

## Free Childcare for 2 Year Olds

Early learning is good for children. Its fun, safe and can help with children's talking and listening skills. Your child may be eligible for free childcare of up to 15 hours per week, for 38 weeks of the year (or an equivalent amount) from the term after their 2nd birthday.

### Who is eligible?

To receive the free entitlement for 2 year olds the child must be in a family who receive one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child tax credit (without working tax credit) and an annual income below £16,190
- Guaranteed element of pension credit
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit and have annual gross earnings of £16,190 or less
- The child has a current statement of Special Educational Needs or an education, health and care plan
- The child receives Disability Living Allowance
- The child is looked after by the Local Authority or has left care through special guardianship or through an adoption or residence order

### When will my child be eligible?

#### 2nd birthday between

1 April - 31 August

1 September - 31 December

1 January - 31 March

#### Becomes eligible from

Start of Autumn Term

Start of Spring Term

Start of Summer Term

### How can I apply for a place on this scheme?

You can apply using any of the following options:

- Apply online at [www.torbay.gov.uk/childcare2yo](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/childcare2yo)
- Complete an application form (attached) and send it to the Early Years, Childcare and Advisory Service at the address given at the bottom of the application form

### Where can my child receive this free entitlement?

There are a large number of settings providing this service within Torbay. You can use any Ofsted registered childcare setting that is judged to be good or outstanding. This could be at a day nursery, school nursery registered to care for 2 year olds, a pre-school, or with a childminder.

All providers receiving funding through this scheme are registered with Torbay Council and are regularly inspected by Ofsted to ensure they meet the required standards of childcare. All providers will make their latest Ofsted report available on request or you can view them at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report) .

For more information about childcare in your area visit: [www.torbaydirectory.com/family](http://www.torbaydirectory.com/family)  or call Torbay's Family Information Service on 0800 3285974.

## Can I use the free hours whenever I want?

The hours/sessions you can book and how flexible these can be will depend on what your chosen childcare provider offers. You will normally be asked to commit to the same weekly pattern of hours for each term with any alterations in these hours needing to be agreed with your childcare provider.

Although we encourage settings to provide the free hours in a flexible manner, you will still need to take the hours within the sessions offered by your childcare provider.

Your childcare provider may also offer you the choice of attending during term times only (15 hours over 38 weeks of the year) or throughout the year (11 hours per week over the full year).

## Do I need to pay for anything at my childcare provider?

Your child's first 15 hours of childcare each week will be free but anything above this will need to be paid for at whatever the normal rates charged by the provider are.

You may also be charged for any additional services you use, for example hot lunches that are considered over and above the 'normal' nursery day. However, you should not have to take any of these additional services in order to receive your free hours.

**Example:** If your child attends a session of three hours (that is part of your free 15 hours) and the children go for a swimming lesson that costs £5 in that time, you can be charged for the swimming lesson if you want your child to attend. However, your child should not have to attend this swimming lesson (and incur the cost) as a condition of them receiving their free hours and there should be a free alternative available which allows your child to attend the session without this cost.

## What hours can I take free?

Within the sessions your childcare provider offers, any hours between 7am and 7pm are potentially free. The first 15 hours your child attends each week (between the hours of 7am and 7pm) at the childcare provider will be the free ones.

The minimum a child can claim free in one day is 2½ hours and the maximum 10 hours.

## My child attends two different childcare providers where will I receive my free hours?

It will be up to you how many free hours your child receives at which setting. You will need to complete a Parental Declaration Form at both settings stating how you want to use your free hours. The childcare provider will then be able to calculate any fees you may owe for any childcare you use over and above the free hours you take at their setting. In total over the two settings you will still only be able to receive a maximum of 15 hours per week.

## More information

If you have any questions about this scheme or need help in finding childcare, please feel free to contact Torbay's Family Information Service on 0800 328 5974.

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## Contact

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