



Darlinghurst

ACADEMY

Early Education Funding Policy

Date created	June 2024
Version	1.0
Status	Ratified
Applicable to	All Staff
Author	Rebecca Davis
Checked by	SLT
Valid from	September 2025
Review on	September 2026

Darlinghurst Academy Nursery

Early Education Funding policy

We offer full-time and/or part-time childcare during term time. **All children are welcome from their third birthday.** We treat all children and families with respect. We aim to meet the specific needs of each child in our care.

Early Education Funding eligibility

We deliver early education funding in line with the requirements set out in the [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#) document (which applies from 1 April 2024).

Children aged 9 – 24 months.

- **From 1 September 2024 onwards parents can get an expanded funded place for 15 hours a week for their 9 – 24-month-old if they are working.** The parent, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (or equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage). Parents can find out more and Apply for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

2-Year-Old Children

There are two ways parents can apply for 2-Year-Old funding.

1. **Parents can get a funded place for 15 hours a week for their 2-year-old if they receive some additional forms of financial support from the Government and their household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax.** Parents can check the [eligibility criteria](#) for more details. Parents can check the [eligibility criteria](#) for free early education and childcare for 2 year olds to see if they are eligible for a free 15 hour place for your 2 year old child. Parents can [make an application](#) on the Southend Citizen's Portal to confirm eligibility for 2 year old funding for your child, and get an approved application number.
2. **From 1 April 2024 onwards parents can also get an expanded funded place for 15 hours a week for their 2-year-old if they are working.** The parent, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage). Parents can find out more and [Apply for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) to get a code for free childcare to give to your childcare provider.

3- and 4-Year Olds:

- All families in England with 3 and 4-year-old children can get Universal funding (up to 15 hours a week) of funded childcare or early education for 38 weeks.
- Working families in England with 3 and 4-year-old children can get extended funding (up to 30 hours a week) of funded early education. It is your responsibility to confirm your eligibility for 30 hours free childcare every three months. Full details around how 30 hours funding is applied for, and the timescales, cut off dates that are applied to claims can be found online. www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Children can take-up universal and extended funding at the start of the funding period following their third birthday.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

- If your child is accessing an early education funding place, your early years provider could be eligible for extra funding to help support your child to develop and learn. EYPP is paid direct to your provider based on the first 15 hours of funding for all age groups.

Disability Access Funding

If your child is accessing an early education funding place and is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, your early years provider could be eligible for extra funding to help support your child. Disability Access Funding is paid annually direct to your provider.

Parent Responsibility

Parents or carers must complete and sign a Parent/Carer Declaration Form each funding period (term) to:

- Confirm the agreement between the provider and the parent for the duration of the funding period.
- Record the number hours/weeks of Free Childcare for the duration of the funding period.
- Record if parents are accessing funding over one or more providers to prevent double claims being made. We may charge for the hours your child attends more than his/her Free Early Years Funding entitlement if you have not declared accurately how many hours your child is attending with another provider.
- Give consent that the information provided on the Parent Declaration Form can be shared with the Local Authority.
- Confirm that you understand that if parents wish to increase the number of funded hours their child is accessing after the headcount date, We may charge for these additional sessions.

Parents accessing Working Parent entitlement must reconfirm eligibility every three months. If you fail to do so you could lose your eligibility for a Working Parent Entitlement place at this setting.

In the interests of stability The Council does not encourage the movement of children between providers' mid-term. Children will not be funded if they move settings during the funding period except for exceptional circumstances. Parents must give at least 20 working days' notice if they intend to withdraw their child.

Holiday arrangements:

- Parents will not be able to claim alternative free sessions if the child does not attend due to family holiday,
- We will ensure that your child receives their full entitlement of hours for the funding period.
- We are not open on Bank holidays and will not charge for these days.

If the setting closes due to sickness, emergencies etc.

Parents will not be charged fees for hours when the setting is closed. For example: In case of emergency where the setting must close due to circumstances beyond our control, such as severe weather conditions.

Parents may lose the funded hours if closure is beyond our control.

If your child doesn't attend due to sickness, family holiday or days off.

- If your child is absent during funded hours, we are not required to provide alternative free sessions.
- Please inform us of any reason your child is unable to attend. If your child is getting funded early education sessions, we are required to monitor your child's attendance and inform the Local Authority if the attendance falls below 90%. Your child's free place is Government funded. If your child consistently fails to attend, their place may be withdrawn.
- If your child cannot attend the setting for any reason, fees for any additional hours must still be paid, as a place has been kept open for your child.

Charges for Additional Services

Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours, or additional services. Please see details of our additional services costs.

