

1. The Plain English Version

The Government funds a set number of free childcare hours for children who meet the eligibility criteria. These hours cover the cost of basic early education — not the full cost of running a nursery place.

Any hours your child attends above their funded entitlement are charged at our standard private rates. Funded hours and any paid hours always appear as separate lines on your invoice so you can see exactly what is and isn't covered.

Funded hours are a contribution from the Government towards the cost of your child's early education. Circadian Nest Nursery is not permitted to charge you anything for the funded hours themselves — but hours above your entitlement are charged at our standard rates.

2. Who Is Entitled to What

Entitlement depends on your child's age and your family's circumstances. Here is a summary of every scheme we offer:

Scheme	Age	Free hours	Who qualifies?	Code needed?
Universal free hours	3–4 yrs	570 hrs/year (~15 hrs/wk term-time)	Every child aged 3 or 4 — no conditions, no application needed	No — automatic
Working parent 30 hours	3–4 yrs	Up to 1,140 hrs/year (~30 hrs/wk term-time)	Both parents working, each earning at least NMW for 16 hrs/wk but under £100k/year	Yes — 11-digit HMRC code
Early Learning for 2-year-olds	2 yrs	570 hrs/year (~15 hrs/wk term-time)	Families receiving Universal Credit, Income Support, or other qualifying benefits. Also looked-after children and certain SEN needs.	Yes — eligibility code via OCC portal
Working parent 30 hours (2-year-olds)	2 yrs	Up to 1,140 hrs/year (~30 hrs/wk term-time)	Both parents working — same earnings criteria as the 3–4 year old working parent scheme	Yes — 11-digit HMRC code
Working parent — under 2s	9–23 mths	Up to 1,140 hrs/year (~30 hrs/wk term-time)	Both parents working — same earnings criteria as above. Child must be at least 9 months old on first day of term.	Yes — 11-digit HMRC code

Important — 2-year-olds

There is no automatic or universal entitlement for 2-year-olds. Funded places for 2-year-olds are only available under the specific schemes above. If you are unsure whether your child qualifies, please ask us or visit childcarechoices.gov.uk.

Not sure if you qualify? Check your eligibility and get your HMRC code at childcarechoices.gov.uk — it takes around 10 minutes.

3. How Your Hours Work in Practice

Term-time funding at Circadian Nest Nursery

We deliver funded hours on a term-time basis across 38 weeks of the year. This means your child receives their full statutory entitlement — 15 or 30 hours per week — during term time.

During school holiday weeks, your child's funded hours do not apply. If you book holiday weeks, each day is charged at our standard private rate: £50 for a half day, plus £9.44 for each extra hour (booked in whole hours), up to the full-day rate of £85.

Scheme	Total hrs/year	Per week (term-time, 38 wks)	Holiday weeks
Universal 15 hrs (3–4yr olds)	570 hours	15 hrs/week	Private rate applies
Working parent 30 hrs (3–4yr olds)	Up to 1,140 hours	Up to 30 hrs/week	Private rate applies
Early Learning for 2-year-olds	570 hours	15 hrs/week	Private rate applies
Working parent 30 hrs (2-year-olds)	Up to 1,140 hours	Up to 30 hrs/week	Private rate applies
Working parent — under 2s	Up to 1,140 hours	Up to 30 hrs/week	Private rate applies

Any hours your child attends above their funded entitlement are charged at our standard private rates, regardless of which funded scheme you are on.

4. Worked Examples Using Circadian Nest Nursery Fees

Our standard full day rate is £85, covering 08:30–17:30 (9 hours). Here is how funded hours affect your invoice in practice:

Example A — Mia, age 3 | Universal 15 hours | 3 morning sessions per week

Mia attends 3 mornings per week, 08:30–13:30 (5 hours per session). Her universal 15-hour entitlement covers all 3 sessions in full during term time.

Invoice line	Hours	Amount
Government funded hours (universal 15 hrs) — term-time only	3 × 5 hrs = 15 hrs	£0.00 (FREE)
Weekly total (term-time)	15 hrs	£0.00/week

*If Mia's parents want her to stay beyond 13:30 on any day, additional hours are available at £9.44/hr — entirely optional.
Holiday weeks: 3 half days at £50 = £150/week (private rate).*

Example B — Noah, age 3 | Working parent 30 hours | 5 morning sessions per week

Noah attends 5 mornings per week, 08:30–14:30 (6 hours per session). His 30-hour entitlement covers all 5 sessions in full during term time.

Invoice line	Hours	Amount
Government funded hours (30-hr scheme) — term-time only	5 × 6 hrs = 30 hrs	£0.00 (FREE)
Weekly total (term-time)	30 hrs	£0.00/week

*If Noah's parents want him to stay beyond 14:30 on any day, additional hours are available at £9.44/hr — entirely optional.
Holiday weeks: 5 days at £59.44 (a half day plus one extra hour) = £297.20/week (private rate).*

Example C — Arlo, age 2 | Working parent 30 hours | 5 morning sessions per week

Arlo attends 5 mornings per week, 08:30–14:30 (6 hours per session). His 2-year-old working parent 30-hour entitlement covers all 5 sessions in full during term time.

Invoice line	Hours	Amount
Government funded hours (2yr working parent 30-hr scheme) — term-time only	5 × 6 hrs = 30 hrs	£0.00 (FREE)
Weekly total (term-time)	30 hrs	£0.00/week

*If Arlo's parents want him to stay beyond 14:30 on any day, additional hours are available at £9.44/hr — entirely optional.
Holiday weeks: 5 days at £59.44 (a half day plus one extra hour) = £297.20/week (private rate).*

5. What Funded Hours Do and Don't Cover

✓ Funded hours COVER	× Funded hours do NOT cover
Your child's early education and learning activities	Hours above your entitlement — charged at £9.44/hr
Play, development and curriculum delivery	Holiday week attendance — charged at the standard private rate (half day plus whole extra hours, up to £85 a day)
Access to our qualified practitioners	Nappies, wipes, sun cream or other consumables
The hours within your entitlement during term time — nothing more, nothing less	Trips / optional activities
	Registration fee (only charged if private hours are taken)
	Holding deposit (refunded in full by the headcount date in the term in which the funded place is taken)

6. Your Responsibilities

Your responsibility	What to do
Get your code	If your scheme requires an HMRC code, you must obtain it before your child's funded place can start. Visit childcarechoices.gov.uk to apply. It takes around 10 minutes.
Renew on time	HMRC codes must be reconfirmed every 3 months — before 31 March, 31 August and 31 December each year. Renewing on time is your responsibility.
Tell us if things change	If your employment status or income changes and you may no longer qualify, please let

Your responsibility	What to do
	us know as soon as possible.
Holiday attendance	If you want your child to attend during school holidays, please let us know so we can confirm their place. Holiday sessions are charged at our standard private rate.
If your code lapses	Funded hours pause from the start of the following term until the code is renewed. Any hours your child attends while funding is paused, or any funding reclaimed by the council because of a lapsed code or incorrect information, are charged at our standard private rate.

Questions about your funding entitlement?

If you have questions about your entitlement, please email us at info@circadiannest.co.uk.

childcarechoices.gov.uk | manager@circadiannest.co.uk