

**FAQs about education for children arriving from Ukraine.**

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## Introduction

The county council, schools and education settings are receiving enquiries and applications for the placement of children and young people who are arriving or may soon arrive from Ukraine. County council staff are committed to working in partnership to support partners, early years providers, school and education setting leaders and staff, and their communities, to provide a warm welcome and the support and guidance for families and their hosts to assist in the access to their education entitlement.

The following FAQs answer some of the commonly asked questions about what educational support is available for children from Ukraine and how to access it.

## Early Years/Pre-school and Child Care

### Are children from the Ukraine eligible for the early years funded education entitlement for two-year-olds (FEET) of up to 15 hours funded education per week?

Families from the Ukraine will have recourse to public funds and the right to work and claim benefits in the UK. Current direction from government is that the usual criteria for accessing Early Years Funded Entitlement will apply.

The usual criteria for FEET funding for two-year-olds will apply to families from the Ukraine. The FEET criteria can be found here [Funded early education for two year olds (FEET) - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/families/childcare/paying/funded-early-education-for-2-year-olds#financial).

Families can be supported to apply in the usual way either online or via a paper form and can access this funding in the funded period after their 2nd birthday, from the date their funding application is approved.

If you experience any difficulties with this or if you need to discuss an individual family’s circumstances, please do contact us at eycommissioningteam@surreycc.gov.uk

### Are children from the Ukraine eligible for the universal early years funded education entitlement for three- and four-year-olds (FEE) of up to 15 hours funded education per week?

All three- and four-year-olds will continue to be eligible for the universal entitlement of up to 15 hours per week from the funded period after their 3rd birthday.

Families should be supported to approach their chosen early years provider directly to access this funded entitlement.

### Are children from the Ukraine eligible for the extended early years funded education entitlement for three- and four-year-olds of up to 30 hours funded education per week?

For the 30 hours extended entitlement, the usual criteria would apply [30 hours funded childcare for working parents - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/families/childcare/paying/30-hours-funded-childcare-for-working-parents)

Both parents must be working, or one parent in a one parent family. They must have a National Insurance Number and meet the usual income criteria to be found eligible, and they must have their valid eligibility code before the start of the next funding period.

The deadline dates are as follows:

31 August for 1 September start
31 December for 1 January start
31 March for 1 April start

There are recommended application windows for each funded period to ensure receipt of a code on time, these can be found here [30 hours free childcare - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare).

This does not affect a child’s eligibility for the universal 15 hours which can start immediately at any point from the funded period following their 3rd birthday.

The County Council has no influence over the eligibility and cut off dates for applications for 30 hours funded entitlement; this is checked and processed by HM Revenue and Customs

### Are families from the Ukraine eligible for Tax Free Childcare?

Families from the Ukraine will have recourse to public funds and the right to work and claim benefits in the UK, therefore current direction from the government is that the usual criteria for accessing Tax Free Childcare will apply.

The Tax-Free Childcare Scheme for children aged 0-11 provides working families with a discount on childcare costs through a government top up. Families can check here to find out whether they are eligible [Tax-Free Childcare scheme - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/families/childcare/paying/tax-free#:~:text=The%20government%27s%20new%20Tax%2DFree,for%20children%20with%20a%20disability).) and should contact their early years setting to find out if they are signed up to the scheme.

### Are children aged 3 and 4 years from the Ukraine eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)?

Families from the Ukraine will have recourse to public funds and the right to work and claim benefits in the UK, therefore current direction from the DfE is that the usual criteria for accessing EYPP will apply.

You can find the criteria here [Early Years Pupil Premium - information for childcare professionals - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/childcare-professionals/providing-free-early-education/early-years-pupil-premium-information-for-childcare-professionals#spend)

### How can families from the Ukraine be supported to find early education and childcare in their local area?

The County Council [Family Information Service](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/families) provide signposting to childcare provision within the local area which may offer places at a range of costs to suit family needs, including school nursery classes, private day nurseries, pre-schools, and childminders.

Their website can be accessed here [Family Information Service - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/families).

### Can families from the Ukraine request to defer their child’s entry into reception or to be educated outside of their chronological year group?

Summer born children whose 4th birthday falls between 1 April and 31 August may request for their child to defer entry or be educated outside of their year group.

