

EARLY YEARS ELIGIBILITY

THE EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT FOR 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS

All children are entitled to a free early years place at the start of the school term following their 3rd birthday. The school term dates are decided annually by the local authority and start from September until July.

In order for a child to become eligible for a free place from the following school term their birthday must fall on or between the dates shown in the table. The born on or between dates do not necessarily mirror actual school terms, particularly in the spring term when Easter dictates school term dates or in the summer term where schools are closed during August.



A child may access the Early Years Entitlement until the end of the school term in which they celebrate their 5th birthday. In reality, most children will be accessing a full time school place in a reception class before then.

A child born on or between	Will become eligible for a free place from	Number of free hours in school year
1 April to 31 August	September following their 3 rd birthday (Start of Autumn school term)	570 hours
1 September to 31 December	January following their 3 rd birthday (Start of Spring school term)	360 hours
1 January to 31 March	April following their 3 rd birthday (Start of Summer school term)	180 hours

WHAT IS A FREE PLACE?

All eligible children are entitled to 570 hours of free early year's provision per academic year. Providers will deliver a maximum of 15 hours per week over 38 weeks per year unless otherwise agreed.

WHAT IS FLEXIBILITY?

Providers are allowed to offer a minimum of 2.5 hours and a maximum of 6 hours of free early year's provision a day, between the hours of 8am and 6pm. Each provider will deliver their own model of Flexibility within these parameters.

SCHOOL TERM OFFER

The minimum offer that parents can expect to access is a standard school term time offer (over 38 weeks) of 3 hours a day over 5 days and the maximum is 6 hours over 2 days and a third day of 3 hours. In addition some early years providers will offer blocks of 4 and 5 hours. Each early year's provider can set the length and times of the free early year's places between the hours of 8am and 6pm. Early years

providers are encouraged to deliver the free early years places in a flexible way to better meet individual family's needs.

THE STRETCHED OFFER

A setting is required to complete a request to deliver the stretched offer which has to be approved by the Birth to Five Service. The stretched offer means a child could access 12 free hours per week for 47.5 weeks from the beginning of the autumn term, 12 free hours per week for 30 weeks from the beginning of the spring term or 12 free hours per week for 15 weeks from the beginning of the summer term. A child would attend in what normally would be school holiday periods. Each early years provider delivering the stretched offer is allowed to set their own weeks of delivery, they must include the core school term dates.

The Birth to Five Service EYE Team provides advice and support to parents and childcare providers to ensure the entitlements are delivered effectively in Lincolnshire. For further information please contact the Birth to Five Service EYE Team on 01522 552752 or view relevant website pages.

The Family Information Service holds a list of all Early Years Entitlement providers in Lincolnshire, please contact them on free phone number 0800 195 1635.