

Guidance for Parents at Atherton House School



Tax Free Childcare &
30 Hours Funded Places

2020/2021 Academic Year

What is Tax-Free Childcare?

Tax-Free Childcare is a government scheme to support working parents with childcare costs. The online service launched in April 2017 and is now fully rolled out to all eligible parents.

If eligible, you set up an online childcare account which you can use to pay your childcare provider directly. For every £8 you pay in, the government will pay in an extra £2.

You can get up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 for disabled children.

You can use Tax-Free Childcare to pay for:

- Registered childminders, nurseries and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and play schemes
- Home care workers working for a registered home care agency.

What are 30 Hour Funded Places?

Working parents of 3 and 4 year olds in England may be entitled to up to 30 hours of free childcare, for 38 weeks of the year (or fewer hours over more weeks). This is an additional 15 hours of funded childcare on top of the 15 hours universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in England.

Am I eligible for Tax-Free Childcare/30 hour funded places?

You will be eligible for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare if:

- Your child is under 12 years old, or your child is disabled and under 17 years old for Tax-Free Childcare.
- You may be able to claim 30 hours if your child is 3 or 4 and not taking up a state funded reception place. (30 hours is available in England only.)
- The child you're applying for usually lives with you – you don't have to be their parent.
- You live and work in the UK, unless you're a Crown servant or member of HM Armed Forces posted overseas.
- You, and any partner, are working, and each earning at least the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage for 16 hours a week – in 2020/21 this is £140 if you're over 25– but less than £100,000 a year each.
- If you're under 25 or an apprentice, you should expect to earn the equivalent of 16 hours, at the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage which applies to you.

You can still apply for Tax-Free childcare and 30 hours free childcare if you're:

- On paid sick leave.
- On paid ordinary or additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or getting Maternity Allowance, for another child.
- On paid shared parental leave.
- On paid annual leave.

You can also apply for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare if you're not working but expect to start a new job in the next 31 days.

You can't get Tax-Free Childcare and tax credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers at the same time. However, you can apply for 30 hours only, and still receive tax credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers.

The full eligibility criteria for 30 hours can be found on [GOV.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

FAQs

Is there a difference between the existing 15 hours universal entitlement and the additional 15 hours?

Yes. 30 hours is for working parents and you need to apply through the childcare service.

However, both the 15 hours and 30 hours must follow the same regulatory framework and there should be no difference between the standard of childcare provision.

I'm on childcare vouchers. How do I switch to Tax-Free Childcare?

First, you can find out which scheme best suits you by completing the Childcare Calculator on [Childcare Choices](#).

If you wish to switch from childcare vouchers to Tax-Free Childcare, you need to notify your employer, and send HMRC confirmation that you've stopped your vouchers within three months of successfully applying for Tax-Free Childcare.

The email you send your employer telling them you wish to stop using childcare vouchers can be used as confirmation.

You can continue to use any childcare vouchers already accrued prior to joining Tax-Free Childcare.

Can I still apply for childcare vouchers?

No, the scheme closed to new entrants in October 2018.

Parents who want to continue using childcare vouchers afterwards will be able to, as long as they stay with the same employer, their employer continues to offer vouchers, and they don't take an unpaid career break of longer than a year.

Applying

When can I apply for 30 hours funded childcare?

You can apply for 30 hours up to 16 weeks before your child turns three. It is recommended that you apply as soon as you are able to – don't leave it to the last few weeks as your application might require some extra checks. To ensure you get a code for the term after your child turns three, you must have applied by the end of the previous term.

How do I apply for Tax-Free Childcare/30 hours free childcare?

You can apply for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours via [Childcare Choices](#).

You, and your partner if you have one, will need your:

- National Insurance number(s)
- Details of one or more of the following – your UK Passport, tax credits, P60 or a recent pay slip.

In most cases, you'll be told straight away if your application is successful. In some cases, HMRC may need to do some additional checks to confirm whether you're eligible, so it's important to apply in good time. If you're found not to be eligible it will tell you why.

I don't have access to the internet. How do I apply?

If you need assistance or do not have access to the internet, you can call the childcare service helpline on 0300 123 4097 and apply over the phone.

I applied for 30 hours/Tax-Free Childcare and am ineligible. What other help can I get with my childcare costs?

All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for the universal 15 hours a week of free early learning. Childcare Choices has a [Childcare Calculator](#) where you can learn more about which government offers might be best for you, whether you are likely to be eligible and how to apply.

Using Tax-Free Childcare

How do I pay Atherton House using Tax-Free Childcare?

Once you've signed up, you need to add us to your childcare account by clicking on the 'Your Tax-Free Childcare account' link on your account homepage. You can pay us directly through your childcare account and can also set up a regular payment on the 1st of each month when our invoices are due.