The Early Years Funded Entitlement will no longer be paid to an Early Years provider from the term after the child’s 5th birthday.

## Elective Home Education

### Are newly arrived Ukrainian families able to Electively Home Educate (EHE) their children?

Electively Home Educating children is an option that any parent might consider in making provision for their child, including newly arrived Ukrainian families. Elective Home Education means that the parent takes sole responsibility for the education of their child.

It is important, that if this is a route that parents are exploring that they contact an Elective Home Education Inclusion Officer to discuss the parents responsibility to make provision and how they can find support.

The county council works with Electively Home Educating families and contacts all families on a regular basis to ensure that the education being provided to their child is meeting their needs.

To be able to book a discussion with an Elective Home Education Inclusion Officer parents can

 e-mail electivehome.education@surreycc.gov.uk

## School Admissions

### Do children arriving in the UK from Ukraine have a right to access a school place?

All children living in the UK have a right to access a school in England, irrespective of their nationality.

### How will families know how to get their children into a school on arrival in the UK?

The Government has issued a [Welcome Pack for refugees from the Ukraine](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welcome-a-guide-for-ukrainians-arriving-in-the-uk) . The pack provides advice for parents on navigating the English school admissions system.

The Government has also published advice on [School applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children)and[general advice on school admissions](https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions).

### How should Ukraine nationals apply for a school place in Surrey?

Families should apply in the usual way by completing an In Year Application Form. Information on applying for a school place is available on the [Surrey County Council website.](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

Host families and support workers may help a family complete the form, but the application must ordinarily be made by a person with parental responsibility.

### How quickly should applications from Ukrainian nationals be considered?

We acknowledge that the best place for children to be educated is in school. Being in a school is vital to help newly arrived children integrate as quickly as possible into the communities in which they are living.

When parents apply for a school place, the [DfE School Admissions Code](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf) states that we should aim to notify parents of the outcome of an application for a school within 10 school days and that we must do so within 15 school days.

Where there are no school places within a reasonable distance of the child’s home, we will use [Surrey’s Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf) to place them locally within 20 school days.

### Can admission authorities prioritise refugees from Ukraine for admission to schools?

Just like families entering under the Afghan and Hong Kong BN(O) schemes, refugees from Ukraine have no specific additional priority for admission.

This means that refugees from Ukraine should apply for a place in the normal way and, should vacancies exist, children should be admitted promptly, like any other children, in strict order of priority according to each school’s published admission arrangements.

Where there are no vacancies in local schools, we will use [Surrey’s Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf) to place children into school, above each schools’ normal capacity where necessary.

### How should admission authorities make decisions on applications?

If a school has a vacancy but no waiting list, then the child should be offered a place and admitted without delay.

However, if a waiting list exists, applications must be considered in accordance with each school’s published admission arrangements.

Some schools give priority based on exceptional social/medical need and so, where this exists within their published admission arrangements, admission authorities may decide to use this to prioritise children from Ukraine, if they feel the child’s circumstances justify it.

### Can schools admit over their Published Admission Number (PAN)?

Whilst each school maintains a number for each year group, an admission authority may admit above that number at any time should they wish to do so. This is subject to infant class size requirements still being met, and if they can accommodate those additional children within their class structure.

However, unless the child is being placed under [Surrey’s Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf), the child to be offered a place must always be the child at the top of the waiting list and next in line to lawfully receive an offer of a place.

### Can a school exceed the infant class size limit of 30 children to a teacher to accommodate refugee children from Ukraine?

Legislation limits the size of an infant class[[1]](#footnote-2)[1] to 30 children per school teacher. Normally this cannot be exceeded but there are exceptions to this limit set out in paragraph 2.16 of the [School Admissions Code](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2).

Where possible and needed, the DfE encourage schools and settings to admit children of refugees from Ukraine as exceptions to the infant class size limit, in the circumstances permitted by the Code.

### How will the [Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf) be applied?

A child will only be considered for placement under [Surrey’s Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf) once they have taken up residence at an address in Surrey.

If no schools within a reasonable distance of a child’s home are willing or able to admit more children and young people, we will place these children under the [Surrey Fair Access Protocol](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/12364/FINAL-Fair-Access-Protocol-2021-22-V1.pdf), in the same way we would place other qualifying children. In these cases, places can be offered over the schools published admission number and without regard to other children who are on the waiting list, if this does not breach the infant class size regulations. Refugees from Ukraine will be given the same level of priority for a place under the Protocol as any other children referred to the Protocol.

