



Chapter 4

20 Hours Early Childhood Education

Overview

Introduction 20 Hours Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a higher rate of funding than the ECE Subsidy. It requires ECE services to provide early childhood education to three-year-olds, four-year-olds and five-year-olds for up to a maximum of six hours per day for 20 hours per week per child without charging fees.

Funding cycle 20 Hours ECE is paid at the same time as the ECE Funding Subsidy – on the first working day of March, July and November.

For more information on when and how funding is paid see **Section 2-4**.

In this chapter This chapter contains the following topics:

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4-1 Funding eligibility

Introduction

This section outlines the eligibility conditions for:

- services eligible to provide 20 Hours ECE
- children eligible to receive 20 Hours ECE.

All services offering 20 Hours ECE and all children receiving 20 Hours ECE must meet the eligibility conditions at all times.

Eligible services

Early childhood education services are eligible to offer 20 Hours ECE if they:

- are licensed **and**
 - are open continuously for at least one session of 2.5 hours per week **and**
 - meet all 20 Hours ECE funding rules.
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Services offering 20 Hours ECE

Services offering 20 Hours ECE must offer 20 Hours ECE to all eligible children.

Services **must not** offer 20 Hours ECE only:

- to some eligible children and not to other eligible children
- on particular days of the week
- for particular hours of operation.

Note: The number of hours of 20 Hours ECE that a service can offer each child will depend on the service's hours of operation, the space available at the service and the child's hours of enrolment.

Eligible children

20 Hours ECE funding can only be claimed for children who fill a child-place and are, three, four or five years of age.

Funding cannot be claimed for:

- children enrolled in school
 - conditionally enrolled children who do not attend the service
 - casual bookings made for children who do not attend the service.
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4-1 Funding eligibility, Continued

When to begin claiming

A child's eligibility for 20 Hours ECE begins on their third birthday.

Services may begin claiming 20 Hours ECE funding for a child on their third birthday.

When to stop claiming

A child's eligibility for 20 Hours ECE ends on the day before their sixth birthday or their last day of attendance before they start school, whichever comes first.

Childcare Subsidy and 20 Hours ECE

The Ministry of Social Development, Work and Income provides a range of support for childcare costs, which include the Childcare Subsidy and Guaranteed Childcare Assistance Payment.

Children receiving 20 Hours ECE cannot receive childcare assistance from Work and Income for the hours of 20 Hours ECE. The only exception is when home-based educator top up payments are applied for the hours of 20 Hours ECE. Families may be eligible for childcare assistance from Work and Income to help with the cost of home-based educator top up payments.

Further information on childcare assistance can be found on the [Work and Income website](#) or call 0800 559 009.

4-2 Funding conditions

Introduction Funding for 20 Hours ECE is attached to each eligible child's enrolment, rather than to a licensed child-place. Funding is made up of 20 Hours ECE and Plus 10 ECE.

20 Hours ECE 20 Hours ECE hours are the funded child hours that services can claim per eligible child for the provision of 20 Hours ECE.

Services are eligible to claim up to six hours **per child** per day, to a maximum of 20 hours **per child** per week.

Plus 10 ECE Plus 10 ECE describes the remaining 10 hours of funding a service can claim for each child in addition to the 20 Hours ECE hours. It is the difference between 30 hours ECE Subsidy funding and the 20 Hours ECE hours.

For more information on the ECE Subsidy see **Chapter 3** of this Handbook.

Maximum funding Services may claim a maximum of:

- six hours funding per day for 20 Hours ECE and/or Plus 10 per eligible child
- 20 hours per week for 20 Hours ECE per eligible child
- 30 hours per week for 20 Hours ECE and Plus 10 per eligible child.

Out of those 30 hours weekly maximum per child, 20 hours per week may be claimed as 20 Hours ECE. The remaining hours up to 30 may be claimed as Plus 10 ECE funding.

Which hours can be claimed as 20 Hours ECE? Parents will choose which days the 20 Hours ECE hours will be allocated to, but no individual day may exceed six 20 Hours ECE hours.

Example 1: weekly The following table shows the number of 20 Hours ECE hours and Plus 10 ECE hours per week that may be claimed for eligible children with different enrolment agreements:

Name	Hours enrolled	Total hours enrolled per week	20 Hours ECE hours claimed	Plus 10 ECE hours claimed
Erin	8 hours per day	40	20	10
Melanie	4 hours per day	20	20	
Hayden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday • 4.5 hours on Thursday and Friday 	33	20	7



4-2 Funding conditions, Continued

Example 2: daily

The table below shows how parents could choose to allocate the 20 Hours ECE hours daily across a week:

- Erin attends 8 hours per day, Monday to Friday.
- Melanie attends 4 hours per day, Monday to Friday.
- Hayden attends 8 hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and 4.5 hours on Thursday and Fridays.

