

Early Education Funding Scheme

Application form and guidance notes

for voluntary, private and independent sector providers including childminders and academies.

**Guidance Notes for Non-Maintained Providers Wishing to Join the Oxfordshire County Council Early Education Funding Scheme**

**Introduction**

1. The information set out in these notes relate to the following sectors:

* voluntary sector providers (pre-schools and playgroups)
* private sector providers (private day nurseries)
* independent schools
* childminders
* new academies and free schools

**The Process**

Below is the process to be followed to be set up to receive Early Education Funding

Step 1 You must be registered with Ofsted, a childminder agency or (for some independent schools) with the Secretary of State. For further information please visit [www.ofsted.gov.uk/](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/)

Step 2 Please make note of the below as this all forms the basis on which we administer the Early Education Funding in Oxfordshire:

1 – If you wish to offer funded hours you must agree to the [Early Education Funding terms and conditions](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/early-years-childcare-working-early-years/early_education_funding_scheme_terms_and_conditions.pdf). By applying to join the scheme you are accepting this contract and confirming that you comply with its terms. At each claim you will also sign a declaration.

2 - Please take time to have a look through the information on the free entitlement that can be accessed on Oxfordshire County Council’s webpage <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/early-education-funding-eef-2-3-and-4-year-olds>

3 - Funding is claimed by using an online portal, therefore, access to a private computer/tablet is necessary. This webpage is helpful as it has links to portal guidance <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/formsandguidance>

4 - Oxfordshire County Council uses ‘Egress Switch’ as its secure email solution when emailing personal and sensitive information. Switch also enables you to communicate securely back with the council. You will be required to set up a Switch account as part of joining process. <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/joining-and-leaving-early-education-funding-scheme>

Step 3 Complete the Application form below and send/email it in together with a copy of your Ofsted certification (if newly registered) or your childminder agency certificate. N.B. New schools and those converting to Academy status need not wait for Ofsted registration certificates before applying. Please email it to [earlyeducation@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyeducation@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Please note there are deadlines for receiving your application. If you wish to receiving funding in the:

Autumn term please return your application by 7th September.

Spring term please return your application by 7th January.

Summer term please return your application by 7th April.

(We will consider a late application if you have an enquiry for a funded disadvantaged two-year-old. Please call us to discuss on 01865 894811).

Step 4 1 - We will acknowledge your application and supply any follow up questions. If we approve your application, we will create your provider portal accounts and email you your user details.

2 - Log into the provider portal, please email us to confirm that you have successfully logged in.

3 - Forward your bank details via Egress. We can then set you up on our finance system. By sending this via Egress we can see that you have set an account up.

Step 5 We will then send a final confirmation to welcome you to the scheme.

**Please do not offer any free entitlement places until your application has been approved as they will not be paid.**

**Quality and Sufficiency**

The County Council recognises the need to ensure that all new provision approved under the scheme is of high quality. It is important that new providers joining the scheme are committed to the development of high-quality services for children and families.

Please note: An application to join the Scheme is unlikely to be approved by the County Council for participation in the Scheme if your provision / or you, as a childminder, have recently re-registered with Ofsted following an inadequate or requires improvement inspection judgement except where a school has undergone sponsored academization. Furthermore, approval of an application is not guaranteed if you are a new provider which has recently taken over a provision which has recently had an inadequate or requires improvement Ofsted judgement. The reason for this is that the County Council will have regard to recent history in determining the outcome of your application with the purpose that any provision appointed is of high quality.

If your setting receives an ‘inadequate’ Ofsted rating or a CMA has raised concerns about you as a childminder, you may be asked to leave the scheme. If you receive a ‘requires improvement’ you may have funding removed for those 2-year-olds on the disadvantaged criteria.

If a CMA has a second ineffective judgement and Ofsted raise concerns about their assessment of childminders, those childminders may be asked to leave the scheme.

There are 2 types of funding for two-year olds. It is not a universal offer and is based upon different specific criteria.

1. ‘Disadvantaged’ 2 Year Old Funding for families on certain benefits and other non-economic criteria: [https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/early-years-education/free-education-2-year-olds](file:///Y:\Access%20to%20Learning\Early%20Education%20Funding\Admin\Process%20notes\1%20EEF%20funding%20manual\1A%20Inbox%20and%20Post%20Rota%20Jan%2023.docx)
2. ‘Working Parents’ 2 Year Old Funding for families who are working and meet the government’s Childcare Choices criteria: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

The Government’s intention is that, as far as possible, early education for ‘disadvantaged’ two-year olds is delivered by providers who have achieved an overall rating of ‘outstanding’ or ‘good’ in their most recent Ofsted inspection report. Therefore, in Oxfordshire we would not automatically agree to fund ‘disadvantaged’ two-year olds in a provision that had an Ofsted ‘requires improvement’ at their last inspection or, if registered with a childminder agency, the agency has indicated the provision is not of the appropriate quality. Please specify on your form which age range you seek funding for and we will let you know when confirming your membership if ‘disadvantaged’ two-year olds can be funded. If you are newly registered with Ofsted you are likely to be eligible to accept funded ‘disadvantaged’ 2s, but this is subject to the above. Schools should have a formal age range of two years plus to claim funding for two-year-olds or for Community & VC schools may offer places under S27 Governors powers.

