



Childcare and early education in Cumbria

In England ALL children aged 3 and 4 get free childcare places. This is for 15 hours a week, during school term time.

If you are in paid work your 3 or 4 year old may be entitled to 30 hours a week, depending on your circumstances.

If your child is 2 years old and you are on a very low income, you may also be entitled to 15 hours free childcare.

If you want your child to attend the nursery/childminder for more than the free hours, you may be able to pay for this. Some nurseries/childminders will take babies and younger children too.

Free childcare places are only available in childcare that has been checked for quality and safety by OFSTED. This can be a childminder, a private nursery or the nursery class of a school. You can contact a childcare provider directly or ask the Children and Families Information service to help you find a place. You can contact them on **childrens.information@cumbria.gov.uk** or phone **03457 125737**



Why send my child to a childminder or nursery?

Your child will be able to have fun and develop their social skills by playing with other children. They will begin to learn English from the staff and from their friends. They will spend some of the time outdoors, developing their physical skills in the fresh air. They will develop the knowledge and skills they will need for school.

What will they do there?

At a childminders/nursery your child will be learning through play. A typical session will involve singing, storytime, opportunities to play indoors and out, time to choose from a range of activities such as painting, drawing, building, role play, being creative, playing with sand and water, playing with other children, exploring nature. They will be given a healthy snack or a meal. Older children will begin to learn about letter sounds and numbers. Younger children will have the chance to have a sleep or rest if they need it. Most importantly, they will have fun!



What will they need to bring?

Ask the nursery/childminder what your child will need. Your child will get messy so they should wear clothes that are easily washed. They will spend time outside, so they will need a warm coat on cold days and suncream and a sunhat if it is hot. Some childminders/nurseries will provide food, nappies and wipes, which you may have to pay for, others may ask you to supply these.



Supporting children starting childcare

Go and visit the childminder/nursery to look around. If you would like your child to go there, talk to the staff about how they help children to settle in. Your child will have a key person, who will get to know you and your child. They will ask about the sorts of things your child enjoys or doesn't like. This will help the nursery to prepare for your child and settle them in. Once your child has started, the key worker will be able to tell you how your child has been during the day and what they have done.



Learning English

Your child will begin to pick up English from the adults and children at the nursery. The adults will use pictures, objects, stories and songs to help with this. It is important that you continue to speak in your own language to your child at home. Developing skills in their home language will help your child learn English, as well as helping them maintain their family connections.



When they are 5

In England children aged 5-16 must be in full time education. They usually start in school in the September before their fifth birthday.

Advice and support – Talk to your resettlement adviser, who will be able to help you access childcare and school places.

Further information (in English and Ukrainian) can also be found at: educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/11/how-do-families-arriving-from-ukraine-apply-for-a-school-place-and-childcare