Grandir UK

Our guide to childcare funding

Learn how you can receive support to help with childcare costs

July 2026

Contents

Welcome to Grandir UK 3

Understanding childcare funding 4

Universal childcare funding 5

Government supported childcare funding 5

Working family childcare funding 6

Grandir UK childcare fees 7

Everyday Essentials 8

Apply for funding (Universal) 9

Apply for funding (working family) 10

Tax-Free Childcare 11

Claiming Tax-Free Childcare 12

Childcare funding FAQs 13

Helpful resources 14

Get in touch with us 15

Welcome to Grandir UK

Every child deserves a nurturing environment to grow. At Grandir UK, we know this more than anyone.

This is why we pride ourselves in being able to create a family where we can all grow together!

With over 99 nurseries across the UK, our incredible family offers the perfect place for your child to begin their exciting journey of learning, growth and discovery.

Nothing is more important to us than giving your child the best start in life, and we believe that every family should receive the support they need to ensure this is available to them.

We understand that childcare costs are a significant factor for many families when it comes to their child's learning. As such, we've made it our mission to make sure every family knows where and how they can gain the necessary support to put their child's development first.

Throughout this eBook, we will explain exactly how funding for childcare works, from the types of funding available and what they entail.

When you're part of the Grandir UK family, what's ours is yours - from the knowledge we have of childcare support to the abundance of care, education and guidance that we can't wait to share with your child!

Our family of brands

The Grandir UK Collection · Kiddi Caru Day Nurseries · Dicky Birds Day Nurseries · Rushcliffe Day Nurseries · Chiswick House & Kensington Place Day Nurseries & Preschools · Toad Hall Day Nursery · Lake House Day Nursery · DayDream Day Nursery · The Wishing Tree Children's Nursery · Pippins Montessori Day Nursery and Forest School · Kingsmead Day Nursery · little cubs Academy · Head Start Day Nursery · Puddleduck Day Nursery · Poppet's House Nursery · First Place Nurseries

Understanding childcare funding

Whilst it may appear complex at first, we're here to make childcare funding simple to understand.

Essentially, the government provide schemes that allow children to enjoy the wonders and amazement of education at a lower cost. This is achieved through funded hours of childcare.

There are three childcare funding programmes that are offered:

