

Early Years Funding and Voluntary Services Policy



1. Introduction and Core Principle

This policy outlines how our setting delivers the Government's funded early education and childcare hours (15 or 30 hours) in compliance with Department for Education (DfE) Statutory Guidance.

The core principle is that the funded entitlement must be delivered **free of charge at the point of access**. We will not levy any mandatory "top-up" fees, nor will we require the purchase of voluntary extras as a condition of securing a funded place.

2. Funded Hours and Charging Structure

2.1. Essential Costs (Covered by Funding)

The funded hourly rate covers the core costs of providing childcare and education in line with the EYFS. This includes all necessary staffing, standard educational resources (e.g., paper, paint), utilities, and **basic hygiene items** (e.g., soap, handwash, toilet paper).

2.2. Funding Patterns (Term-Time vs. Stretched Offer)

Parents must choose one funding pattern per term via the Parental Declaration Form.

| | Term-Time Only (38 Weeks) | Stretched Offer (51 Weeks) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Weekly Entitlement (15 Hours) | 15 hours per week | 11 hours per week |
| Weekly Entitlement (30 Hours) | 30 hours per week | 22.5 hours per week |

2.3. Charges for Additional Hours and Private Days

| Scenario | Chargeable Time | Rate |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Additional Hours | Hours attended <i>in addition</i> to the funded session (e.g., wrap-around care). | £8.00 per hour |

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| Private Days | Any full days booked where no funding is claimed (i.e., days taken outside the weekly entitlement). | The setting's usual day rate (as per the separate fee schedule). |
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3. Voluntary Contribution Policy (Chargeable Extras)

The charges below are for services and items outside the scope of the Government's funding rate. These charges are **strictly voluntary** and must be agreed upon **termly**.

3.1. Voluntary Meal and Snack Charges

| Service | Cost | Parental Alternative (Free of Charge) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Hot Lunch, Tea, and Snacks | £1.10 per hour | Parents provide meals and snacks . |

Crucial Guidelines for Packed Lunches (If Parent Declines Charge):

- **Food Safety:** We **do not have refrigeration facilities**. Meals must contain an ice pack and be non-perishable.
- **Health:** Lunches must be healthy and balanced. **Chocolate, sweets, crisps, and high-sugar drinks are prohibited.**
- **Allergens:** Packed lunches must be entirely **nut-free**. Parents **must provide an accompanying list of all ingredients and common allergens** present in the packed lunch to staff upon arrival.
- **Forgotten Items:** If a packed lunch or snack is forgotten, parents will be contacted immediately and **are expected to deliver the item to the nursery without delay.**
- Costs cover catering, food, preparation, kitchen staff time.

3.2. Voluntary Consumables Charge (Personal Care Items)

| Service | Cost | Parental Alternative (Free of Charge) |
|---------|------|---------------------------------------|
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| Personal Consumables (Nappies, Wipes, Sun Cream, Barrier Creams e.g., Sudocrem) | 20p per hour | Parents provide a supply of all required items , clearly labelled, for their child's use. |
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Forgotten Consumables Clause: If essential personal care items are forgotten, parents will be contacted immediately and **are expected to bring the items to the setting without delay.**

4. Invoicing and Transparency

All invoices will be fully itemised and will clearly separate the charges for funded hours (£0.00), additional private hours, private days, and each individual voluntary extra (Meals, Consumables, Activities).

Payment for any voluntary extra will never be a condition of securing or retaining a funded place.

5. Parental Commitment

The funding pattern and choices regarding voluntary extras are fixed for the duration of the current funding term. Changes can only be made at the start of the subsequent funding term, following written notice. This commitment must be captured via the Parental Declaration Form.