

05 Equality procedures

05.05 Essex County Council funding opportunities, procedures and help available with childcare costs

Universal Funded Early Years Entitlement (FEEE) is available at Little Doves for 3- and 4- year-old children, starting the term after their third birthday. This is up to 15 funded hours per week each term, totalling 38 weeks a year. The term after a child's 3rd birthday the parent/carer is given and asked to complete a FEEE parent/carer agreement form for that term. The parent/carer is also be asked to read an email with additional information regarding the FEEE process and data retention periods. The parent/carer is asked to complete and return to Little Doves the FEEE parent/carer agreement form as soon as possible so that the information provided can be entered onto the Essex provider portal during the headcount period to apply for funding for that child for that term. The form asks for a child's ethnicity; this is to allow Essex County Council to highlight inequalities, investigate their underlying causes and remove any unfairness or disadvantage.

Applications for FEEE funding are submitted every term so the parent/carer is asked to complete/sign a FEEE parent/carer agreement form every term. Little Doves cannot apply for FEEE funding for a child without a signed FEEE parent/carer agreement form for that term.

Little Doves do not operate a sole provider policy and the funding can be shared across two settings or with a childminder.

The FEEE parent/carer agreement form is used to confirm the number of funded hours from the child's entitlement that parents/carers are claiming with one or more childcare providers and that the entitlement does not exceed the maximum offer for the term.

A parent/carer cannot increase the hours they have claimed on their FEEE parent/carer agreement form for that term after headcount submission.

If a child joins after the headcount submission period and FEEE funding has not been claimed at another setting for that term, a late claim can be submitted up until three weeks before the end of the term.

If a child joins during the last three weeks of term, funding cannot be applied for and the parent/carer is required to pay for the hours the child attends the pre-school.

If a child leaves the pre-school partway through the term, an arrangement may be made between Little Doves and the child's new setting to transfer any remaining funding for that term.

If a child joins Little Doves from another setting partway through the term, Little Doves asks for the remaining funding for that term to be transferred to us. If a child's old setting is not in agreement with this then the parent/carer is required to pay for the hours the child attends Little Doves for the remainder of that term.

Funded Early Years Entitlement for eligible 2-year-olds (FEEE2) is available at Little Doves. A 2-year-old can get funded childcare if the parent/carer gets any of these benefits:

- 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
- child tax credits, and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

2-year-olds can also get funded childcare if they:

- are looked after by a local authority
- have a statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- get Disability Allowance
- have left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

In addition to this criteria, Essex County Council will also consider applications for children where the council has received a Section 23 notification from Health.

The parent/carer applies online for FEEE2 on this link www.essex.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs. Once FEEE2 funding for the child has been approved, the parent/carer receives a placement notification code which they need to provide on the parent/carer agreement form that will be given out by Little Doves. The parent/carer will also be given an eligibility start date; this date is the earliest the child can begin their funding claim. This will also need to be added on the parent/carer agreement form in the relevant box. This funding can only be used at one setting.

Working Parents Funding for 2 year olds (FEEE2W)

Eligible working parents of 2 year olds are able to claim 15 hours FEEE per week, for 38 weeks per year, from the term after their 2nd birthday. For the eligibility criteria and more details please go to:

[Apply for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator

The parent/carer will need to apply in the term before they wish to take up the funding. They cannot receive funding mid-term and so any application must be made and confirmed before the cut off dates in the previous term. If eligible, the parent/carer will receive an 11-digit code. This code must be provided along with the parent/carer's national insurance number in the appropriate boxes on the FEEE parent/carer agreement form. Essex County Council require the pre-school to check the eligibility of the code on the provider portal and therefore the parent/carer is asked to tick a box on the FEEE parent/carer agreement

form to give permission for us to do this. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure they continue to provide the information required to HMRC/Childcare Choices when it is requested (usually every 3 months) to keep the code valid. Little Doves cannot do this for them. If they do not reconfirm their details with HMRC/Childcare Choices and their eligibility expires, they have one term's grace period where their child will continue to receive the Working Parents Funding for 2 year olds, however, if they do not reconfirm during that term, their child will no longer receive the funding.

Little Doves does not operate a sole provider policy and so the funding can be shared across two settings or with a childminder.

The code the parent/carer receives from Childcare Choices will remain as their child's code until they go to school.

