

Government Funding Entitlement

Abacus Ark deliver the free entitlement and funded hours free of charge for 2, 3 & 4 year olds and the Camden Enhanced Offer (CEO) funding. This document will provide you with all the necessary information to help you understand the government funding entitlement at Abacus Ark, and the options that are available to you.

Further information on the funding available and also the Tax Free Childcare scheme can be found via the government Childcare Choices website: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>.

Entitlement

As we are open all year round (except 2 weeks at Christmas), we have spread the annual funding entitlement over the 50 weeks that we are open. This results in a rounding up of hours, which are not charged. Any hours above the funding entitlement will be charged.

15 Hours Entitlement

	Total funding per year	Weeks covered	Hourly equivalent
Government Guidance	570 hours	38 weeks	15 hours per week
Abacus Ark	570 hours	50 weeks	11.4 hours per week (rounded to 12 hours)

30 Hours Entitlement

	Total funding per year	Weeks covered	Hourly equivalent
Government Guidance	1,140 hours	38 weeks	30 hours per week
Abacus Ark	1,140 hours	50 weeks	22.8 hours per week (rounded to 23 hours)

2 Year Old Funding

2 year old children may be eligible for 15 hours free childcare. We offer a limited number of free 2 year old funding spaces, offering the 15 hours as 12 hours per week spread over the year. No registration fee or deposit is payable for these spaces.

To be eligible for the 2 year old funding, you must be living in England and get any of the following benefits:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA);
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA);
- Universal Credit, and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments;
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit (or both), and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax;
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit).

2 year old children can also get the 2 year old funding if they:

- are looked after by a local authority;
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- get Disability Living Allowance
- have left care under an adoption order, special guardianship order or a child arrangements order

If you're a non-UK citizen who cannot claim benefits

- If your immigration status says you have 'no recourse to public funds', you may still get free childcare for your 2-year-old. You must live in England and your household income must be no more than:
- £26,500 for families outside of London with one child
- £34,500 for families within London with one child
- £30,600 for families outside of London with two or more children
- £38,600 for families within London with two or more children

You cannot have more than £16,000 in savings or investments.

How do I sign up for the 2 year old funding entitlement?

To access the 2 year old funding entitlement you will need to apply directly with Camden Council. You will need to complete an application form on their website: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/free-early-education-for-2-year-olds>.

For help applying, please read [Camden's Application process \(PDF\)](#).

If you are eligible, you will receive a letter confirming dates of eligibility. You must provide the letter to finance@abacusark.com or the Nursery Manager before we are able to claim the funding.

If you have a 2 year old funding code from another borough, please send us the code so we can verify this.

3 & 4 Year Old Funding

All 3 & 4 year olds in England are eligible to receive the 15 hours funding entitlement as it is a universal offer. 3 & 4 year olds may also be eligible to receive an additional 15 hours (via the 30 hours funding entitlement or Camden Enhanced Offer).

Abacus Ark offer the following types of funding available to 3 & 4 year olds:

- 15 hours - offered as 12 hours per week spread over the year;
- 30 hours - offered as 23 hours per week spread over the year;
- Camden Enhanced Offer (CEO) - 30 hours - offered as 23 hours per week spread over the year.

Qualifying Dates for 3 & 4 Year Old Funding

Your child will be eligible to receive the 15 or 30 hours funding entitlement starting from the term following their third birthday.

Children born between	Entitled to claim from
1st January and 31st March	Summer Term - Beginning on the 1st April
1st April and 31st August	Autumn Term - Beginning on the 1st September
1st September and 31st December	Spring Term - Beginning on the 1st January

Moving to school reception class

Children due to start school reception classes in September will not be eligible to receive the funding entitlement at both Abacus Ark and their new school. Consequently, funding will end on the 31st August. Children going to school will be funded via the school funding grants and not the early years funding (which we receive) and therefore unable to access both types of funding in the same term.

30 Hours Funding for 3 & 4 Year Olds

To access the 30 hours funding entitlement you must be eligible. To qualify for eligibility you must:

- Earn more than the equivalent of 16 hours at the national living wage or minimum wage per week.

There is no requirement to work a certain number of hours per week – it is all about how much you earn and whether you meet the minimum earning threshold. Apprentices are also eligible if they earn the equivalent to 16 hours at the apprentice minimum wage.

AND

- Earn less than £100,000 per year.

This applies if you are self-employed or on a zero-hours contract and expect to meet the earning criteria on average over the three months after you have applied for the 30 hours. HMRC will look at data such as your previous earnings to consider whether you are likely to meet the criteria and may contact you for further information if they are unsure.

If you are starting up your own business, you will not be expected to meet the minimum earning criteria in your first year of trading.

If you are not working but you expect to take up paid work within 14 days, you can still apply for the 30 hours, if you expect to meet the income criteria over the coming three months.

If you are a single parent and meet the above criteria, you will be eligible for the 30 hours. If you live with a partner, you both must meet the above criteria. This still applies if one of you is not the child's parent – for example, if you have remarried or have started living with a new partner. If you are separated/divorced from your child's parent, the eligibility rules will only apply to the parent that the child normally lives with (and their new partner if they are part of the same household).

How do I sign up for the 30 hours funding entitlement?

To access the 30 hours funding entitlement, you must first obtain a code. You can apply for your 30 hours code on the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare> where you will be required to complete an application.

During the application process you will need to provide your name, address and National Insurance number. In addition to this you will need to provide details regarding your income requirements over the next three months and whether you are in receipt of any benefits.

If you live with a partner, you will need to provide the same information for them as well. This will enable HMRC to decide whether your child is eligible for the 30 hours.

