



JULY 2024

RBWM AfC Early Years Contact Details

Name	Job Title	Contact for	Tel No.	Email address
Clive Haines	Deputy Director for Education	Safeguarding General support	07825 862200	clive.haines@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Catherine Doyle	Early Years Development Officer – Two Year Old Funding	Two Year Old Funding Advice regarding EYFS & Environment support (with specific regard to the 2 year olds)	01628 685959 or 07824 623614	catherine.doyle@achievingforchildren.org.uk 2yearoldfunding.rbwm@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Charmagne Niles	Early Years Funding Officer	All Early Years Funding & General Enquiries	07792 327949	charmagne.niles@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Nicola Jordan	Early Years Funding Officer	All Early Years Funding & General Enquiries	07545 650457	nicola.jordan@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Sarah Cottle	Early Years Advisor	Advice regarding EYFS. Environment support. Training. General staffing enquiries. Moderation. Safeguarding.	01628 520002 01753 865351 01628 623551	sarahcottle@eyfed.org.uk sarah.cottle@achievingforchildren.org.uk

**We thank all providers for your hard work and support over the last academic year. We hope you all have a lovely summer and manage to have a good rest. Take care. With best wishes,
The Early Years Team**

Early Education Funding

Early Education Funding Important Dates

Autumn 2024

Term time funding maximum 14 weeks

Age-eligible children -

Turning 9 Months by or on 31/08/24

DOB: 2 Year Olds - 01/09/21 - 31/08/22 DOB: 3 & 4 year olds 01/09/19 - 31/08/21

Headcount Date - Thursday 05 October 2024

The date from which you can submit estimate claims this term - 15 July 2024

Latest date to submit funding claim for estimated 75% payment to be paid on time - 24 July 2024

Estimate Payment Due (75%) - By w/e 06 September 2024

25% paid by end September, October & November for monthly

Latest date to submit actual claim for final payment - 08 November 2024

Actual (Final) Payment Due - By w/e 29 November 2024

If paid monthly, final payment by end of December

Spring 2025

Term time funding maximum 12 weeks

Age-eligible children -

Turning 9 Months by or on 31/12/24

DOB: 2 year olds - 01/01/22 - 31/12/22 DOB: 3 & 4 year olds 01/01/20 - 31/12/21

Headcount Date - Thursday 16 January 2025

The date from which you can submit estimate claims this term - 02 December 2024

Latest date to submit funding claim for estimated 75% payment to be paid on time - 11 December 2024

Estimate Payment Due (75%) - By w/e 10 January 2025

25% paid by end January, February & March for monthly

Latest date to submit actual claim for final payment - 28 February 2025

Actual (Final) Payment Due - By w/e 21 March 2025

If paid monthly, final payment by end of April

W/e = week ending. Please note it is aimed for payments to be cleared funds in your account by the end of the week in which the relevant payment date is given.

From the autumn term 2024 there will be 2 different methods of funding payments –

1. Twice termly as is currently the case.
2. Monthly for those providers who have opted for this method.

All providers will still submit claims twice per term - Estimates and Actuals.

As previously advised, please see below for the monthly payments system –

Spring

Jan (25% of estimate) - Feb (25% of estimate) - Mar (25% of estimate)

April (additional 25% plus or minus any changes that have been made on the portal)

Summer

May (25% of estimate) - Jun (25% of estimate) - Jul (25% of estimate)

August (additional 25% plus or minus any changes that have been made on the portal)

Autumn

Sept (25% of estimate) - Oct (25% of estimate) - Nov (25% of estimate)

Dec (additional 25% plus or minus any changes that have been made on the portal)

Providers would submit estimated hours claims (as is done now). We would process payments for the first 3 months based on the estimated hours claims submitted, and providers will receive payment by the end of each month. Children's details are then uploaded via the Actuals by the end of the week after the half term holiday (as is done now), and the final payment for the term is then made accordingly by the end of the final (4th) month.

The percentage split for payments on Synergy has to be the same for all payment options, so as the monthly payments option is 75% (3 x 25%) based on Estimates and 25% based on the Actuals, the twice termly payments option from the autumn term will be 75% initial payment and 25% final payment.

If you have not opted for monthly payments from the autumn term, you will receive funding payments twice per term.

Eligibility Codes - The Working Parents Entitlement

The deadline for applying for Eligibility Codes for the Working Parents Entitlement (Under 2s, 2 Year Olds and 3&4 Year Olds) is 31st August for codes to be valid and accepted for the autumn term.

The deadline for applying for codes to be valid for the spring term is 31st December.

