

TRUST POLICY

Nurseries Handbook – Early Years Free Entitlement Policy



Approval		
Director Approval	Date approved:	13 th March 2026
Ratification		
Trust Management Committee	Date approved:	22 nd July 2026
	Review Date	22 nd July 2029

Version	Date	Author	Status	Comment
1.0	February 2026	Childcare Service Manager Nursery Managers	LIVE	New trust wide policy
2.0				

Contents

Contents	2
1. Policy Statement	3
2. Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE)	3
3. Free Funded Hours	3
4. The Pattern of Delivery UHSussex Nurseries	4
5. Free Entitlement Funding Groups	8
6. Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	9
7. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)	9
8. Disability Access Fund (DAF)	10
9. Links to other Trust policies	11

1. Policy Statement

This policy is designed to outline the Governments Early Years Entitlement Funding for those children attending an Ofsted Registered Early Years setting.

2. Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE)

Early Years Free Entitlement funding is a government scheme administered by Local Authorities to Ofsted registered providers in England. All children aged 3-4 years are eligible for the standard 15 hours funded for 38 weeks per year. For those aged 3-4 years wishing to extend to 30 hours or babies/young children from 9 months and above Early Years Funding is based on eligibility criteria.

Early Years Free Entitlement funding ensures that young children can benefit from early years education.

Parents wishing to claim Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE) must:

- Parents are requested to complete and return the Local Authority form (Declaration Form) providing information such as Child's Name, DOB and Address of the child. This will be given to you by the Nursery Manager
- Parents claiming funding for 9 – 36mths funding will require an E-Code
- Parents claiming Extended funding for 3–4-year-olds will require an E-Code (30 hours)

3. Free Funded Hours

University Hospitals Sussex nurseries are registered with Brighton & Hove County Council (B&HCC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to provide Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE) hours under the following schemes:

- Universal EYFE for 3- and 4-year-olds
- Extended EYFE for 3- and 4-year-olds under the Working Families Entitlement
- LA Issued EYFE for 2-year-olds
- EYFE for 2-year-olds under the Working Families Entitlement
- EYFE for 9 months and older under the Working Families Entitlement

We are also in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access Fund for eligible children.

Parents/carers are advised to retain a copy of this policy for future reference and to review it in conjunction with our Fees Policy.

4. The Pattern of Delivery UHSussex Nurseries

Since September 2010 the funding implemented by the Local Education Authority has allowed settings that operate beyond 38 weeks per year to deliver the funded hours in a flexible formula that provides financial continuity for both parents and maximises free hours.

The nurseries within University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust we will be offering Parent and Carers of children eligible up to 12 hours per week free entitlement of a period of 47 weeks instead of the generic 15 hours for 38 weeks. Those that are able to claim extended funded hours it will be 24 hours for 47 weeks.

The entitlement will be reduced over the Christmas period, Easter and of a shorter period in August. During the non-funded weeks, a normal nursery rate will be charged.

Parent/Carers will be informed of dates through termly newsletters and noticeboard messages.

Number of Weeks	Hours per Week	Hours per Session
47 weeks per annual (dates provided) 1-2 weeks at Christmas non funded 1-2 weeks at Easter non funded 2 weeks August non funded	12 hours per week 24 hours per week	3- or 6-hour sessions will be free
Total	Max 570 hours per year Universal Funding 1140 Extended Funded Hours	

Options of Delivery:

As University Hospitals Sussex Nurseries provides a service for employees of the organisation the sessions offered in Sussex House (Brighton & Hove) and Wendy House (West Sussex) nurseries are designed to support the working patterns of the varying departments within our hospitals.

We hold a small number of places for external use and provided some funded only places too. Standard nursery sessions are of 4.5hrs and 9hrs per day and the entitlement formula allows 3, or 6, hours free entitlement blocks with the remaining hours to be paid at the normal nursery rate relating to your salary bracket.

Free Funding Table

Session Times	Hours Claimed
Morning 9am -12noon	3 hours
Afternoon 1.30 pm – 4.30pm	3 hours
Day 9am – 3pm	6 hours

The provision of Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE) includes the delivery of early years education and childcare, and we deliver this in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Our delivery of Early Years Funding for Sussex House and Wendy House Nurseries includes:

- No requirement to access a minimum number of hours or sessions.
- The option for Funded Only sessions without the requirement to access additional paid-for hours.
- No requirement to take up additional paid services, such as meals, snacks and personal care items. Any additional learning experiences where there is a further cost will be of donation request only.
- No requirement for children to use all their EYFE solely within our nurseries. Children may access EYFE sessions at a maximum of two different sites per day.

