



Paving the way.....

Little Smarties guide to funding and FAQ's:

What is government funded childcare?

Government funded childcare “15 hours FREE” or “30 hours FREE” is a subsidised childcare support to assist with the cost of childcare for your little ones in an Ofsted registered, local authority affiliated setting. This is officially known as Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) or Families Requiring Additional Support (FRAS) previously known as FEEE2 for families in receipt of Government support.

Is ‘Little Smarties’ a registered and affiliated setting?

‘Little Smarties’ is an affiliated childcare provider under all government childcare schemes and registered with Ofsted (EY549918).

What funding can I get?

From September 2025 all qualifying households with a child/children from the age of 9 months old, can apply for up to 30 hours funded childcare per week. Your child/children need to be 9 months old or older before the start of the term you wish for them to start at ‘Little Smarties’. Parents, carers or legal guardians need to apply for your child’s/children’s funding before the start of the term you wish for them to start at the setting.

How do I get help?

Parents, carers or legal guardians need to check their eligibility here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator?step-by-step-nav=f237ec8e-e82c-4ffa-8fba-2a88a739783b>

If you qualify, you then apply for your child’s/children’s funding here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/apply-for-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

After applying for your child’s/children’s funding, a successful outcome will be confirmed with a code number and a date to confirm when your newly acquired funding can be used in a setting. The successful applicant will then be promoted to setup an account with HMRC online services. It is important you reach out and inform the setting/s where you will redeem your funding of the outcome your child’s/children’s funding application. ‘Little Smarties’ will issue you with a Parent/Carer Agreement Form (PAF) which needs to be

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completed for the academic/financial year. The form is filled in by the parent who has opened the account with HMRC online services. The details of this form will allow us to confirm the start date of your child's/children's funding. Parents, carers or legal guardians qualifying for working parent funding can also open a tax efficient account to make invoice payments.

Is this form straight forward to fill in?

We are happy to help you fill in the PAF form to aid the successful redemption of your child's/children's funding. We can help to explain the importance of checking your eligibility for any additional funding which will assist with your child's/children's education, facilities, resources and experience while in our care at 'Little Smarties'. Parents, carers or legal guardians are required to confirm with 'Little Smarties' if your child/children will be attending another affiliated setting who will also be claiming your child's funding.

How much funding (how many hours) do I get per term?

There are three school terms per Essex County Council (ECC) academic/financial year. Autumn, Spring and Summer. Each term is based solely on the Essex County Council school term and holiday dates for community and voluntary controlled schools. Each school term has a different amount of academic weeks, the amount of academic weeks in the school term is multiplied by the amount of hours you are eligibility for (15hrs or 30hrs).

e.g. Autumn term = 14wks x 15hrs/30hrs = 210hrs/420hrs

School holidays are not including in the calculation of your funding allowance. If you need your funding to cover the school holidays, this is known as 'stretched' funding. Stretching your funding dilutes how many hours per week your child/children is able to use, because it needs to stretch further. 'Little Smarties' will notify parents stretching their child's/children's funding how many weeks they need to stretch your funding for the term.

Can I use my funding on a term time only basis?

'Little Smarties' are happy to calculate your child's/children's funded allocation on a term time only (TTO) basis. In school holidays your child's/children's funding is not redeemed against their contractual agreement. A TTO retainer is charged (details of our retainer costs can be found in our rates, fees, costs and charges - given at your request. Some funding streams are exempt from retainers being charged. The retainer is charged to maintain the economic



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sustainability of the setting, enabling us to maintain this option and allow families the flexibility to use our Term Time Only option.

Is my funding used on a bank holidays or if the setting is closed?

On all UK bank holidays funding is not used or calculated against these days, if they fall on your child's/children's contractual days, a bank holiday (BH) retainer would be charged for the same reasons stated above.

Annually 'Little Smarties' has three scheduled inset days per financial/academic year. One in each academic term, Autumn, Spring and Summer. 'Little Smarties' deem these inset days are very important to focus on training and the development of our staff. Funding is not used on these days and no retainers are payable.

What if I don't qualify?

If you don't qualify for the working parent funding other funded support may be available, please check government website for more details. All children receive funding the term after their 3rd birthday with 15 hours universal funding.

What types of funding are available?

Qualifying children from:

- 9 months old (FEEE1W) get 30 hours funding.
- 2-3 years old (FEEE2W) get 30 hours funding or 15 hours (FRAS) qualifying under a different criteria.
- 3-4 years old (FEEE3-4) get up to 30 hours funding. 15 hours of universal funding (which ALL 3-4 year olds qualify for) and an additional 15 hours when qualifying for 15 hours Extended Funding Entitlement (EFE).

All children are funded up to the age of 5 years old. Special arrangements need to be made if you choose to or feel a need to defer your child's primary school placement.

Will my code stay the same or do I need to renew it every term?