Please signpost parents to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk - there is also information there about Tax-Free Childcare and other help and support with childcare costs. Please use the resources for providers at -

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers/guidance-and-resources/>

Kindly remind parents to revalidate their codes by the valid-to date of the code.

Any codes with a Grace Period end date of 31st August must be revalidated before that date if parents wish to access the Working Parents Entitlement in the autumn term.

PLEASE do not offer any Working Parents Entitlement hours for a term UNLESS parents have a valid Eligibility Code for the relevant term, and you have checked that the code is valid for the relevant term.

If a child is eligible for the 'Disadvantaged' 2 Year Old Funding, they must have a letter of confirmation from RBWM AfC - we do not issue codes or reference numbers for 2 Year Old Funded children.

No code is needed for the 3 & 4 Year Old 15 hours Universal Entitlement. All 3 & 4 Year Old children are automatically eligible for this from the start of the term after the term in which they turn 3. All Eligibility Codes can be checked on the Eligibility Checker on Synergy - but PLEASE check the dates of the code carefully, that the code is valid for the specific term in which the funding is being claimed. Please complete the mandatory fields (code, child's DOB and the NI number of the parent who applied for the code) only and tick the 'consent to check' box. If you enter any more details, then you will receive the error message 'Submission failed'.

Message from the DfE - Childcare when a child becomes 3 years old

We have been made aware of the large number of questions from parents of 2-year-olds about what happens when their child turns 3.

Children are able to access the universal 15 hours from the term after the child's third birthday through to when they start school.

If the child is accessing the 15 hours entitlement for working parents of 2-year-olds and the parent remains eligible, the parent will automatically be moved onto 30 hours (Universal 15 hours + 15 hours for working parents) from the term after the child turns 3. They just need to keep reconfirming their code as normal and it will become usable to claim the 3 & 4 Year Old entitlement for working parents (the actual code remains the same).

If the child is accessing the early education and childcare entitlement for families of 2-year-olds who receive certain benefits through their local authority, then they will be able to access the universal entitlement from the term after the child turns 3, which means in practice that they will continue to receive 15 hours of childcare.

Can we please remind you of the following -

Every provider must hold a completed RBWM AfC Parent Declaration Form for every funded child at their setting. The forms must be completed fully and accurately, and both parents (if applicable) and the provider must sign the declaration. Proof of a child's date of birth must be seen and recorded. Please ensure you are using the most up-to-date form, which has 5 pages.

Please note: If more than one provider claims funded hours for a child then the following process will be followed -

- AfC early years team will contact both providers to inform them there has been a duplicate claim for the funding and will request to see copies of the Parent Declaration Forms.
- If no Parent Declaration Form is submitted within one week of the request the funding will be withdrawn for that child.
- If the Parent Declaration Form does not clearly state the hours and type (universal/extended) of funding for your claim then funding will also be withdrawn.
- If both settings produce valid Parent Declaration Forms, then the funding will be allocated to the provider with whom the form was signed first, unless the parent can evidence that they gave the agreed notice, subject to a maximum of 1 month.
- If a duplicate funding claim is not resolved within one week of the portal close date then funding will be withdrawn from both providers until the matter is resolved. This is to avoid any unnecessary delay in payments.
- Invoices/ statements to parents must be clear and transparent, and give a detailed breakdown of funded hours (if applicable) and all charges made and what they relate to - funded hours must be shown as a nil charge (no monetary value should be shown)
- It is a good idea to provide parents with as much information as possible regarding EEF and fees/ charges PRIOR to a child starting at your setting. Also, we would strongly advise that providers ask parents to sign a contract before a child starts at a setting, clearly setting out terms and conditions of the child's place
- If parents have any problems or queries relating to their Eligibility codes, they must contact the Childcare Service Helpline on 0300 123 4097 - the Early Years Team cannot help parents if they are having any problems applying for or revalidating codes

DAF & EYPP

Please remember that DAF and EYPP eligibility is extended to eligible children accessing the following entitlements -

- the universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds
- the 15 hours entitlement for 2 year olds if parents are receiving specific benefits
- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible 2 year old children under the working parents entitlement
- from the autumn term 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 2 years

For EYPP eligibility, families must also meet the eligibility criteria - please refer to -

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/early-education-funding-for-2-3-and-4-year-olds/early-years-pupil-premium>

For DAF eligibility, children must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and a current and valid DLA award letter must be provided. Please refer to -

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/early-education-funding-for-2-3-and-4-year-olds/disability-access-fund>

Provider Business Support Tools

A lot seems to be happening now within Early Years with the Expanded Entitlements Funding. To help providers plan for the expanded entitlements, please refer to the link below for the RBWM AfC Business Support Tools & Important Information to Support Providers Business Planning.

