

Fees and Payments Policy

The principles set out in the following policy will be adhered to at all times by Staff, Volunteers, Students and Committee

As a provider of Ofsted registered childcare, we both encourage and actively support eligible parents/carers with claiming and accessing the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit, Childcare Voucher Schemes and with claiming for Tax Free childcare.

We offer places for children who are eligible for universal and extended entitlement funding for 3 and 4yr olds, and children who are eligible for 2yr old funding.

This policy aims to ensure;

- That every child has equal opportunity of access to the Pre-School
- That the setting is not exposed to legal risk
- That the relationship between parents/carers and the Pre-School remain positive.
- That the reputation of the setting is not adversely affected
- That all parents/carers are clear of the Pre-School procedures for fees and payments.

Responsibilities and expectations

Policy Statement

The Pre-School is a Voluntary Run Organisation, and as such our aim is to run our finances at a suitably sustainable level. We do not aim to make a large profit but to maintain an adequate fund to keep up the maintenance of our premises and the equipment used by the children, and to retain a contingency fund.

1. Payable fees will be set at a reasonable level in order to fulfil the above objective and will be in line with the current funding hourly rates which are set by Devon County Council.
2. Fees will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in the funding rates set by Devon County Council.

Funded childcare

Universal funding

All children are eligible to receive 15 hours a week universal funding from the start of the term after their 3rd Birthday. Term dates are available from the Pre-School Unit.

The Pre-School will claim this funding each term directly from Devon County Council with parental permission.

Extended entitlement

Working families of children aged 3 to 5 years can apply for an additional 15 hours of childcare a week equalling 30 hours in total.

Children who receive this eligibility can attend the Pre-School Unit for up to 30 hours a week using both the universal and extended entitlement together.

Parents must apply directly through <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> or <https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/>

Parents will be provided with a code to prove their child's eligibility and this will be required by the Pre-School Unit. The code will enable a claim to be made to Devon County Council for the payments and fees will be charged if the code is not provided.

2 year old funding

Some 2yr olds will be able to access funding for 15 hours per week.

If you are in receipt of any of the following benefits your child will be eligible.

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit, and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including
- Child Tax Credits and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for tax credits).

2-year-olds can also get funded childcare if they:

- are looked after by the Local Authority
- have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- get Disability Living Allowance
- have left care under an adoption order, special guardianship order or a child arrangements order.

If our child is eligible, you will usually receive an invitation to apply from Devon County Council.

If you have not received an invitation but think you may be eligible, you can check this at [Citizen Portal - Sign in \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk) or by calling **0345 155 1013**.

Fee Rates per session (non-funded hours)

All Non-Funded hours are currently charged at the following rates.

2 year olds – £5.24

3 and 4 year olds – £4.30

Booking Sessions

1. Each term (around half term) parents/carers of children already attending the Pre-School will be asked to book their child's sessions for the following term. Spaces remaining after this process will be allocated to children on the waiting list and children due to start the following term.
2. Sessions must be booked in advance – this is to ensure that there is a space for your child and the correct adult to child ratios are met. Some spaces may be available on the day or at short notice ('ad hoc' or extra sessions), however; the Pre-School is unable to guarantee this.

Billing

1. Fees for non-funded hours will be invoiced in the first month of each term.
2. All fees invoiced can be paid in 3 equal monthly instalments, and are shown on the invoice.
3. Payment for agreed 'ad hoc' or extra sessions not booked in advance using a parent declaration form will be invoiced separately; these invoices must be paid within 28 days.
4. Payments can be made by cheque, Bacs or in cash.

Collection of Fees (non-funded sessions)

1. When a parent/carer books a space for their child using the termly parent declaration form the Pre-School we will accept this as an agreement to pay all relevant fees for both funded and non-funded hours. Funded hours shown on the signed parent declaration form will be claimed by the Pre-School on your behalf from Devon County Council, and all non-funded hours will be charged to the parent/carer of the child named on the parent declaration form by invoice.
2. If payment is not received, the Pre-School has the right to exclude the child from the non-funded sessions, and the child's space will be reallocated.
3. The Manager will inform the Committee of any outstanding fees to be paid and actions will be taken to recover any debts where a payment arrangement has not been agreed with the Manager.
4. We appreciate that if a family is experiencing financial difficulty, it may be hard to make complete payment in one instalment. In these situations, and on a case-by-case basis, the Parent/Carer should contact the Pre-School Manager and discuss payment in alternative instalments.
5. The Committee will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further 'credit' and will, in future, be required to pay in advance.

6. This decision and its basis will be recorded at a committee meeting.
7. We will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the help available to pay for non-funded sessions such as the childcare element of the working family tax credit, tax free childcare and childcare voucher schemes.

If fees are not paid as agreed, the following procedure will apply:

1. If no payment is received by the due date, and no arrangements for payment are agreed the following procedure will be followed;

- ***First 'overdue payment' reminder letter***

A reminder letter will be issued 28 days after the due date.

The date of the reminder will be recorded.

- ***Second 'overdue payment' reminder letter***

A second reminder letter will be issued 14 days later.

The date of the reminder will be recorded.

The child's non-funded sessions will be withdrawn.

Failure to respond to reminders / settle a debt/make payment arrangement

If after a further 14 days a response is still not received, a letter will be sent advising you that the Pre-School Committee will at this point seek legal advice, this could include advice being taken from Law Call, the Charity Commission or a solicitor.

Further action to recover the money owed will then be taken as advised, this could involve a claim being made against you in the small claims court.

Additional payment/fees

1. Additional payments and fees will only be charged with notice in writing.
2. A one-off administration fee of £20 is charged when children start at the Pre-School Unit, details of this charge are provided in the prospectus.
3. These payments will only be charged to meet the costs of activities or outings which cannot be met by the Pre-School.
4. The cost of extra activities will be kept to a minimum only covering the costs, the Pre-School will not benefit financially from any additional payments made in this way.

Late collection of a child from Pre-school

In the event of a child being collected late from the Pre-School Unit without notice a bill will be issued for the time difference between the booked agreed time of collection and the actual time the child was collected at the current non-funded hourly rate.

Notice of withdrawal of a child from Pre-School

1. Unless a child is leaving the Pre-School unit to start full time School (Primary School) written notice must be given.
2. 1 months' notice must be given in writing.
3. Where a child leaves prior to the end of the 1 month notice period fees will be charged until the end of that period.
4. All fees invoiced will be due to be paid up to the last day of the notice period, this will be calculated by the Administrator and a new invoice will be issued once notice in writing has been received from the child's parent/carer. Any fees due must then be paid within 14 days of receipt of the invoice to ensure that the account is cleared prior to the end of the written notice period given by the parent/carer.
5. Where a child's space is funded a claim up to the end of the notice period will apply, and these fees will not be able to be claimed by another childcare provider.
6. Where non-funded fees invoiced during the notice period are not paid within the requested 14 days, fees as originally invoiced up to the end of the term will be due without a reduction.

This Policy was adopted on:

Name of Pre-School:

Signed on behalf of the management:

Role of signatory:

Next date policy to be reviewed: