

Charging Policy for Childcare at Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School

Policy Statement

At Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School we aim to make our pre-school as accessible to as many families in the community and therefore aim to ensure our fees are as competitive as possible. As a non profit making charity we rely on prompt fee payments to be able to meet our running costs and to provide equipment and resources for the children who attend. In doing so, we ask all parent/carers to respect our policy to ensure the sustainability of our pre-school.

The Schedule of Charges

1. The fees are reviewed at the Committee's discretion.
2. Children not eligible for funding, or who wish to attend sessions in excess of 15 hours per week, will need to pay the current fees as set down by the setting.
3. The pre-school will notify the parents in writing/email, in advance of any price increases.

Our hourly rate is charged at £3.60, for children accessing two or more 2.5 hourly sessions per week. This rate also applies to children who take up extra sessions above their funded hours, under 3's and those who chose not to use their funded hours at our setting.

Those who wish to attend the setting for 2.5 hours a week or less, the hourly rate is £4.60 per hour.

We offer a daily lunch club from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm this is an additional charge of £3.60 per hour, if not claimed as part of funded hours. Lunch clubs are an additional payment to sessions.

We are open from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm Monday - Friday; we recommend a minimum of five hours per week, to ensure continuity. Our morning sessions run from 9:00 – 11:30 am and our afternoon's 12:30 – 3:00 pm.

4. We offer flexibility to support parent/carers to maximise the use of their child's place, where sessions are available to allow this.
5. As the pre-school is a small charity, we do not offer discounts for siblings or for children of staff members.
6. Any bank charges the pre-school incurs through the non payment of a cheque will be passed onto the parent/carer.
7. Where a child is not yet in receipt of Early Years Education Funding, a fee of £3.60 per hour applies, for 2 or more 2.5 hour sessions.
8. If a parent/carer has any issues with their invoice, they are to contact the Administration Manager or the Treasurer in the first instance.

Contributions

We ask for a contribution of £1.00 per week towards the cost of healthy snacks and cooking ingredients and £3.00 per term to help cover insurances and Ofsted registration, for all fee paying children and those that access above their full entitlement of 15 hours Early Years Funding.

We ask for a voluntary contribution from those children claiming up to their 15 hours entitlement.

In line with government regulations parents are advised that:

♣ All contributions are voluntary,

♣ Children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently, no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not, make a contribution of any kind.

Holding Fee

Parent/carers who anticipate that they will be only claiming their entitlement of 15 hours Early Education Grant Funding will not be charged a holding or registration fee. For those who are not eligible for funding, or who intend to take over 15 hours in the setting, you will be asked to pay a £25 registration fee to cover administration costs.

Uniform

Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School t-shirts and book bags are on sale in the setting but are by no means compulsory. They are sold at a small profit which goes into the pre-school funds.

Payment Procedures

1. Fees are payable on a half term basis, each pre- school year consists of six terms.
2. The preferred method of issuing invoices to parent/carers is by email, but hardcopies are available upon request, or for parents/carers without email access. During the last week of each half term parent/carers will receive an invoice for the following term's fees. The invoice will include a date by which payment should be made. All new parent/carers are asked for valid email addresses upon joining and these are kept on file for the purposes of sending invoices, newsletters and fundraising notices. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the pre-school of any changes.
3. The invoice will clearly show the services being charged for and the hours your child has received free of charge for their early years education place. Parent/carers are asked to check the session pattern shown on the invoice and report any discrepancies to the Administration Manager as soon as possible. A revised invoice will be issued within a week of the notification of the change.
4. If a child starts mid-term, the fees will be calculated and adjusted accordingly by the Administration Manager.
5. Payment can be made in cash or by cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Yaxley & Mellis Pre-school. Please ensure cheques are correctly dated, made payable as above and authorised. It is the responsibility of the payer to ensure there are adequate funds in their account. All payments must to be inside a sealed envelope, marked with the Child's Name and deposited in the post - box outside the pre-school.

Alternatively, parent/carers may choose to pay fees directly in to our bank account.

The details of which are:

Barclays Bank Plc Sort code 20-26-34 Account No: 63081885.

Parent/carers are requested to use their child's name as reference for any payments made in this way. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that our Sort Code and Account number are entered correctly on their own online banking system. The pre-school cannot be held liable if a parent/carer mistypes either the Sort Code or Account number which could lead to a payment being made to another account in the unlikely event that this does occur, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that the pre-school is reimbursed correctly.

6. The pre-school is happy to accept all forms of vouchers, so long as sufficient notice has been given to set up a new provider and there are no financial or administrative implications to the pre-school. Any parent/carer wishing to use childcare vouchers should contact the Administration Manager first, they can provide support if employer salary sacrifice forms require completion. Most vouchers are electronic and are paid directly into the pre-school bank account once the parent/carer generates the payment.

