

**BRIGHT** FUTURES START IN EARLY YEARS

# 2-year-old early education **MYTH BUSTING**

Did you know your 2-year-old could receive up to 15 hours funded early education per week, subject to eligibility?





# Frequently asked questions

"I can't get 2-year-old special funding, I think it's just the normal 3- and 4-year-old nursery funding we can get and it is hard to apply for it"

**FALSE**

Not necessarily, you might meet the criteria for 2-year-old early education, it's based on economic and non-economic criteria, and it's quick and easy to apply. You just create an account on our SBC citizen portal, then it's a 5-minute application, if you're eligible, you find out straight away. Having trouble applying, we can do it for you!



## Economic criteria

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit, and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit (or both), and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

**Apply here on our SBC Citizen Portal** ([www.slough.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/free-early-education-2-year-olds/2](http://www.slough.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/free-early-education-2-year-olds/2)) or call us for support on 01753 476589.

## If you're a non-UK citizen who cannot claim benefits

If your immigration status says you have 'no recourse to public funds', you may still get free childcare for your 2-year-old. You must live in England and your household income must be no more than:

- £26,500 for families outside of London with one child
- £30,600 for families outside of London with two or more children

You cannot have more than £16,000 in savings or investments.

Contact your childcare provider or check with us if you're unsure if you can get free childcare.

**"I have to put my 2-year-old in a childcare setting, for 15 hours a week. I don't think she is ready, it's too much, I don't want to use this!"**

**FALSE**

Just because you are eligible for 15 hours a week of funded early education, it doesn't mean you have to use the full 15 hours a week, entitlement.

You can speak to your childcare provider about your concerns, maybe put your child in at reduced hours to start, maybe increasing later or not, whatever works for you and your little one.



**"If I get a new job, with higher income, I will lose my 2-year funding entitlement?"**

**FALSE**

Once you are eligible for the 2-year-old funding, you are eligible!

Your application is approved; you get your code at the same time. Just give this to the childcare setting, to get your little one started.

It doesn't matter if anything changes in your economic circumstances after, as at the time you applied, you were eligible!

To remind you see economic criteria for 2-year-old funding below:

If you are on certain benefits such as Universal, Child Tax or Working Tax Credits and have an annual income of below £16,190 before tax (£15,400 for families in receipt of Universal Credit) you could be eligible.

**"I, as my child's mother, am the best nurturer and teacher, it's better for my two-year-old to be home with me, they are so young!"**

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

You will always be your child's first and main carer, nurturer, and teacher, but early education at a nursery can help your child further by:

- setting the foundation for early lifelong learning
- improving your child's cognitive, linguistic, and social development
- preparing them for school.

Why not take advantage of this and:

- have some time to yourself
- quality rest time
- focus on another child at home
- do a course, upskill yourself, get back to work
- see friends, have time for a hobby.

## Did you know?

Good early years education from very early on can help to boost your child's development, giving them the opportunity to learn, thrive and play.

Free early years education for 2-year-olds is offered in approved pre-schools, day nurseries and with childminders.

Eligible 2-year-olds can have up to a maximum of 570 free hours in the child's birthday year. The maximum weekly amount of 15 hours per week of free early years education can be used over two or more days a week. You can spread the free hours throughout the year - this is called a 'stretched offer'.

**"Can I ask my health visitor at my child's clinic for more information? Or can she help me to apply?"**

**TRUE**

Yes, you can ask your health visitor, or another agency who may be working with your family, to help you with the application. If your child already attends a childcare provision, speak to them about receiving your funded early years education.

You can fill out the application on our 2-year funding form and return the form to us.

Or on the SBC Citizen Portal online link!

Struggling to apply online, ring us on 01753 476589 and we'll fill out the application for you.





"I have to exchange money, give deposits, and worry about payments?"

**FALSE**

The early years education provider will be paid directly, so you won't need to worry about managing the money yourself.

"I have heard early education and learning will really help my child and they will have lots of fun!"

**TRUE**

This is a national scheme that allows your child to get a head start.

It offers an opportunity, free of charge, to learn and play alongside other children and to paint, read, cook, climb, sing, dance, dress up, be active, build and garden.

"As soon as my child turns 2 they can be at a childcare setting for early education?"

**FALSE**

For children who are eligible, the earliest date you can claim will depend on when their second birthday is. You can apply and fill out the application the term they are turning 2 years old and access the funding in a childcare setting the term after.

**Child's birthday**

1 Jan-31 March

1 April-31 August

1 Sept-31 Dec

**Start**

Earliest start 1 April

1 September

1 January



# In summary

Eligible 2-year-olds can have up to a maximum of 570 free hours in the child's birthday year.

The maximum weekly amount of 15 hours per week of funded early years education can be used over two or more days a week. You can spread the free hours throughout the year - this is called a 'stretched offer'.

Parents please be aware with stretched funding, there may be a charge for sessions, outside of the funded hours.

# For further information

[www.slough.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/free-early-education-2-year-olds](http://www.slough.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/free-early-education-2-year-olds)

**For general enquiries contact:**

**T:** 01753 476589

**E:** [FIS@Slough.gov.uk](mailto:FIS@Slough.gov.uk)

Details of providers delivering the offer can be found on the Slough Family Information and Services website:

[www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/home.page](http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/home.page)