### Where can Ukrainian families find advice on accessing a school place?

We recognise the challenges that families from Ukraine will face and so, if a parent, host family or support worker needs further advice in relation to accessing a school place, please direct them to Surrey Schools and Childcare Service.

Phone: 0300 200 1004 (Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Email: schooladmissions@surreycc.gov.uk

## Children who will need to apply for a school place for September

### Which age groups may need to apply for a school place for September 2022?

* children born between 01 Sept 2017 and 31 August 2018 will be due to start Reception in September 2022.
* children in current Year 2 of an infant school will need to transfer to a junior school in September 2022.
* children in current Year 6 will need to transfer to a secondary school in September 2022.

### Can parents apply for a place for September this term?

Yes, they should apply up to 31 August 2022. After that time, the parent needs to submit an in-year application.

### How do parents apply for a place for September?

Parents can apply online up to 18 August 2022 via these links:

Primary: [Late applications and changes of preference - primary, infant or junior schools - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/primary-junior-and-infant/late-admissions)

Secondary: [Late applications and changes of preference - secondary schools - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/secondary/late-applications-and-change-of-preference)

Parents should be encouraged to apply online if possible. If they cannot, or if they are applying after 18 August, they should call Surrey’s Schools & Childcare Service to request a paper application form, via 0300 200 1004 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm).

### Will Ukrainian children in Year 2 have to go to an infant school and then move school again in September?

The School Admissions team will only allocate an infant school to a Year 2 child this late in the school year if:

* this is parental preference and there is a vacancy at the school (the parent will be advised of the need to apply for a junior place for September 2022)
* there are no available places at a primary school within a reasonable distance

## Travel assistance to school

### Are children from Ukraine entitled to travel assistance to school?

The usual travel assistance process applies; an online application should be submitted for eligibility to be assessed.

If the School Admissions team is sending an offer letter (for schools that Surrey manages in year admissions for), the offer letter will explain to the parent how to apply for travel assistance. Schools making their own offers should also include this information.

The School Admissions team may send a pre-approved transport form to the parent if it has been identified that the child will be entitled to travel assistance, to speed up the process.

If eligible, the most cost-effective mode of assistance will be arranged - which is most likely to be public transport (or coach for secondary aged pupils) for mainstream pupils.

If an application for travel assistance has been unsuccessful [parents can appeal the decision](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/transport/under-16/appealing-a-travel-assistance-decision).

For detailed information regarding travel assistance to school visit: [School transport - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/transport)

## Managing transitions to learning

### Should schools place Ukrainian children out of year?

There is no need for any child to be placed out of year, children from Ukraine will benefit from being with their peers. The barrier of language will diminish if they are given a positive and inclusive curriculum. However where there is a request, the admission authority for the school must consider it based on the circumstances of the case and what is in the child’s best interests.

For further information visit: [Guidance on the education of children outside of their chronological year group (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/12582/Guidance-on-the-education-of-children-outside-of-their-chronological-year-group-V3.pdf)

### Should Year 10 and Year 11 Ukrainian students be placed out of year, as they have not accessed the GCSE curriculum?

Students from Ukraine will have accessed their own curriculum and should normally be placed in the usual year group. Students will learn English from other students of the same age and will have the opportunity to sit the relevant exams in the future.

### Do schools and settings have discretion for phased / gradual reintegration plan?

As a rule, no. All children and young people of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. A pupil who is new to English should be given every opportunity to access the curriculum.

### What flexibility do schools and settings / local authorities have in terms of providing access to education?

There is no flexibility. Children of compulsory school age **must** receive full-time education. Parents are under a statutory duty to ensure their children receive a full-time education and local authorities are under a duty to provide suitable school places.

In Ukraine, children do not attend school until they are 7. The DfE has confirmed that it looks to local authorities to help parents understand that children of compulsory school age in the UK (aged 5 but under 16 at the start of the school year) must attend school full-time unless the local authority is assured the child is receiving suitable home education.

### Where can I get assistance with purchase of a school uniform?

In the first instance contact the school, often schools will have arrangements in place to support families.

