

09 Early years practice procedures

09.01h Prime times – Essex County Council Funded Places

Essex County Council Funded Places [Early years and childcare \(essex.gov.uk\)](http://essex.gov.uk)

[Universal Funded Early Years Entitlement \(FEEE\)](#) is available at Little Doves for 3 and 4 year old children, starting the term after their 3rd birthday. This is up to 15 funded hours per week each term, totalling 38 weeks a year. When a child is eligible for FEEE funding, it is a requirement of Essex County Council that proof of the date of birth of the child and the address where they live is presented to the manager/deputy of the setting, so the parent/carer is asked to bring in their child's birth certificate and proof of address if they have not already done so.

The term after a child's 3rd birthday the parent/carer will be given and asked to complete [a FEEE parent/carer agreement form](#) for that term. The parent/carer will also be asked to read an email with additional information regarding the FEEE process and data retention periods. The FEEE parent/carer agreement form must be completed and returned to Little Doves 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 the child for that term. The parent/carer is asked to read the form carefully and complete it fully. 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. To help the parent/carer complete this box there is a link within the [09.01c Parent/carer contract](#) section 4.1 to the ethnic category options.

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

Little Doves CP does not operate a sole provider policy and so 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.

The parent/carer **cannot** increase the hours they have claimed on the 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 will be required to pay for the hours their 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 and funding for that term has already been claimed by this setting, Little Doves would like the remaining funding for that term to be transferred. If the child's old setting is not in agreement with this, then the parent/carer will be 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 the household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments
- Child tax credits, and the 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 the person gets when they 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.

A parent/carer can apply online for FEEE2 on this link www.essex.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs. Once FEEE2 funding for their child has been approved, they will receive a placement notification code (starting with TYF881) which they need to provide on their parent/carer agreement form that they will be given by Little Doves. The parent/carer will also be given an eligibility start date; this date is the earliest they can begin their funding claim. This will also need to be added on their 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. This will increase to 30 hours in September 2025.

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/apply-for-free-childcare-if-youre-working)

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. The parent/carer 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 along with the

parent/carer's national insurance number is added into the appropriate boxes on the FEEE parent/carer agreement form. Essex County Council requires the pre-school to check the eligibility of the code on the provider portal and therefore the parent/carer are asked to tick a box on the FEEE parent/carer agreement form to give permission for the pre-school 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 the parent/carer. If the parent/carer does not reconfirm their details with HMRC/Childcare Choices and their eligibility expires, the parent/carer has 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, they will no longer receive the funding.

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

The code a parent/carer receives from Childcare Choices will remain their child's code until the child goes 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 the opening hours, however the funding can be shared across two settings. The eligibility criteria and more details are available on:

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, the parent/carer 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 requires 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 the pre-school 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 the parent/carer. If they do not reconfirm their details with HMRC/Childcare Choices and their eligibility expires, they have one term's grace period where the child will continue to receive the Extended Funded Early Years Entitlement (30 hours). However, if the parent/carer does not reconfirm during that term, they will no longer receive the 30 hours, only the universal 15 hours in subsequent terms.

Little Doves CP does 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 - the household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax, not including any benefits received

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 will be 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 will apply 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 CP does not charge a top up fee on hours funded by Essex County Council.