

Stretched Funding Information

The Department for Education set the termly funded weeks for early years childcare that covers 38 weeks per financial year (April to March). Confirmation of funded weeks each term can be found on the Useful Dates under the heading Termly Funding Information here: [Early Years Funding | CYPsinfo](#):

Providers can choose how they offer funded hours to parents:

- **Term-time only:**
Parents use their funded hours across the standard 38 weeks and pay for childcare accessed in non-funded and holiday weeks.
- **Stretched funding:**
The same total number of funded hours is spread out ("stretched") over more weeks, including holidays.
This means parents receive fewer funded hours per week, but can access funded hours for more weeks of the year.

Providers may stretch their offer between 39 weeks to 52 weeks, and their offer must be published for parents to make an informed choice before taking up a funded place.

Please note: The number of funded weeks in each term varies. Please take this into consideration when offering stretched funding. Providers should refer to the Useful Dates for the correct number of DfE funded weeks in future terms within the current financial year.

How to calculate number of actual funded hours to claim on Synergy Provider Portal.

Step	Termly Stretched	Annual Stretched
1	Identify the number of hours child attends per week	Identify the number of hours child attends per week
2	Multiply step 1 by number of stretched weeks in the term	Multiply step 1 by number of stretched weeks in the year
3	Divide step 2 result by number of funded weeks in the term	Divide step 2 result by number of funded weeks in the year (38)
4	Claim step 3 result on the headcount	Claim step 3 result on headcount

- Regardless of number of weeks attended, all claims on the Provider Portal must always be in line with the North Yorkshire term time weeks
- No more than 10 funded hours can be claimed per day
- If the total hours attended exceeds the maximum funded hours available in the term you must claim the maximum weekly hours the child is eligible for and offer the remaining hours non funded in line with your usual policy.

Limitations for providers when offering stretched funding

- Providers are responsible for calculating and ensuring they claim the correct number of funded hours per week on the termly headcount. Funding cannot be paid if an error is identified once the termly headcount is processed and funding allocated.
- If a parent leaves before headcount week, or is no longer eligible to access Working Parent funding, you will not be able to claim funded hours when potentially the parent has already accessed funded hours during non-funded weeks in a previous term.
- If offering stretched funding on an annual basis, providers must also consider how this will impact them if a parent leaves their setting mid-term. Notice periods cannot be imposed on parents for funded hours. A provider also cannot continue to claim funded hours on behalf of a child who has left, in future terms, to cover funded hours they may have accessed with your provision in a previous term during non-funded weeks.
- Parents must be made aware that if accessing stretched funded hours and if they leave your setting mid-term, this may impact whether they can continue to access funded hours with their new provider until the next new term starts.

Compliance Requirements

- Providers must ensure a parental agreement is in place to reflect the agreed funded offer prior to headcount week. A parent must fully understand the funded offer made by a provider, the total number of funded hours being claimed (each term or year), as well as the pattern of attendance required by their child to access the total funded hours being claimed by the provider (each term or year).
- Headcount claims will be monitored by the local authority. Where a child is identified as attending for 2 days or less, further information may be required from you to evidence that the total funded hours claimed on headcount are in line with DfE regulations.
- In the event of a full compliance check, we will review the parental agreement held for the 38 weeks funding available (April to March), check your funded offer and number of weeks funding is stretched and check the number of days per week a child is registered to access funding. Registers of attendance will then be reviewed to ensure the total funded hours have been accessed as claimed (each term or year).

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to offer parents 'Stretched' Funding?

No, there is no statutory requirement for providers to offer stretched funding. A provider can decide how they deliver funded hours, based upon their business model.

As an alternative to stretched funding, providers may offer the funded entitlement on a term time basis and spread the cost of non-funded hours across the term/year.

If I offer stretched funding, how should it be administered?

You must:

- **Clearly explain your offer to parents, and**
- **State this in your parent information and on your website (if applicable)**

Your stretched offer must include how and when parents can access their funded hours and what happens if a child is splitting their entitlement at more than one provider, or they leave mid-year.

You must tick the stretched funding box on the provider portal to enable the local authority to see the claim is being stretched. All funded providers must comply with Department for Education statutory guidance.

Can a child who is accessing stretched funding attend more than one provider?

Yes, however, when a child splits their funded entitlement between more than one provider, **all providers and the parents** must be clear on the number of hours that can be claimed. Claims must **not** exceed the total number of funded hours available either annually or termly, this is particularly important when one provider is offering stretched as it can cause confusion for the parent and results in over claims.

Can I claim a child's full funded entitlement to allow for ad-hoc days?

No, providers should not claim funded hours for future or ad hoc attendance. The hours agreed must follow a regular pattern and be documented in the parental agreement

Am I required to tell North Yorkshire Council that I am stretching?

Yes, you must inform the Early Years Funding Team that you are stretching and indicate for each child who is accessing the stretched entitlement on the provider portal.

Will you check my stretched headcount claim is correct?

No, you are responsible for ensuring your claim is correct and matches your parental agreement.

If I offer stretched funding on a term-by-term basis, can a parent bank unused funded hours from one term to the next?

No. A parent cannot carry forward into another term any unused funded hours from a previous term.

If you offer stretched funding on an annualised basis this will not apply as the parent will be accessing the same number of weekly funded hours for each week your setting is open, throughout the year.