



Funded childcare at The Play Academy

When will my child get funding?

A child is entitled to funding from the start of the school term which falls after they turn 9 months for working family funding or 3rd birthday universally. There are 3 terms in an academic/school year (autumn, spring & summer).

See the key dates table below to work out when your child will be entitled to funding.

Further information on funding can be found on the government website;

<https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/>

How much funding is my child entitled to?

Funding is provided by the Government as follows :

- **Universal 15 hrs funding** : 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year – all 3 and 4 year-olds are entitled to this regardless of income or whether the parents are working
- **Extended 30 hrs funding** : an additional 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year – both parents should be in work for at least 16 hours, each earning at least National Minimum Wage up to £100k pa. You may also be eligible if one parent is working and the other is in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer's Allowance, Employment & Support Allowance or is on Maternity/Paternity Leave.

Funding is provided for 38 weeks of the year, following Local Authority school terms starting in Autumn term (September). This is a maximum of 570 hours for Universal 15hrs Funding, or 1140 hours with Extended 30 hrs Funding in any full academic year. The remaining 13 weeks of the year (ie school holidays and training days) are NOT funded.

How does funding work at The Play Academy?

We offer both 15 and 30 hour funded places, either full year or term time (limited spaces), and will do so as long as it works for our nursery and parents. We stretch the 38 weeks of funded hours across 38 weeks (term-time places), or 51 weeks (full-year places). If your child's funding starts in Spring or Summer term, the amount of funding for the remainder of that academic year will reduce accordingly and will need to stretch over more weeks. We offer funding on full days (10 hours) or half days (5 hours).

By Local Authority rules we are not permitted to offer more than 10 hours of funding in any one day. You don't have to use the full entitlement and you can use your funding with up to two providers.



What does the funding cover?

Funding covers only the core elements of childcare. Government guidance states:

“Providers...can charge for meals and snacks as part of free entitlement places and they can also charge for consumables, such as nappies or sun cream, and for services such as trips and specialist tuition... Providers who choose to offer the free entitlements are responsible for setting their own policy on providing parents with options for alternatives to additional charges...”

For our funded places there is an ‘Meals and Consumables’ charge. The following is a list of items that are provided by the setting and not covered by funding or classed as basic childcare which is covered by the government;

- Meals- Breakfast, Lunch and Tea.
- Snacks and ingredients for cooking/baking etc.
- Nappies, wipes, nappy sacks and nappy disposal.
- Trips and Outings-Trips and outings such as the aquarium, care home and forest school incur further charges due to entrance fees, group costs, location hire and reduced staff ratios where required.
- Groups at the setting-Monster movers, Pilates and Basketball.
- Busy Bag Supplement-Busy Bags form part of our enhanced curriculum and go beyond the expectation of normal childcare and the local authorities expectation of school readiness. These activities cost the setting substantial amounts in equipment, resourcing and ingredients.

Meals and Consumables at The Play Academy?*

£6.50 per funded session (£13 per day)

Days with no funding: Incorporated into our normal daily rate

* Fees correct at time of printing, please bear in mind our fees may have increased when your child’s funding starts

A fully funded space will need to be discussed on an individual basis with the management team who can provide you with a full breakdown of what you will be required to bring with you if opting out of the consumables charges.

Our fees are annualised and divided into equal monthly payments so you will receive a monthly invoice as normal. Once we know how many days your child will be attending and how much funding you want us to claim, we can work out your fees for you. If you would prefer to pay an ‘actual’ monthly amount please do let us know.

What will happen to my Tax-Free Childcare account?

Nothing! You can continue to use your Tax-Free Childcare account to pay your fees, so you will still benefit from your usual tax savings on top of the saving provided by funding.

Can I claim Universal Credit for meals and consumables?

Yes, if you are eligible for Universal credit and have claimed support with fees previously, you can continue to claim for additional charges.



Can I increase my child's days when we get funding?

Yes. Many of our parents take advantage of the lower fees to increase their child's sessions. If you wish to increase your child's days, please give us as much notice as possible. We'll then send you a breakdown of your new fees if we can accommodate your request.

How does it work if my child attends another provider as well?

You are entitled to split your funding between two providers. Please bear in mind if your child goes to a school's nursery, it is likely to be a term-time only provision and adult:child ratios could be higher (up to 1:13). At The Play Academy we maintain our 1:8 ratio at all times. Additionally, if your child attends a school's nursery it is not a guarantee that your child will get a place at the school. Please check these details with the school nursery if you are considering one. If you wish to split your child's funding between us and another setting or childminder

How do I apply for my child's funding?

·Universal 15 hrs funding : no need to apply as all 3&4 year olds are automatically entitled to this funding.

·Extended 30 hrs funding : you must apply online and obtain a "30-hour code" using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>.

The deadline is stated on the website but please see the key dates table below.

Once your application is approved you will receive your 11-digit "30-hour code".

If you have a Tax-Free Childcare account, you might receive your code automatically.

What happens next?

We will give you a Parental Declaration form in due course to complete and return to us. See the deadlines in the Key Dates table below. If you've applied for Extended 30 Hours funding, you must put your 30 hour code on the form. This form constitutes your permission for us as your childcare provider to claim your child's funding from the Local Authority. It will cover your child's funding for the full academic year (a new form must be completed at the start of each new academic year). We cannot confirm your funded place or claim your child's funding until we have this form. And that's it, we will do all the admin after that!

Please note : The Local Authority always refuses to pay funding for late applications so please be aware of this. If you miss the deadline and are refused funding this is out of our hands, and we will be unable to offer your child a funded place.