Once you have reregistered an account with HMRC online services (the childcare service) the primary applicant will receive a reminder email and notification within the reconfirmation link of the government portal. It is imperative that you the parent, carer or legal guardian keep on top of the

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reconfirmation as and when it is required and you are notified. Allowing reconfirmation to lapse may result in your funding being withdrawn.

Can I share my funding?

NO: Parents in receipt of 2 year funding (15 hours per week) FRAS, this cannot be shared and can solely be used at only one affiliated setting.

YES: Parents receiving funding from the age of 9 months old up to the age of 4/5 years old, can share funding with other affiliated settings including childminders. You can share your termly funding allowance with up to two affiliated settings. This relates to the following funding streams- FEEE1W, FEEE2W, FEE3/4 universal funding and EFE.

If you intend to share your child's/children's funding across settings inclusive of 'Little Smarties', it is vital that you make it clear with all the settings how many hours will be claimed by each setting. Ideally we request you share the contact details of the setting/s along with the contact person/s of whom deals with their funding. As settings are strictly prohibited from claiming more than the termly funding allowance.

How is my funding calculated across the academic/stretched term?

'Little Smarties' will reach out to all our parents, carers or legal guardians well in advance of the start of each academic term. You will be requested to confirm what hours you require your child to attend the setting, once we have confirmed your little ones requested attendance, you will then confirm how many funded hours you require 'Little Smarties' to claim on your behalf up to and including the maximum amount for each specific term (this will be confirmed on your PAF form). At 'Little Smarties' we maintain our funding proposition is transparent as we only use funding for the exact hours needed for your little ones. You will also be asked to confirm which type of contract you require and if you will be sharing your child's/children's funding. 'Little Smarties' will then calculate your child's/children's total attendance for the whole term. This is calculated term by term as we are only eligible to claim funding termly. From the total attendance figure we will deduct the your child's/children's funding allowance. If your child's/children's attendance is in excess of the termly funding allowance, the total amount of excess hours will be equally split over the invoiced months within that term. We refer to this a forecasting.

Is there anything I need to pay?

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For each day when funding covers or contributes to your child's/children's attendance 'Little Smarties' request parents, carers or legal guardians pay a fair funding supplement (FFS).

Excess hours/attendance over the funded allowance is paid for at our ad hoc hourly rate (see rates, fees, costs and charges- Appendix A), along with a FFS (see table below). The value of the FFS is determined by the funding stream your little one receives. Our fair funding supplement rates are reviewed annually in accordance with our rates, fees, costs and charges (Appendix A) and are reviewed every April.

Our current FFS rates can be given at your request.

Is everyone asked to pay a FFS?

Children receiving additional support for their care or funding are not asked to pay the FFS. Eligible funding streams include - DAF & SENIF. Children and families in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) are requested to pay our FFS but not required to pay any retainers (term time only or bank holidays). If a child or a family are receiving FRAS funding (15hrs) they are not requested or required to pay any additional fees. Children receiving FRAS funding will only pay for excess attendance over the termly funded allowance this would be paid at the ad hoc hourly rate. Parents, carers and legal guardians qualifying for FRAS funding may also receive additional support with their childcare through universal credits.

The additional funding streams of DAF, SENIF and EYPP will be determined by Essex County Council (ECC). 'Little Smarties' will notify parents, carers or legal guardians on the successful qualification of any additional funding. Consent must be given on the PAF form before any applications can be made or completed in order to apply for your child's/children's additional funding for their development.

Why do you ask for a FFS?

Notwithstanding the amazing benefit government funding is to the parents, children and the setting, qualifying funded hours are paid at a set value by the government scheme stipulated by the local authority. It is no secret and is well documented that the proportion of income generated by the funding we receive does not allow us to operate or maintain the levels of service and quality we pride ourselves upon, when compared against 'Little Smarties' rates, fees, costs and charges.



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Your fair funding supplement (FFS) contributes to:

Providing a healthy and hearty menu- Providing a varied, balanced, healthy and exciting menu comes at a cost. Using premium healthy ingredients to cook from scratch and cater for all dietary intolerances, preferences and allergies.

Providing extra-curricular activities- Sports, drama, music, languages, our own cultural days, sports day, Christmas performance and sign language are just some of the areas we source trusted outside professionals to come into the setting to develop your little ones' confidence and self-awareness.

Parents, carers and legal guardians that our ability to make these generous contributions make a huge difference to the longevity of the business which all our staff care so much for.

Being inclusive and transparent- charging our FFS means we can offer our funding proposition in the fairest and most transparent way possible. Calculating funding against a child's total attendance throughout the whole day without any loopholes or grey areas. It enables us to not use funding against inset days or our bank holidays. It provides us with the flexibility to not request FFS's from families not in a position to morally afford the social or educational benefits of childcare.

Any questions or objections to the charging of our FFS needs to be made in writing to lsnlimited@gmail.com.

Yours Sincerely,

The Board
Little Smarties nursery LTD

April 2026