

Social Care - Benefits of Two-Year-Old Funding For Vulnerable Children

Social worker

- Childminder/nursery practitioner is an extra support to the family and can input into Child and Family Assessment/Child Protection planning
- Pre-school children are made more visible to professionals
- Improved outcomes for family
- Child development can be assessed and any issues picked up on
- Promote equality and inclusion
- Minimising risk for the child and building resilience
- Fulfil Local Authority duty under Children Act 2016 to secure free childcare for qualifying children

Parent/Carer

- Parents accessing childcare often access other services such as Children's Centre activities, family support services and meet other parents
- Maintain a routine, model learning and play at home
- Funded hours give parent time for appointments, self care, counselling, job searching
- Childminders in particular are fantastic at befriending and supporting parents
- Additional support system

Child

- Improved communication and language, social and emotional skills
- Easier transition into three/four year old placements and school
- Early years learning crucial to long-term development
- Reduce damaging influences of poverty on life chances, narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers
- Learning and play often continued at home

Long term advantages

- Increased equality for disadvantaged groups in our community
- Child less likely to be in a step up / step down within social care cycle
- Parent more integrated into the community
- Parents/carers gain knowledge to access all entitlements that they/their child are entitled to
- Children with SEND and EAL are supported before school and are less disadvantaged when they begin school

Is the child I am working with eligible?

Needs based eligibility criteria

Two year olds can get funded for 15 hours per week (term time) childcare if they:

- Are looked after by a local authority
- Have a statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Get Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Have left care under an Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order
- Non-EEA citizen who cannot claim benefits;
- Claimed asylum in the UK and are waiting for a decision (known as 'part 6')
- Been refused asylum in the UK (known as 'section 4')
- If your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, and you have either:
 - Leave to remain with 'no recourse to public funds' on family or private life grounds
 - The right to live in the UK because you're the main carer of a British citizen (known as a 'Zambrano Carer')

Income based eligibility criteria

Parent/carer lives in England and gets one 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 payment
- Tax credits, and your household income is £16190 a year 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)

How do I support parent/carer to apply

- Your Local Authorities' Families Information Service/Families Information Directory
- Your Local Authority Online Childcare Portal