

Nursery Education Grant for 3 and 4 year olds

– Parent Fact Sheet

What is free early education for three and four year-olds?

The government gives funding called the Nursery Education Grant (NEG) to local authorities so that all parents who want free early education for their pre-school age children can get it. Brent Council has local conditions for the delivery of this grant by our childcare providers and these are set out below.

When are children eligible for the NEG?

Children become eligible for the NEG from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. This means a child born between:

- 1 September and 31 December is eligible from 1 January (the spring term)
- 1 January and 31 March is eligible from 1 April (the summer term)
- 1 April and 31 August is eligible from 1 September (the autumn term).

Where can I get the NEG for my child?

You can get the NEG at most nurseries in Brent. This includes private, voluntary and council-run nurseries, independent schools with nursery classes, some children's centres and some childminders. Apply directly to the childcare settings that are most convenient for you. Some are very full but it is usually possible to find a vacancy in most parts of Brent.

Contact Brent CFIS (details below) to get a list of eligible settings, or if you cannot find a place with a childcare provider.

How much time will my child get?

The NEG funds up to 15 hours of early education a week up to 38 weeks a year during term time. Your child needs to start at the setting at the beginning of term, so start looking before you need the place. You may be able to access your 15 hours flexibly so please discuss options with your childcare provider.

How do I apply for the NEG?

It is a good idea to put your child onto setting waiting lists before they are three years old. Tell the manager or administrator that you want an NEG place.

How is the money paid?

It is paid by the Brent Early Years and Family Support Service directly to the nursery or other provider. You do not have to apply to the council for the money.

Do I need to pay the childcare provider if I am claiming only 15 hours?

No, you should not need to pay the setting any additional fees if you are claiming the free entitlement hours only.

What happens if I want or need more than 15 hours childcare?

If you want or need to pay for extra hours because you work or study, the NEG will be taken off your bill and you will pay for the additional hours. You may be able to get extra help to pay for extra hours from the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, or other sources of funding. Details can be found on the Brent council website.

How do I know if my child is eligible for the NEG?

All children from the beginning of the term after their third birthday and all four year-olds in the UK can get the NEG. There are no exceptions. If you have difficulty finding a place in a nursery, call Brent CFIS.

What are the next nursery headcount dates for the NEG?

- Autumn term 2015 - Thursday 17 September 2015
- Spring term 2016 - January 2016 (Date to be confirmed)
- Summer 2016 term - Thursday 21 April 2016

What happens if I want my child to join a setting but the head count date has already passed?

If you wish your child to join a setting part way through the term or the head count date has passed, you will not receive NEG in this term. You can still access a place but you will need to pay for the hours that you use. Alternatively, you can take up your funded place in the following term.

What happens if my child is absent from the childcare setting during the term?

Absences of two weeks or more

Brent Council recognises that there may be times when a child will be absent for more than two weeks, for example sickness or other family circumstances. A maximum of two weeks absence (per term) will be funded. We will not automatically pay absences longer than 2 weeks. This is because we recognise that extended periods of absence are unsettling for children and pre-school settings expect children to attend regularly. Research and experience show that if children attend a good quality childcare setting regularly they do better in terms of social and educational development.

Holidays

If you are planning to take your child for a planned holiday for more than two weeks during the term you need to discuss this beforehand with your nursery. The childcare provider will then discuss this with the council and this may mean that you will not be able to claim funding for the term.

Sickness and other absences

Where a child is absent due to sickness or circumstances beyond the parents' control for more than two weeks or where there are frequent bouts of sickness resulting in absence equalling two weeks or more, you will need to provide your setting with a doctor's certificate to explain your child's absence. This will be used in the discussions between the setting and the local authority so that a decision can be made as to whether funding will be withdrawn.

What agreement will I sign with the nursery?

Parents should be aware of the agreement that they will sign with the setting as part of enrolling their child. This will outline any notice periods that families need to give if they are considering moving their child. It will also outline any late fees that childcare providers may charge for late collections of children.

What happens if I wish to move my child to another childcare provider?

You will need to meet any notice periods that you have agreed to with your childcare provider. If you have to change childcare provider during in a term, the funding for your child will not follow to the new setting (except in exceptional circumstances)

Can I use a childcare setting outside Brent?

You can use settings in other local authorities if that is more convenient for you. The nursery will claim the NEG from its own council.

For further information, please contact Brent Children & Families Information Service on 020 8937 3001 or email cfis@brent.gov.uk

Nursery Education Grant for two year olds

- Parent Fact Sheet

Some families will be entitled to access a nursery education grant place when their child turns two. The application process for this grant differs from the NEG 3 and 4. Brent Council has local conditions for the delivery of this grant by our childcare providers and these are set out below. This factsheet should be read in conjunction with the forthcoming NEG 2 leaflet.

How do I know if my child is eligible for NEG 2?

If you are in receipt of any one of the following you could be eligible.

- Income support (IS) or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190.00 (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (TC 602 Final Award Notice – 2011/2012)
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

You may also be able to access a place if either of the following apply for your child

- They have a special educational need or disability
- They have been in care and/or adopted

Who do I contact to make an application for this grant?

Please contact the Early Years and Family Support Service NEG 2 team on 02089372462 or the Brent Children and Families Information Service on 02089373001 for further information and to make an application

If I meet the eligibility criteria for NEG 2 when would my child be eligible?

Children become eligible for the NEG 2 from the beginning of the term after their second birthday. This means a child born between:

- 1 September and 31 December is eligible from 1 January (the spring term)
- 1 January and 31 March is eligible from 1 April (the summer term)
- 1 April and 31 August is eligible from 1 September (the autumn term).

Is there a termly headcount date for NEG 2?

No – there is no cut off point in each term for parents wishing to access this grant. Families who are eligible can apply any time during in the term following a two year old's birthday.

Where can I get the NEG 2 for my child?

There are a number of NEG 2 approved childcare providers in the borough. These include private, voluntary and council-run nurseries, nursery schools, some children's centres and some childminders.

Contact Brent CFIS (details below) to get a list of eligible settings, or if you cannot find a place with a childcare provider.

How much time will my child get?

The NEG 2 funds up to 15 hours of early education a week up to 38 weeks a year during term time. This means you may be able to choose when your child attends.

Do I need to pay the childcare provider if I am claiming only 15 hours?

No, you should not need to pay the setting any additional fees if you are claiming the free entitlement hours only.

What happens if I want or need more than 15 hours childcare?

If you want or need to pay for extra hours because you work or study, the NEG will be taken off your bill and you will need to pay for the additional hours. You may be able to get extra help to pay for extra hours from other sources of funding. Details can be found on the Brent council website.

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What happens if I wish to move my child to another childcare provider?

You will need to meet any notice periods that you have agreed to with your childcare provider. If you have to change childcare provider during in a term, the funding for your child will not follow to the new setting (except in exceptional circumstances)

Can I use a childcare setting outside Brent?

No – it is not possible to use settings outside of Brent to claim the NEG 2 grant funding.

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