Families can also contact [Surrey County Council](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/health-and-welfare/support/financial-supp) for financial support and advice.

## School Attendance

### How strongly must schools and settings and local authorities enforce attendance at school for refugees from Ukraine?

School attendance is mandatory, and parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a full-time education and regularly attends the school where they are registered.

## Funding

### Is there additional funding available for schools?

The government has indicated that additional funding will be made available for the provision of education services for children arriving from Ukraine. The County Council will share with schools further details and clarification when this is available. The DfE have indicated that further information will be made available before the end of the Summer Term.

### Are there the usual funds for schools and settings for refugee settlement children – schools and settings might need to source trauma counselling?

In the 2022/23 financial year, the Government is offering 7,800 schools and settings and colleges in England grants to train a senior mental health lead in their setting.  The training will equip senior mental health leads with the knowledge and skills to implement effective processes for identifying students, or specific groups, who need additional mental health support. Furthermore, the Government has provided additional funding to accelerate the roll out of Mental Health Support Teams linked to schools and settings and colleges, who provide early intervention on mild to moderate mental health issues, to cover approximately 35% of children and young people in England by 2023.

For those who need immediate access to specialist support or help, all NHS Mental Health Trusts are providing 24/7 support.

### Do children from Ukraine have entitlement to free school meals?

We expect that most Ukrainian children will be entitled to free school meals when they arrive in the UK. This is based on the government's recent confirmation that Ukrainian parents will be entitled to benefits. A National Insurance number or National Asylum Support Service reference number is required from parents for verification of eligibility for benefits- related free school meals.

Schools may wish to provide meals as a goodwill gesture whilst families await the relevant government documentation to facilitate the required free school meal eligibility check to be performed.

Please note state funded schools in England are required by law to provide free lunches to all children in reception, year 1 and year 2, who are not otherwise entitled to benefits-related free school meals. Please let the school know of benefits-related eligibility even for children in these groups as the school may be able to access additional funding if they do.

## School support for children and families

### What support can Surrey County Council REMA (Race Equality and Minority Achievement) team provide schools?

The REMA Team is available to support schools and settings, as they welcome children from Ukraine. REMA can provide:

* Interpreters for meetings with parents etc.
* Bilingual Support Workers to help children and young people in school through their first language
* English teaching
* Initial assessments to plan provision for individual children and young people
* Training for school staff

### What developmental support is available for school and setting staff and leaders regarding trauma informed practice?

**The Compassionate Schools, Education Psychology**

The Compassionate Schools Programme offers school leaders an opportunity to explore current school practice in promoting the wellbeing and inclusion of children and young, particularly those who have been affected by prolonged and unpredictable stress, trauma and adversity

**Surrey Healthy Schools Approach Training**

Funded by Education and Public Health the [Surrey Healthy Schools](https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/professionals/healthy-schools) approach was revised in 2020. Utilising research and evidence from the Department for Education, Public Health England, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, the Department of Health and Ofsted; directorates and agencies have been working together to help co-ordinate ever more rigorous strategies across Education, Public Health, Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Services, the NHS and school nursing.

There is also a range of [Mental health training opportunities available for Surrey schools - Healthy Surrey](https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/professionals/healthy-schools/news/mental-health-training-opportunities-available-for-surrey-schools)

## Additional resources and information

* Generic information on the Surrey County Council website [Support for Ukrainian Nationals - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/community/housing/support-for-ukrainian-nationals)
* In-Year admission: [Apply for an in year school place - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/in-year)
* Primary admission: [Apply for a place at a primary, infant or junior school - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/primary-junior-and-infant/apply)
* Secondary admission: [Apply for a place at a secondary school - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/secondary/apply)
* Family information services: [Family Information Service - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/families)
* Guidance for Councils: [Homes for Ukraine: guidance for councils - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=684a1c3a-5fdf-4e53-b9a2-75bcaa99d197&utm_content=immediately)
* Homes for Ukraine: [Homes for Ukraine: record your interest - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine)
* Ukraine Family scheme: [Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa)
* [PSHE, Inclusion and Wellbeing News](https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/professionals/healthy-schools/news)
* Information, services and resources for schools and settings: [Surrey Education Services](https://surreyeducationservices.surreycc.gov.uk/) hub
1. [1] An infant class is one in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year i.e. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)