

Cookies on GOV.UK

We use some essential cookies to make this website work.

We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services.

We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services.

[Accept additional cookies](#)

[Reject additional cookies](#)

[View cookies](#)

Guidance

Childcare and education up to 16 years old: Homes for Ukraine

How and when to apply for childcare places and schools.

From: [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#)

Published 16 January 2023

 [Get emails about this page](#)

Contents

- [Childcare](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\)](#)

 [Print this page](#)

Related content

Collection

[Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for guests](#)

Childcare

Childcare and education availability will be different depending on which part of the UK you live in.

England

You can get help with the cost of childcare depending on your circumstances, including:

- 15 free hours of childcare per week for all children aged 3 and 4

- An extra 15 hours of free childcare if you work and your child is aged 3 and 4
- free childcare if your child is 2 years old and you are on a [very low income or receive certain benefits](#) (page not translated).

You may also be able to get money off the cost of childcare if you work or are on Universal Credit.

30 hours free childcare

If your host family already uses the 30 hours free childcare scheme, you can also apply and use the hours if you are eligible.

Both households will be seen as separate, even though you share the same address.

You can read more about the [30 hours free childcare](#) (page not translated).

Tax free childcare

Tax free childcare is another option available for children 0 to 11 years old (or up to 16 years old if your child is disabled).

Through this scheme, for every £8 you put in, the government will add another £2. This money can be used to pay for childcare including:

- breakfast clubs
- after school clubs
- childminders
- nurseries
- playgroups
- nannies
- au-pairs

As long as they are [registered providers](#).

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).

You qualify for this scheme if you are:

- single
- working
- earn a minimum of £152 a week up to a maximum of £100,000 a year

If you have a partner, you can still qualify for this scheme if you both earn a minimum of £152 a week up to a maximum of £100,000 a year.

This can be used alongside the 30 hours free childcare available to people who work.

If you already receive Universal Credit or Tax Credits, and you open a Tax Free Childcare account, you will stop receiving the other benefit.

If you're not sure if this scheme is for you, you can get help, and a free benefits 'check-up' from [Citizens Advice](#) or [independent advice centres](#).

To find out more about your options are, look at [Childcare choices](#).

For more information speak to someone in your local council or answer some questions to [get childcare](#)

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)

A government-funded programme for children who also get free school meals to attend free activities like summer camps. Children who don't get free school meals can pay to attend.

Your local council may also have other organised activities for children during the school holidays. Check their websites for more information.

Wales

You can get help with the cost of childcare including:

- childcare for children aged 3 and 4
- childcare support for parents whilst training or looking for work
- your local Family Information Service (FIS) can give you free advice on childcare

You can find out more about [help paying for childcare](#)

Northern Ireland

You can access a specific amount of free childcare for your children depending on your circumstances.

Read more about [childcare in Northern Ireland](#).

Scotland

In Scotland childcare is free for some children in certain situations.

If your child is 3 or 4 years old, you can get up to 1,140 hours a year of funded early learning and childcare.

This works out as:

- 30 hours a week if taken in term time
- about 22 hours a week if taken over the whole year

If your child is under 3 years old you might be able to access funded early learning, but this depends on your local council. Contact your local council to discuss you and your child's circumstances.

You can find out more information on [early learning and childcare](#).

Education

England

In England, children must start full-time education once they reach school age. This can be on the 31 December, 31 March or 31 August after their fifth birthday, whichever date is directly after their birthday. They must stay in full-time education until they are 16 years old.

The local council supporting you and your family will help you with this.

Schools are open from September until July the following year. This is known as a school year.

The school year is split into terms and there are holidays (when school is closed) before each new term. Your local council will usually have these [dates on their website](#).

You could face legal action or a fine if your children don't attend school or you don't educate them at home.

Read more about [school attendance and absence](#).

Children will go to:

- primary school from 4 years old to 11 years old
- secondary school from 11 years old to 16 years old
- sixth form from 16 years old to 18 years old

There are also sixth form colleges in some areas for young people aged 16 to 18 years old.

Your child or children will be in a specific 'year group' depending on their age:

Child's age	Year
3 to 4	
4 to 5	Reception
5 to 6	Year 1
6 to 7	Year 2
7 to 8	Year 3
8 to 9	Year 4
9 to 10	Year 5
10 to 11	Year 6
11 to 12	Year 7
12 to 13	Year 8
13 to 14	Year 9
14 to 15	Year 10
15 to 16	Year 11

There are different ways children can learn in England:

- in a free, state-funded, school (find out more about the [different types of school](#))
- in an independent school (also known as a private school or public school), which normally charge fees
- at home (known as home education or home schooling)

There are a small number of University Technical Colleges (UTCs) and studio schools that teach children STEM (Science, Technology,

Engineering and Mathematics) focussed skills and technical qualifications that are valued by employers. This is mainly for children aged 14 and older.

You can contact your local council to find state-funded schools in your area and the [admissions criteria](#). Find out what your [local council is](#).

Getting your child into a school (admissions)

September is the beginning of the school year, but it is likely your child or children will start later than this, depending on when you arrive in the UK. This is known as an 'in-year' admission.

