



Important funding information and advice for parents at Hordle Explorers Nursery

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are aware that childcare funding information is a vast and often complex subject that can be difficult to understand, particularly for parents starting their journey at a nursery or pre-school setting.

There were some significant changes to funding in April 2024 when we saw the expansion of 2 year old funding, with further changes due to come into effect from September 2025 for this age group. We would urge all families to read the below information carefully as it could have a significant impact on the cost of your childcare.

This letter outlines the possible funding routes that may be open to you and your family, depending upon your individual circumstances. Please check your eligibility for the funding options where appropriate for you. We are always happy to help families navigate funding so please do get in touch if you need any assistance at any time.

What funding options are available to my child?

There are 4 possible funding avenues for children at Hordle Explorers Nursery:

- 2 year old funding for working families - 15 hours, (increasing to 30 hours from September 2025), known as **'Expanded Funding'**
- 2 year old funding for non-working families – 15 hours for parents who meet specific eligibility criteria, known as **'Disadvantaged 2 year old Funding'**
- 3 & 4 year old funding - 15 hours known as **'Universal Funding'**
- 3 & 4 year old funding - 30 hours known as **'Extended Funding'**

Please note that each of the above funding options above have eligibility criteria which must be checked by parents. Childcare providers are unable to undertake these checks on your behalf. For further information on each, please read below

2 year funding – Expanded Funding (15 hours, increasing to 30 hours from September 2025)

From April 2024, eligible working families with 2 year old children are entitled to up to 570 hours of funded childcare per year (15 hours per week delivered over 38 weeks). This funding is available from the term after your child turns 2.

To apply for this funding go to the Government's online childcare service, [Childcare Choices](#).

If your child is eligible, you will be provided with a **unique reference number**. Please keep this reference number safe as you will need to provide this on your EYE funding form, which will be provided to you by Hordle Explorers Nursery.

When to apply for Expanded hours funding

| When your child turns 2 | When your child can get their hours from | Recommended time to apply |
|--|---|---|
| 1 st September to 31 st December | Term starting on or after 1 st January | 15 th October to 30 th November |
| 1 st January to 31 st March | Term starting on or after 1 st April | 15 th January to 28 th February |
| 1 st April to 31 st August | Term starting on or after 1 st September | 15 th June to 31 st July |

You must apply for a code by the end of the month before a new term starts. For example, if the term starts on 1st September you must apply by 31st August. However, we would strongly urge you to apply in plenty of time before this date to ensure that your child will be funded in time. If we do not receive a completed funding form we will have to assume your child is not funded and you will be invoiced in full for your child's hours.

2 year funding – Disadvantaged Funding (15 hours)

Some children may be eligible for 2 year funding from their 2nd birthday. To check your eligibility please follow the link below where you will be able to check the eligibility criteria and make an application:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/childcare/paying-for-childcare/2yearoldoffer>

If your child is eligible, you will be provided with a **unique reference number**. Please advise us of this reference number in writing to hen@hordleprimary.co.uk and we will provide you with a EYE funding form for completion.

3 & 4 year old funding – Universal Funding (15 hours)

From the beginning of the school term following your child's 3rd birthday, all children are entitled to 15 hours of free Early Years Education (EYE) funding, during school term time. This funding is offered automatically from the term after your child turns 3 and you do not need to make an application for this. When your child is eligible, we will provide you with a funding form along with instructions on how to complete this.

3 & 4 year old funding – Extended Funding (additional 15 hours)

In addition to the Universal Funding, working parents may also be eligible to apply for Extended Funding which will enable them to claim an additional 15 hours funding per week providing a total of 30 hours funding.

You can apply for 30 hours funding from when your child is 2 years and 36 weeks old and it must be done before the funding period begins. Failure to do so will mean that you miss out on the opportunity for this additional funding and booked sessions in excess of 15 Universal hours, will be charged at our hourly invoiced rate.

To check your eligibility for 30 hour funding please visit the website below: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare>

When to apply for 30 hours funding

| When your child turns 3 | When they can get 30 hours | Recommended time to apply | Deadline to apply for funding |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 st September to 31 st December | Term starting on or after 1 st January | 15 th October to 30 th November | 30 th December |
| 1 st January to 31 st March | Term starting on or after 1 st April | 15 th January to 28 th February | 30 th March |
| 1 st April to 31 st August | Term starting on or after 1 st September | 15 th June to 31 st July | 30 th August |

Once your application has been approved you will receive a code for 30 hours free childcare. Please keep this reference number safe as you will need to provide this to us on your EYE funding form. It is very important that you regularly check your child's funding eligibility (it is recommended that this should be checked by parents every 3 months as a minimum).

What information will I need to provide to the nursery?

All funded families must complete an **EYE funding form** when your child becomes eligible for any type of funding. This form will be provided to you, along with instructions on how to complete it. Please ensure this completed form is returned to us by the deadline provided at the time to enable us to claim your funding within our allocated funding window. Failure to do so may mean that you are invoiced in full for your child's hours. If your child's hours change throughout the year, it is essential that your form is amended and signed to ensure we remain compliant. If we request that you come into the school office to amend your form please do so at the earliest convenience so that we can make the correct funding claim on behalf of your child.

If you need any additional support with completing the form please do get in touch.

What else do I need to know?

Funded hours restrictions and additional guidance – EYE funding enables nurseries to claim up to 570 hours of Expanded, Disadvantaged and Universal funding (the first 15 hours) and 570 hours of Extended funding (the second 15 hours, for those eligible), totalling up to 1140 hours over a year. However, we are limited on the number of hours we can claim across each term. Furthermore, we can only claim for 38 weeks per academic year and our nursery opens for 39 weeks per year and therefore all funded families will receive an invoice for a minimum of 1 week of nursery fees across the academic year.

