



East Brent Pre-School

Fees and Debt Management Policy

Policy Aims

This policy aims to form part of the contract between the parent/carer and East Brent Pre-School including for wraparound care provision. For the purposes of this document the name East Brent Pre-School will refer to all services offered at the setting unless there is a specific difference, in which case the individual service will be named.

East Brent Pre-School operates a service which is fair and competitively priced. We aim to offer a high quality, safe and stimulating environment that provides a service that is good value for money. Opening times and hours for the setting are 7.45am – 5.15pm Monday to Friday in term time. 5.15pm can be arranged with prior arrangements.

There are several types of funding or childcare vouchers to claim for. These are currently:

Two year old funding for parents on benefits

Two year old funding for working parents

Universal funding for 3 and 4 year olds

Childcare vouchers

Tax free childcare schemes

The office will be happy to help you apply for relevant funding.

Fees

Fees are calculated on an hourly rate. The level of fees will be set by the school Governors and approved by the Executive Head Teacher and will be reviewed termly. Parents will be given one months' notice in writing of changes to fees or to changes to our fees policy. Return slips on the letter will allow us to monitor that all parents have received and accepted the new terms.

The current fees are set at:

£6.25 per hours for under 3's

£6.25 per hour for over 3's

Additional Charges

The Pre-School reserves the right to charge for additional 'Enrichment' activities which are not part of the routine day, such as sports coaching and school trips. Parents will be informed prior to these events in writing and consent will be sort for their child to participate.

Invoices

Fees are invoiced monthly in arrears and are to be paid within 14 days of receipt of invoice.

Payment must be made even if sessions are missed. Any additional sessions will be invoiced the following month if the cut-off date for the current month's invoice is past. The pre-school administrator/staff will give a receipt upon receiving payments if requested. Invoices will be given to parents as they are issued. All payments and fees, including Early Years Funding, will be itemised on the monthly invoice. The funding claimed will be shown as hours per day. A session not attended

due to illness, holiday, appointments etc. cannot be exchanged for a session on another day or refunded and will be charged in full. If a child is absent due to long-term illness parents will be asked to sign an adjustment form to reduce the funding hours claimed for. If sessions are paid for, then a reduction in fees will be considered by the Head teacher and Pre-school administrator. The Pre-school will not charge for emergency closure days (e.g. snow days).

Payment Methods

The Pre-School accepts a range of payment methods as listed

BACS

Childcare Vouchers

Tax-Free Childcare scheme payments. (Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to check whether you could be eligible for government childcare offers, if you are eligible for Tax-Free Childcare you will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply)

These payment methods will be reviewed as required.

Debt Management

If fees are not paid on time (14 days after receipt) a £5 late payment charge will be made and the parent/carer will be sent a letter requesting payment within 7 days.

If fees have still not been paid 30 days after receipt of invoice without any explanation, the Finance Administrator will contact the parents by phone and will send a copy of the invoice to the parents. If after 7 days the payment has still not been received the parent will be sent a formal warning letter and the school governors will be notified. The formal warning letter to the parent/carer will explain that continued late payment may result in their child's place at the setting being forfeited and the debt being passed to a debt collection agency. Repayment plans can be initiated with the agreement of the Head teacher or Pre-school Manager if a parent is having difficulties paying an invoice in full. This can be managed by the Finance Administrator and the parent will be asked to sign an agreement to the payment plan. Defaulting on a repayment plan will be treated the same as defaulting on an invoice.

Parents/carers are strongly advised at their earliest convenience to contact the administrator if they have a query about their invoice, or if, for any reason, they are likely to have difficulty in making payment on time, to avoid jeopardising their child's place at the setting.

The Funding Periods are:

Autumn: 1 September – 31 December

Spring: 1 January – 31 March

Summer: 1 April – 31 August

This table below shows when your child will be able to access the funding for the first time:

- If the child is born between 1 April and 31 August, funding can be claimed from 1 September – autumn funding period
- If the child is born between 1 September and 31 December, funding can be claimed from 1 January – spring funding period
- If the child is born between 1 January and 31 March, funding can be claimed from 1 April – summer funding period

The maximum number of Universal Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funded hours that can be claimed are as follows:

- The maximum that can be claimed per day is 10 hours.
- The maximum entitlement is 15 hours a week over a minimum of 38 weeks.
- The maximum of providers at one time is 3
- A maximum of 2 sites in a single day.
- EYE is offered Term Time only.

The Grace Period

The government has introduced a ‘grace period’ to enable parents to retain their childcare place for a short period should they become ineligible for the extended entitlement. This will allow continuity for the child and also give the parent some time to regain employment.

