

Free Childcare Places for 2 Year Olds



What is the 2 year old entitlement?

From September 2013 there will be free childcare places for eligible families with a 2 year old who live within Tameside. You may be entitled to 15 hours of flexible early education for up to 38 weeks completely free of charge. The flexibility of the entitlement will depend on the childcare provider you choose and is subject to reasonable demands and the provider's ability to offer it. It can mean different hours over different days but you must commit to the same weekly pattern of hours for the term.

How does it work?

Free childcare places will be available to children of families who are in receipt of eligible benefits or if you have been referred by professionals for consideration of a place e.g. by your health visitor or via your local Children's Centre.

If my child is eligible when can they start receiving the free childcare entitlement?

Your child can start the term after their 2nd birthday. So:

A child born on or between:	Can access their free entitlement from:
1st April and 31st August	1st September (Autumn Term)
1st September and 31st December	1st January (Spring Term)
1st January and 31st March	1st April (Summer Term)

(Subject to availability)

Where can my child access their entitlement?

Your child can access the free entitlement from several childcare providers such as:

- Private Day Nurseries
- Pre-Schools and Playgroups
- Independent Schools
- Accredited Childminders

Providers must be registered with Ofsted AND included on the Tameside Directory of Providers to be able to offer the free entitlement. Not every provider in Tameside can offer the entitlement.

For more information visit www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/nurseryplaces

What are the benefits for my child?

Good quality early years childcare provides an opportunity for children to learn through play based activities to become more independent and develop their own identity. Research has shown it helps them acquire the skills they need to make good progress at school.

How do I get a place for my child?

If you are eligible you will be informed by letter to your home address during the term your child turns 2, the letter will explain more about how you can find a place and what you need to do.

As a parent/carer you can decide where you would like your child to go (subject to availability).

For more information about what is available in your area, or to find a place suitable for you, please contact:

Tameside Families Information Service (FIS)

Visit: www.tameside.gov.uk/surestart/childcare/2yearoldfunding

Email: fis@tameside.gov.uk

Tel: **0161 342 4260**

Places are subject to availability and you should contact the childcare provider of your choice as soon as possible in case there is a waiting list for places. Unlike school allocations, places are not guaranteed and will be offered on a first come first served basis.

How do I claim the free childcare entitlement?

When your child first accesses a place, you will be asked to show proof of your child's date of birth and the letter confirming your offer of a place. At the start of each term, your provider will ask you to sign a parental contract which is then sent to the Council and includes the following items:

- An agreed pattern of hours for the whole term
- Your confirmation that your child is not receiving more than 15 hours free entitlement per week, at any other provider within, or outside Tameside.



Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if my child attends a childcare provider for more than the 15 hours?

The 15 hours will be completely free and you should not be expected to pay anything for these. If your child has any additional hours or services, your provider may reduce your total fees by the 15 hours free entitlement.

Do I have to use all 15 hours?

No, your child can attend from 2.5 hours up to 15 hours per week, but remember, you cannot save them to use at any other time, for example, holiday periods.

How many hours can my child have in a day?

Your child can access a minimum of 2.5 hours per day. Some settings can offer the entitlement flexibly which means that your child could access the full 15 hours over 2-5 days. To discuss what times you would like your child to attend, please speak to the childcare provider of your choice.

What happens if I want my child to move to a different nursery part way through the term?

By signing the parental contract you are agreeing that your child will stay at that childcare provider for the whole term. This means you must check with your provider if you want to move your child.

What happens if I want my child to stay for lunch?

If your child stays at the setting over the lunch hour, this can be a part of the free entitlement. The provider may make a reasonable charge for the food or alternatively you may be given the option of giving your child a packed lunch. Your provider will discuss this with you.

What happens at the end of the placement?

All children are eligible for 15 hours of free early education per week from the term after their 3rd birthday. Families and childcare providers are advised to discuss plans for continuing the placement before the child's 3rd birthday.

For more information visit:

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