Little Me Nursery

Government Funded Childcare

Understanding Early Years Funding



At Little Me Nursery we aim to make Early Years Funding simple, transparent and fair for all families, while still offering the high-quality care, staffing and environment that young children need. We provide a calm and nurturing early years' experience that supports each child's development, curiosity and well-being.

Government early education funding can sometimes be confusing, so this guide explains how the funding works and how we apply it across the year.

Government funding is intended to support early education sessions only and is paid to the nursery by the local authority and not directly to parents. Funding covers the basic EYFS childcare but does not cover every element required to deliver the high-quality foundations for life that we believe children need. This guide also explains what is included in a typical day, and how our options are structured so you can make an informed choice for your family.

Government Funding Entitlements.

Depending on your child's age and your family circumstances, you may be eligible for up to 30 hours of funding per week.

Eligible children may receive one of the following funded entitlements:

Universal Funding.

All children aged 3-4 years are entitled to up to 15 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks of the year. Total annual hours: **570 Funded hours.**
Eligibility for this funding is automatic from the term following a child's 3rd birthday. Parents do not have to apply for it themselves, as it is done through the setting, with parents providing evidence of their child's age through a birth certificate.

Extended Funding.

Eligible working families may receive up to 30 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks of the year. Total of maximum annual hours available: **1140 funded hours.**

Working family extended funding (available from the funding period after the child turns nine months of age) requires an eligibility code obtained online. We recommend applying around three months before you wish to start using funding. The funding begins the term after approval and eligibility must usually be reconfirmed every three months in line with your validity start and end dates. Parents must apply for eligibility through the government childcare service and provide their valid eligibility code to the nursery. To check your eligibility and to apply, please follow this link: **https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker/**
Please share any eligibility codes with the nursery office as soon as you receive them so we can apply for your funding.

Parents are expected to ensure that their children are in attendance for all funded hours claimed. Any repeated patterns of non-attendance will be reviewed, and parents may be required to pay back the monetary value of hours not attended.

The FEEE (Free Early Education Entitlement) Funding that nurseries receive **does not cover the full cost of delivering high quality early education and care** and for this reason, many nurseries offer different contract options to allow families to choose what works best for them.



What we offer at Little Me Nursery:

We are open for 47 weeks of the year. Government funding is provided for 38 weeks of the year, in line with school terms. To support working families, from September 2026, we shall only be offering stretched funding, which is delivered across the full 47 weeks that we are open.
Stretching Government funding evenly helps to provide predictable costs and continuity of care. This approach helps children to maintain consistent routines and relationships with staff, which supports emotional security and learning. Spreading funding across the full opening pattern also makes budgeting easier for families and reduces abrupt changes to attendance across school terms.

Stretched Funding Calculations:

Funding type (up to):	**Weekly stretched hours:**
15 hours	12 hours per week (Equates to 564 per year)
30 hours	24 hours per week (Equates to 1128 per year)

Little Me Nursery operates a minimum attendance pattern of two full days per week.

Regular attendance helps children settle securely, form strong relationships with their key worker and their peers and supports them to benefit fully from the curriculum. Short, irregular patterns of attendance make it harder for children to build confidence and for staff to plan meaningful, progressive learning experiences.



- Little Me Nursery offers parents a choice between:

  Option 1: A Fully funded Early Education place

  or

  Option 2: An Enhanced Package, which includes all additional services.

Option 1- FEEE Fully Funded Sessions

Session	Session length	FEEE Hours claimed	Additional Charges
8:30am – 2:30pm	6 hours per day	6	None

Parents/Carers may choose a fully funded place, which means:

- Only the funded hours are used
- No additional charges apply

However, the rate we receive to provide fully funded places covers early years education only.

Items that are not included in a Fully Funded place and will need to be provided by the parent/carer * are:

- Meals and snacks
- Consumables
- Resources for Enhanced Activities that we provide over those described in the Early Years Statutory Framework.

* Please see Unwilling to Pay Policy and our Packed Lunch Policy.

Option 2: Enhanced Package

Session	Session length	FEEE Hours claimed	Additional charges
Flexible start time between 8am-9:30am. Drop off must be by 9:30am for final registration and ensure you use your full 6 hour funded session within the day	6 hours of funding. Use of the full day from 8am up to 5:30pm	6	£36 a day



Little Me Nursery offers an **Enhanced Package** costing £36 per day.
The **Enhanced Package** includes:

- Your 6 funded hours a day
- Costs of additional hours not covered by Local Authority Funding (3.5 hours per day)
- Flexibility to drop off and pick up any time between 8am and 5.30pm, ensuring that children are in attendance for the funded hours being claimed.
- Extended year-round availability
- Freshly prepared healthy meals and snacks, made by our wonderful cook and where possible sourced from local providers, such as Joseph Morris Butchers and Farndon Fields Farm shop.
- All nursery consumables: Spare nappies, wipes and suncream if they run out, toothbrush, toothpaste, personal care PPE, and the disposal thereof.
- Enhanced outdoor learning activities and resources
- Cooking and gardening activities
- Enriched art, creative and sensory activities and associated materials
- Nature learning experiences
- A tailored, paper Learning Journey, which is bound and can be kept for all time, when your child leaves us for school
- Seasonal activities, such as Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween and Christmas parties and all enhanced activities and gifts at these times.

Families choosing this option still receive their government funded hours but also benefit from the full nursery experience and additional provision, as Government funding is a valuable contribution, but it does not reflect the full cost of providing high quality early years education and care. The Enhanced Package enables us to support experienced and qualified staff with above and beyond further training, such as Early Years Degrees and extended courses. We maintain higher than statutory

ratios, provide a calm and well-resourced environment and deliver a rich curriculum that supports the whole child. These investments ensure children receive consistent, developmentally appropriate experiences that prepare them for school and life.

Absence and Holidays.

Funded hours are allocated across the year and therefore cannot be refunded for

- Child absence
- Family holidays
- Illness

This ensures staff ratios and nursery provision remain stable.
Your child must be in attendance throughout the full 6-hour funding period each day.

Funding can be shared between settings.

Parents can choose to use their funded hours:

- All at one Nursery
  or
- Split between two early years settings.

For example: a child with 30 hours funding (stretched to 24 hours) could attend Little Me Nursery for part of the week and another nursery or preschool for the remaining hours.
If you are using your funded hours with another nursery, or your child attends another setting, it is important that you let us know.