

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 to children aged 2 to 5 years who are eligible for both universal, 30hrs or targeted funding, and welcome children without funding known as fee paying.

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 to fulfil the above objective and will be set 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 (15hrs)

All children are eligible to receive 15 hours a week universal funding from the start of the term after their 3rd Birthday regardless of family income or circumstances.

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.

Working entitlement (30 hrs)

Working families of children aged 9 months to 5 years can apply for up to 30 hrs of childcare a week.

Children who receive this eligibility can attend the Pre-School Unit for up to 30 hours a week.

Parents must apply directly through HMRC and if successful will be provided with a code to prove their child's eligibility to the funding, this will be required by the Pre-School Unit on initially booking and be reaffirmed each term. The code will enable a claim to be made to Devon County Council without the code fees will be charged for booked hours.

Targeted funding (15hrs)

Targeted funding for 2-year-olds can be claimed by some households if the following apply;

- The household is in receipt of
 - Universal Credit with a household income of £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments
 - Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit

Or

- their child is looked after by a local council
- their child has an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- their child is in receipt of [Disability Living Allowance](#)
- their child has left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangement order or adoption order

Applications for this funding can be made [online](#) or by phone: 0345 155 1013. Parents/Carers will need their National Insurance Number or National Asylum Support Number (if applicable) in order to make a 2-year-old funding application.

If you're a non- UK citizen who cannot claim benefits

If your immigration status says you cannot claim benefits, you may still get funded childcare for your 2-year-old. You must live in England and your household income after tax must be no more than:

- £26,500 for families with one child
- £30,600 for families with two or more children
- You cannot have more than £16,000 in savings or investments

Parents will need to complete the [Application for funded early education for two-year-olds from families with no recourse to public funds \(NRPF\)](#) and attach this to their [online](#) application, along with any supporting evidence such as Biometric Residence Permits, bank statements, wage slips etc.

Fee Rates per session (non-funded hours)

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

2 yr olds – £7.48

3 to 5 yr olds – £5.50

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 by completing a declaration form. 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 at the start of each month.
2. All fees invoiced must be paid within 28 days.
3. Payment for agreed 'ad hoc' or extra sessions not booked in advance using a parent declaration form will be invoiced the following month; these invoices must be paid within 28 days.
4. Payments should be made by Bacs unless otherwise agreed with the Manager.

Collection of Fees (non-funded sessions)

1. When a parent/carer books a space for their child using the termly parent declaration forms 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 each month.
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.
This decision and its basis will be recorded at a committee meeting.
6. 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 28 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 28 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 £25 is charged when children start at the Pre-School Unit, details of this charge are provided in the prospectus.
3. Additional payments will only be charged to meet the costs of activities or outings which cannot be met by the Pre-School, the Pre-School will not benefit financially from these payments.
4. The cost of extra activities will be kept to a minimum.

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.

A minimum 1 hour charge for 2 staff will be made where the late collection is after 5pm.

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 provided.
2. 4 weeks' notice must be provided in writing.
3. Where a child ceases attendance prior to the end of the 4 weeks' notice period fees will be charged until the end of that period regardless.
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 Manager 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 28 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 28 days, fees as originally invoiced up to the end of the term will be due without a reduction.