Whilst there is no requirement to access a minimum number of hours or sessions, we recommend that children do attend the setting more than once per week to gain the most out of the learning and activities we offer, it also provides us to be more flexible in planning the day to meet the children's needs.

The tables below provide a guidance to how we spread the funding to ensure hours are maximised through the year.

Option 1. 12 hours Funded for 47 weeks per year

Day	Session hours	Free Entitlement Hours	Non-Funded Hours at normal nursery hourly rate
Monday	Full Day	6hrs	3hrs
Tuesday	Full day	6hrs	3hrs
Wednesday	Full day	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee
Thursday	Full day	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee
Friday	Full day	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee

Day	Session hours	Free Entitlement Hours	Non-Funded Hours at normal nursery hourly rate
Monday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Tuesday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Wednesday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Thursday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Friday	4.5 am/pm	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee

Option 2. 24hrs Funded for 47 weeks per year

Day	Session hours	Free Entitlement Hours	Non-Funded Hours at normal nursery hourly rate
Monday	Full Day	6hrs	3hrs
Tuesday	Full day	6hrs	3hrs
Wednesday	Full day	6hrs	3hrs
Thursday	Full day	6hrs	3hrs
Friday	Full day	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee

Day	Session hours	Free Entitlement Hours	Non-Funded Hours at normal nursery hourly rate
Monday	Full Day	6hrs	3hrs
Tuesday	Full day	6hrs	3hrs
Wednesday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Thursday	4.5 am/pm	3hrs	1.5hrs
Friday	Agreed session	Normal nursery fee	Normal nursery fee

Option 3. Funded Only Places

As workplace settings we provide Fully Funded sessions subject to availability, and these are also stretched over the 47-week period. We provided Funded Only session during the core time of the day to ensure the child[ren] gain the maximum amount of learning opportunities.

Times	Amount Per Week	Weeks Per Year
Morning 9am -12noon	Maximum 4 times per week	47
Afternoon 1.30 pm – 4.30pm	Maximum 4 times per week	47
Day 9am – 3pm	Maximum 4 times per week	47

During the non-funded periods the child will be unable to attend the setting however you will be advised of these dates by termly funding letters and the fee formula calendar displayed in our nurseries. If you are requesting your child to attend during that period than you will be charged at the normal nursery fee rate (subject to availability)

Funding Declaration:

- Parents and Carers are required to give information of how many sessions they wished to claim for at the nursery or any other childcare/education setting by completing the Parent Declaration Form.
- University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust nurseries claim 12 / 24 hours per week as a whole or in partnership with another provision in Local Education Authority (LEA) or grant-maintained schools or nurseries.

- The nursery will request a copy of your child's birth certificate or passport number as part of the ID process on the funding form.
- Parent and Carers must provide an E-Code for 9-36mth olds and for those claiming the extended 3–4-year-old funding.
- The nursery will process the claim with the Local Education Authority through the online portal system.
- The early years 'Free Entitlement' hours will be deducted from your fees per month and will not exceed 570 / 1140 hours per year within the formula stated.
- Free Entitlement details will be outlined on your monthly invoice.

Changes to Funding:

During the term should circumstances change and you choose to withdraw your child, from our nurseries, we will require a 4-week written notice for EYFE sessions, inclusive of holidays and periods of closure. If you move to another provider within the Local Authority after the notice period, your new provider can contact us to request transfer of any remaining funding we have claimed on your child's behalf.

If your child misses EYFE sessions due to illness, holidays or any planned or unplanned absence, these hours will not be available at a later date. If Sussex House or Wendy House nurseries are unexpectedly closed during your child's regularly scheduled EYFE sessions, due to illness or other unforeseen reason, will offer these hours at an alternative time subject to availability and where reasonable.

Your Funding Entitlement:

If parents only want to use EYFE, they will not be charged for their attendance not any hidden additional costs. UHSussex nurseries are committed to supporting families accessing our settings and other services are not included within our costs:

- Meals are all included unless the child has a dietary preference or requirement or has formula milk, and this is supplied from home
- Wipes and Sunscreen is included, unless there is a personal preference and this is supplied from home alongside nappies / changes of clothing.
- On occasions the nurseries will ask for a donation towards outings, trips or outside entertainers.

Parents can also pay for additional hours, which are subject to availability. Accessing additional paid-for hours is not a condition of accessing EYFE hours. For more information on charges for additional hours and services, please see our fee policy.

5. Free Entitlement Funding Groups

Below provides an outline of those eligible for the Free Entitlement Hours.

