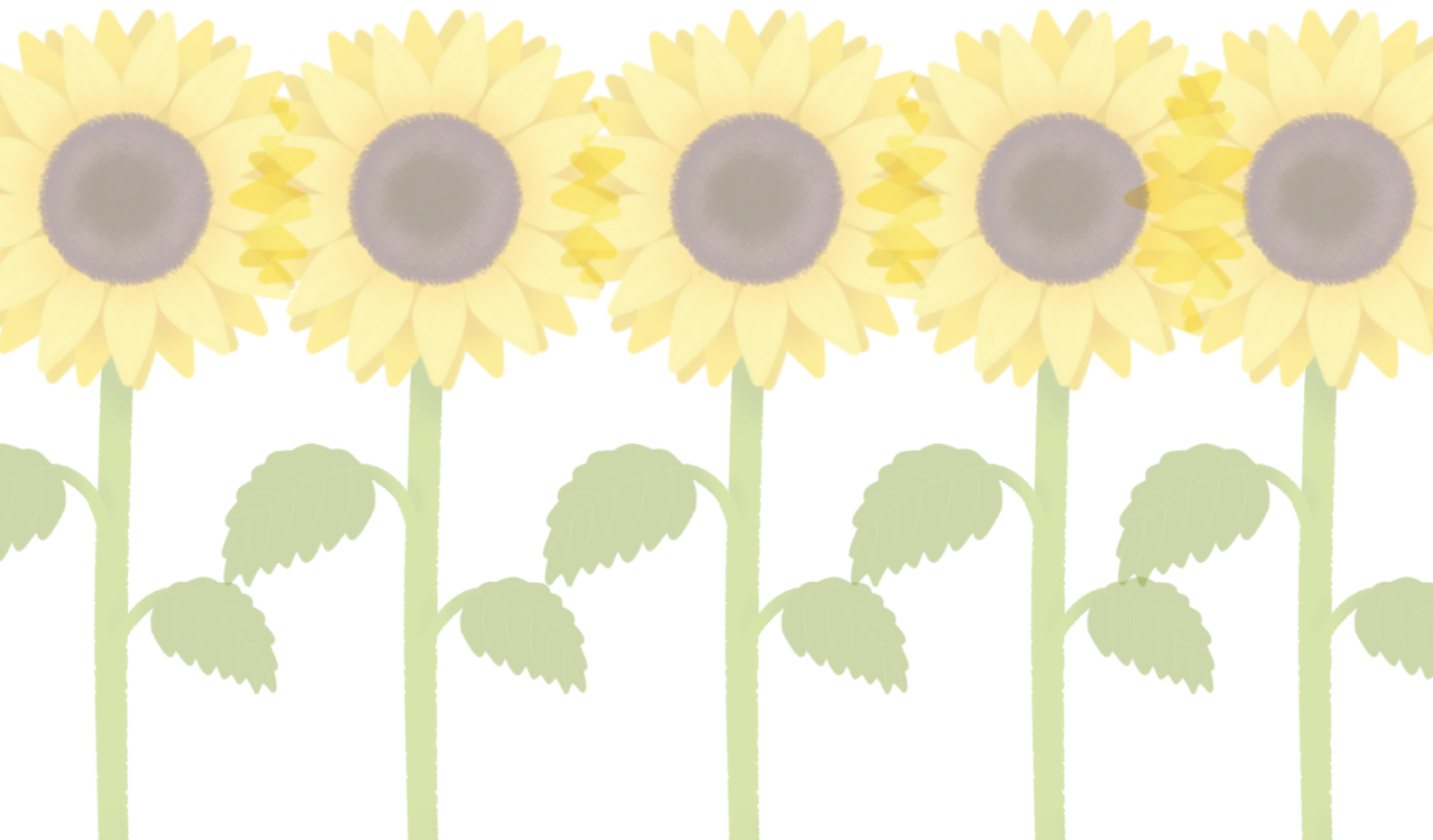


FUNDING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS



OVERVIEW

This document to outline the current process for funded hours and the upcoming changes to the funding hours from April 2024 onwards. We will break it down to make it easier to understand and explain the costs involved.

In September 2010, the Department for Education introduced an entitlement to 15 hours of funded childcare per week for all 3 and 4 year olds in England. This was later increased to 30 hours per week for working parents.

These hours cover 38 weeks of the year (during school term time), however we will calculate over the 51 weeks we are open throughout the year, 'stretching' the hours used.



APRIL 2024 ONWARDS

Starting from April 2024, existing childcare support will be expanded in phases.

By September 2025, most working families with children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare support.

The changes are being introduced gradually to make sure that providers can meet the needs of more families. This means that:

- From April 2024, eligible working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours childcare support the term after the turn 2.
- From September 2024, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents of children from the term after they become age 9 months to 3-years
- From September 2025, eligible working parents of children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare a week.

Like the existing offer, these hours cover 38 weeks of the year (during school term time), however we will calculate over the 51 weeks we are open throughout the year.



ARE YOU eLIGIBLE?

You, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage).

If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.

You can't get either 15 or 30 hours childcare if you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 adjusted net income or more.



WHEN CAN MY CHILD START?

Your child can start in their childcare place the term after they are eligible and have received a valid eligibility code, whichever is later. Term start dates are 1st September, 1st January and 1st April.

To keep your 15 or 30 hours childcare place you need to check your details are up to date every 3 months.

WHEN TO APPLY?

You can apply from when your child is 2 years and 36 weeks old.

Recommended time to apply:

- 1 September to 31 December

Term starting on or after 1 January

- 15 October to 30 November

1 January to 31 March

- Term starting on or after 1 April

15 January to 28 February

- 1 April to 31 August

Term starting on or after 1 September

- 15 June to 31 July

You can apply outside of these recommended dates but you might not receive your code in time. You must have a valid code by the end of the month before a new term starts.

You have to reconfirm your eligibility every 3 months. If you apply more than 3 months before the term starts, you'll have to reconfirm your eligibility in your account in order to keep your code valid.



APPLYING FOR FUNDED HOURS

If you have a partner:

You must include your partner in your application if you are:

- married or in a civil partnership and live together
- not married or in a civil partnership, but living together as though you are

Their employment and income will not affect your eligibility if they:

- are or will be absent from your household for more than 6 months
- are a prisoner

You and your partner cannot both have accounts for the same child.

If you are separated:

You and your ex-partner need to decide who should apply if you are jointly responsible for your child.

If you cannot decide, both of you must apply separately and HMRC will decide who gets a childcare account.



TERM DATES

There are a total of 38 funded weeks within a 52 weeks year. Sunflowers calculates all fees based on 51 weeks as we close over the Christmas/New Year period.

The Spring Term has 12 funded weeks.

The Summer Term has 11 funded weeks.

The Autumn Term has 15 funded weeks.



COSTS INVOLVED

The biggest misconception regarding the funded hours is that there is no costs to be paid; this is because they are advertised as 'free' hours rather than 'funded' hours.

These childcare offers are not intended to cover the costs of meals, resources, consumables (such as nappies or wipes etc.), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips and events).

Sunflowers has a Daily Support Charge which covers these costs charged at a rate of £15 per day and additional hours charge of £5.75 per hour.

This is in place for both 15 hours funding and 30 hours funding for 2, 3 & 4 year olds.

