

Free Early Learning (FEL) benefits young children in their social development, learning and preparing for school. It also helps parents and carers access employment and training, so there are huge advantages to the whole family.

Our role is to make sure parents and carers are aware of their entitlement.

2 Year Old FEL:

Available if parents/carers receive Income Support, JSA or an income under £16,190
or the child has DLA, an SEN or EHC plan or is a Looked After Child.

Available from the term after the child's second birthday.

Available until the child qualifies for FEL as a 3 year old, even if the family's circumstances change.

Entitled to 570 hours a year, which can be taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of school term, or less hours a week for more weeks of the year.

Parents/carers should apply through the following ways:

- a) go on to the Citizen Portal and get a valid reference number: https://ems.sheffield.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/
- b) arrange with a local nursery/childminder to apply via the Provider Portal
- c) ask their local Children's Centre if they can help with the application

Following a successful application, the childcare provider will need the reference number to confirm the funded place.

FOR MORE DETAILS GO TO [THE SHEFFIELD DIRECTORY](#)

Universal 3&4 Year Old FEL:

Available to all children aged 3&4 until they start school.

Available from the term after the child's third birthday.

Entitled to 570 hours a year, which can be taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of school term, or less hours a week for more weeks of the year.

Parents/carers should contact their chosen nursery/childminder to arrange a place.

Extended 3&4 Year Old FEL (30 Hours):

Available to children aged 3&4 if their parents/carers qualify. Both parents or lone parent needs to earn 16 hours pay at minimum wage. Allowances are made for maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or if they're unable to work due to disability or caring responsibilities.

Available from the term after the application is approved by HMRC and the child has turned 3 as with the universal FEL.

Entitled to an additional 570 hours a year, making 1,140 is total which can be taken as 30 hours a week for 38 weeks of school term, or less hours a week for more weeks of the year.

Parents/carers should apply through HMRC on <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> to get a reference number to take to their nursery/childminder. The childcare provider will need the reference number to confirm the additional hours.

Parents should apply before the child turns 3 to ensure Government funding is available the following term.

FOR MORE DETAILS GO TO [THE SHEFFIELD DIRECTORY](#)