



Nursery Charging Policy

2021 - 2022



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1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016 (as amended)
- DfE (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'

2. Fees

2.2 Parents are charged for care provided outside of the following provision:

15 hours free provision a week for eligible two-year-olds

Universal 15 hours free provision a week for all three to four-year-olds.

Extended 30 hours free provision a week for eligible three to four-year-olds.

Extended 30 hours free provision a week for children in foster care.

2.3 The charges are as follows:

- £12 per additional 'top up' session
- £2.24 for each hot lunch provided (paid directly to the caterers)
- £2 for the additional 30 minutes at the end of the day

Wrap around care:

- Breakfast Club - £2.00

• Afterschool Club:

£3.00 for 3.30pm – 4.30pm

£5.00 for 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Morning session times: 8.45am-11.45am

Afternoon session times: 11.45am – 2.45pm

An additional half hour session can be provided on request to enable parents to pick up at the same time as main school closes.

2.4 The 30 hours free childcare offer cannot be used to pay for meals, other consumables (such as nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The school may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement between the parent and the school.

2.5 Parents will not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a '30 hours' place.

3. Eligibility for free education and childcare for two-year-olds

3.1 Parents of two-year-olds are eligible for free education and childcare if they live in England and receive one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit – if the parent and their partner have a combined income from work of less than £15,400 a year after tax
- Tax credits and they have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment parents receive when they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

3.2 A child may also be eligible for free early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

They're looked after by the local council

They have a current statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan

They receive Disability Living Allowance

They've left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

3.3 Grove Primary School and Nursery will ask parents to complete a parental declaration form to help us ensure they receive their free early education and childcare hours.

3.4 Parents can use the free early education and childcare allowance from the term following the child's second birthday.

4. Eligibility for 15 hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds

4.1 All children in England receive 570 hours free childcare per year.

4.2 These hours are usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year.

4.3 '15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.

4.4 The school will ask parents to complete a parental declaration form to help us ensure they receive their free childcare hours.

4.5 The 15 hours free childcare for three and four year olds will be offered for morning sessions only

5. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement

5.1 Parents of three and four-year-olds must meet the eligibility criteria below to be eligible for the extended 30 hours free childcare:

- The parent of the child (and their partner where applicable) is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage – this funding limit does not apply if a parent is self-employed and started their business less than 12 months ago.

5.2 Where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

5.3 Where one parent (in a couple household) is in receipt or could be entitled to be in receipt of specific benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

5.4 Parents are not eligible if:

- The child does not live with them.
- The parent or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.
- The parent is from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.

5.5 Parents will check their eligibility for the scheme by using the government's Childcare Choices website. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

5.6 Eligible parents will provide the school with their unique eligibility code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with their written consent, to enable the school to verify eligibility and receive future notifications from the LA on the continued validity of the code – parents are encouraged to do this as soon as possible, as they can only start their 30-hours free childcare the term after receiving a decision from HMRC.

5.7 The school will retain copies of documentation to enable the LA to undertake audits and fraud investigations; however, as per the Data Protection Act 2018, it will be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer any good reason to keep the data.

6. Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care

6.1 A child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours childcare per week (30 hours free childcare per week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory school age, and the criteria below are met:

- Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision making; and
- In single foster parent families, the foster parent holds additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.
- In two foster parent families, both partners hold additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.

6.2 To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The school can provide this form on request.

6.3 Foster parents are required by the LA to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

7. Payment information

7.1 Invoices will be raised monthly for parents who do not qualify for free funding or wish to 'top up' sessions. The invoice will be itemised to provide clear and transparent information concerning the charges as agreed in this policy. A due payment date will also be itemised on the invoice.

7.2 Payments can be made through a BACS on line to the Worcestershire County Council or cash payments can be made to the School Office. Please see reverse of invoice for payment details.

7.3 Payment is required when a child is on holiday, absent due to illness, or isolating due to Covid as the nursery must hold the child's place during this period and staff rotas are set.

7.4 If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the school leaders will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The school's decision is final.

7.5 One month's notice and payment will be required to withdraw your child from the nursery.

7.6 If the school has to close the nursery due to the on-going Covid 19 pandemic, credited adjustments will be made.

8. Difficulty with payments

8.1 The school will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.

8.2 Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact the school, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

9. Debt collection

- 9.1 The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including nursery fees.
- 9.2 The governing board will not write off any debt.
- 9.3 A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for seven years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices.
- 9.4 The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts; however, we will refer uncollected debts to the Local Authority to consider such action.

10. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

10.1 The headteacher will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and well-maintained.
- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
- A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor.
- The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
- The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.

10.2 The governing board:

- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
- At its discretion, will refer uncollected debts to the LA for consideration for legal action.
- Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- Will adhere to privacy arrangements.

11. The process for pursuing debts

11.1 Informal reminder – Within two days of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the school.

11.2 First reminder letter – If the debt is yet to be paid one week after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.

11.3 Second reminder letter - If the debt is yet to be paid one week after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.

11.4 Final reminder letter – If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to the LA to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.

11.5 Possible legal action – If no payment is made, and the governing board decides to escalate the matter to the LA, the LA will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

12. The waiving of debts

12.1 The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the headteacher and the governing board.

12.2 A debt may be waived when it is believed the debtor is experiencing serious financial hardship or if all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted and it is believed it would not be cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

13. Monitoring and review

13.1 This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing board.

13.2 The next scheduled review date is July 2024

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