Information on 3 and 4 Year old Funding

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year. This applies until they reach compulsory school age (the following their fifth birthday).

Free early education places are available at a range of early settings including nursery schools and classes, day nurseries, play groups, pre-schools and child minders.

The free early Years education entitlement can be taken flexibly within the following limits:

- The full 15 hours have to be taken over at least two days per week and a minimum of five days per week.
- A minimum of 3 hours can be taken in one day,
- A maximum of 10 hours in on day.

You can take the free entitlement at up to two providers. The basic offering is three hours over five days a week, or five hours over three days a week, but many providers will allow you to take the provision flexibly, in a pattern that meets your needs. For example, your child could have nine hours at a nursery class and six hours with a pre-school, day nursery, child minder or independent school over the course of 2 days or more.

When can my child access a place?

A Child born in the period	Will become eligible for a free place
1st April – 31st August	1st September following child's third birthday
1st September – 31st December	1st January following child's third birthday
1st January – 31st March	1st April following child's third birthday