We hope that your setting may find some of the business support tools presented and other additional information will be useful and helpful in going forward with the new expanded Early Years Funding Entitlements. Some of you may already be aware of /use these tools already, if not, we hope you will find them useful in planning the future of your business.

More information and support can be found on the Childcare Works HUB for Providers website. The HUB is a bank of resources available to Local Authorities and childcare Providers implementing the childcare expansion programme. Here you will find a comprehensive library of the resources developed to support the roll-out of the early years and wraparound childcare expansion project.

- Childcare Works website: Supporting Local Authorities and Providers to deliver the early years entitlements expansion and wraparound childcare programme.

<https://childcareworks.org.uk/hub-for-providers/introduction/>

- Early Years:

<https://childcareworks.org.uk/hub-for-providers/hub-early-years/>

- Wraparound Childcare:

<https://childcareworks.org.uk/hub-for-providers/hub-wraparound-childcare/>

There are also other useful links on the 'Signposting' page.

The RBWM AfC Business Support Tools & Important Information to Support Providers Business Planning can be found at -

<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/early-education-funding-useful-information-for-pro/>

Sufficiency on the Synergy Provider Portal

Dear Providers,

With the new expanded entitlements being rolled out by the government for eligible working parents of 2 year olds and under 2 year olds, to support the LA in their statutory duty to ensure sufficient early years and childcare places, can you kindly complete the Sufficiency Section on Synergy, indicating the number of places you offer across each age range and the number of vacancies you hold for each age range.

This information will be collected on a termly basis and will only be used to inform the LA and the DfE should they ask for monitoring purposes.

The data provided will not be made directly available to families but may be used to give an indication of the level of availability in the local area.

Please refer to Charmagne's recent email which has instructions on how to complete the Sufficiency section in Synergy. The term to complete the Sufficiency for will be Summer Term 2024. This task should take no more than about 10 - 15 minutes to complete. Many thanks for helping us to continue to provide sufficient funded early years education and childcare places for families within this borough.

Many thanks,

Charmagne and Nicola

2 Year Old Funding

Thank you to those of you who have supported our funded 2 year olds this term.

Earlier on this year, we sent out a poster to promote the funding, along with one advertising other Government childcare support for families. Please can you ensure these are on display to show the families that you offer funded places.

To help us to ensure that all eligible families can access a place, please let us know if you do not already offer the funding and would like to, or if you have any current vacancies for funded children from 2 years old.

Don't forget to ensure your progress checks for 2 year olds are in place. If you would like any support around this, or other aspects of your provision for 2 year olds, please contact me.

Many thanks,

Catherine

If you have any queries regarding the 2 year old funding, please contact us at:

2yearoldfunding.rbwm@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Employers For Childcare

Our Family Benefits Advice Service provides advice and guidance to parents, employers and childcare providers. This includes advising on the latest developments in relation to childcare support, carrying out personalised 'better off' calculations and sharing up-to-date information on issues such as employment rights for parents. Our charity also carries out research into childcare issues and lobbies Government at all levels across the UK.

Website: <https://www.employersforchildcare.org/about-us/>

Email: hello@employersforchildcare.org

Telephone: 028 9267 8200

Tax Free Childcare Scheme

One of the options for additional childcare support is the Tax-Free Childcare Scheme. Eligible parents who sign up for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme open an online childcare account which they use to pay you directly for childcare. Payments work just as they do through an online bank account. Each payment is accompanied by a reference number for each child so you can identify their payments. For providers who have not signed up for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme, if you're an approved or registered childcare provider, you can sign up to get a childcare provider account. This allows you to set up your bank account details and receive payments from parents who use Tax-Free Childcare. After you sign up, you'll get a childcare provider account which you can use to keep your details up to date, allowing parents who use Tax-Free Childcare to pay you.

Financial support is not limited to just Nurseries, Pre-Schools and Childminders. Depending on eligibility criteria, this support could also be used for breakfast clubs; after-schools clubs; activity clubs; holiday clubs; and play schemes.

By joining up to the Tax-Free Childcare scheme, this would support working families with their childcare costs by enabling them to buy additional childcare and education hours which in turn could support your business.

For more details, kindly go to the following link-

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/guidance-and-resources/information-childcare-providers>

You can find a range of communications tools to help you promote the Working Parents Entitlement and Tax-Free Childcare which includes useful email templates, leaflets, posters and social media content.

