

Family Information Service  
2 Year Old Free Entitlement (FE)  
Frequently Asked Questions – for settings

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## Eligibility questions

### Which parent is eligible for Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance?

If a two-parent family, eligibility will be based on the parent who receives the funding. If a single-parent family, eligibility will be based on the main carer.

### What if a parent/carer is currently paying but are eligible under the new criteria?

Please encourage the parent/carer to apply for FE for 2 year old funding as soon as possible so parents don't pay more than necessary. If eligible, funding will only be granted from when the application was made and **cannot** be backdated. A free place must not be started until eligibility has been checked and funding awarded by WSCC.

### If a parent is eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) for an older child and refuses to apply for FSM, how can we encourage the parent to apply for FE 2 year old funding under the FSM criteria?

We need your help to break down this barrier. Children will be county-wide, not just in areas of deprivation. It is an entitlement **not** targeted at vulnerable groups.

### What if a parent/carer has been granted funding but their circumstances change which mean they no longer meet the eligibility criteria?

Agreed funding will remain in place regardless of a change in the family circumstances.

- If the child moves to another West Sussex setting, you must transfer the balance of the unused funding to the new setting
- If the child does not take up another place, the funding should be used to offer a space to another funded 2 Year Old, either new or on your waiting list
- If you do not have another funded 2 Year Old, the funding can be used for the benefit of other children in your setting.

### How can I be sure if a child is eligible under the Child Looked After criteria that has transferred to me from another setting?

Please phone the FIS on 01243 777807 who can double-check eligibility.

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**What if a parent/carer used to be eligible but is now no longer eligible?**

If funding has already been agreed then this remains in place for that child. However, future applications will be based on the current national criteria which has been set by Government. Unfortunately WSCC have very little discretionary control over these criteria.

**Can I (setting) use the FSM eligibility checker?**

No. Only WSCC have access to the FSM eligibility checker.

**Setting information questions**

**Will printed copies of the FE for 2 year old application form be available?**

Please encourage all applications to be made online, however there will be a paper-based version of the application form upon request.

**Do I need to see the National Insurance or Asylum Seeker numbers?**

No. WSCC will be using these references as part of the eligibility checks.

**What if I have a parent with multiple births?**

They can apply only if they meet one of the eligible benefits or other specified criteria.

**How will this be promoted to parents?**

We are working on a Communications Plan which will be rolled out from June onwards. Parents will be informed of the FE for 2 Year Olds through literature in Doctor's Surgeries, Children and Family Centres, Libraries, local advertisements and more.

**Do you have to supply an invoice even if the value is £0?**

Yes. For accounting and auditing purposes there needs to be a paper trail. It also needs to be made clear to parents that this service is offered free of charge and a secondary invoice offered to non-FE children or for ancillary services.

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### **Can settings be made aware of the reasons FE for 2 year olds was granted?**

The only information we will receive will be if the family meet the criteria for funding. We will not have any additional information on the support needs of the child or family, and as the funding will be an entitlement, it may be that additional support needs are not required anyway. Training is available to support practitioners to ask parents sensitive questions – “Why wait to talk about weight”, [course code IS019N](#) is particularly relevant and covers a variety of difficult conversations, not just those regarding weight.

### **Is there any specific training on 2 year old handling/restraint?**

The [Manual Handling course](#) is a generic basic introduction into lifting and handling, any specific training relevant to a specific child would be organised on a case by case basis.

### **How is the 2 Year Old late payment form different to the FE late payment form?**

2 Year Olds can start at any point in the term and the late payment form will be a formal way of ensuring payment is made. 3&4 year olds should only use a late payment form if there are exceptional circumstances relating to why they missed the headcount day

## **Funding queries questions**

### **Why can 2 Year Olds start after headcount day?**

2YO have always been able to start at any point in the term. This is in recognition of the fact that children may become eligible for funding or ‘ready’ for early education at varying times in the year.

### **Is there a timeframe of when a balance should be transferred over? If not, can we put one in place e.g. 1 month**

Childcare providers will be expected to work together to arrange the transfer of funding. We will look into timeframes for the next agreement.

### **When will the funding rate for FE increase?**

At the moment we have been given no indication of if and when a rate increase will occur. We will update you if this changes.

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**Can a setting mix 2, 3 and 4 year olds or do they need to be kept separate?**

Settings will be able to integrate 2, 3 and 4 year olds as long as you also address the additional needs of the younger children e.g. providing a rest area and time, changing facilities etc. For additional support and guidance, please contact your Early Years and Childcare team.

**Can a setting sit with a parent to go through the application form?**

If a parent needs additional support with completing the application form, they can [visit their local Children and Family Centre](#) for assistance. If this is not possible settings can support parents to complete the form. However, please be aware that the parent may need to supply sensitive information, particularly if they are applying under criteria other than Free School Meals, and so may require support away from other parents in the setting.