When you pay money in, it will take 24 hours to clear before you can pay your us. Payments to Atherton House will take a further three days to arrive in our account. When you apply for Tax-Free Childcare, you'll be given a unique reference number for your child. You need to give this number to your us so that we can match your payments to your child. You can find this in your welcome pack by clicking the 'Secure messages' link on your account homepage.

Using 30 Hours Funded Places

What do I do once I've opened my childcare account?

Once you open your childcare account you'll see a screen called 'Your childcare service account'. From here you can:

- Find your 30 hours free childcare code, by clicking on the link '30 hours free childcare'. Codes usually start '500'.
- Use the 'Your Tax-Free Childcare account' link to pay money into your account, add a childcare provider, pay your provider or set up regular childcare payments.

Check your messages by clicking on the 'Secure messages' link. Your eligibility response will be in here, as will your Tax-Free Childcare payment reference number. You need to give this to Atherton House, to help them match your payments to your child.

When can my child access a 30 hours grant?

You can claim 30 hours from the term after:

- your child turns three, or
- the date you receive your eligibility code from HMRC.

Whichever date is later.

How do I take up a 30 hours grant with Atherton House?

Once you have an eligibility code you should take it, along with your national insurance number, to our manager to be checked and to reserve your place in good time. We must check your code before you take up your 30 hours place.

What can I expect to pay for using 30 hours?

Just like at school, Atherton House can charge for additional services and provisions provided over and above the 'basic' provision, for example, lunch, trips or music classes.

Can I split my entitlement between providers?

Yes, you can split the entitlement between multiple providers. However, you cannot use more than two sites in one day as we believe continuity of care is important for a child's learning, development and wellbeing.

How is my 30 hours spread over the 50 weeks Atherton House is open?

Like the existing grant, eligible parents are entitled to 30 hours a week in each of the 38 weeks of the academic year. However here at Atherton House we stretch this offer over 50 weeks of the year, equating to 22.8 hours per week. The equal spreading and thus the numbers of hours per week is based on when your child becomes eligible.

Eligible from	Autumn Term (14 weeks)	Spring Term (11 weeks)	Summer Term (13 weeks)	Total Funded Hours
September	30 x 14 = 420	30 x 11 = 330	30 x 13 = 390	<u>1140</u>
January	N/A	30 x 11 = 330	30 x 13 = 390	<u>720</u>
April	N/A	N/A	30 x 13 = 390	<u>390</u>

Fee Calculator

We have created an online fee calculator to aid you in working out how your nursery fees will be reduced based on the funding your child receives. To visit our calculator please click [here](#).

Extras over and above basic funded provision provided as a bundle with stretched bookings

- Nappies
- Wipes
- Nappy cream
- Formula milk
- Breakfast (Nutritionally balanced)
- Lunch (Nutritionally balanced home cooked meals)
- High tea (Nutritionally balanced home cooked meals)
- 2x snacks per day (Nutritionally balanced)
- Sun Cream
- Sun hats
- Online Learning Journals – eyLog
- Parent App
- Parents' evenings
- Mothers' Day Event
- Fathers' Day Event
- Christmas Concert/ Christmas craft days
- Art materials
- Easter Hat parade/ Easter craft day
- Christmas Party
- Graduation
- Yoga
- Spanish Lessons (Pre-school)
- 100 % Paediatric 1st aid trained staff
- Professional photographer
- Pre-School Information Evening
- Free Settling-In Sessions
- Multi agency working (Required by Statutory Framework but not funded by EEF)
- Routine 1 to 1 sessions with Room Leader
- Multiple Excursions/Trips using our own 17-seat minibuses

Can I use Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours?

Yes, you can get Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours funded childcare at the same time. You can't get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as tax credits, childcare vouchers or Universal Credit. You can also get 30 hours childcare alongside these schemes.

Reconfirming your eligibility

How often do I have to reconfirm my eligibility?

You will need to reconfirm you are still eligible for 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare every three months, using your childcare service account, even if you have not yet taken up your place. It's easy to do; if your details have not changed you just tick a box to confirm this. You'll be reminded to do this 4 weeks before the reconfirmation deadline. It's important you let us know if your circumstances have changed, as they will be checked against other systems.

If you miss the reconfirmation deadline, you will receive a message telling you that your eligibility has lapsed. You should go into your childcare account and reconfirm.

If you reconfirm and you're no longer eligible, or do not reconfirm, you may be able to continue your 30 hours childcare place for a short period known as the 'grace period.'

What happens if I reconfirm and am ineligible?

If you are no longer eligible for 30 hours, you will enter a grace period where you maybe able to retain your 30 hours childcare for a short period of time.

You should check your grace period arrangements with our manager.

If you are no longer eligible for Tax-Free Childcare, you can still use the money in your account (including the top-up you accrued while you were eligible) to pay us. You can also continue to use your account to pay us in future, but you won't get the government top-up.