

# Free Entitlement Funding

## How much free childcare does FEF provide?

A parent can claim a maximum of 15 hours per week over three academic terms (Spring, Summer & Autumn). The total number of weeks over the three academic terms is 38. Therefore **FEF** can be claimed for up to 38 weeks each year.

A Parent can claim three hours of **FEF** funding per session attended (a session is defined as a morning or afternoon). To claim the full entitlement of 15 hours per week, the child must attend nursery for five sessions across three days each week.

A Parent can use all 15 hours with **kidsunlimited** or split the claim over two childcare providers. However, the total claim per child must not exceed 15 hours per week.

## What is FEF?

**FEF** stands for Free Entitlement Funding and is a government scheme which allows **kidsunlimited** to offer up to 15 hours of free childcare each week during school term time.

## How is FEF claimed

A parent claims **FEF** via **kidsunlimited** by signing a declaration at the beginning of each term. Some Local Education Authorities request an additional form to be completed. These declarations confirm the child details and the number of hours of **FEF** funding being claimed.

For each term claim, a child must be in attendance at the nursery on or before the term Headcount Date advised by the **Local Education Authority**. The Headcount Date is a specific date usually towards the beginning of each term. Details of these dates are available on the Local Education Authority website.

If a child starts at the nursery after the Headcount Date, **kidsunlimited** will submit a late claim to the **Local Education Authority** but cannot provide free childcare until approved.

If a child leaves **kidsunlimited** during a term then the **FEF** claimed through **kidsunlimited** would be adjusted to reflect the actual hours attended at **kidsunlimited**.

## When does a child become eligible for FEF?

Children are eligible for **FEF**:

- from the term after they turn three years old
- to the term they attend school.

Children Born Between	Become Eligible in
1 January – 31 March	Summer Term (May – Aug)
1 April – 31 August	Autumn Term (Sept-Dec)
1 September – 31 December	Spring Term (Jan – Apr)

## What happens if booking patterns change?

If a parent wishes to change their booking pattern during the course of a term this must be agreed with the Nursery Manager and the Local Education Authority must be advised. A Parent will need to complete a new **FEF** declaration if the number of **FEF** hours changes.

The change in **FEF** hours may change the value of the monthly invoice. This depends on the fee rates and number of new sessions booked compared to previous sessions booked. The first invoice to reflect the change will be the one for the month after the month of changed booking pattern.





## How is FEF reflected in invoices and payments?

In line with the Government Code of Practice, **kidsunlimited** administer the FEF “free at point of delivery”. This means that the FEF hours are deducted from Parent invoices and parents are never charged for those FEF hours.

To help Parents budget and spread childcare fees across the full year, **kidsunlimited** spreads the FEF over the full year. This avoids Parents having higher fees in school holidays versus lower fees in term time.

*For example (this is for illustrative purposes only and Evelyn-Joan is not based on any child in kidsunlimited nurseries):*

*A toddler called Evelyn-Joan attends kidsunlimited’s nursery for various sessions which add up to 40 hours per week. The monthly fee for these sessions is £870 which equates to an average hourly fee of £5 for Evelyn-Joan.*

The value of Evelyn-Joan’s FEF funding for the year is calculated using 15 hours per week for 38 weeks multiplied by the £5 average hourly rate. This equals £2,850 for the year. The FEF value of £2,850 is then spread evenly over the year so £237.50 is deducted from each monthly invoice.

*The final invoice and payment for Evelyn-Joan’s parents is therefore £632.5 every month of the year which keeps budgeting simple.*

### What changes have been made to Nursery Education Funding?

Due to a tightening of Government guidelines, FEF funding is now provided via a reduced invoice value. Previously a payment could be made to parents at the beginning of term but this generated problems on change of booking patterns. **kidsunlimited** follows Government guidelines and child invoices are calculated as above.

### Where can I find out more on FEF?

The Information for Parents web pages from the Government provide further background information and links to regional Local Education Authorities.

These pages can be found at by the link on the **kidsunlimited** website or at [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/)