

Early Years Setting Funding Calendar and Payment Schedule

Free Early Education and Childcare Period
Sept 2025 – Aug 2026



This document details the funding periods and payment dates for early years settings in Kent offering: Free For Two Funding, 3&4 Universal Funding, the Working Parent Entitlement, Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Fund (DAF) for children aged 9 months – 4 years and is to be used in accordance with the terms of the Kent Provider Agreement.

Funding Periods

	From	To
Autumn 2025	1 September 2025	31 December 2025
Spring 2026	1 January 2026	19 April 2026
Summer 2026	20 April 2026	31 August 2026

Maximum Funded Hours

A child can claim the maximum number of funded hours per entitlement as detailed below:

Age Range	FEE Entitlement	Yearly Hours	Maximum Entitlement per Age Range
9 Months +	Working Parent Entitlement	1140	A maximum of 1140 for eligible 9 months +
2 Year Olds	Free For Two Funding	570	A maximum of 570 for eligible 2 year olds*
2 Year Olds	Working Parent Entitlement	1140	A maximum of 1140 for eligible 2 year olds*
3&4 Year Olds	Universal Entitlement	570	A maximum of 1140 for eligible 3&4 year olds
3&4 Year Olds	Working Parent Entitlement	570	

* If eligible for both Free For Two Funding and the Working Parent Entitlement, the funding will be split between the entitlements to a maximum of 1140 hours.

Date of Birth Ranges 2025/26

Term	9 Months +	2 Year Olds	3 Year Olds	4 Year Olds	Whole 3&4 DOB Range
Autumn 2025	01/09/2023 to 30/11/2024	01/09/2022 to 31/08/2023	01/09/2021 to 31/08/2022	01/09/2020 to 31/08/2021	01/09/2020 to 31/08/2022
Spring 2026	01/01/2024 to 31/03/2025	01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023	01/01/2022 to 31/12/2022	01/01/2021 to 31/12/2021	01/01/2021 to 31/12/2022
Summer 2026	01/04/2024 to 30/06/2025	01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024	01/04/2022 to 31/03/2023	01/04/2021 to 31/03/2022	01/04/2021 to 31/03/2023
Autumn 2026	01/09/2024 to 30/11/2025	01/09/2023 to 31/08/2024	01/09/2022 to 31/08/2023	01/09/2021 to 31/08/2022	01/09/2021 to 31/08/2023

For further information on which term a child's funded year starts, please see page 10 of the Kent Provider Agreement [Kent-Provider-Agreement April-24.pdf \(kelsi.org.uk\)](#).

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Funding Rates

The funding base rates for providers in 2025/26 are as follows:

3 & 4 Year Olds*	£5.34
2 Year Olds	£7.84
9 Months +	£10.76
EYPP	£1 per funded hour

**If you qualify for the quality supplement, this will be added to your base rate. Deprivation supplements will be an additional payment made by KCC's Finance Team.*

Funded Weeks

In line with the Kent Provider Agreement, providers can offer a non-stretched or stretched pattern or both. However, where providers are unable to open for the 38 weeks and this has been agreed with KCC, the provider must ensure that parents are made aware prior to taking up their place that they will not be able to access their full free entitlement with them.

Funding over 38 weeks - Non-Stretched

up to 15 hours per week

Autumn 2025	14 weeks	210 hours
Spring 2026	11 weeks	165 hours
Summer 2026	13 weeks	195 hours

Funding over 48 weeks - Stretched

up to 12 hours per week

Autumn 2025	16 weeks	192 hours
Spring 2026	14 weeks	168 hours
Summer 2026	18 weeks	216 hours

Settings offering Stretched funding

In the case of a parent taking up the 'stretched' offer, they must be made aware that they may exceed their free early education and childcare hours. Please be aware that the choice of whether to stretch the funding is up to each Provider and is not obligatory.

Please note: Management Information will deduct/cap any overclaimed hours in the final term of the child's funding year.

Free Early Education and Childcare claims can only be submitted under a 38 week or 48 week pattern. If you wish to deliver the funding entitlements outside of these options, please refer to the stretched funding calculator, child tracker and sample calendars on KELSI to ensure you claim the correct number of funded hours.