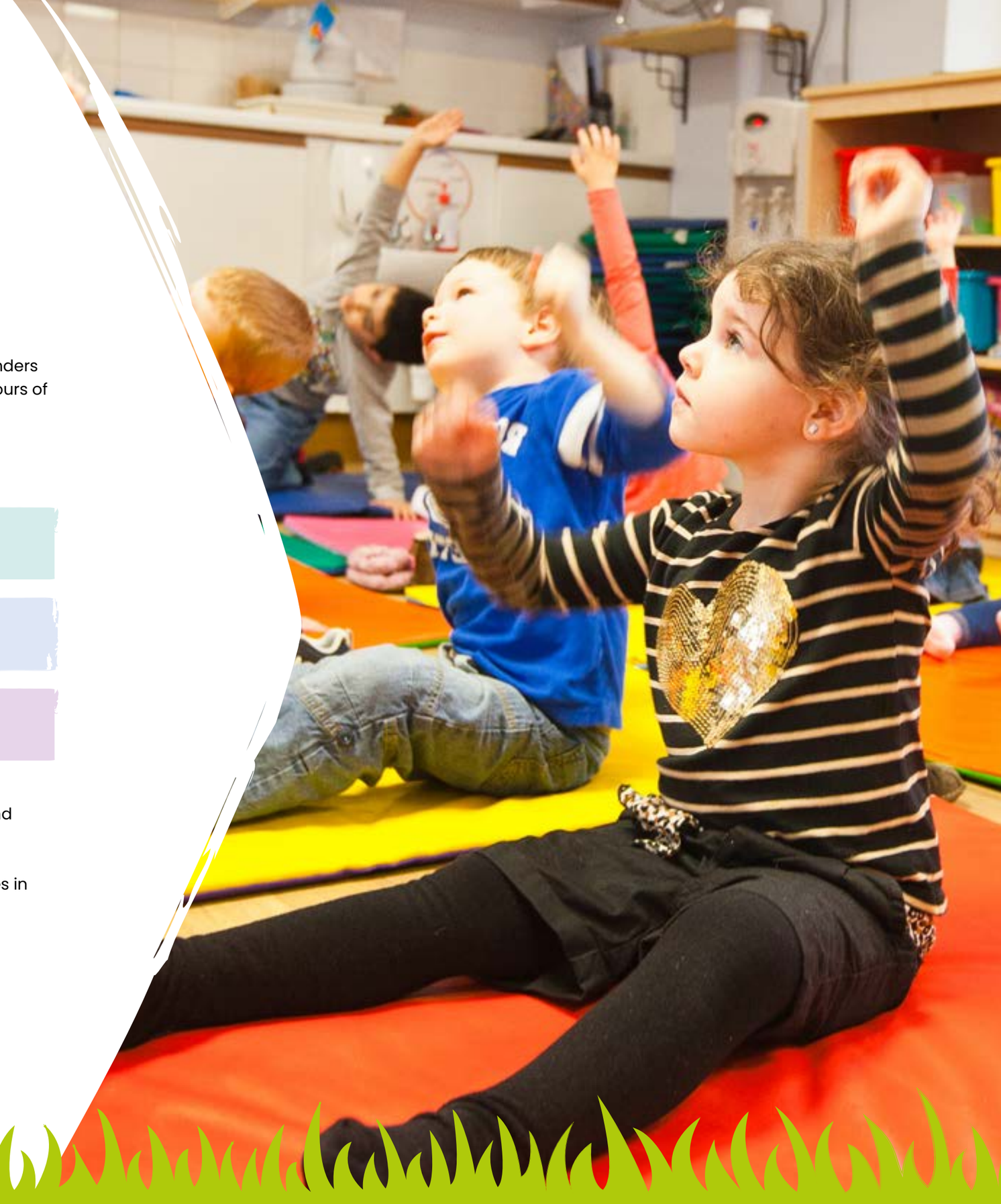
1. **Universal childcare funding**

2. **Early Learning for 2 year olds funding**
   For those receiving some form of support and certain benefits

3. **Working family childcare funding**

All of these programmes offer a different amount of funded hours of childcare and have different levels of eligibility for children and parents.

Don't worry... we're about to take you through both childcare funding programmes in detail, so grasping these schemes will feel like a piece of cake!



Universal childcare funding

What is the universal childcare funding programme?

This government programme offers funding for 3 and 4-year-olds across England, where they're entitled to 15 hours of nursery education per week across 38 weeks during term time.

Who is eligible for this scheme?

All 3 and 4-year-olds across England qualify for this scheme. The universal entitlement begins the term after your child's 3rd birthday, and ends when they reach the compulsory age for school.

A little more detail

We understand that 15 funded hours, while helpful, may not fully align with the childcare needs of every family, and you may want your child to attend nursery more often. After all, we at Grandir UK know that a solid routine and freedom of access to development and educational resources are vital for your child's early life! Therefore, we offer additional, non-funded hours to fit in with your schedule which are referred to as private hours. For more information on this, speak with your chosen Grandir UK nursery or request a pricing schedule from our expert Parent Engagement team and they can send it straight to your inbox.

Good to know...Grandir UK is a full day care provider therefore we have taken the option to stretch the funding across the year. If you are eligible for 15 hours of universal childcare funding, we spread your funded hours evenly across the weeks our nurseries are open. This way, you can enjoy consistent support with your childcare costs all year round.

You may also be entitled to other government schemes and incentives alongside universal childcare funding. To find out what is available to you and your family, head over to Best Start In Life for eligibility and up-to-date information.