7. For parents who have to pay for any part of their childcare, help may be available via the child tax credit system. For further details contact the tax credits helpline 0845 300 3900 or visit the HM Revenue & Customs website (www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits)

8. Parent/carers are welcome to set up a weekly/monthly payment plan. If parent/carers wish to take advantage of this scheme, they need to contact the Administration Manager. Weekly/monthly payment plans need to be paid on the date stated on the agreement contract and signed by the parent/carer.

9. Fee payments will be checked by the Administration Manager, they will then issue a receipt for payments of cash or cheques. If you wish to receive a receipt for BACS payments please email our Administration Manager.

10. Fees should be paid by the date stated on your child's invoice. If payment is not received in the first instance then the pre-school reserves the right to implement the following policy.

Non-Payment of Fees

It is our intention to be sympathetic to the needs of your children when families encounter financial difficulties whilst competently collecting outstanding amounts as they fall due. It is essential parents/carers keep the Administration Manager informed as early as possible if there are problems paying the fees.

Unpaid fees have a detrimental effect on the pre-school and it is not a situation which we will leave unresolved. Therefore, if you are, for any reason, unable to pay the fees due, please speak to the Administration Manager or Treasurer advising them of your particular circumstances. In the event of a personal crisis, we will do our best to resolve the situation for both parties. *However, in every event, the outcome is that all outstanding fees must be paid.*

If the agreed payment structure is not honoured then the following procedure will be followed:

1. An informal reminder will be sent out to parents if no payment has been received in the first week of term.
2. If no response is received an 'overdue account' letter will be issued, asking for full payment within five working days. An immediate application of a 5% surcharge will be added to your invoice. If payment is received within five days then no further action will be taken.
3. If payment is not received at this stage, we may inform you that your child (ren) will be unable to attend their non-funded session(s) until payment has been received.
4. If this position remains unsolved at the end of the current term (or the agreed period of time) the child (ren)'s non-funded place(s) will be cancelled and offered elsewhere. If the parent/carers have contacted us already to make alternative arrangements, allowances can be made.
5. In the continuous absence of payment in full, steps will be taken to recover the full payment (i.e. the outstanding balance plus all accrued costs) through the small claims court. The Treasurer and Chair of the Pre-School Management Committee will be kept informed of the position at all times and will be paramount in any decisions or action applied.
6. If steps 1 - 2 have already been used for one payment period, then these steps do not have to be repeated for a following payment period for that same person. Step 3 maybe instigated immediately upon the payment structure not being honoured.

Late Collection

If your child is not collected on time, our legal liability relating to the staff/child ratio will be infringed as two members of staff must remain at the pre-school until the last child has been collected. Any parent/carer who is late collecting their child will have to pay a charge which helps to cover the additional staffing costs incurred for this reason. The charge is £5 for the first 5 minutes, with an additional £5 for every 5 minutes thereafter. If this does occur, the Administration Manager will be informed and an invoice will be generated.

Holidays and sickness

However payment is made, fees are payable regardless of whether your child is able to attend or not, i.e. holiday or illness. This also applies to lunch club if a place is booked. As the pre-school will have kept the child's place open, and will continue to employ and pay staff.

Hospital appointments.

If you know your child has a hospital appointment and will be requiring time off, providing you have given us a minimum of 2 weeks' notice in writing, you will not be charged.

Hospitalisation

If your child is absent from pre-school due to hospitalisation, payment is expected for the first week. Thereafter, no charge is made for subsequent time off.

Notice

We plan our staffing levels and set our budget well in advance. In order to operate, we therefore need notice of changes to numbers and thus our income. Four weeks written notice is required of a child leaving the pre-school or reducing their sessions, otherwise fees in lieu of notice will be charged. This also applies to children in receipt of Early Years Education Funding.

Closure

In the event that the Management Committee decides to close the pre-school and there is a disruption to services, i.e. adverse weather conditions. The pre-school reserves the right to offer replacement sessions in lieu of refunds.

Trips and Outings

1. If a trip or outing is organised by the pre-school, the pre-school may decide to ask parents for extra fees to cover this.
2. If a child is entitled to the free Early Years Education Funding, and the trip is within the hours accessed by the child, the pre-school may ask for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the trip. If the trip is outside those hours, a charge may be incurred as determined by the committee.
3. As the pre-school is a charity, if it does not receive enough funding from the voluntary contributions, the trip may not go ahead.
4. Other events, for example a Christmas party, may also be arranged throughout the year. It is at the discretion of the Management Committee when session charges or charges for events will or will not apply.

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