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Making Surrey a better place

# Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE) in Surrey

September 2011 - August 2012



**This leaflet is to help you understand Early Years Free Entitlement at an important time in your child's development.**



### **Can you tell me a little bit about Early Years Free Entitlement?**

It is the opportunity for children to take part in planned learning activities, to consistently high standards, to help them progress towards achieving the early learning goals set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You can find out more about the Early Years Foundation Stage at the Department for Education (DfE) website:  
[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

### **How many hours can my child have for free?**

Your child can have up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks a year. Some early years providers will be able to allow you to use your hours flexibly over the week but you won't be able to have:

- More than 10 hours in one day
- More than 12½ hours over two days.
- Less than 2½ hours in one day
- Any time before 8am or after 6pm

## **Which early years providers qualify?**

The following are examples of early years providers who qualify:

### **Local Education Authority (LEA) schools:**

Nursery schools  
Nursery classes

### **Private and voluntary early years providers:**

Pre-schools  
Playgroups  
Day nurseries  
Independent schools  
Accredited childminders who are part of a quality assured network

All Early Years Free Entitlement early years providers are inspected by Ofsted to ensure they reach a certain standard, to find out more visit:  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Whilst we will do all we can to find you a place of your choosing, the entitlement is to a free part-time early years provision place and not a guarantee of a place with a particular early years provider.

### **Who can get free part-time early years provision?**

As a general rule children can get free part-time early years provision from the term after their third birthday, for two years until they reach compulsory school age.

<b>Child born between</b>	<b>Can have a free place from</b>
1 April - 31 August 2008	September 2011
1 September - 31 December 2008	January 2012
1 January - 31 March 2009	April 2012
1 April - 31 August 2009	September 2012

Your child can receive the free entitlement until they either, start in a reception class at a local authority maintained school or reach compulsory school age, which is the school term after their fifth birthday.



### **How are the 38 weeks spread across the year?**

Early years providers are able to claim for the following weeks each term, not including half-term breaks or school holidays:


Autumn term 2011 - 14 weeks

Spring term 2012 - 11 weeks

Summer term 2012 - 13 weeks

Autumn term 2012 - 14 weeks

Not all early years providers will be able to offer you 38 weeks or will be able to let you use the hours flexibly – they may have set session times each day.



If your chosen early years provider does not offer 38 weeks you may not be able to take the balance somewhere else.

**Does the early years free entitlement have a monetary value?**

No, it is the guarantee of a free place. It is not a voucher or a parental subsidy.

**How do I claim?**

You are not able to claim the entitlement directly. Early years providers that are registered on The Surrey Directory of Early years Providers are able to offer free part-time places and will claim on your behalf.

### **Is it really free or will I have to pay any fees?**

The entitlement to 15 hours a week for up to 38 weeks a year is free. However, early years providers can set their own EYFE session times. Any time taken outside of the session will be classed as additional services and can be charged for even if, overall, your child attends for less than 15 hours.

The early years providers set their own fees for additional services but should ensure that you know in advance what you will be expected to pay. They should give you an invoice, at least termly, clearly showing what they are asking you to pay for.

### **Will the early years provider ask me to sign any forms?**

The first term that an early years provider claims on your behalf you will be asked to fill in an Early Years Free Entitlement Registration form. They will ask you to show your child's birth certificate or passport as proof of identity and eligibility. They will also ask you to complete an EYFE declaration form at the beginning of every term and another form if you want to increase or decrease the number of hours your child attends.



### **Can sessions be mixed between early years providers?**

Yes, you can choose to take up the free entitlement with two early years providers if this suits you better. Schools are also beginning to offer a mix of sessions. So, for example, your child could have 9 hours in a local authority nursery school or class and 6 hours with a private early years provider.

If you choose to take up the full entitlement with one early years provider, and take up additional hours with another early years provider, you will be charged for all these additional hours.



### **School admission and deferred entry**

In Surrey, children are able to start school in the September after their fourth birthday. You may choose to get a place at a school under the normal admission arrangements but postpone your child's admission to later on in the academic year and keep them with the early years provider until then. The place will need to be taken up within the school year. If you are planning to defer entry you will need to inform the school as soon as you have made this decision.

### **What will happen to my funding if my child is absent?**

If your child is likely to be absent for more than two weeks you should notify your early years provider.

### **Is there any support available for children with special needs?**

Every early years provider will expect to have children with additional needs at some point. With careful planning and organisation most of these children are able to participate fully in the activities. Early years providers are able to access specialist advice from the Early Years and Childcare Service and may be able to apply for the full entitlement even if the child does not go all the time.

### **Can the lunch hour be part of the free entitlement?**

Yes, a child's entitlement can be taken up around lunchtime. The early years provider may make an extra charge for the lunch or you may be given the option of a packed lunch for your child.

### **What happens if my early years provider does not offer the full entitlement?**

Early years providers in Surrey do not need to offer the full entitlement. Some may not be able to be open every day of the week and some do not offer 38 weeks a year. If you choose an early years provider that does not offer the full entitlement, the early years provider will let you know in writing what that means for you.





### **Do I have to live in Surrey?**

No. Surrey County Council pays for children who go to registered early years providers in Surrey, it doesn't matter where they live. A child moving to England from another country is entitled to early years provision on the same basis as any other child, regardless of whether they have British citizenship.

### **Can I transfer my funding from one nursery to another, if I want to change mid-term?**

No. Once your child has started the term at a setting and you have signed the EYFE declaration form the funding for the term will be paid to that early years provider. In exceptional circumstances, it will be possible to transfer funding. If you feel that you have to move your child to a different early years provider contact Surrey Family Information Service for their advice first.

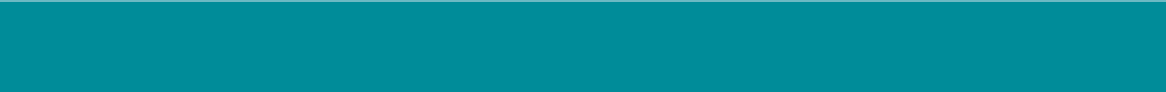

### **How can I get more information?**

Contact Surrey Family Information Service by:

**Email:** [surrey.fis@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:surrey.fis@surreycc.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 0300 200 1004

**Website:** [www.surreycc.gov.uk/fis](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/fis)



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