If you are eligible you will receive an 11-digit code (usually starting with '11' or '50'). Once you have received this code, you will need to send this to finance@abacusark.com alongside the following details, so that your code can be verified with Camden Council.

- Your child's full name and date of birth;
- Your full name and date of birth;
- Your National Insurance number;
- Your current address.

By providing this information you will be confirming that we can share your details with Camden Council to confirm eligibility.

Verifying your code

Once we have received your code and details, we will verify them with Camden Council. Once verified, we will receive the following details, which will be forwarded onto you.

- **Validity start date:** This is the date that you will be able to claim the 30 hours funding entitlement from.
- **Validity end date:** This is the date that your code ends and is when you will need to reconfirm your details with HMRC by. You will be prompted to reconfirm your details with HMRC every three months. If your child is no longer eligible for the 30 hours or you do not reconfirm your details with HMRC by this date, then you will move into a 'Grace Period'. The Grace Period refers to a short period that your child will still receive the 30 hours after they have been deemed to be ineligible.
- **Grace Period end date:** This is the date that your Grace Period ends, and your child will no longer be eligible for the 30 hours. At this point your child will be eligible for the universal 15 hours funding entitlement only.

Deadline for obtaining your code

Applications for the 30 hours must be done before the end of each term i.e. by 31st August for a place starting in September, by 31st December for a place starting in January or by 31st March for a place starting in April. If you miss this deadline you may not receive the 30 hours funding entitlement until the following funding term.

Please note that the process for obtaining a code may take up to 4 weeks, so please make sure you start the application process as soon as possible, to avoid missing out.

Reconfirmation of your child's 30 hours eligibility

For parents that have already provided us with a code, please ensure that you reconfirm your details with HMRC in order to continue receiving the 30 hours funding entitlement.

You will be reminded by HMRC every three months to reconfirm your details. You should receive a notification via email or text message from HMRC asking you to reconfirm your details. You will need to sign into your HMRC account (that you set up when you applied for the 30 hours) and follow the instructions given on your account to reconfirm.

If my child is not eligible for the 30 hours offer, can I still get the 15 hours?

Yes. The 15 hours entitlement is still universal so if you are not eligible for the 30 hours entitlement, you will still be eligible for the 15 hours.

What happens if my child becomes ineligible for the 30 hours entitlement?

If you no longer meet the eligibility criteria, your child's 30 hours will continue to be funded for a 'Grace Period'. Please notify us if and when you lose eligibility. This table outlines how long the Grace Period will last, depending on when you become ineligible for the 30 hours. Once the Grace Period has expired, your child will still be eligible for the 15 hours funding entitlement.

Date 30 hours eligibility code becomes invalid	Local Authority audit date	Grace Period end date
1st January - 10th February	11th February	31st March
11th February - 31st March	1st April	31st August
1st April - 26th May	27th May	31st August
27th May - 31st August	1st September	31st December
1st September - 21st October	22nd October	31st December
22nd October - 31st December	1st January	31st March

Camden Enhanced Offer (CEO)

Camden offer a scheme of 30 hours for 3 & 4 year olds children that are not eligible to receive the government's 30 hours offering. To be eligible for the Camden Enhanced Offer you must be:

- A resident of Camden;
- You, and any partner, are not eligible for the Government 30 hours for working parent(s) - check eligibility for the Government 30 hours free childcare at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.
- You must take your universal entitlement of 15 hours free childcare in Camden to be eligible for this enhancement.

And you must meet one of the following criteria:

- Your family receives Universal Credit and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments.
- Income Support; Income based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Tax credit, and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- The Working Tax Credit 4 week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Your child is being 'looked after' by the local authority or is a child who has 'left care'
- Your child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan*
- You receive disability living allowance for your child*
- You receive support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- In receipt of Universal Credit and have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £15,400.

*Evidence must be provided with application

How do I sign up for the Camden Enhanced Offer?

To access the Camden Enhanced Offer you will need to apply directly with Camden Council. You will need to complete an application form on their website: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/camden-enhanced-offer-form>.

If you are eligible, you will receive a letter to confirm that your application has been successful. You must provide the letter to finance@abacusark.com or the Nursery Manager before we are able to claim the funding.

Parent Declaration Form

As a mandatory requirement put in place by the government, all parents receiving the government funding entitlement of 15/30 hours are required to complete a parent declaration form, which allows Abacus Ark to claim the funding entitlement on your behalf.

This form will need to be completed prior to each funding term (3 times per year) to ensure your child can receive the funding entitlement.

Without the completion of this form, we are unable to claim and pass on the benefits of the funding entitlement.

The declaration form consists of the following sections:

- Child's details including full name, date of birth, and current address;
- Additional details for claiming the 30 hours funding (if eligible) consisting of your National Insurance number and 30 hours eligibility code;
- Setting and attendance details including details of your child's attendance and the funding hours for Abacus Ark to process;
- Confirmation of the provider who is to claim the 15/30 hours;
- Declaration to be signed and dated by yourself and Abacus Ark.

The parent declaration form will be sent out prior to your child receiving the government funding. The form is sent to you via email and can be completed online in a few minutes. Abacus Ark will prepopulate parts of the form, to make it easier for you to complete. A paper version of the parent declaration form is also available should you wish to complete this instead.

Please note, for parents claiming the funding for the first time, we are required to see proof of date of birth before we are able to process funding for your child. Please provide a copy of your child's passport or birth certificate. This can be given to the nursery manager to be scanned, or you may wish to send a copy via email to finance@abacusark.com.