

## STRETCHING THE FREE EARLY YEARS FUNDING ENTITLEMENT – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### Early educational Funding

The Maximum Early Educational Funding for each eligible child is 15 hours per week for a maximum 38 week period. Your child is entitled to access up to 15 hours a week of free part time early year's education from the funding period which follows your child's third birthday (or second birthday if eligible).

Child's Birthday	When Funding Can Start
1 January - 31 March	1 April
1 April - 31 August	1 September
1 September - 31 December	1 January

During the financial year April 2015 – March 2016, school term time amounts to 38 weeks and 3 days. If taking a 'stretched entitlement each of the three funding period begin on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. i.e.; 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1<sup>st</sup> January; therefore your entitlement can be stretched from this date as the school term in most cases would start later in the month, i.e. 6<sup>th</sup>.

#### Flexibility is limited:

Although stretching your child's entitlement will give you greater flexibility, your child may not be able to access their full entitlement of 570 hours across the year, your child's attendance pattern and the dates the provider is closed may affect their entitlement. I.e. setting on school site may close for school development days.

The minimum and maximum session lengths still apply when the entitlement is stretched. The minimum session length is 2.5 hours and the maximum length is 10 hours. If your child just attends on a Monday for 10 hours, the maximum in a 52 week year your child would be able to access would be 520 hours, but in reality the hours will be less due to closure for public and bank holidays.

It is the responsibility of your early year's provider to ensure that you understand how you can access your entitlement across each funding period.

#### What is Stretching?

'Stretching' your child's free early educational place of 570 hours means your child can benefit from attending a childcare provider all year round without the need for you to purchase additional childcare during the school holidays. Instead of taking your funded hours at 15 hours each week for 38 weeks, your child could have 11 hours each week for 51 weeks of the year at a provision offering this opportunity. Or you could stretch your entitlement over one funding period, ie; during the summer holidays.

Examples of stretched models – across the full year:

Per week	51 weeks (11 hours)	47 weeks (12 hours)
Model 1	2 x 5.5 hours per = 561 hours max claim	2 x 6 hours = 564 hours max claim
Model 2	2 x 4 hours + 1 x 3 hours = 561 hours max claim	3 x 4 hours or 4 x 3 hours = 564 max claim
Model 3	1 x 6 hours + 1 x 5 hours = 561 hours max claim	1 x 9 hour + 1 x 3 hour = 564 max claim

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Examples of stretched models – across the funding periods:

<i>Per week</i>	<b>Max period</b>	<b>Summer 2015</b> 195 entitlement	<b>Max period</b>	<b>Autumn 2015</b> 213 entitlement	<b>Max period</b>	<b>Spring 2016</b> 162 entitlement
Model 1	21 weeks 4 days	1 x 9 hour (21 weeks = 189 maximum claim)	16 weeks 4 days	1 x 10 hours + 1 x 3 hours (16 weeks = 208 maximum claim)	13 weeks	2 x 6 hours (13 weeks = 156 hours maximum claim)
<b>If available</b>		+ 1 x 6 hours in 4 day week = 195 maximum claim)		+ 1 x 5 hours in 4 day week = 213 maximum claim)		1 x 6 hours = 162 maximum claim
Model 2		1 x 6 hours + 1x 3 hours (21 weeks = 189 maximum claim)		2 x 5 hours = 1 x 3 hours (16 weeks = 208 maximum claim)		2 x 5 hours + 1 x 3 hours (12 weeks = 156 maximum claim)
<b>If available</b>		+ 1 x 6 hours in 4 day week) = 195 maximum claim)		+ 1 x 5 hours in 4 day week = 213 maximum claim)		+ 1 x 6 or 2 x 3 hours = 162 maximum claim
Model 3		1 x 5 hours (21 weeks + 1 x 4 (21 weeks = 189 maximum claim)		3 x 4.25 hours (16 weeks = 204 hours maximum claim)		4 x 3 hours or 3 x 4 hours (12 weeks – 156 maximum claim)
<b>If available</b>		+ 1 x 6 hours in 4 day week = 195 maximum claim)		+ 1 x 3 hour + 1 x 4 hours in 4 day week = 213 hour max claim)		+ 1 x 6 or 2 x 3 hours = 162 maximum claim)

Please note:

Signing a parental contract at the beginning of a funding period ties you into remaining with that provider (*unless exceptional circumstances arise*) until the end of a funding period. Should you access a stretched entitlement and move providers during a financial year, your provider will calculate the number of hours you have accessed during that year and only the remainder of your 570 hour entitlement will be available at another provider.

If you move to a non-stretching provider the provider will calculate the number of hours you may access a week during the remainder of that financial year.