Details	Cost	Payment Method
1 Additional AM/PM Session	£16.50	Via ParentPay
1 Lunchtime Care Provision	£4	Via ParentPay
School Catered Meal	£2.50	Via ParentPay
Weekly Nursery Fund (materials, resources etc.)	£1	Cash to Nursery
Enriching Curriculum Activities (e.g. Forest school, beach trips etc.)	Ad hoc	Via ParentPay

Parents will be provided with clear information to let them know what their individual additional costs will be to allow them to make an informed decision before they take up a place.

Parents will be provided with login details for our online payment system, ParentPay, once their child has started Nursery.

Fees for additional sessions and/or lunchtime care will be charged via ParentPay on a half-termly basis; a breakdown of the sessions charged can be viewed by the parent within their ParentPay account. Fees are payable half-termly in advance.

The school reserves the right to withdraw additional sessions if payment is not received.

See appendix A for an example invoice.

When you can have free early education hours

Government legislation states that free early education sessions can be delivered:

- only between the hours of 6.00am and 8.00pm.
- for a minimum session of one hour per day up to a maximum of 10 hours a day

We offer free early education sessions at the following times:			
	9 – 24 months (from Sept 2024)	2-year-old (expanded funding only, children must be 3 years old)	3 – 4-year-old
Monday	N/A	08:30-15:15	08:30-15:15
Tuesday	N/A	08:30-15:15	08:30-15:15
Wednesday	N/A	08:30-15:15	08:30-15:15
Thursday	N/A	08:30-15:15	08:30-15:15
Friday	N/A	08:30-15:15	08:30-15:15

- We deliver funding up to 15 (or 30) hours a week over 38 weeks a year.
- We **do not** offer an option to stretch early education funding entitlement in line with the Southend Stretch Funding Policy (if the offer is stretched over more than 38 weeks the hours per week are reduced)

More help with childcare costs

[Childcare Choices](#) is a government website providing:

- information about all the different types of help with childcare costs
- a link to the Government [childcare-calculator](#) that we recommend parents use to find out what schemes they are eligible for and how much they can get.



You may be eligible for other help with childcare costs, including.

- **Tax Free Childcare:** We are registered to accept Tax free childcare. If you qualify you can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).
- Universal Credit for childcare.
- Childcare help if you are training.

To be signed by parent

I have read and understood the Early Education Funding policy for 2, 3- and 4-year-olds.

Child's name:	
Child's date of birth:	
Parents name:	
Parents signature:	
Date:	

Appendix

A.



Child: [REDACTED]

From: Darlinghurst Academy

For Period: 05 Jan 2026 - 13 Feb 2026

Invoice Number: #28

Invoice Date: 09 Jan 2026

Due Date: 23 Jan 2026

Darlinghurst Academy
Pavilion Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3JS

Email : finance@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk

Tel : 01702 478379

Summary	Qty	Funded	Unfunded	Price
Regular Schedule Bookings	54	90 hrs	45 hrs	£246.00

Total To Pay **£246.00**

Please make payment via your ParentPay account.

We accept tax-free childcare payments - please ask the Finance Office for details.

School meals are available if required, at a cost of £2.65 per day. Meals can be requested on the day and paid for via your ParentPay account.

Nursery Fund - We ask all parents for a voluntary donation of £1, per week, payable directly to the Nursery. This helps us provide extra provision for the children, for example, ingredients for cooking, play dough, sand. Details of what your donation has been used for, this term, can be found on Tapestry.

Charges for 05 Jan 2026 - 13 Feb 2026

REGULAR SCHEDULE BOOKINGS

Date	Session	Funded	Unfunded	Rate	Price
Mon 05 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Tue 06 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Wed 07 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Thu 08 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Thu 08 Jan 2026	Lunchtime Supervision	0 hrs	0.75 hrs	£4.00/session	£4.00
Thu 08 Jan 2026	PM	0 hrs	3 hrs	£5.50/hr	£16.50
Fri 09 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Fri 09 Jan 2026	Lunchtime Supervision	0 hrs	0.75 hrs	£4.00/session	£4.00
Fri 09 Jan 2026	PM	0 hrs	3 hrs	£5.50/hr	£16.50
Mon 12 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Tue 13 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Wed 14 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Thu 15 Jan 2026	AM	3 hrs	0 hrs	£5.50/hr	£0.00
Thu 15 Jan 2026	Lunchtime Supervision	0 hrs	0.75 hrs	£4.00/session	£4.00
Thu 15 Jan 2026	PM	0 hrs	3 hrs	£5.50/hr	£16.50