

Parent Information

How Universal Credit will affect eligibility for Free for 2's from 1 April 2018

What is Free for 2's?

Free for 2's is a Free Early Learning offer of up to 15 hours per week for some two-year-olds in Haringey. Parents/carers are eligible for Free for 2s if they are in receipt of at least one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit - if you and your partner are on a low income from work - [this usually means a combined income of less than £15,400 a year after tax](#)
- Tax Credits and have an income of under £16,190 - **before tax**
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)



- The child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) made under section 324 of the Education Act 1996;
- The child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan prepared under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- The child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) under section 71 of the Social Security and Contributions and Benefits Act 1992;
- The child is looked after by a local authority (under Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989);
- They are no longer looked after by a local authority as a result of an Adoption Order, a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangement Order – within the meaning of Section 8 (1) of the Children Act 1989

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What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit will be replacing many of the current benefits (see list below). Universal Credit is for individuals and families. It is designed to help people with low (or no) income with their basic living expenses and housing costs.

Universal Credit also supports people unable to work due to illness, disability or childcare commitments and those caring for disabled people.

Universal Credit will be replacing the following benefits:

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Working Tax Credit

Also

- Universal Credit is being introduced in stages across the UK.
- You do not need to do anything until you hear from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about moving to Universal Credit, unless you have a change in circumstances.
- Claiming Universal Credit depends on where you live and your personal circumstances.

I am a working parent/carer - how will the changes to Universal Credits affect me if I wish to take up a Free for 2's place?

- Working parents or carers whose child/children were born **on or after 1 January 2016** will **need to meet the Universal Credit earned income threshold** in order to qualify for a Free for 2's place.
- Working parents or carers, whose child/children were born **before 1 January 2016**, are **not subject to the Universal Credit earned income eligibility changes**.

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What do I need to do if my child is already in a Free for 2's place?

You do not need to do anything. Your child met the criteria at the time of application so the changes from 1 April 2018 will not affect your free place.

I want to apply for a Free for 2's place – what do I need to do?

Simply go to Haringey's Free for 2's – Free Early Learning web page for more information or to apply online: www.haringey.gov.uk/freeearlylearning

Note:

- The local authority aims to process all Free for 2 applications within 10 to 15 working days. However, there may be some situations where we need further information, so in these cases, processing may take a little longer than the 10 to 15 working day processing period.
- Once we have processed your Free for 2's application, we will write to you and let you know the outcome.
- Those parents or carers who meet the criteria for a FF2 place will be sent a letter, which contains a unique reference number. They will need to take this letter to their chosen childcare provider in order to access a place.
- You can look up childcare provision in Haringey by visiting our Family Information Service Directory at: www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/family-information-service-directory-fisd you can use the postal search option to filter searches in specific areas.
- OR, you can see or download a copy of our list of Haringey providers registered to offer Free for 2 places here: www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/childcare-costs/free-early-education/free-early-learning-two-year-olds

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How do I find out more about Universal Credit and Free for 2's?

Useful websites

1) GOV.UK – understanding Universal Credit:

www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/new-to-universal-credit/children-and-childcare/

2) GOV.UK – Universal Credit – how to claim:

www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim

- a. Universal Credit helpline for customers who **do not have an online account** - 0800 328 9344
- b. Universal Credit helpline for customers **who have an online account** – 0800 328 5644

3) Childcare Choices

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

4) EntitledTo

www.entitledto.co.uk/help/universal-credit

www.entitledto.co.uk/help/Qualifying-for-the-childcare-costs-element-Universal-Credit

5) Citizens Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/

6) Family and Childcare Trust

www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/childcare-guides

7) Turn2Us

www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation/Bringing-up-a-child

8) Gingerbread

www.gingerbread.org.uk/information/benefits-tax-credits-and-universal-credit/universal-credit/common-questions-about-universal-credit/