

GUIDANCE NOTES 2025

EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE FOR ELIGIBLE TWO YEAR OLDS

Your child may be eligible for a 2 year old place, from the term after their second birthday, if you receive one or more of the following qualifying benefits:

Eligibility criteria:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit (Earning threshold applies)
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit (Earning threshold applies)
- Support under Part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit Statement (Take home pay threshold applies)

OR if your child is:

- Looked after and accommodated
- Under a kinship care order
- Lives with a Parent Appointed Guardian
- Care experienced or has a parent who is care experienced
- A graduate from the Family Nurse Partnership Programme.

To allow us to confirm eligibility application parents/carers **MUST** provide the following information:

- Completed application form for eligible 2 year olds
- Proof of benefit received
- A copy of your current Council tax statement and a copy of the child's birth certificate
- Confirmation that your child is either: Looked after and accommodated, under a Kinship Care Order or staying with a parent appointed guardian
- Proof of support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 if applicable

APPLICATION / ELC ALLOCATION TIMELINE								
BIRTHDAY MONTH	APPLICATION MONTH / PROOF OF BENEFIT IN THE MONTH OF		ENTITLED INTAKE – NEW TERM	ELC ALLOCATIONS	RELEASE DATE TO PARENTS			
MARCH	FEBRUARY		AUGUST	5 – 6 AUGUST 2025	7 AUGUST 2025			
APRIL	MARCH							
MAY	APRIL							
JUNE	MAY							
JULY	JUNE	If applying at a term time establishment only: complete the application form in June and then submit proof in June or July direct to Education HQ						
AUGUST	JULY							
SEPTEMBER	AUGUST		JANUARY	2 – 3 DECEMBER 2025	4 DECEMBER 2025			
OCTOBER	SEPTEMBER							
NOVEMBER	OCTOBER							
DECEMBER	NOVEMBER							
JANUARY	DECEMBER		APRIL	10 – 11 MARCH 2026	12 MARCH 2026			
FEBRUARY	JANUARY							

APPLICATION FORM	
Application forms are only available from Local Authority / Approved Childminder or Approved PVI provider Applications Forms must be submitted to the first-choice provider.	
COMPLETING MANDATORY SECTION IN ELC APPLICATION FORM	
1a	This section must be fully completed to register your child. You must produce proof of your child's date of birth in the form of a birth certificate and proof of your residing address. We will only accept - council tax bill / tenancy agreement or lawyer letter with a completion of house purchase - Forms will not be accepted if this proof is not produced at the time of submitting the form – Arrangements in place for childcare purposes, cannot be taken as a child's residing address
1b	Family details – This information must reflect any parent named on your child's birth certificate and must be completed. Please ensure you have up to date information and an email address is stated – You will receive your ELC offer to your email address.
1c	All information relating to your child's health must be completed and brought to the attention of the provider. Doctor and Health Visitor details must be completed, or the application form will not be accepted.
1d	Please state any professional agency involved with the child or family
2	Please complete fully and state the qualify benefit / criteria – proof of the evidence must be submitted.
3	You must indicate at least 3 choices in priority order of establishment and model of attendance. This can at a Local authority establishment / Approved Funded Provider Childminder or Approved Funded provider Private / Voluntary or Independent Nursery or across 2 providers this would be a blended or split place. Please note, we will always aim to ensure preferred choices are allocated, however, there is no guarantee of this. Applicants may find that the preferred establishment / operating model is full. In this situation, in ensuring the authority meets its statutory duty, an alternative place will be offered that is not stated on the application form submitted. Every attempt will be made to offer a suitable place within the Early Learning and Childcare defined area, however, this is not guaranteed.
4	Please initial each individual box that you have read and understood requirements / information before submitting the application form – If you do not understand or require further information, please contact the provider where they will be able to assist you. By signing the form, you are indicating that the information you have submitted is correct and that any false information given will put at risk any ELC place offered. agree to inform the provider of any changes to my circumstances as this may also affect any place offered.

PLEASE NOTE securing a place for your 2 year old child does not have any bearing on your child's 3-5 statutory funded place.

You will need to submit a 3-5 childcare application within the admissions timeline and guidance to your first choice nursery.