The funding is provided under the framework of the [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2) for local authorities and any further guidance issued from time to time.

These procedures only apply to eligible providers wishing to receive public funds for the early year’s education entitlement of two, three and four-year olds. If they are registered with Ofsted, either independently or as part of a Local Authority school (or, in the case of Independent Schools, with the DfE) or a childminder agency, providers may set up in business at any time to provide education and childcare for 0- to 5-year-olds on a fee-paying basis. If no public funds are being sought and the parents of these age groups are meeting the fees in full, then the provision falls outside the scope of these procedures and of this scheme.

Providers that have been granted an exemption to any elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage may be considered for funding under the scheme if the provider can show that the quality of care and education is in the best interests of the child.

**Please note the following regarding legal requirements on charging, and Oxfordshire’s scheme:**

1. You must ensure that parents have completed the parent declaration for the term before claiming funding. In cases where parents wish to split their child’s entitlement between two or more providers, parents must indicate how they wish to split funding on the declaration form. Where a parent wishes to split funding between a Local Authority maintained school and a PVI setting, the parent must first ensure the school is able to accommodate this request as, in general, most maintained nursery schools and classes will require the full entitlement to be taken with them and do not permit partial attendance.

2. You must work collaboratively with other early years providers locally and support local partnership activities.

3. The core entitlement of 570 hours a year (or 1140 hours if eligible for the 3&4YO working parent entitlement) must be provided free of charge. It is not acceptable to use the monetary value of the funding as a subsidy and charge parents top up fees as this would be a breach of the statutory requirement and the contract with OCC.

4. You may set charges for any additional services, and this is not a matter for the Council to determine. However, no charges or requirement to purchase additional services can be set as a condition of parents accessing a free entitlement place. Please ensure that any fees for additional services and invoices are clearly set out so that parents can see that they have received their free entitlement.

**Application for Registration within the Oxfordshire County Council’s Early Education Funding Scheme**

**ALL PARTS OF THE APPLICATIONMUST BE COMPLETED AND, IF INCOMPLETE, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL BUT WILL BE RETURNED**

*(For private, voluntary or independent early years providers, including childminders)*