Erin	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Hours enrolled	8	8	8	8	8	40
20 Hours ECE hours	4	4	4	4	4	20
Plus 10 ECE hours	2	2	2	2	2	10
Difference: DO NOT CLAIM	2	2	2	2	2	10
Melanie	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Hours enrolled	4	4	4	4	4	20
20 Hours ECE hours	4	4	4	4	4	20
Plus 10 ECE hours						
Hayden	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Hours enrolled	8	8	8	4.5	4.5	33
20 Hours ECE hours	6	6	6	2		20
Plus 10 ECE hours				2.5	4.5	7

Sharing child places

Children may share a child-place during the day.

In this situation, services may claim up to six hours 20 Hours ECE Funding per eligible child plus up to six hours ECE Subsidy Funding per child-place.

Example of sharing child places

The following example shows how a service could claim funding where a child receiving 20 Hours ECE shares a child-place with an Under Two child.

- Chantal is receiving 20 Hours ECE and is enrolled for five hours on Monday to Friday, from 8am to 1pm.
- Kahu is one-year-old and is enrolled for four hours on Monday to Friday, from 1pm to 5pm.

Child	Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Kahu	Under 2 hours	4	4	4	4	4
Chantal	20 Hours ECE hours	5	5	5	5	
	Plus 10 ECE hours					5
	Total hours claimed per day	9	9	9	9	9



4-2 Funding conditions, Continued

2.5 hour sessions

Sessional services that offer 2.5 hour sessions may claim funding for 3 hours for those sessions.

20 Hours ECE hours may be claimed for the first 2.5 hours. Services must claim Plus 10 ECE hours for the remaining half hour.

Claiming for 20 Hours ECE absences

The absence rules in **Chapter 6** apply to 20 Hours ECE funding.

Services must not charge fees for hours that they claim as 20 Hours ECE. If a service claims 20 Hours ECE funding under an absence rule, the service **must not** charge fees for any conditional or casual child who directly fills that place. If the service charges a fee, it **must** claim the ECE Funding Subsidy.

This will occur only when the service is filled to its maximum capacity and the casual child is directly replacing an absent child who is claiming 20 Hours ECE.

20 Hours ECE Attestation

An *Attestation* included in the enrolment agreement **must** be signed for each child receiving 20 Hours ECE. **20 Hours ECE funding must not be claimed for a child until the service has received a completed and signed Attestation.**

Parents must confirm the total hours per day of 20 Hours ECE the child will receive at the service and any other service the child is enrolled to attend.

Enrolment details and records **must** be kept up-to-date. Parents must notify services and change the enrolment details if there is a change to the number of hours of 20 Hours ECE their child receives at any service.

Using 20 Hours ECE hours at more than one service

Parents may choose to allocate their 20 Hours ECE hours across more than one service.

A child can receive a maximum of six 20 Hours ECE hours per day and twenty 20 Hours ECE hours per week **as a total across all services.**

The enrolment details will indicate if, and for how many hours, a child is receiving 20 Hours ECE at another service. This will tell each service how many 20 Hours ECE hours can be claimed for each child.

Each service may still claim up to 30 hours of funding per child per week, but funding must not be claimed for the same hours. The remaining hours once the 20 Hours ECE hours are used up may be claimed as Plus 10 ECE hours.



4-2 Funding conditions, Continued

Example

Caleb is enrolled in a home-based service from 7.45am to 3.45pm on Mondays and Fridays, and 7.45am to 12.45pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. He is also enrolled in kindergarten from 12.45 to 3.45pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. His parents choose to allocate 20 Hours ECE hours to both the home-based service and the kindergarten. This might look like:

Home-based	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Hours enrolled	8	5	5	5	8	31
20 Hours ECE hours	2	4	4	4		14
Plus 10 ECE hours	4	1	1	1	6	13
Kindergarten	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Hours enrolled		3	3	3		9
20 Hours ECE hours		2	2	2		6
Plus 10 ECE hours		1	1	1		3
Total 20 Hours ECE hours	2	6	6	6		20