All 3- and 4-year-olds are eligible to access up to 15 hours Universal Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE) a week (up to a maximum of 570 hours per year)

Eligible working parents can apply for EYFE for Working Families, providing access to:

- Extended EYFE for 3- and 4-year-olds, granting an additional 15 hours per week on top of the Universal EYFE (totalling up to 30 hours weekly or a maximum of 1140 hours annually).
- Up to 15 hours per week (or up to 570 hours annually) EYFE for Working Families from the term after they are 9 months old and upwards if approved. April 2025 extended to 30hrs (or a maximum of 1140 hours annually) for 2 years olds
- From September 2025, all children aged 9 months and above can access up to 30 hours per week (or a maximum of 1140 hours annually).
- Some 2-year-olds can access a maximum of 15 hours of EYFE per week (or up to 570 hours per year) if their families meet specific criteria under the Local Authority (LA) Issued Free Childcare for 2-year-olds.

See the tables below for information on when children become age eligible for the various entitlements:

A child born on or between:	Will be of eligible age for the 9-month-old EYFE* from the start of term beginning in:
1 April and 30 June	April after turning 9 months old
1 July and 30 November	September after turning 9 months old
1 December and 31 March	January after turning 9 months old

A child born on or between:	Will become eligible for 2-year-old EYFE for Working Families* or 2-year-old LA Issued EYFE** from the start of term beginning in:	Will become eligible for Universal EYFE for 3- and 4-year-olds and Extended EYFE for 3- and 4-year-olds* from the start of term beginning in:
1 January and 31 March	April following their second birthday*	April following their third birthday
1 April and 31 August	September following their second birthday*	September following their third birthday
1 September	January following their second birthday*	January following their third birthday

and 31 December		
--------------------	--	--

To check your availability please go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Brighton and Hove Council

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/families-children-and-learning/childcare-and-family-support/childcare-and-childcare-support

West Sussex County Council

www.westsussex.gov.uk/information-for-childcare-providers/early-years-funding/

6. Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

UHSussex nurseries welcomes all children and will work with parents and carers to ensure the needs of their children are met. To best support the child, our nurseries will endeavour to assess all relevant information about their needs during their settling in period and their regular attendance and will consult the parent/carer about any needs that the family or the nursery has identified.

Should any additional needs be identified, support is available from the Local Education Authority via our Inclusion Team Support. Parents and carers will be consulted before seeking this support.

Inclusion Funding

Inclusion Funding can be applied for by providers signed up to offer Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE) to support them in allowing children with additional needs to access their EYFE. Sussex House and Wendy House nurseries will consult parents and carers before applying and seek their input into the action plan for the child. We will share this action plan with the Local Education Authority, who will then determine if Inclusion Funding can be provided and how much.

Local Offer

Please refer to Local Offer Policy

7. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

EYPP is additional funding for early years settings to improve the education they provide for eligible children claiming Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE). EYPP is paid to settings alongside EYFE (Extended hours for 3- and 4-year-olds are exempt). Children do not need to take up their full entitlement to receive it. EYPP will be paid in proportion to the child's actual EYFE hours.

For Sussex House and Wendy House nurseries to be able to claim for your child, you will need to provide the following information:

- Parent/carer's full legal name.
- Parent/carer's date of birth.
- Parent/carer's National Insurance (NI) number or National Asylum Support Service (NASS) number.
- Evidence that the child has been in local authority care for one day or more in England or Wales (if applicable).
- Evidence proving the child has been adopted from local authority care, left care through a special guardianship order or is subject to a child arrangements order (if applicable).
- Sussex House and Wendy House nurseries will determine best use of the funding by assessing the needs of eligible children, and in consultation with parents. We may also seek advice from the Local Education Authority for best use.

Information can be found about EYPP by viewing West Sussex County Council's EYPP guidance or Brighton and Hove City Council EYPP guidance

8. Disability Access Fund (DAF)

DAF is a measure which aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or helping with building capacity, be that for the child in question or for the benefit of children attending the setting. DAF is a fund that can be paid once per year.

Children will be eligible for the DAF if they meet the following criteria:

- The child is in receipt of child Disability Living Allowance (DLA); and the child receives Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE).

For Sussex House and Wendy House nurseries to be able to claim DAF for a child, we will need the following:

- A newly completed Parent Declaration, completed to confirm you would like [insert provider name] to apply for DAF on behalf of your child; and
- A copy of a letter confirming your child's current eligibility for Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

- To determine best use of the funding, [Insert Provider name] will assess the needs of the child, consult with parents, and seek support from West Sussex County Council where required.

9. Links to other Trust policies

UHSHN007 Nursery Handbook – Childcare Fees Policy