Early Years and Childcare information

In England, early years care and education is not compulsory but is available for all children from 0 – 5 years of age including children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). Play provision is also available through breakfast clubs, after school clubs and school holiday play schemes. Most provision is privately run by businesses or charities and are registered and regulated. As a parent or carer, it is your choice if you want your child to attend one of these provisions and it is up to you to decide which type will best meet your needs.

Early years education in England follows a play-based approach and you can expect your child to spend their time becoming involved in lots of different play activities inside and outside. All early year's provision follows government guidance which includes regulations about things like:

- staff numbers and qualifications
- how to keep children safe
- the curriculum that is followed.

Types of provision to choose from

Day Nursery- usually open 8am – 6pm all year (excluding bank holidays). They take children from 0- 5 years and may offer care for older children in the school holiday or after the school day is over. Meals and snacks are usually included in the fee.

Pre-school – usually open 9am - 3pm in school term time. They usually take children between 2- 5 years and will offer morning, afternoon, or sometimes full day sessions. Meals are not normally included and so you might be asked to provide a packed lunch for your child if they stay all day.

Childminder - Registered childminders are self-employed childcare professionals who work in their own homes caring for other people's children. They care for small numbers of children in their home-setting and will often care for a range of ages. Childminders can be flexible and offer patterns of childcare to support many families. Just like other provision, childminders are regulated and inspected. Some childminders can offer funded early education sessions for 2, 3, and 4-year-olds.

After School and School Holiday Clubs – usually open between 3.30pm and 6pm and are often situated on a school site. There will be a fee for your child to attend which usually includes snacks and drinks. You can ask for details at the school your child goes to.

Cambridgeshire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. The HAF programme offers funded places to school age children (4-16 years) during the Easter, Summer, and Christmas school holidays. Transport to the schemes can be arranged if it is needed. There are many holiday schemes to choose from which all offer children the chance to play with other children, take part in a variety of fun activities, sports or drama and eat a healthy meal. Each scheme will have adults present who are trained to work with and support children.

To find out if you are eligible and for more information, please email the HAF Team at HAF@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

How to find early years or childcare provision for your child
Visit https://bit.ly/DirectoryCCC
Or
Tel: 0345 045 1360

How is childcare funded?
Every 3-year-old can attend an early year's provision for 15 hours a week starting in the school term after their 3rd birthday. This is fully funded by the Government.

Depending on your financial circumstances your child may also be eligible for:
- 15 hours of early years funding from the school term after their 2nd birthday
- 30 hours of early years funding from the school term after their 3rd birthday.

To find out more about what funding your child is eligible for go to: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
Early Years providers often support children with SEND and may be able to apply for additional funding to help your child. If your child has SEND and you would like advice about early years provision, please contact ey.send@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.