1. Early Years Funding Policy

Early Years Funding is government funded childcare support offered for 38 weeks of the year. The funding can be delivered over 38 weeks (term-time only childcare) or stretched to 51 weeks per year (all year round childcare provision).

1.1. Funding Available

Child's age	38 weeks Offering	Eligibility
2 years	15 hours	Families receiving extra government support
3-4 years	15 hours	All families in England
From 9 months to 4 years	30 hours	Eligible Working Families

1.2 Eligibility Criteria

If your child is born between:	They are eligible for a place from:
1st April and 31st August	1st September after reaching 9 months*, second or third birthday until statutory school age of 5
1st September and 31st December	1st January after reaching 9 months*, second or third birthday until statutory school age of 5
1st January and 31st March	1st April after reaching 9 months*, second or third birthday until statutory school age of 5

*Check government eligibility criteria regarding when you return to work at:

https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker/

or https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/paying-for-childcare/

1.3 Our Approach to Funding – 51 weeks per year – All year round

The government funding of 15 or 30 hours per week for only 38 weeks of the year, which equates to:

- **570 hours** per year for 15-hour funding
- **1140 hours** per year for 30-hour funding

Giant Leap Childcare and Learning Centre operate 51 weeks and stretch the funding across the full year which can be taken up in 4.5 hourly blocks of funded session times.

Funded Session Times:

The AM Session is available from Monday to Friday 7.30am – 12.00pm and the PM Session is available from 1.30pm – 6.00pm.

Once the funding is fully utilised additional hours can be booked.

1.4 Our Approach to Funding – 38 weeks per year - term-time only

We offer term-time only funded childcare for 38 weeks per year at our sister settings:

Go Outdoors Nature Play & Outdoor Learning

15 Hours (term-time only)

3 hour sessions 8.30-11:30 / 12.00-15.00

30 Hours (term-time only)

6 hour sessions 9.00-15.00

Once the funding is fully utilised additional hours can be booked between 7.30am and 6.00pm.

Knight Hill Day Nursery

15 Hours (term-time only)

3 hour sessions 8.30-11:30 / 12.00-15.00

30 Hours (term-time only)

6 hour sessions 9.00-15.00

Once the funding is fully utilised additional hours can be booked between 8.30am and 5.00pm.

1.5 Eligibility & Code Requirements

Eligibility for working parents must be confirmed through HMRC and a valid eligibility code must be provided. We require permission to check this code and will ask you to sign a Funding Parental Agreement. Codes must be renewed every three months. Codes can only be applied from the term after your child's qualifying birthday or after they have reached 9 months.

1.6 Transparency of Charges

From April 2025, all providers must clearly show how funded hours are delivered and what additional charges apply.

To comply with this, **we do not** charge for food, consumables and activity charges during our funded session times.

Early Years government funding covers your child's childcare funded hours, which we deliver in full and free of charge during their funded session times.

In addition, we have broken down our pricing into additional hours booked outside of funded sessions times. Please see our Nursery Fees & Session Times.

1.7 Pricing & Billing Model

Our nursery fees are calculated on a monthly basis, invoices are issued monthly and paid up front. Invoices are fully transparent showing booked session times only and have no hidden/extra costs.

1.8 Termly Funding Allocation

Our local authority, Lancashire County Council, calculates funding differently each term, meaning the number of funded hours varies per term.

The Termly Funding Allocation schedule is:

- **Spring term (January – March):** 11 weeks
- **Summer term (April – August):** 13 weeks
- **Autumn term (September to December):** 14 weeks

Additionally, the number of funded hours your child receives will depend on:

- Which term they start funding for the first time
- How many terms remain in that academic year

The exact dates for each term and further information are available on the local authority website:

https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/

1.9 Attendance Monitoring & Responsible use of Funds

We are required to ensure that government funding is used as intended and in full or Lancashire County Council can withdraw the funded hours. Therefore, as per the parental agreement, where your child attends for funded hours only:

- You must ensure that you do not arrive late or collect early with any regular frequency
- Your attendance should not drop below an acceptable level

In the instance of Lancashire County Council withdrawing funded hours, we will apply additional hourly charges to your invoices to cover any removal of funding.

1.10 Claiming Process

To claim Early Year funding at our nurseries you must:

- Complete both the Funding Parental Agreement and the Local Authority Parental Declaration Form.
- Refer to our Admissions & Waiting List Policy for guidance on place allocation.

1.11 Fully Transparent

Once your child is eligible for funding, we will support you in accessing the right funded session times pattern to meet your childcare needs.

The nursery reserves the right to revise funded session times patterns in line with government guidance and funding changes.

We aim to be fully transparent, fair and flexible while supporting excellent childcare for every family.