Working Parents Funding for 3 and 4 year olds Extended Funded Early Years Entitlement (FEEE 30 hours), where an additional 15 hours to the universal FEEE 15 hours is available for qualifying families, can be used at Little Doves. The most hours that can be claimed at Little Doves is 22 due to our opening hours, however the funding can be shared across two settings. The eligibility criteria and more details can be found at:

www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator

The parent/carer needs to apply in the term before they wish to take up the funding. If eligible, they will receive an 11-digit code. The parent/carer is asked to provide this code along with their National Insurance number in the appropriate boxes on the FEEE parent/carer agreement form. Essex County Council require the pre-school to check the eligibility of the code on the provider portal and therefore Little Doves asks the parent/carer to tick a box on the FEEE parent/carer agreement form to give permission for us to do this.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure they continue to provide the information required to HMRC when it is requested (usually every 3 months) to keep the code valid. If the parent/carer does not reconfirm their details with HMRC and their eligibility expires, the parent/carer has one term's grace period where they will continue to receive the Extended Funded Early Years Entitlement (30 hours). However, if they do not reconfirm during that term, they will no longer receive the 30 hours, only the universal 15 hours in subsequent terms.

We do not operate a sole provider policy and so the funding can be shared across two settings or with a childminder.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding that can be received for eligible children who receive Universal Funded Early Years Entitlement (FEEE), Funded Early Years Entitlement for eligible 2 year olds (FEEE2) or Working Parents Funding for 2 year olds (FEEE2W).

This provides enhanced learning and development support and a child may be entitled to this if the parent/carer is on any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax, not including any benefits you get

If the parent/carer thinks they may be eligible, they are asked to tick the agreement to check eligibility box in the parent declaration section on their child's FEEE parent/carer agreement form. These details are then entered into the ECC provider portal during headcount submission. The parent/carer is informed by Little Doves if the EYPP has been improved. Children in care/children adopted from care are also eligible to receive EYPP. This is not collected via headcount; Little Doves applies for this separately.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Premium is enhanced funding to help meet a child's additional needs. This can only be applied for when the child is old enough to receive the universal FEEE funding. A child may be eligible for this funding if they have SEN, a disability or a Health Authority Section 23 Notice.

Disability Access Fund (DAF) is a one-off annual payment to the pre-school if a child is in receipt of disability living allowance. and receives Universal Funded Early Years Entitlement (FEEE), Funded Early Years Entitlement for eligible 2 year olds (FEEE2) or Working Parents Funding for 2 year olds (FEEE2W). The purpose of this funding is to help the pre-school make reasonable adjustments to the setting to improve the child's access to funded early years education. The DAF payment can only be given to one provider; it cannot be given across two settings. The DAF cannot be used towards childcare fees or providing more FEEE hours.

Inclusion funding is extra hourly funding that can be applied for if a child receives 2-year-old funding (FEEE2) and has additional needs. An inclusion grant application form is completed by the pre-school and sent to ECC funding panel to assess and authorise the grant. This can also be applied for if a child attends more than 15 hours a week and is in receipt of SEN Premium for those 15 hours. Permission will be requested from the parent/carer before applying for this grant.

In line with Essex County Council contract, Little Doves does not charge a top up fee on hours funded by Essex County Council.

Help with childcare costs

Child Tax Credit

Child Tax Credit is an income-related allowance for parents and carers of children or young people who are still in full-time education.

For more details: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/tax-credits

Help for working families

Tax-Free Childcare

Working parents can get up to £2000 government support per child per year towards their childcare costs. GOV.UK has more information on Tax-Free Childcare.

For more details: www.gov.uk/get-tax-free-childcare

Working Tax Credit

Working parents/carers may be able to get help pay for childcare whilst working. This is the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. GOV.UK has more information on Working Tax Credit.

For more details: www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit

Universal Credit and childcare

A parent/carer may be able to claim up to 85% of their childcare costs if they are eligible for Universal Credit. GOV.UK has more information on Universal Credit and childcare.

For more details: www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit

Employer supported childcare

Some employers provide support with finding and paying for childcare. Parents/carers are encouraged to talk to their employer about what they offer. (See information from HM Revenue and Customs). GOV.UK has more information on what parents/carers may be entitled to.

For more details: www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-supported-childcare