Please remind parents about Tax-Free Childcare. There are a lot of parents who would be eligible for the scheme who are not signing up for it. Information for parents can be found at -

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/how-use-tax-free-childcare>

Useful up-to-date information regarding EEF for Early Years Providers in our Local Authority can be found at -

<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/early-education-funding-useful-information-for-pro/>

Early Years Visits

Sarah Cottle (Co-Headteacher of Cookham, Maidenhead and The Lawns Nursery School Federation) and Catherine Doyle (Early Years Development Officer – Two Year Old Funding) visit Early Years settings. We prioritise providers who have not yet had an inspection (new providers or management teams), as well as those who are expecting an upcoming inspection. We will contact those providers directly, but if you feel you would like some support or have any queries, as always, please e-mail the early years inbox -

rbwm.earlyyears-childcare@achievingforchildren.org.uk and someone will come back to you.

This may be in the form of a phone call, email, virtual chat or face-to-face meeting. If we are unable to help, we will try and signpost you to someone who can.

As always, we would like to thank you all for the amazing hard work and support you offer the Borough's families.

Training and Network Meetings

Details of these events and how to book will be sent out separately.

Wednesday 2nd October – Childminder network event. (7- 8.45pm – Virtual event)
Cheryl Walker (Ofsted) will update childminders on Ofsted Inspections, discuss common misconceptions and answer questions.
Clive Haines and Sarah Cottle – Safeguarding Update.

Wednesday 9th October – Maths training with Nathan Crook. Nathan will be focusing on teaching number and pattern to children aged 2-5 years old.
4-6pm – Exploring Early Pattern – this session is for settings and PVI's
7-9pm – Number – this session is for childminders
Both sessions are face to face as they are practical sessions and will take place at The Lawns Nursery School, Windsor, SL4 3RU. Please note these sessions are FREE. There is no charge to attend.

Friday 11th October – New to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. This event will take place at Moor Hall.

Tuesday 12th November – Early Years Network Meeting/ Inclusion meeting – for setting leaders and SENCOs. Maidenhead Rowing Club 9.30am – 12 noon.

Keeping Children Safe in Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

The current Model Schools Safeguarding Policy that includes all the updates from Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSE) for 2024 can be found at -

<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/safeguarding/>

Please feel free to adapt this, if you wish for your provision, as the contents are relevant for all ages and stages.

The current safeguarding audit tool, which we recommend you complete and keep under regular review, can also be found at the same link.

Changes of Details at Providers

Please keep the Early Years Team informed of any important changes at your setting(s). This could include a change of manager and/ or ownership, and change of telephone number(s) and/ or email address(es). Changes at settings seem to happen very frequently, and it is very important that we are informed immediately, so that we have the correct details and we are directing queries to the correct person at the correct email address or telephone number.

If anyone leaves your setting, and they have a login to the Synergy Provider Portal, please inform us immediately - it is a Data Protection breach if someone who has left your setting still has access to the provider portal.

Please remember that you must immediately let Ofsted know of any changes to your registered provision.

Useful Links

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/>
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/early-education-funding-for-2-3-and-4-year-olds>
https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/childcare_providers
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/child-protection-information>
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/wraparound-childcare-programme>

<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/>
<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/early-years/>
<https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/topic/safeguarding>

https://live.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/AFC_RBWM/Synergy/providers

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs>
<https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-eif/early-years-inspection-handbook-for-ofsted-registered-provision-for-september-2023>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-qualifications-finder>
<https://www.ecctis.com/>

<https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/>
<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/>
<https://ndna.org.uk/>
<https://www.pacey.org.uk/>

Other useful contacts

RBWM AfC General Early Years Queries
rbwm.earlyyears-childcare@achievingforchildren.org.uk

RBWM AFC Two year old funding
2yearoldfunding.rbwm@achievingforchildren.org.uk

LADO – LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk Tel no. 07774 332675 or via the Single Point of Access (see below)

Single Point of Access (SPA) - mash@achievingforchildren.org.uk
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/child-protection-information/multi-agency-threshold-guidance>

Early Help - ehhub@achievingforchildren.org.uk Tel no. 01628 685976
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/child-protection-information/early-help-hub>

Educational Psychology Team (including queries regarding Inclusion Funding requests) - edpsych@achievingforchildren.org.uk Tel no. 07926 075218
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/educational-support-services/educational-psychology-service>

Family Hub Service – familyhubs@achievingforchildren.org.uk
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/family-hub-service>

Health Visitor Duty Line – health.visiting@achievingforchildren.org.uk Tel no. 0300 365 6523
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/health-visiting-service>

School Admissions School Support Services - rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk Tel no. 01628 683870)
<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/school-admissions>

Ofsted Helpline – enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Tel no. 0300 123 1231
<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-form>

HMRC Childcare Service Helpline - 0300 123 4097
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/childcare-service-helpline>