Early Learning for 2 year olds funding

What is Early Learning for 2 year olds funding?

Although universal childcare funding begins after your child turns 3, you may be eligible to receive 15 hours of funded childcare per week for your 2-year-old.

Who is eligible for this scheme?

To receive this funding, you must be receiving additional government benefits, which can include:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Universal Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- The child receives Disability Living Allowance or has Special Educational Needs (SEND)
- You receive the guaranteed element of Pension Credit

Children will also qualify for Early Learning for 2 year olds funding if they have been adopted, have a kinship or guardianship order, or are being looked after by a Local Authority.

A little more detail

You can check your eligibility for Early Learning for 2 year old funding here. These sessions have no additional charges and are subject to availability and could be subject to change, therefore please always check with your local Grandir UK nursery.

Working family childcare funding

What is the working family childcare funding programme?

The third funding programme is for eligible working families across England, offering 15 or 30 hours of funded childcare spread evenly across nursery weeks for consistent year-round support.

Who is eligible for this scheme?

This scheme is only for qualifying working families where you and your partner meet the following criteria:

- You're both working at least 16 hours a week
- You each earn a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage (NMW) or National Living
- You need to earn less than £100,000 to qualify

A little more detail

Both parents will need to apply for this scheme if you're married, in a civil partnership, or unmarried but living together.

We understand that 30 funded hours, whilst helpful, may not fully align with the childcare needs of every family. At Grandir UK, we know that a solid routine and access to development and educational resources are vital for your child's early life.

That's why we offer additional, non-funded hours, referred to as private hours, to fit around your schedule. For more information, speak with your chosen Grandir UK nursery or request a pricing schedule from our People Engagement team.

Good to know...

If you're eligible for 15 or 30 hours of working family childcare funding, we spread your funded hours evenly across the weeks our nurseries are open, giving you consistent support with childcare costs all year.

There are other Government schemes and incentives alongside working family childcare funding which you may be entitled to. Head over to Best Start In Life for eligibility and up-to-date information and to find out what is available for you and your family.

At a glance childcare funding

Here's a quick glance to summarise what childcare funding you may be entitled to and what this entails:

	9 months +	2 year olds	3 & 4 year olds	Stretched hours
Universal (All parents)	-	-	**15 hours**	**Yes**
Working families (Who qualify)	**30 hours**	**30 hours**	**30 hours**	**Yes**
Early Learning for 2 year olds funding	-	**15 hours**	-	**Yes**

Grandir UK childcare fees

At Grandir UK, your child's well-being is at the heart of everything we do. From high-quality care and welcoming facilities to enriching experiences and a safe, secure environment, we make sure every day with us is the best it can be.

Understanding our fees

Our fees are made up of three parts: government-funded, private hours and our Everyday Essentials package. Most families will have a combination of these, so we've kept everything clear and transparent to help you understand exactly what's included.

The specific rates will vary with each nursery, but the breakdown below illustrates our fees and what this might look like.

A 4-day place at Grandir UK using 22 hours of funding

Nursery opening hours: 8 am to 6 pm – total of 40 hours of childcare

Core provision

Funded hours

22 hours at no charge

Private hours

18 hours charged at the individual nursery rate

Everyday Essentials

4 days

Everyday Essential package for all those lovely extras highlighted on page 8

Our discounts:

You'll be thrilled to hear that at Grandir UK, we offer some great discounts to help support you with your childcare costs even further!

+ Our full-time discount

When you send your child to join our Grandir UK family on a full-time basis – meaning five full-day sessions a week – you'll automatically receive a fantastic discount.

+ Our extra sibling discount

If you have more than one child attend one of our Grandir UK nurseries, you can receive up to 10% discount on your eldest child's standard sessions.

How are your fees calculated?

To ensure you receive a consistent monthly invoice, we calculate your annual total and divide it into 12 equal payments.