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| **PART A: PROVIDER DETAILS** | | |
| Establishment Name: | | |
| Trading Name (if different from above): | | |
| Company/Charity number (if appropriate) | | |
| Establishment Address:  Telephone No:  Mobile No:  E-mail: | | |
| Registered address (if a company) and Company registration number. | | |
| Type of provider:  Voluntary / private / independent school / childminder / academy / other  *(Delete as appropriate)*  If ‘other’, please specify: | | |
| Have you applied (or do you intend to apply) for exemption from any part of the Early Years Foundation Stage? Delete as applicable: YES (Granted) / Intend to / NO | | |
| **PREVIOUS HISTORY** | | |
| 1 Have you previously owned or managed a provision either in or outside of Oxfordshire?  Yes / No (Delete as appropriate). If ‘Yes’, please answer the following. If ‘No’ go to question 2   1. Name of provision? 2. How long ago was this? 3. In what capacity? 4. What was the last Ofsted judgement? 5. Has the provision closed and why?   2 Have you acquired or “taken over” management of this provision from another provider at the same address?  Yes / No (Delete as appropriate). If ‘Yes’, please answer the following:  If ‘No’, go to question 3   1. Name of previous provider at this address 2. What was the Ofsted rating prior to take over? 3. How many staff do you employ from the previous provider?   3 Have you re-registered your existing provision with Ofsted?  Yes / No (Delete as appropriate). If ‘Yes’, please give date and reason. | | |
| **EARLY YEARS PROVIDER PORTAL** | | |
| Early Education Funding is claimed through the Early Years Provider Portal. For an account to be set up, please provide details of the main contact for the early education funding and details of anyone else that you would like to have access to the on-line claim forms and or payments information. Accounts must not be shared and each user should have their own user account with an email address unique to the individual user (i.e. the same email address cannot be used for more than one user). Please inform us immediately if any of your email addresses have changed or if access to the portal should be revoked (i.e. an employee leaves the organisation). You may have up to 5 registered users, but we suggest that you limit access to employees who are responsible for dealing with the funding forms.  **Are you happy for all your portal users to have access to the payment area within the portal?**  **Delete as necessary. Main Y/N User 1 Y/N User 2 Y/N** | | |
| Main Contact  Name and address:  Position:  Telephone No:  E-mail (must be unique): | Additional Portal Access User 1  Name:  Position:  Email address (must be unique): | |
| Additional Portal Access User 2  Name:  Position:  Email Address (must be unique): | |
| Which of these early education funding entitlements do you intend to offer (please cross all that apply):  ‘Disadvantaged’ funded 2- year- old places (up to 15 hours per week)  Working parent entitlement funded 2- year- old places (up to 15 hours per week)  Universal 3- and 4-year-old places (up to 15 hours per week)  Working parent entitlement funded 3- and 4-year-old places (up to 30 hours per week)  From September 2024:  Working parent entitlement for Under 2’s (term after the child’s 9 month birthday)- up to 15 hours per week – parents must apply for this entitlement through childcare choices.  If your setting is not yet open, or you are applying to start funding later please indicate opening/expected term for funding start date: | | |
| **PART B: REGISTRATION** | | |
| **If you are a voluntary or private sector provider or childminder**, please answer the following questions:  (a) Is your provision currently registered with Ofsted/ a Childminder Agency under the relevant section of the Children Act? **Yes / No** *(delete as appropriate)*  If no, please wait until you are registered by Ofsted/ a Childminder Agency before sending in this application. If **yes**, please complete the following:   1. Date of **first** registration\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (if newly registered please attach a copy of your registration certificate) 2. Ofsted/ Childminder Agency number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. If using a Childminder Agency please supply its name and contact details   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | |
| **If you are a new Academy or Free School**, please answer the following questions:   1. Please indicate if you are a school which is:  * Under construction Y/N   If yes what is the expected opening date? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   * Converting to an academy Y/N   If yes, what is the expected conversion date? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   1. If you have your new Ofsted number, please add it here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   Please note that we will check on the DFE ‘Get information about Schools’ database to ensure that Ofsted URNS match but appreciate that with conversions and new schools the URN may not yet be allocated when you apply to join the funding scheme.  **If you are an independent school**, please answer the following questions:  (a) Is the school finally registered with the Department for Education (DfE)?  **Yes / No** *(delete as appropriate)*  If no, please wait until you are finally registered with the DfE before sending in this application.  If yes, please attach copy of the letter from the DfE confirming final registration as an independent school.  (b) Additional information or comment: | | |
| **PART C: PLANNED PLACES** | |
| How many funded places do you intend to offer:  3- and 4-year-olds up to 15 (universal) funded hours: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  3- and 4-year-olds up to 30 working parent entitlement funded hours: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2YO ‘Disadvantaged’ up to 15 funded hours: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2YO up to 15 working parent entitlement funded hours: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  From September 2024:  Under 2’s working parent entitlement funded hours \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  If offering additional paid for places, how many will you offer:  0–2-year-olds: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  2-year-olds: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  3-year-olds: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  4-year-olds: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  5–7-year-olds: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  We appreciate the above is a snapshot in time from when you completed this application.  How many weeks are you open per year? If you plan to follow school term times this will be 38 weeks: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­\_  Will you offer a stretched entitlement? (i.e. fewer than 15/30 funded hours per week but spread over more than 38 weeks of the year):  YES / NO (delete as appropriate)  Please detail planned opening hours/days and session times:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |

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| **DECLARATION:**  On behalf of the Early Years provider named in Part A of this application, I apply for inclusion within Oxfordshire’s Early Education Funding scheme.  I, (**insert your name**) ……………………………………………. as [*Director / Company Secretary / Owner / Child-minder / Governor / Headteacher / Committee Chair / other][[1]](#footnote-1)* for and on behalf of the Nursery Setting (**insert name of nursery setting[[2]](#footnote-2)) ….…………………………...………**  confirm as follows:   1. I have authority to sign this declaration on behalf of the above nursery setting/school. 2. I have read the Early Education Funding Terms and Conditions published on OCC’s website at [Early Education Fund Terms and Conditions](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/early-years-childcare-working-early-years/early_education_funding_scheme_terms_and_conditions.pdf) and confirm that the provision meets all the requirements to be an Oxfordshire County Council “Approved Provider”; 3. I accept the Early Education Funding Terms and Conditions; and 4. The Early Years Education Funding will be utilised strictly in accordance with the Early Education Funding Terms and Conditions. 5. For childminders, I agree not to claim for my own children or those of any assistants employed by me, or for children related to me or to any assistants employed by me.   Signed\*: ………………………………….  Name: ……………………………………  Date: …………………………………….  **Data Protection Statement:**  The information provided on this form will be used by Oxfordshire County Council for the purpose of registration on the Early Education Funding Scheme and for administration and place planning purposes. This information may be shared with other departments within Oxfordshire County Council and the establishment address and telephone number will be published on Oxfordshire County Council provider lists and website at Oxfordshire’s Family Information Service (except for childminders operating on domestic premises when the Council will only publish limited address and contact details). |

1. **Delete which does not apply- if “other” please state on what basis authority is held and provide appropriate evidence annexed to this declaration.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **The legal name of the provision must be given and not the trading name**. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)