



## **Policy for Payment of Fees and the Free Entitlement**

This policy sets out when and how fees are payable, our procedures for dealing with late payment and explains the Free Entitlement. As a charity, our principal sources of income are the fees which we charge for the sessions we provide and the free entitlement funding we claim from West Sussex County Council for eligible children.

### **Fees**

- Fees are payable for all sessions attended by children before their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and during the term of their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- Any sessions not covered by Free Entitlement funding must be paid for. Fees are payable if all Free Entitlement hours are taken up at another setting.
- Fees must still be paid if children are absent with or without notice for any reason including holidays or sickness. Fees will only be waived in exceptional circumstances and after discussion with either the Manager or an Officer of the Committee.

### **Free Entitlement**

- The Free Entitlement is funding received by the setting from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and takes the place of fees. All children are eligible from the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- Free Entitlement consists of 15 hours at Pre-school per week for a maximum of 38 weeks per year.
- Free Entitlement can be used to pay for lunch clubs.
- Free Entitlement is paid to the setting in two blocks per term and is based on an estimate submitted before the start of the term and a headcount carried out during the early weeks of each term. Dates for headcounts are displayed on the noticeboard.
- The Pre-School must comply with WSCC Code of Practice key principles, OFSTED registration requirements and Every Child Matters Early Years Foundation Stage in order to receive the Free Entitlement.

- Parents/carers must provide proof of their child's date of birth and complete and sign a parent declaration form. This form must be amended when the number of sessions a child attends changes.

## **Fee Payment**

- Invoices will be sent to parents by email, or in paper format if preferred, in advance of the start of the term for which fees are payable.
- Invoices must be paid in full within 14 days of the start of the relevant term or within 14 days of the child's start date if the child is new to Pre-School.
- Pre-School appreciates prompt payment. Any parents/carers anticipating difficulties in paying fees should contact the Administration Manager, Manager or Treasurer immediately. Arrangements can be made to pay fees half termly/monthly/weekly.
- We have a policy in place to provide funded places for children in certain circumstances. Details of this policy can be found in the policy folder or policy section of our website, or parents/carers can speak to the Manager.
- Where an employer contributes to the cost of childcare, e.g. through childcare vouchers, we are willing to participate in the scheme provided we meet the requirements/criteria.
- We are willing to participate in any Government tax credit schemes that contribute to the cost of childcare, provided we meet the requirements/criteria.

## **Late Payment of Fees**

- The Pre-School makes every effort to meet the needs and best interests of all our children and in times of financial difficulty we seek to be understanding and flexible in our approach. However, all fees, including lunch club fees, must be paid in order for the setting to offer the high quality provision that all children deserve. As a registered charity, we are obliged to collect all monies owing to us and to take legal action if all other avenues have been explored.
- If payment has not been received by the due date a reminder will be emailed by the Administration Manager or a hard copy reminder put in the child's pouch in the foyer.
- If payment is not subsequently received, or no plan is been put in place to pay in instalments, the Treasurer will contact the parents/carers to explain that payment must be made, or a payment plan put in place, immediately.
- Pre-school reserves the right to withdraw a child's place if fees are not paid. In this case, sessions/lunch clubs will not be held open pending payment and may be offered to other children.

- A 10% charge of your total outstanding invoice may be added if your payment is overdue and / or payment plan has not been adhered to.
- No additional sessions/lunch clubs will be offered to families in arrears, unless a payment plan is in place and is being adhered to.
- Sessions will not be offered to younger siblings of parents/carers who are in arrears, unless a payment plan is in place and is being adhered to.
- Any outstanding monies owed may be recovered through legal action.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Hurstpierpoint Pre-School	name of setting
Held	<hr/> 15th June 2016	Hurstpierpoint Pre-School
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> June 2017	
Signed on behalf of the management committee	<hr/>	
Name of signatory	<hr/> Hayley Spencer	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	<hr/> Chair	
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