Everyday Essentials

Government funding for early years education provides basic childcare for eligible children but doesn't cover meals, snacks, nappies, wipes, suncream, high-quality resources, or extra-curricular activities.

We believe early years education should be rich and engaging. To help us maintain high standards and make life easier for families, we include a small contribution called **Everyday Essentials** in our fees. This ensures children have everything they need for a happy, safe, and enriching nursery experience—with seasonal menus and exciting activities that support their development and give them the very best start in life.

Everyday Essentials ensures:

- **Consistency and quality** – All children receive the same high-quality care items and learning materials.
- **Smooth daily routines** – Staff can focus on caring and educating, not tracking down supplies.
- **Enhanced experiences** – We can plan exciting activities and learning opportunities with everything ready to go!

Please note: If you are unable or unwilling to fund your Catering, Care Products or Enrichment Experiences, please do make an appointment to discuss with the Nursery Manager. We are committed to working with you to find a suitable way forward. Fully funded sessions are available without any additional charges.

1. Catering and Nutrition

Our nursery menus are thoughtfully created, ensuring every meal is nutritious, balanced, and age appropriate. We cater to all individual dietary needs, including vegetarian, vegan, and allergy-specific requirements.

All meals, snacks and drinks between meals including:

Breakfast: A selection of bagels, toast, crumpets, yogurt and cereals.

Lunch: A cooked meal with dessert

Tea: A cooked meal with a snack

(All meals, snacks and drinks are sourced and prepared by our experienced nursery chefs)

2. Enrichment experiences

Our comprehensive education programmes focus on nurturing each child's curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking skills. From our baby rooms to preschool, we ensure a balanced, enriching environment with tailored activities to support developmental milestones.

Enrichment experiences include:

Boogie Mites, Sing and Sign, Sow & Grow, Health & Self, Make & Bake; Innovate & Investigate (Early Years PE and Forest School where applicable)

Educational Community visits and trips: Multigenerational visits, library, high street, places of importance and more!

3. Consumables

We are committed to providing high-quality essential care products and maintaining rigorous hygiene standards to ensure safe, reliable, and comfortable everyday care for all children.

Care products could include:

Nappies and wipes for children who require them, chosen for their comfort, reliability, and skin-friendly materials.

High-quality, non-toxic, and child-friendly sun cream, applied by our trained Nursery Practitioners to protect delicate skin during outdoor play and activities.

Every product we use is chosen with safety, quality, and children's health in mind and will differ per nursery.

Applying for funding

Now you know what childcare funding is available, we'll now show you how and when you need to apply for your funding.

This is dependent on several factors, ranging from the type of scheme you're applying for, to the age of your child.

But don't worry – we've broken it down for you.

Universal childcare funding for 3 & 4-year-olds

How to apply - With universal childcare funding, you simply need to contact your chosen Grandir UK nursery and our friendly team will walk you through the process.

This often involves you simply showing proof of your child's age for eligibility – such as a passport or birth certificate and completing a parent declaration form which gives the nursery permission to claim. You do not require a code.

It's as easy as that!

When to apply -The universal childcare funding starts the term after your child turns 3, so you should be funded from:

Your child turns 3 between 1st September and 31st December	Funded from 1st January – Spring term
Your child turns 3 between 1st January and 31st March	Funded from 1st April – Summer term
Your child turns 3 between 1st April and 31st August	Funded from 1st September – Autumn term

Free entitlement for 2-year-olds change to Early Learning for 2 year olds funding

If you're receiving government benefits and are eligible for Early Learning for 2 year olds funding, you should contact your local authority to confirm this.

You can then show written confirmation from your local authority to your chosen Grandir UK nursery to begin receiving your funded hours the following term.

If you think you might be eligible but haven't received confirmation, contact your local authority or speak to our Grandir UK nursery team who can put you in touch with the right contact.