A child will enter ‘the grace period’ when the child’s parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria (see table below)

We the provider will be notified and if the parent is not eligible after the grace period, the extended entitlement will be charged at our hourly rate.

Date Parent receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation	Grace Period End date:
1 January – 10 February	31 March
11 February – 31 March	31 August
1 April – 26 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	31 December
1 September – 21 October	31 December

Funding for Eligible 2 year olds for families on benefits

We offer up to 570 hours per year for eligible 2 year olds for funding the term after their 2nd birthday.

For children who qualify for funding for 2 year olds, the funding will be available from the date stated on the acceptance letter; this will not be earlier than the first day of the funding period after their 2nd birthday.

Funding for Eligible 2 year olds with working parents

Some parents may be entitled to working parents funding for their two year olds. This funding is currently for 15 hours. To apply for this funding you will need to make sure that you have the following information to hand.

- Your national insurance number (or unique taxpayer reference if you are self-employed)
- The date you started or are due to start work
- Details of any government support or benefits you receive
- The uk birth certificate reference number (if you have one) for your child.

You may find out if you're eligible straight away, but it can take up to 7 days.

Once your application has been approved, you'll get a code for free childcare to give to your childcare provider.

Universal Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds

The early years entitlement gives your child a maximum of 570 hours each year. This will start the funding period after your child's third birthday and will last for 3 funding periods (equivalent to one year).

The maximum entitlement that can be claimed is 15 hours per week. The maximum entitlement that can be claimed per day is 10 hours, up to a maximum of 15 per week. The Early Years Entitlements can only be claimed in full hours or in blocked of 15 minutes. The next entitlement year, (starting the funding period after your child's fourth birthday) your child will receive another automatic allocation of 570 hours which will also last for another 3 funding periods.

To claim the EYE funding the following information is needed:

- Child's legal documentation – a copy of child's birth certificate or passport.
- Somerset County Council Child Registration form completed.
- If claiming 2 Year Old Funding, a copy of the acceptance letter is required.
- EYE parent declaration form – completed every term and signed by parent
- 30 Hours Extended Entitlement Consent form – completed and signed
- Relevant codes for Two and Three year old funding

If the above legal documentation is not produced, then the parent/carer will be charged the setting's normal fees as unable to claim EYE Funding. If a funding claim, for either universal or extended funding, is unsuccessful due to parental omission of information or documentation then the Pre-School will charge for the hours attended and parents will be liable to pay for these costs.

Any additional sessions accessed over and above the free entitlement will be charged at our hourly rate as set out above (Charges). This will show on the invoice.

UEYF and EEFYF will not be claimed against non-pupil days, but the Pre-school reserve the right to claim funding for days when the setting is closed at short notice, ie due to adverse weather. Funding will also be claimed if a child is absent for sickness or holidays.

If a child is withdrawn from the setting part way through the funding period and the required notice is not given, the setting will retain the equivalent of 4 weeks funding to cover the 'notice period' following the last day of attendance.

Tax Free Childcare

Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to check whether you could be eligible for government childcare offers, if you are eligible for Tax-Free Childcare you will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

Early Years Pupil Premium

Children who meet the criteria for free school meals may be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). EYPP Application forms will always be available in the reception area of the Pre-School and parents will be made aware of this additional funding through newsletters and one-to-one staff contact. The funding received will be applied on a case by case basis, but approximately 50% will be used to support the child's education and 50% to provide additional services to the child. Please see the EYPP policy for details.

Cancellation of Child's Place

A period of four weeks' notice for cancellation and reduction of sessions is required in writing by the parent/carer to terminate a child's place at the setting. All sessions booked during the four week notice period must be paid for prior to the termination date and within the 14 days terms from receipt of invoice.

Terminations, reductions and changes made to sessions verbally will not be accepted – they must be in writing and a month's notice must be given.

Late collection Fee

Where a parent/carer is late collecting their child the additional time will be charged at the standard hourly rate. If the late collection time is after the close of the standard opening hours of the Pre-school (3.10pm for preschool or 5.15pm for wraparound care) then there will be a charge of £5 for each 15 minutes. If a child remains uncollected for longer than 30 minutes after the setting has closed and contact with the parents/guardians has not been possible Social Services will be contacted and the uncollected child and safeguarding policies implemented.

Further information

Parents and Guardians can access further information on early years funding and tax free childcare at

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/childrens-services/early-years-for-families/early-years-entitlement-information-for-families>

This policy was implemented on 20th March 2024

I agree to the above policy _____

Child's name _____

Parent's name _____

Date: _____

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