

# Free childcare for under 5's



## This is for:

- 9-month-olds to school age children for working parents
- 2-year-olds from families on lower incomes or in receipt of some government support
- All 3-and-4-year-olds

## Do I meet the criteria and how do I apply?

Phone **0300 123 4097**

Scan the QR code or search: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)



## When do I apply?

Apply the term before you want to take up a place. Deadlines are 31 March, 31 August or 31 December.

## When would free childcare start?

Free childcare can start from the term **after** your child turns the relevant age. It is for 38 weeks of the year. Some childcare providers will stretch funding over more weeks which means less hours per week. Speak to your childcare provider.

If on parental leave or starting a new job, please see over the page for application deadlines.

## Where do I find childcare?

Scan the QR code or search:

[www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/postcode-search](http://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/postcode-search)



# More detail on free childcare and support for under fives

Between April 2024 and September 2025 more children under three will become eligible for free childcare.

## Who is eligible for free hours and when:

### 3-and-4-year-olds:

- All families eligible for 15 hours
- Working parents\* eligible for an extra 15 hours (30 in total)

### 2-year-olds:

- Families earning less than £16,190 on Universal Credit, or with other kinds of government support – for 15 hours.
- Working parents\* eligible, currently 15 hours (increasing to 30 hours in Sept 2025)

### Under 2s:

- Working parents\* of children from nine-months-old eligible for 15 hours from Sept 2024 (increasing to 30 hours in Sept 2025)

\* Working parent(s) is defined as households where all parents are working at least 16 hours at the National minimum wage for their age and earning less than £100,000 (if a couple both need to work).

## If you are on parental leave or start a new job

When you start / return to work	When you can apply from	When your free hours can start
By 30 Sept 2024	Now to 31 Aug 2024	1 Sept 2024
1 Oct 2024 to 31 Jan 2025	1 Sept to 31 Dec 2024	1 Jan 2025
1 Feb to 30 April 2025	1 Jan to 31 Mar 2025	1 April 2025
1 May to 31 Sept 2025	1 April to 31 Aug 2025	1 Sept 2025

## Other support available:

- Working parents can apply for tax free childcare which covers 20% of any additional hours.
- Students can often get support through their college or university.
- Job Centres can sometimes support people when they first get a job.

## Children with additional needs or a disability:

All childcare should try and meet children's needs. If you get free hours (listed above) you may also be eligible for an inclusion fund, to help provide extra support for your child to take up those hours.

## Who can help you apply and give advice:

- Nurseries, pre-schools, and childminders can give you good advice on what you are entitled to, deadlines and how to apply.
- Health visitors and midwives can often help.
- Family Hubs.
- Childcare Choices – help with applying and eligibility, ring **0300 123 4097**
- Early Years Sector Support – help finding local childcare, or advice on an eligibility appeal, ring **0191 277 4674** or email: **EarlyYears@newcastle.gov.uk**