When to apply -The childcare funding for your 2-year-old starts the term after your child turns 2, so you should be funded from:

Your child turns 2 between 1st September and 31st December	Funded from 1st January – Spring term
Your child turns 2 between 1st January and 31st March	Funded from 1st April – Summer term
Your child turns 2 between 1st April and 31st August	Funded from 1st September – Autumn term

Applying for funding

Working family childcare funding

How to apply - Applying for working family childcare funding is slightly more complex, but our simple guide will show you how to do this step-by-step:

1. **Check the government website to see if you're eligible for the funding:** https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker

2. **If you think you're eligible, apply on the government website here:** https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working

3. **Provide the necessary information on the application, which includes:**

- Your National Insurance number
- The UK birth certificate reference number of any children in your application
- The date you started or are due to start work

The application usually takes 20 minutes to complete. You may find out if you're eligible straight away, but this could take up to 7 days.

4. **Once approved, you'll receive an eligibility code and account for your childcare funding.**

5. **Give your eligibility code to your chosen Grandir UK nursery, along with your National Insurance number and child's date of birth. Your childcare funding should then start the following term!**

6. **You must reconfirm your eligibility for the funding every three months.**

Simply log in to your childcare account to check and confirm your details, to ensure you receive the funding for the following term.

When to apply - This all depends on the working family childcare funding programmes you are applying for.
The table below shows when you can access this funded support from when you child turns 9 months old:

Your child turns 9 months old between:	You can access the funding from:
1st January and 31st March	Term starting on or after 1st April
1st April and 31st August	Term starting on or after 1st September
1st September and 31st December	Term starting on or after 1st January

Note: You must apply for your working family code before the start of term.

Tax-Free Childcare

As well as receiving any of the funding programmes, you may also be eligible for Tax-Free Childcare!

What is Tax-Free Childcare?

This particular scheme is to help working families with the costs of childcare, where the government pay additional funds to your childcare provider.

How does It work?

You're able to set up an online childcare account that's used to pay for your childcare – including nurseries, childminders, nannies, after-school clubs and play schemes.

For every £8 you pay into the account, the government will pay in an additional £2.

You can receive support of up to £500 every 3 months for each child, which equates to £2,000 per year. If your child has a disability, this can go up to £1,000 every 3 months, totalling £4,000 per year.

Who is eligible?

To receive Tax-Free Childcare, you (or you and your partner) must:

- Be working
- Earn an average weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage (NMW) or National Living Wage (NLW)
- Earn less than £100,000 individually each per year
- Work in the UK

You may still be eligible if:

- You're on sick or annual leave
- You're on shared parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave and you're going back to work within 31 days of the date you first applied
- You or your partner are not working, but receive certain benefits

Your child must:

- Be under 12 years old – they stop being eligible on 1st September after their 11th birthday.
- Usually live with you
- Be your biological child or adopted child – foster children **are not** eligible

If your child is disabled, they may receive a higher amount if:

- They receive benefits such as Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), or Armed Forces Independence Payment
- They are certified as blind or severely sight-impaired

You cannot use Tax-Free Childcare together with:

- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Childcare vouchers

Claiming Tax-Free Childcare

Here's our step-by-step walkthrough of how to claim Tax-Free Childcare:

1.

Find out if you are eligible to receive Tax-Free Childcare on the government website here:

https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/childcare-early-years-education/Tax-Free-childcare

2.

If you think you're eligible, you can then apply online on the government website here:

https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-Tax-Free-childcare

3.

Fill in the necessary information. To use this service for the first time, you'll need:

- A Government Gateway account – if you don't already have one, you can set one up using this service https://www.gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account
- Your National Insurance number
- Access to a mobile phone or landline
- One or more of the following – your UK Passport, proof of receipt of tax credits, P60 or a recent payslip

You can then select Grandir UK as your childcare provider!

4.

Once your childcare account is set up, you can then begin depositing money. This can be done with a debit card but is quicker via standing order or direct bank transfer.

For every £8 you deposit into the account, you'll automatically receive an additional £2, up to the value of £2,000 per child per year. If your child has a disability, this can go up to £4,000.

