



Help with childcare costs

There are a range of schemes available to help parents with childcare costs, which support parents to take up training and employment and enable children to experience an enriching childcare environment. Numerous studies and local evidence show that high quality childcare and early education supports children's development and prepares them to thrive at school and in later life.

2 years

Parents are eligible for free 15 hours childcare and early education for 2 year olds if they are out of work, or if they are in work but earning less than £16,190 per year, or if their child has special educational needs or disabilities, is looked after or adopted.

You can see a full list of the eligibility criteria and apply online at:

www.islington.gov.uk/free2

3 and 4 years

All 3 and 4 year olds can get 15 hours a week (up to 570 hours a year) free early education with a registered childcare provider (nursery or childminder). Parents can start using the scheme the term after their child turns 3.

From September 2017, some working parents will be able to get an additional 15 hours free (30 hours per week in total).

30 hours free childcare and tax-free childcare

30 hours free childcare and tax-free childcare are new government schemes to help working parents with the cost of childcare. To qualify, parents must be in work and each earning the equivalent of 16 hours per week on the national minimum wage (on average), and not more than £100,000 each per year. The scheme is also open to self-employed parents.

30 hours free childcare is for 3 and 4 year olds attending registered early years providers (school nurseries, children's centres, private and voluntary sector nurseries and childminders).

Tax-free childcare can be used with registered childcare providers, including after-school and holiday schemes for **children up to the age of 12, or 17**, if the child has special educational needs or disabilities.

Parents will soon be able to check whether they are eligible for these schemes by using the online 'Childcare Service'. Parents can sign up for email updates about when they can apply:

www.tax.service.gov.uk/childcare-schemes-interest/welcome

Further support with childcare costs for working parents

Tax credits

Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit are paid to people in work to top up low wages. Working Tax Credit is gradually being phased out and replaced by Universal Credit. Islington families will start moving to Universal Credit in 2018. Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit can include a childcare element, which gives help to parents with childcare costs.

Childcare vouchers

Employers may be able to help with childcare costs using childcare vouchers or other schemes, for example a staff nursery. If parents decide to take up the new tax-free childcare scheme, they won't be able to use childcare vouchers as well. For information about which scheme will suit parents best, go to: www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator

National Insurance credits for adults who care for a child under 12

Grandparents or other family members can claim for National Insurance credits if they are caring for a child while their parent (or main carer) is working.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-insurance-credits-for-adults-who-care-for-a-child-under-12-fact-sheet

Further support with childcare costs for students

Care to Learn

This scheme is for parents under 20 who are taking a publicly-funded course.

Discretionary Learner Support

This is for parents aged over 19, on a further education course.

Childcare Grant

This is for parents in full-time education.

For full details of support with childcare costs go to: www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs

Further support from Islington Council

Islington Childcare Bursary

This is a scheme run by Islington Council to help parents who are starting work, a work placement, or training, to pay for childcare on a short-term basis. It is available for low-income parents who are not able to get childcare funding by any other means.

For information about finding and paying for childcare, contact Islington's Family Information Service:

Tel: 020 7527 5959

Email: fis@islington.gov.uk

Website: www.islington.gov.uk/fis