

Government Funded Hours Policy 2020/2021

Entitlement

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 universal funded hours per week during term time starting the term after their third birthday. Families wishing to claim funded hours will need to complete an Early Years Funding (EYF) Parental Declaration Form, which we can provide, confirming how many hours you wish for Alfresco to claim on your behalf and providing consent for your information to be passed to the appropriate authorities in order for the claim to be made.

You may be entitled to an additional 15 hours per week as part of the 30 hours extended offering in which case you are welcome to use those extended hours here at Alfresco. Visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to find out whether you can claim the extended 30 hours. If your claim for 30 hours funding is successful you will be provided with an 11 digit code which will need to be provided to us to confirm eligibility. These codes need to be renewed every three months and it is the family's responsibility to provide and renew the code.

Using Your Funded Hours

There are two ways funded hours can be used at Alfresco:

1) Over 38 weeks during term time. Pre-school term dates for this academic year are:

Autumn: 1st Sept – 16th Oct (7 weeks) 2nd Nov – 18th Dec (7 weeks)

Spring: 4th Jan – 12th Feb (6 weeks) 1st Mar – 1st Apr (5 weeks)

Summer: 19th Apr – 28th May (6 weeks) 7th Jun – 23rd Jul (7 weeks)

2) Spread over 52 weeks (same total number of hours but fewer hours per week).

Additional hours can be booked over and above your funded hours and these will be charged at our standard rates. Early drop off or late collection charges will be applied to all sessions as per our terms and conditions.

There are some limitations on claiming funded hours which are explained in the appendix.

Additional Services

Government funding is designed to cover the cost of providing early education and childcare but does not cover the additional services which we provide at Alfresco. The additional services relate to aspects of this setting which go over and above the funded early education and childcare offer, including freshly home-cooked meals and snacks; maintenance of the forest area and the extra training and insurance the forest provision requires; trips to local places of interest; and incidentals. As these optional additional services are not funded by the government, they need to be paid for by families if families choose to take them up.

The additional services we offer are charged at £1.70 per funded hour. We charge for additional services on an hourly basis as this enables us to continue to offer complete flexibility regarding hours booked. The alternative would be to restrict funding to set session times but we want to avoid this as we know how valuable flexibility is to families.

The additional services charge is optional, but we regret that if families opt not to pay the additional charge then their children will not be able to receive meals and snacks and may not be able to join

other activities. Families wishing to opt out of receiving additional services will need to confirm this in writing and speak to us about ensuring their children are provided with everything needed to attend.

Appendix: Limitations for claiming funded hours

Deadlines for changes

The system which nurseries and pre-schools use to claim their funding from the government is set up on a termly basis and there are only certain windows during which it is open for us to make new or amend existing claims. You are welcome to request changes in hours at any time and we will always do our best to accommodate you, but if the last window has passed for that term we may not be able to claim increased funding until the following term. It may be possible to make funding changes after the window has closed, but if the government is unable to provide increased funding then families will be liable for the full cost of any extra hours.

Carrying over entitlement

We are able to offer families the opportunity to spread funded hours throughout the year and can account for different numbers of hours per term or different hours during the holidays. However, it is not possible to exceed the maximum funded hours per week. For example, if you are entitled to claim 15 hours per week but only use 10 hours per week in the autumn term it is not possible to claim 20 hours per week in the spring term as this is more than your maximum of 15. You are still entitled to the unused hours from the autumn term, though, and they could be used during the holidays.

Multiple Settings

If you are claiming funding at more than one setting you will need to ensure that your combined claims do not exceed the maximum entitlement. A parental declaration form will need to be completed at each setting so it is clear how much funding is being claimed where and to avoid any over claims. We are entitled to continue claiming funding during a child's four week notice period even if they do not attend so this will need to be considered if you move setting and wish to set up a new claim elsewhere.