When it shows as 'available', you can begin paying this money to your childcare provider.

Anyone can contribute to the account on your behalf, and should you no longer wish to pay into the account, you can withdraw any money you've built up. However, this will mean the government contribution will also be withdrawn.

5.

You can now pay your childcare provider using the money in your childcare account.

Please make sure your childcare fees are paid correctly either on or before the first day of each month.

You will receive a unique reference number for each eligible child which you must provide to us, so we can allocate each payment to the correct child's fees.

6.

Make sure you log into your account and confirm your details every 3 months to ensure you continue receiving government support if you're eligible.

You'll be sent a reminder 4 weeks before the reconfirmation deadline to ensure you can access your account in time.

Childcare funding FAQs

Do all of your Grandir UK nurseries offer childcare funding?

Yes. All of our Grandir UK nurseries offer childcare funding, because we've made it our mission to support you and your children as much as we can!

Contact your chosen Grandir UK nursery to learn more about their childcare funding process.

What if my circumstances change and I'm no longer eligible?

If you're no longer eligible to receive childcare funding, you must immediately inform your chosen Grandir UK nursery and ensure your child's fees are paid in full on or before the first date of every month. (If you're accessing Working families funding, you may be eligible for a grace period-your nursery can check this for you.)

Are your fees the same for every nursery in the UK?

Our fees differ across all our Grandir UK nurseries, due to various things such as location, running costs, and additional benefits, for example.

However, we guarantee a superior and magical experience for every child at every nursery in our Grandir UK family.

Can I receive discounts on top of my childcare funding?

Yes. If you're eligible for any of our Grandir UK discounts, these will be applied to your private hours and everyday essentials package.

Speak to your chosen Grandir UK nursery for more information.

Do holidays impact my child's funded hours?

Holiday time shouldn't impact your child's funded hours if your time away is under 2 weeks. If you plan on being away for longer than this, contact your chosen Grandir UK nursery to check if the funding can continue.

I've missed the deadline. Can I still receive funding for the term?

Unfortunately, no. If you've missed the deadline of the final date to apply for next-term funding, you will have to wait until the term afterwards to receive the funded hours.

As such, please make sure you check your eligibility and apply for funding in good time so you can receive the support you need for childcare costs.

Can I apply for working family childcare funding as well as Tax-Free Childcare?

Yes, if you are eligible for both. If you want to apply for both working family childcare funding and Tax-Free Childcare, you can do so here: https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working.

Can funded hours be rolled over into the next term?

No, they cannot. However, we can stretch your hours across the year to ensure you receive the support you need in a more continuous way, and that your child has a stable routine when part of our Grandir UK family.

We often get asked why families cannot bring in their own food for their children, and this is why:

We promote the health and well-being of children by offering balanced and nutritious meals and are committed to accommodating children with food allergies and dietary restrictions therefore due to safety concerns and to ensure all childcare are kept safe, we do not allow food to be brought into our nurseries.

All of the information is correct as of the date of publication. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our team at Grandir UK.

Helpful resources

At Grandir UK, we love learning and believe there's always more knowledge to be shared - and we apply this to our parents too!

That's why we've put together some helpful resources we think can answer any questions you might still have or provide further clarity on anything you need. The more support you receive, the better!

The Best Start in Life parent hub

Best Start in Life brings together trusted information and support from pregnancy through your child's early years and beyond, including childcare support.

https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

Government Gateway

Access the website to sign into or set up your Government Gateway account for childcare.

https://www.access.service.gov.uk/login/signin/creds

Grandir UK website

Our website is a great place to find all the latest information on things from our childcare funding and recent news to our policies and our upcoming events.

https://www.grandiruk.com/parent-hub/our-childcare-discounts

Get in touch with us

Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any more questions, or simply want to clear anything up about our childcare funding.

parentengagement@grandiruk.com
0800 028 4500
www.grandiruk.com