

Early Years Funding

In the UK at present all three and four year olds are entitled to a maximum of 15 hours of free nursery education. This applies until they reach compulsory school age (the term following their fifth birthday) so will usually extend into their Reception year in school.

Free pre-school education can take place in nurseries, playgroups, preschools or at a child minders. The table below shows when your child will become eligible for their free early learning place.

If your child is born between:	They are eligible for a free place from:
1 April and 31 August	1 September following their third birthday or the beginning of the autumn* school term
1 September and 31 December	1 January following their third birthday or the beginning of the spring* school term
1 January and 31 March	1 April following their third birthday or the beginning of the summer* school term

* Based on a three-term school year.

In our pre-school at Widford Lodge we use 3 hour sessions. One morning session is 3 hours and one afternoon session is 3 hours.

For the school terms that your child is eligible for free 15 hours funding when they are in their Reception year, the amount of the funding is deducted from the fees for that term.

We will need to see your child's original birth certificate for proof of age to support the process of application for the funding.

For more information about free nursery education in your area, contact the Family Information Service (FIS). The FIS provides information, advice and assistance to parents, carers and professionals on the range of children, family and young people's services available within our area.

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs> We are not able to support the 30 hours free funding to which some parents may be eligible.