

# Discover **if you qualify for free childcare**

## **New eligibility criteria from April 2014**

The Free Entitlement (FE) for 2 year olds scheme is funded by the Government to offer free, quality, flexible early education and care for eligible 2 year olds in West Sussex. The current scheme has expanded to allow **40%** of all two year old children across West Sussex to take up free early education and care.

### **What does the funding pay for?**

The funding pays for 570 hours per year of flexible early education and care. This is for a maximum of 15 hours per week over a minimum of 38 weeks per year.

Your child will be able to go to a pre-school, nursery or FE Childminder who are authorised to offer free places.

### **What are the benefits?**

Research shows that attending good quality early education and care can make a difference for young children. It can improve a child's learning and development, help equip children with the skills needed for when they go to school, and support them to do well in the longer term.

### **Am I eligible?**

Families need to meet certain criteria in order to apply for the Free Entitlement for 2 year olds.

You may be able to claim Free Entitlement for 2 year olds if your child is of eligible age **and** the parent/carer is also in receipt of one of the eligible benefits (please see over).

### **Eligibility criteria:**

- Child is of eligible age

<b>An eligible child born on or between:</b>	<b>Can apply online from:</b>	<b>...to access a free place at the start of the term beginning on or after:</b>
1 April and 31 August	1 April	September, following their second birthday
1 September and 31 December	1 September	January, following their second birthday
1 January and 31 March	1 January	April, following their second birthday



➤ Child is of eligible age **and** you are in receipt of **one** of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit (and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)\*



or

- they are a Child Looked After (where West Sussex County Council acts as the corporate parent)
- the child is adopted\*
- the child has a Special Guardianship Order\*
- the child has a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan
- the child has special educational needs or a disability (SEND). These children are eligible if the child:
  - receives Disability Living Allowance\*
  - has a current statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHPC).\*
  - is known to the Early Years PARM

\*You will need to provide evidence when you apply.

### **How do I apply?**

Apply online by visiting our website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/freechildcare](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/freechildcare)

Guidance notes on how to complete the online application form are also available on this web page under supporting documents.

If you need further assistance, please:

- Contact the Family Information Service on 01243 777807 or email [family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk) or
- Visit your local Children and Family Centre who will be able to assist you. To find out where your local Children and Family Centre is, visit <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/cfc>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Coverwell".

**Julie Coverwell**  
**Adviser**  
**Early Childhood Service**

