agreement, Providers can offer a non-stretched or stretched pattern or both. However, where providers are unable to open for the 38 weeks and this has been agreed with KCC, the provider must ensure that parents are made aware prior to taking up their place that they will not be able to access their full free entitlement with them.

Funding over 38 weeks - Non-Stretched

up to 15 hours per week

Autumn 2023	14 weeks	210 hours
Spring 2024	11 weeks	165 hours
Summer 2024	13 weeks	195 hours

Funding over 48 weeks - Stretched

up to 12 hours per week

Autumn 2023	16 weeks	192 hours
Spring 2024	14 weeks	168 hours
Summer 2024	18 weeks	216 hours

Settings offering Stretched funding

In the case of a parent taking up the 'stretched' offer, they must be made aware that they may exceed their free early education hours and be given the option of either (a) removing their child from the setting or (b) paying for the additional hours. Under no circumstances can you insist that the parent pays; they must have the option to remove their child if this best suits their circumstances. The terms around these extra hours must be agreed between yourself and the parent at the time they sign the Parental Declaration. Please be aware that the choice of whether to stretch the funding is up to each Provider and is not obligatory.

Should you wish to stretch funding between 38 or 48 weeks or 48 weeks plus, please claim the funding over 38 or 48 weeks per year via Synergy and then stretch the funding yourselves with the parent. There is a calculator available on KELSI to convert non-stretched hours to stretched. You will also be required to track these children on the stretched tracker for audit purposes which is also available to download from KELSI. These tools are only required to be used if you are stretching funding outside of the 38 or 48 week pattern.

There are two sample calendars on KELSI to assist you with working out your term dates. When stretching funding for a child for 48 weeks you **must** remember to tick that the child is stretched at headcount in Synergy and check the weeks you are claiming for are correct. Providers should be aware that the universal and extended funding will be capped at 570 hours each a year (the maximum number of hours the Department for Education fund Local Authorities) so Management Information will deduct any overclaimed hours in the final term of the child's funding year.

Estimate Data Collection period for 3 and 4 Year Old Funding

Autumn 2023: Friday 23 June – Tuesday 4 July 2023

Spring 2024: Friday 10 November – Tuesday 21 November 2023

Summer 2024: Friday 1 March – Tuesday 12 March 2024

Interim payments will be paid at 50% of the termly hours submitted

Headcount Weeks for 3 and 4 Year Old Funding

Autumn 2023: Monday 11 September – Friday 15 September 2023

Spring 2024: Monday 15 January – Friday 19 January 2024

Summer 2024: Monday 22 April – Friday 26 April 2024

Payment Dates for 3 and 4 Year Old Funding

Autumn 2023:	Interim:	W/C Monday 4 September 2023
	Balancing:	W/C Monday 30 October 2023

Spring 2024:	Interim:	W/C Tuesday 2 January 2024
	Balancing:	W/C Monday 19 February 2024

Summer 2024:	Interim:	W/C Monday 15 April 2024
	Balancing:	W/C Monday 10 June 2024

Early Year Census

The Early Years Census is how the local authority receives funding to pay providers for the year, so it is vital that **ALL** providers complete it. Census week will be 15th – 19th January 2024 and providers will have until 2nd February 2024 to submit their return.

Please Note: Failure to submit a census will result in your Spring term balancing payment being placed on hold.

Compliance Visits

KCC, its agents or any person authorised by KCC, will carry out annual sample checks and/or audits on all registered childcare providers to ensure compliance with the requirements of Free Early Education funding. KCC, its agents or any person authorised by KCC, will also carry out checks as a result of a complaint or concern.

FF2 Children

2 year old funding does not follow the same headcount process as 3 & 4 year old funding, for more details on payments dates for FF2 funding, please go to the [FF2 Payment Schedule](#)