Submitting Funding Claims

All Free Early Education and Childcare claims* are submitted to Management Information via the Synergy FIS Provider Portal and follow an estimate and actual attendance / headcount collection process. Providers **must** have a signed Parental Declaration Form before submitting any claims. Any new children starting after the headcount submission window (who have not attended another Kent provision in that funding period) or amendments to claims can be submitted via the adjustment tab in the provider portal and will be paid in line with the payment windows specified.

**Disability Access Fund (DAF) does not follow this process and is not completed within the Synergy FIS Provider Portal. The application can be found on KELSI - [Claiming EYPP and DAF - KELSI](#). Payment for eligible children will be made in line with the set payment dates on pages 3&4.*

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Free For Two Funding

Free For Two Funding is for the most disadvantaged two year olds in Kent. Estimate and actual attendance should be based on KCC confirmed eligible children only. Children can start at any point during a term and claims **can** be submitted to increase funded hours throughout the term.

3&4 Year Old Universal Funding and the Working Parent Entitlement for 9 months- 4 years

A headcount claim should only be submitted for those children who are accessing their **full** funded hours during the designated headcount week. Funding is based on one claim, per term, per child for these entitlements. Universal hours and the Working Parent Entitlement hours **cannot** be increased after headcount week. If a parent wishes to increase their hours, they will need to wait until the following term or pay for the additional hours.

Designated Headcount Weeks:

Autumn 2025: Monday 8 September – Friday 12 September 2025

Spring 2026: Monday 12 January – Friday 16 January 2026

Summer 2026: Monday 27 April – Friday 1 May 2026

EYPP

The early years pupil premium (EYPP) is additional funding for early years providers to improve outcomes for children by providing them with enhanced learning and development support. This is available for some children from low-income families and children who are looked after or who have left care under certain circumstances. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is only payable on the first 15 funded hours a week that the child is receiving for the term across all the entitlements.

Providers must add the parent details from the Parental Declaration Form onto the child's funding claim in the provider portal and tick the EYPP consent box to allow KCC to complete an EYPP check on all children, EYPP will then be added to the child's claim for the term. If a child meets the non-economic criteria, then providers can follow the application process on KESLI - [Claiming EYPP and DAF - KESLI](#).

Submission Windows and Payment Dates:

Autumn 2025

Submission Type	Claims to be submitted on the Synergy provider portal:	Payments will be made week commencing:
Estimate	26 June - 8 July 2025	1 September 2025
Actual Attendance / Headcount	1 September - 16 September 2025	27 October 2025
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	17 September - 7 November 2025	24 November 2025
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	8 November - 5 December 2025	22 December 2025

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Spring 2026

Submission Type	Claims to be submitted on the Synergy provider portal:	Payments will be made week commencing:
Estimate	14 November - 25 November 2025	5 January 2026
Actual Attendance / Headcount	2 January - 20 January 2026	23 February 2026
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	21 January – 6 March 2026	23 March 2026
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	7 March – 3 April 2026	20 April 2026

Summer 2026

Submission Type	Claims to be submitted on the Synergy provider portal:	Payments will be made week commencing:
Estimate	6 March – 17 March 2026	20 April 2026
Actual Attendance / Headcount	20 April – 5 May 2026	15 June 2026
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	6 May - 26 June 2026	13 July 2026
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	27 June - 17 July 2026	3 August 2026
Late Joiner / Adjustment claims	18 July - 14 August 2026	1 September 2026

Any adjustment to headcount claims for 3&4 year old universal funding and for working parent entitlement claims for 9 months- 4 year olds will be liable to an administration charge. Further details on charges can be found on KELSI - [Free Early Education - KELSI](#)

Early Years Census

The Early Years Census is how the local authority receives funding to pay providers for the year, so it is vital that **ALL** providers complete it. Census week will be 12 – 16 January 2026 and providers will have until 31 January 2026 to submit their return.

Failure to submit a census will result in your Spring term actual attendance/ headcount payment and any subsequent payments being placed on hold until it is received.

Compliance Visits

KCC, its agents or any person authorised by KCC, will carry out regular audits on all registered childcare providers to ensure compliance with the requirements of Free Early Education and Childcare funding. KCC, its agents or any person authorised by KCC, will also carry out checks as a result of a complaint or concern.