

Working Parent Family Entitlement – Funding and Requirements for Eligibility

Suffolk County Council (SCC) Statement

The Early Years & Childcare service at SCC can only fund places where the eligibility codes meet the parameters for funded places set by the Department for Education, and where the child is of eligible age. This means from the term after they turn 9 months old, with terms officially commencing on 01 January, 01 April & 01 September. We work to the operational guidance for Local Authorities and providers. The pertinent sections in relation to expanded/extended hours codes are:

When Parents can Claim and Start a 30 Hour Place (this guidance also applies to 15 hours for children aged 9 months to 2 years old)

Parents should be encouraged to apply the term before their child turns three to ensure they can access a place when they want it. If they do not receive a code before the deadline, they will need to wait until the following term to access their 30 hours place. Parents can apply up to 31 days before taking up or returning to work. The earliest a parent could receive a 30 hours code for their child is 16 weeks before they turn three. If a parent applies before this point, they will only be able to apply for Tax-Free Childcare.

Local authorities are not expected to secure the additional free hours where the parent has applied after the 31st August, 31st December or 31st March.

Please note: Parents can be issued with an eligibility code before their child is of an eligible age (applications can be made for 15 hours when a child is 23 weeks old). The earliest a family can use their code is the term after their child turns 9 months old.

In summary:

To access a funded place the family must have a valid code and the child must be of eligible age.

The full details can be found in the operational guidance:

[Early years entitlements: operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Please note: We are aware some parents are advised by HMRC that SCC has a discretionary fund available to pay for 30 hours places applied for after the deadline. This is not the case. SCC does not receive funding from the government to pay for discretionary places when deadlines have been missed.