An example is as follows:

| Funding period | Funding period dates | Maximum funded hours per week | Number of weeks in term | Maximum Universal hours | Maximum Extended hours |
|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Autumn | 1 st September – 31 st December | 15 hours Universal, 15 hours Extended | Usually 14 weeks** | 210 hours | 210 hours |
| Spring | 1 st January – 31 st March | 15 hours Universal, 15 hours Extended | Usually 12 weeks** | 180 hours | 180 hours |
| Summer | 1 st April – 31 st August | 15 hours Universal, 15 hours Extended | Usually 12 weeks** | 180 hours | 180 hours |
| Totals | | | 38 weeks** | 570 hours | 570 hours |

(Information correct as of April 2024)

*** Please note that the maximum number of weeks we can claim per term does vary year on year and when your child exceeds the above hours within the term, parents will be charged per hour at our standard hourly rates. Our current hourly rate is £7.50 + £1 consumables fee for every funded hour (prices applicable as of September 2024). Please see below for further information on the consumables fee arrangement.*

What other charges am I expected to pay?

Deposit

A refundable deposit of £50 will be charged to all families at the point of making an application to join Hordle Explorers Nursery and must be received before we can proceed with the next steps of your application. The exception to this is families who are eligible for Disadvantaged 2 year old Funding, who will not be charged a deposit.

Once your child joins us, this deposit will be credited to your first invoice. If for any reason your child does not join us, this deposit will not be refunded unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please contact the Nursery Business Manager in this instance.

Consumables Fee

A Consumables fee of £1 per funded hour will apply to all funded hours under the Expanded, Universal and Extended funding options. It is not applied to those eligible for Disadvantaged 2 year old Funding.

Please note if your child exceeds their funded hours, these hours will continue to be invoiced at our usual rates. You will not be charged the Consumables fee on these additional hours, only the hours where funding has been applied. It is therefore exceptionally important that you check your eligibility at the earliest opportunity if you believe this may apply to your child.

Consumables examples:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Snacks | Nappy bags | Wipes | Antibacterial wipes/hand gel | Disposable gloves |
| First Aid supplies | Clinical waste collection | Pushchairs | Spare clothes/footwear | Spare wet weather gear/footwear |
| Blankets/sheets for naps | Cleaning materials | Art supplies | Craft materials | Stationery supplies |
| Curriculum resources & materials | Hygiene and personal care products | Kitchen utensils | Administration costs | Other sundry items |

Hourly rates

Any non-funded hours are charged at our hourly rate of £7.50. This rate applies until August 2025. Hourly rates are reviewed annually and at least one term's notice is provided to families.

Late Surcharge

Please note that any late payments of nursery fees will incur a charge of £20. Please make a note of invoice due dates and ensure that payments are made in a timely manner.

My child attends more hours than we receive funding for – what other payment options are available to us?

• Tax Free Childcare

In addition to the above funding options, parents can also get up to £500 every 3 months to help with the costs of childcare through the Government run **Tax Free Childcare scheme**. Your eligibility depends on whether you are working, your income (and that of your partner), your child's age and circumstances.

For further information on this scheme, how to check your eligibility and set up an account, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>.

If eligible, you will be provided with a unique **Tax Free Childcare reference number**. This must be provided to us before you make any payments to Hordle Explorers Nursery via this account. Please email your unique reference number to hen@hordleprimary.co.uk with the subject title "TFC reference".

Please note that payments to us via the TFC scheme can take up to 5 working days to reach us so we would kindly ask that payments are made in readiness for our nursery fees due dates (for further information on invoice due dates please see below).

• Childcare vouchers

Although this scheme is closed to new applications, some employers still run childcare voucher schemes for their employees. If you joined one of these schemes on or before 4th October 2018 you might be able to keep getting vouchers which you may be able to use to make payment towards HEN fees. Please provide your Childcare voucher company to us in writing to hen@hordleprimary.co.uk and we will advise next steps.

Payments to Hordle Explorers Nursery

Any nursery fees due over and above Early Years Education funded hours or via the alternative routes mentioned above are due to Hordle Explorers Nursery via our online payment system, Scopay. Our current hourly rate is £7.50.

When your child joins Hordle Explorers Nursery, you will be provided with your **Scopay account letter**, which provides instructions on how to set up your account. We would kindly ask all parents to set up their account, as this system is used to pay the Consumables fee as well as events and ad-hoc sessions where applicable.

You will receive a termly invoice from Hordle Explorers Nursery, payment for which is due in the following way:

Either

100% due by the beginning of the term (payment due dates are always included with your invoice)

Or

50% due by the beginning of the term and 50% due at half term.

Exact payment due dates are always included with your invoice. We would respectfully ask that parents make a note of these dates and ensure timely payments are arranged.

We are here to help!

We fully appreciate that childcare funding can be a minefield for parents but we hope this letter has offered some clarification on some of the options that may be available to you.

We are here to help and support families to make nursery fees manageable so please do contact us if you have any questions at all relating to funding, fees and payment options.

Kind regards,

Hannah Rook

Nursery Business Manager

Hordle Explorers Nursery

**HORDLE
EXPLORERS**

Hordle CE (VA) Primary School & Nursery, Hordle Lane, Hordle, Lymington SO41 0FB
Tel: 01425 611657 e-mail: adminoffice@hordle.hants.sch.uk www.hordle.hants.sch.uk

'That they may have life; life in all its fullness' John 10:10