In-year admissions

An in-year admission is when you apply for:

- a place in reception or year 7 after the start of the school year
- a place in any other year group at any other time

Ask your local council if you need to apply to the school or to the council for a place for your child in school. Your local council should have a form on their website for in-year admissions.

Some schools will still have places available for in-year admissions, but the more popular schools will probably be full. Your local council can help you find schools with available places in your area.

When your child is offered a place, they will start at the beginning of the next term.

Choosing a school

There are lots of resources to help you choose a school.

You can search for schools near your home by searching on [Get information about schools](#). You can choose to search by distance from your address and type of school.

Every local council publishes an admissions guide on their website listing all the local schools.

You can [compare the performance of the schools you are considering](#). If you want to look at this in more detail all schools will have an Ofsted inspection report (unless the school has only been open for a short time).

Ofsted checks schools in England to make sure that they are teaching well, achieving good grades from their students and looking after a child's overall wellbeing.

Coordinated admissions and when to apply

If your child or children are starting school at the start of the school year, the process is called 'coordinated admissions'. Your local council decides which children go to which school.

To apply for a school place you must complete your local council's Common Application Form (CAF). You will find this on the council's school admissions pages on their website, or you can ask them to send you a copy by post. You will need to say which schools you would prefer for your child.

If your child is 4 or 5 by September

You must apply for a school place in reception by 15 January the year your child should start school.

If your child is 11 by September

You must apply for a school place in year 7 no later than 31 October the year before.

You can say which school you would prefer for your child to go to, but the closer your home is to the school, the more likely your child will be offered a place there. Your child is less likely to be offered a place at their chosen schools if you miss the deadline for applications.

The local council will try to give you a place for the school you would prefer, but if your choice is not available you will be given a place in another school with available places.

You should find out which school your child has been offered a place at on the following dates:

- 1 March the following year for year 7 places
- 16 April the following year for reception class places

How places are decided

Every school has a specific number of places available. If there are more children than there are places available, the school must use their admissions policy to decide who gets a place.

The school's admission policy should be published on their website. Their admission policy will explain what criteria you will need to meet to get a place.

What you might need to show before you are offered a place

Some schools have 'catchment' areas. If you live in the school's catchment area, your child is more likely to be offered a place. You might need to show something, like a letter, that proves your address.

If the school is religious (they may be Church of England, Catholic, Jewish or Muslim for example), they may give priority to children from families who are religious. The school might ask you to fill in an extra application form to work out if you are a member of a particular religion.

You might also be asked for evidence of your child's date of birth when they are offered a place.

If you don't get a place in the school you wanted

You might not get a place in the school you chose.

If this happens, you can ask for your child to be added to the school's waiting list (if they have one available). Your child can attend another school and stay on the waiting list for the school you want, in case a space becomes available.

You must be offered the chance to appeal the decision by the admission authority. The appeal panel is independent from the school and the appeal can be held virtually.

You can ask someone to represent you, or you can present your own case to the panel.

You can appeal for the school you would prefer even if your child is already attending another school.

Read the [guidance about the appeals process](#).

Wales

Parents and carers should contact their local council for information about applying for a school place.

- [primary school places](#)
- [secondary school places](#)
- More information about [school admissions in Wales](#).

Northern Ireland

Every child aged between 4 and 16 is entitled to a school place. If your child is eligible for primary or post-primary school, you must apply for their place.

For more information see [applying for a school place](#)

Scotland

Scotland provides free school education for all children from about 4 and a half years old, up to the age of 18.

Your local council is responsible for providing school education in the area you live. You can find full information on [applying for all school places and placing requests](#).

Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Most schools and colleges are expected to identify and meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

In England, your local council can offer more support and information. You can [find your local council](#).

Scotland

Scotland has a different service to Special Educational Needs & Disability in England (SEND), but your child will still receive support if they need it from [Additional Support for Learning \(ASL\)](#).

Additional Support Needs (ASN) is a term used to describe a wide range of needs. It also includes impact on children from Armed Forces families, such as:

- transitions
- interrupted learning
- dealing with separation and loss

This includes short or long-term needs. ASN in Scotland includes needs defined as SEND in England.

There is a [Scottish advice service for additional support for learning](#). You can use this service to find information about when your child might be entitled to extra support.

Wales

You can read more about [special educational needs: guidance for carers and parents](#).

Northern Ireland

You can read more about [special educational needs](#).

Published 16 January 2023

 [Get emails about this page](#)

 [Print this page](#)

Explore the topic

[Housing and communities](#)

Is this page useful?

Yes

No

[Report a problem with this page](#)

Topics

[Benefits](#)

[Births, death, marriages and care](#)

[Business and self-employed](#)

[Childcare and parenting](#)

[Citizenship and living in the UK](#)

[Crime, justice and the law](#)

[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

Government activity

[Departments](#)

[News](#)

[Guidance and regulation](#)

[Research and statistics](#)

[Policy papers and consultations](#)

[Transparency](#)

[How government works](#)

[Get involved](#)

[Environment and countryside](#)

[Housing and local services](#)

[Money and tax](#)

[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

[Visas and immigration](#)

[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

[Help](#) [Privacy](#) [Cookies](#) [Accessibility statement](#) [Contact](#) [Terms and conditions](#) [Rhestr o Wasanaethau Cymraeg](#)
[Government Digital Service](#)

OGI All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



© Crown copyright