4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments

Introduction	<p>This section explains the financial payments services may and may not request from parents for the period children are enrolled for 20 Hours ECE.</p> <p>There are four types of payments. They are fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments</p>
Definition of a fee	<p>A fee is a payment that is required as a condition of enrolment and can be enforced. It excludes home-based educator top up payments but includes any other compulsory payment regardless of the type: wages, salary or any other payments made by the parents /caregiver to either the educator or the service provider.</p> <p>Enforcement is when a service or educator withholds or withdraws enrolment, withholds or withdraws parts of their service (for example children not permitted to take part in certain activities) or attempts debt recovery.</p>
Parents must not pay fees for 20 Hours ECE	<p>Parents must not be charged fees for hours claimed as 20 Hours ECE.</p> <p>Services that offer 20 Hours ECE to all eligible children must ensure all hours for children covered by 20 Hours ECE have no charge.</p> <p>The service provider must ensure parents do not pay a fee for hours covered by 20 Hours ECE, either to the service provider or to the educator.</p>
Home-based educator top up payments	<p>Home-based educators may require payments from parents to 'top up' the amount of 20 Hours ECE funding pass-through from their service provider to match their hourly fees for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE. Further information on home-based educator top up payments can be found below.</p>
Parents can be charged fees for hours outside 20 Hours ECE	<p>Parents can only be charged fees for hours outside of the 20 Hours ECE maximum of six hours per day and 20 hours per week per child. Any fees charged for additional hours attended or enrolled by eligible children outside of 20 Hours ECE must be charged by the hour.</p>
Provision of fee information	<p>Rates (and changes to rates) must be documented and provided to parents/caregivers.</p> <p>Home-based service providers must make their 20 Hours ECE educator pass through part of documentation provided to parents/caregivers.</p>



4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Definition of a donation	A donation is a voluntary payment. There is no obligation to pay and there is no enforcement of payment.
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Services may request donations	When requesting donations, services must ensure that donations are not described as fees, or by any other term that implies that they are compulsory.
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4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Definition of optional charges

Optional charges are a request for a payment that parents may choose whether or not to make for a specific purpose, which can be one-off or ongoing, that:

- is for the education and care of the child; *and*
- is above what is required to meet the regulated standards; *and*
- can be separated out and measured.

Optional charges should reflect the real and actual costs of the additional item or activity.

Parents must have a choice about whether they want to pay for the additional item or activity covered by the optional charge. They must be informed in writing that agreeing to an optional charge is not compulsory, and they must not be penalised for choosing not to pay an optional charge. However, the additional item or activity can be withheld if parents do not agree to pay an optional charge.

Agreement to optional charges

When a parent agrees to pay an optional charge, the specific items covered by the charge, and the agreement to pay the charge must be part of the enrolment process and recorded on the enrolment agreement.

An agreement to pay ongoing optional charges must include information about how long the agreement will last and/or what the rules are about making changes to the agreement.

Once an agreement to pay has been reached then services may enforce payment.



4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Acceptable optional charges

Optional charges can **only** be requested for:

- aspects of provision that are not required by regulation
- additional staff beyond the minimum regulated adult/child ratios
- items that parents may either provide for their own children, or pay for the service to provide.

Services must ensure that the activity or item offered exceeds/is over and above what is required by regulation.

For example:

- specific teaching resources such as a dance or music teacher
- excursions and entrance fees
- transport
- sunscreen lotion
- clothing items such as sunhats
- food.

Optional charges cannot be requested for the administration of 20 Hours ECE, wage administration for Home-based educators or home management. Further information on this can be found at the [Education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) website.

Following the reintroduction of the 100% funding band on 1 January 2021 services will no longer be able to request additional payments from parents to help contribute to the cost of having more than 80% certificated teachers.

4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Requesting optional charges for excursions and transport

An optional charge should only be requested for excursions if:

- i. There is a direct cost associated with the excursion (e.g. an entry fee); and/or
- ii. Travel is required to get to the destination, specifically any distance greater than what could be considered reasonable to reach by walking

Any optional charge for an excursion must be for the education and care of the child and be able to be separated out and measured.

Costs must be itemised so parents can see how the optional charge is to be spent. Requesting a nominal hourly rate for unspecified excursions and transport does not meet the intent of an optional charge.

Optional charges can be requested at any time after enrolment. Therefore, if requested at the time of planning the excursion, the charge can reflect real and actual costs.

Unacceptable optional charges

Optional charges can **not** be a condition of initial or continued enrolment, or requested for:

- aspects of provision that are required by legislation
- general contributions towards the cost of high quality education and care provided by the service or due to the service being well regarded
- home management (in the case of ECE provided in the child's own home)
- wage administration
- wage top-ups
- administration of 20 Hours ECE
- excursions that do not meet the criteria for excursions and transport.

Following the reintroduction of the 100% funding band on 1 January 2021 services will no longer be able to request additional payments from parents to help contribute the cost of having more than 80% certificated teachers.

