



Free Early Learning for 2 year olds: Frequently asked questions

What is a Free 2 year old place?

It is a free place for eligible 2 year olds at certain registered settings across Walsall.

How many hours is a Free 2 year old place for?

The amount you have is up to you as long as you don't send your child for more than 15 hours per week, term time, or 12 hours per week for 48 weeks per year.

Do I have to use all 15 hours per week?

No. You can send your child as much as you, and they, feel comfortable with. Any time spent at a setting can have a positive effect on your child, so a few hours is better than none! Regular absences of 2 weeks or more and attendance that falls under 80% could affect your child's place, as funding from the Local Authority could be at risk of being withdrawn for the setting.

How flexibly can I take the hours?

The most common way to take hours is either 12 hours per week for 48 weeks per year or 15 hours per week, term time only. Where it is possible, the setting you choose will try to be as flexible as possible.

However there are some restrictions:

- A session must be not more than 10 hours;
- Sessions have to take place between 06:00-20:00;
- The full 15 hours can only be taken over a minimum of 2 days;
- In a single day, your child cannot access the funding at more than 2 settings;
- If your child only goes 1 day, the maximum number of hours they can get is 10.

When can my child start getting their place?

Your child can start attending a setting the term after they turn 2. The table below shows how this works:

If your child is born between:	They will get their free place:
1st January and 31st March	Summer term (after Easter - normally April)
1st April and 31st August	Autumn term (in September)
1st September and 31st December	Spring term (in January)

What happens if my circumstances change?

If you have a change in your circumstances (for instance if you get a pay rise) this does not affect your free place. Once your child gets a place, they are entitled to it until the end of the term they turn 3.

What happens when my child turns 3?

They will automatically start getting their free 3 and 4 year old early years place, so for you, nothing will change!

Can I use my current provider?

Yes! If your child is the first 2 year old funded child they take, they will need to contact us.

Can I send my child to a setting outside the Walsall Borough?

If you prefer to send your child to a setting in the surrounding areas, this is normally ok. You will need to contact the Local Authority for that setting to apply for a place with them.

Can I use the school my other children go to?

At the moment, there are quite a few of schools that are offering the free place for 2 year olds, so you might be able to. Ask in the school office or the nursery and they'll let you know if they take 2 year olds.