

Frequently Asked Questions

Early year's entitlements

Q Can a child start a 30 hour place immediately after a parent has received an eligibility code?

A Not necessarily, an eligibility code can be issued before a child is three years old. A child is eligible to take up a place the term after their third birthday and once an eligibility code has been received – as illustrated below:

Date parent receives eligibility code	Child can take up a funded place
Between 1 January to 31 March	the term starting after 1 April
Between 1 April to 31 August	the term starting after 1 September
Between 1 September to 31 December	the term starting after 1 January

Q How often do parents need to reconfirm their 30 hour eligibility and who notifies them?

A A parent needs to reconfirm their eligibility every three months. They will be notified by HMRC by their chosen method of communication (parents can also view their reconfirmation date on their childcare choices account). Although, it is advised that childcare providers alert parents when they are nearing their eligibility code end date.

Q Can a child take up a 30 hour place for the first time when in their grace period?

A No a child cannot start a place whilst in their grace period.

Q Do childcare providers need to verify a 30 hour eligibility code before offering a 30 hour childcare place?

A Yes, this can be carried out on the Synergy online provider portal by either submitting a pay claim or using the eligibility checker tool. Codes only need to be verified once, not term on term.

Q Does the 'eligibility checker' on the synergy on-line provider portal verify a 30 hour eligibility code?

A No, the eligibility checker will inform a provider as to whether the code is valid code and can be used as a place planning tool. Child and parent/carer details need to be entered into the Synergy online provider portal and validated via the blue '30 hours free childcare' button in the 'funding' tab.

Q How do childcare providers know the start, end and grace period dates that are attached to a 30 hour eligibility code? And how often is this information updated?

A Once a code is verified this information is visible in the Synergy online provider portal. LA's carry out 30 hour eligibility code audits twice per term. The information in the provider portal is then automatically updated. The LA audit dates can be found in the Early years entitlements operational guidance.

Q Can the local authority assist parents with 30 hour eligibility code issues?

A No. Parents need to contact HMRC direct on 0300 123 4097.

Q Can the local authority override eligibility decisions made by HMRC?

A No. The local authority has no role in determining the eligibility of 30 hour childcare.

Q What can childcare providers charge parents who are taking up a 30 hour place for?

A The Early year's entitlements operational guidance for local authorities and providers outlines how entitlements should be delivered, which includes charging models.

Q Do providers need to obtain an 'early year's voucher code' for a two year old before offering a free funded place?

A Yes. A place should not be offered before obtaining this code.

Q How do providers enter a pay claim for a two year old on the Synergy provider portal?

A The child's details need to be entered via the '**EY Voucher**' tab. If entered via the 'add child' tab this will not be a valid claim and will be declined.

Q How does a provider know if a child is eligible for EYPP?

A If a child has attracted EYPP this will be displayed on the on line provider portal against the child on the actuals funding page. An EYPP check can only be carried out if parent and carer details are submitted with the pay claim.

Q How does a provider know if a child has attracted the deprivation weighting?

A If a child has attracted the deprivation weighting, DC2 will be displayed on the on line provider portal against the child on the actuals funding page. Also a provider can use the on line post code checker that is available on Oldham councils website, just type in the postcode and an instant result will be displayed. https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4770/postcode_checker

Q Can a parent move a child that is accessing the free entitlement mid-term?

A Providing a termly parental declaration form has been signed, funding will only follow the child if exceptional circumstances apply.

Q How often do parent declaration forms need to be signed?

A Parents should sign a declaration form within the first two weeks of each term.

Q Does a parent have to wait to start work before they can apply for the extended hours?

A Parents can apply up to 31 days before taking up or returning to work.

Q How do I make a claim for DAF?

When claiming actuals for a child via the online provider portal you are asked to select if a child is eligible for DAF, if you select yes you must submit a copy of the child's DLA award notification or certificate to the free entitlement team.

Q If a childcare provider nominates a child for DAF via the online provider portal does the payment get released straight away?

A No DAF funding will not be released until a copy of the child's DLA award letter and signed parental declaration form is received.

Q My term dates are different to those specified on the Oldham Council website.

A The Free Entitlement Team recognise that childcare providers school holidays may not always fall in line with those issued by the council, to accommodate this specific term dates have not been set and will run from the 1st until the 31st of the relevant term regardless of when the childcare provider opens and closes their setting. Within each term however there are a maximum of hours and weeks that be claimed, the how these are distributed onto the parent is left up to the childcare provider. Please see the provider payment timetable for full details.