

# free early education



& childcare for three & four year olds

## Free early education can be taken at:

- childminders registered with Ofsted
- day nurseries
- nursery schools
- pre-schools
- schools with nursery classes

All providers deliver the early years foundation stage curriculum and offer the same learning opportunities for children. All providers are inspected by Ofsted and some providers can provide flexible provision and opportunities for additional hours. 96% of all Hertfordshire providers are graded good or outstanding by Ofsted. Evidence shows that regular, high quality early education has lasting benefits for all children.



Best Start Herts  
for providers



Hertfordshire

**Regardless of where your child accesses their free early education entitlement they will experience a varied and stimulating range of play and early learning activities, including:**

- learning by playing and exploring
- creative and critical thinking
- socialising and making friends
- having fun, in a safe and nurturing environment
- being school ready.

“ Childcare has given Amy the opportunity to have a change of scenery and to explore and learn new things, all whilst making friends and building social skills. ”

You can find providers offering free early education places and 30 hours free childcare in your area by contacting your local family centre or on the Hertfordshire childcare directory, [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/parents](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/parents) Contact your local free early education provider, or look on their website, for advice on:

- place availability
- when your child can start
- visits and open days
- how they allocate places
- flexible provision, part-time placements, 30 hours free childcare and additional hours.

You do not have to buy additional hours or additional services such as lunch or activities in order to access free early education. You do not have to pay for any part of your child's free early education.

## When can my child start?

All children are entitled to 570 hours of free early education per year once they turn three until they start full-time school.

**Your child is born between:  
1 April - 31 August**

**1 September - 31 December**

**1 January - 31 March**

**Your child can start:**

On or after 1 September after their third birthday

On or after 1 January after their third birthday

On or after 1 April after their third birthday

Working families who meet a national criteria may be eligible for 30 hours free childcare (a total of 1140 hours per year).