4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Enforcement of payment	Once a parent has agreed to pay an optional charge, the service or educator may enforce the payment as they would enforce a fee.
Parents who choose not to pay optional charges	<p>If a parent chooses not to pay an optional charge, the only action a service or educator can take is to withhold the additional feature(s) covered by the optional charge. By choosing not to pay an optional charge, parents are agreeing to not have access to that additional activity or item.</p> <p>Parents who choose not to pay an optional charge must receive at least the standard of service required by the regulations. It is the responsibility of the service providing 20 Hours ECE to ensure parents do not pay a fee for hours covered by 20 Hours ECE, either to the service provider or the educator (in the case of a Home-based service).</p>
Changing optional charge agreements	<p>Services must allow reasonable opportunities for parents to review their decisions regarding optional charges. Either party may initiate a change to the agreement and any changes must be documented in accordance with record keeping requirements. One-off optional charges are agreed at the time parents are asked by the service.</p> <p>Any change to agreements on ongoing optional charges is a change to the enrolment agreement.</p>



4-3 Fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments, Continued

Definition of home-based educator pass through

Home-based services pass-through a portion of the 20 Hours ECE funding to home-based educators. This 'passthrough' per funded child hour may be lower than the educator's usual hourly fee. Where the pass-through is lower than their hourly fee for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE educators may charge a home-based educator top up payment per child.

Definition of home-based educator top up payments

Home-based educators may require payments from parents to 'top up' the amount of pass-through from their service provider to match their hourly fees for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE.

The home-based educator top up payment must be no more than the difference between the pass-through and the hourly fee for each child for the hours outside of 20 Hours ECE.

Where a parent is the employer of an educator, the home-based educator top up payment still applies as a cost to the parent, but is not directly charged by the educator.

The home-based educator top up payments can only be charged for the hours of 20 Hours ECE.

Example

For example, an educator charges \$10 per hour per child for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE. The service they are contracted to 'passes-through' \$6 per hour for each child from the 20 Hours ECE funding. The educator can require parents to pay the difference of \$4 per hour directly to the educator.

Enforcement of payment

Once a parent has agreed to pay home-based educator top up payments, the home-based educator may enforce payments as they would enforce a fee.

Unacceptable home-based educator top up payments

If an educator is an employee of a home-based service provider, home-based educator top up payments must not be charged.

4-4 Record keeping requirements

20 Hours ECE record keeping requirements

Services must keep records of fees, donations and optional charges received from parents. Records must show the type of payment received – fee, donation or optional charge.

In addition, home-based services with educators charging home-based educator top up payments have further record keeping requirements.

Services **must** also continue to meet the requirements for recording enrolment, attendance and absence in **Chapter 6**, and the record keeping requirements in **Chapter 11**.

Enrolment Agreement Form

The sections marked with this symbol **◆**, in the Ministry of Education's sample Enrolment Agreement Form must be included in the service's Enrolment Agreement Form. Wording cannot be changed, except to add relevant details for your service.

For more information on enrolment records see **Chapter 6** of this Handbook.

Services must keep the following records of fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments charged to parents:

- records of the agreement to optional charges must be part of the Enrolment Agreement Form
- records of the agreement to the home-based educator top up payments must be part of the Enrolment Agreement Form
- records of fees and donations must be kept on the Enrolment Agreement Form

Recording parent contributions

Records must show the amount and type of payment received – fee, donation, optional charge and home-based educator top up payments

Home-based ECE services

When the parent directly pays the home-based educator, services must keep a record of all payments made for 20 Hours ECE that occur between any of the following parties: parent, educator and service provider. This includes the pass-through for home-based services.



4-5 Beginning or ceasing to offer 20 Hours ECE Funding

Introduction

This section is for services beginning or ceasing to offer 20 Hours ECE.

First Advance of 20 Hours ECE

The table below shows the funding process for services claiming their first advance of 20 Hours ECE funding.

Information on completing the *EC20 Transitional Advance Form* is in Section 7-9 of this handbook.

Stage	Description
1	The service requests an <i>EC20 Transitional Advance Form</i> from the Ministry of Education, ece.funding@education.govt.nz
2	The service completes and returns the <i>EC20</i> to the ECE Operational Funding Team on ece.funding@education.govt.nz .
3	The Ministry calculates the service's advance payment based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number of days the service will be open and the calculated funded child hours for each day during a selected week for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under Twos Two and Overs not receiving 20 Hours ECE 20 Hours ECE Plus 10 ECE hours and the date the service will begin offering 20 Hours ECE.
4	The Ministry makes an advance payment to the service on the next available major payment date.
5	The advance payment is washed-up against actual funded child hours on the next RS7 Return and 20 Hours ECE funding becomes part of the normal funding cycle.

Ceasing 20 Hours ECE

Services that decide to stop offering 20 Hours ECE funding should contact the ECE Operational Funding team on ece.funding@education.govt.nz to discuss how to adjust their future funding.

More information about 20 Hours ECE can be found at the [Education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) website.



4-6 The EC20 Form

**This section
removed**

This section was removed in April 2015.

Please see Section 7-9 for information on the *EC20 Transitional Advance Form*.