

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of the children are met.

10.16 Payment of fees

Policy statement

If there are any concerns about the following or payment of fees generally, parents/carers are requested to talk to the Pre-school Chair, the Treasurer or the Administration Assistant whose details appear on the green display board in the main hall of the setting.

Rates

Fees are £6:00 per child per hour.

Voluntary snack charge of 50p per snack (up to a maximum of £1.00 per day) for non-funded children.

Voluntary consumables charge of £1.00 per session (up to a maximum of £2.00 per day) for funded children.

At Little Fingers Pre-school, we are committed to equal opportunities for everyone, ensuring it is accessible to all families in the community, whilst providing high quality care and education. Whilst we aim to keep fees as competitive as possible, in order to maintain sustainability, quality of care, and for it to be possible to pay staff according to their qualifications and experience and to meet rising costs of services etc, we carry out a review of our charges on an annual basis. Should it be deemed necessary to increase the fees, you will be given the minimum of one month's notice. We recognise that families have differing needs and therefore endeavour to meet the individual needs of all families.

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year from the term following their third birthday. If parents choose to use funding at Little Fingers Pre-School they are requested to inform us to make the application on their behalf. If parents wish their child to attend for additional hours they will be charged according to the rates detailed above.

From September 2017, children of some working parents will be entitled to an additional 570 hours per year (30 hours per week), meaning that many families will be able to claim 1140 hours of free childcare if they meet certain criteria. If eligible for the 30 hours childcare, also known as the 'Extended Entitlement', the 1140 hours of free childcare can be taken across the year, (38 weeks) term time only and split between up to four childcare providers.

Flexibility options will need to be discussed with Little Fingers Pre-school and your other chosen childcare provider(s).

Invoicing

Fees will be invoiced termly in advance. Payment is due within 30 days from receipt of invoice, or the invoice date if later, unless an alternative arrangement is agreed with the Management Committee.

Payment

Payment can be made in cash or by cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Little Fingers Pre-school. Alternatively, parents/carers may choose to pay fees directly in to our bank account. The details of which are:

Santander Account number: 87481603 Sort Code: 09-01-52

Please do not share these bank details with anyone without prior consent of either our Treasurer (Katherine Gisborne) or our Administrative Assistant (Olivia Duckney).

Parents/carers are requested to use their child's name as reference for any payments made in this way.

Outstanding fees

If parents/carers have any difficulty at all paying fees, it is essential that they tell us straight away. We are always happy to discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements with parents/carers in genuine financial difficulties.

Procedures

- Parents/carer's are notified of the required fees at the beginning of each term by means of an invoice. Fees are payable termly and may be paid either in their entirety or in instalments.
- Term fees need to be paid by cheque or bank transfer on the date(s) specified on the invoice otherwise a late payment charge of 5% will be incurred.
- Cheques should be made payable to "Little Fingers Pre-School".
- Holidays taken during term time will incur normal session fees.
- If a child is accessing more than their entitlement, then additional hours will be charged for. If no payment of these additional fees is received within the specific time period detailed on the invoice and we have not been advised, then the extra hours will be withdrawn.
- Parents/carers are free to use their funding at any registered setting.
- If a child starts the setting mid-term, the fees will be calculated and adjusted accordingly.
- Receipts are issued only if requested.
- We request half a term's or 4 week's notice before withdrawing your child. If notice is not given, we reserve the right to charge for this period.
- Fees will still be incurred if the setting has to unexpectedly close (for a period of up to and including 3 days).
- Little Fingers Pre-school is registered to receive childcare vouchers.

Collections and Debt Recovery

- If a parent/carer has difficulty paying by the due date, they must advise our Treasurer (Katherine Gisborne) or our Administration Assistant (Olivia Duckney) to arrange an alternative payment plan.
- If the fees are not paid by the due date and parents/carers do not advise us, an additional charge of 5% of the outstanding amount will be added to the bill.

- Our aim is to protect the pre-school's charitable status, by recovering outstanding payments by the due date.
- Our aim is to promote positive action to prevent arrears occurring by providing a range of payment methods. However, the pre-school will consider enforcement action against deliberate non-payers of those who delay payment.
- Where a parent/carer makes contact with the pre-school, their circumstances will be sensitively and confidentially considered with a view to agreeing a reasonable payment plan and minimising recovery action, thus helping to alleviate possible hardship.
- Where parent/carer's fail to establish contact or maintain arrangements, recovery action will continue as follows:
The pre-school will:
 - Contact the parent/carer within 7 days after the payment due date has expired. Parents will receive an informal written reminder that fees are outstanding.
 - If, after a further 14 days, parent/carer has still not paid their fees, they will receive a formal written reminder and an additional charge of 5% of the outstanding amount will be added to the bill.
 - All information collected is strictly confidential and governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 (General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) and Little Fingers Pre-school's Confidentiality policy.
 - Liaise with parent/carer to advise on re-scheduled arrears amount and appropriate payment method.
 - Provide a detailed summary of re-scheduled amount in writing, showing relevant amounts and instalment due dates.
 - Advise the parent/carer to commence and maintain payments immediately.
 - Be forced to take legal action to recover the outstanding amount, should the fees continue to remain unpaid.
 - Be forced to offer the child's place to another child on our waiting list, should the fees remain unpaid. We reserve the rights to ultimately refuse admissions if fees remain unpaid.
- If the parents/carers have contacted us to make alternative arrangements, allowances can be made.

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. One half term or 4 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.*

Refunds *No refund is made for sickness or absence from the pre-school.*

Closure *In the event of the Little Fingers Pre-school being forced to cancel sessions, we will endeavour to give as much notice as is reasonably possible. The pre-school reserves the right to offer replacement sessions in lieu of refunds.*

Little Fingers Pre-School Registered Charity No. 1038252

This policy was adopted by

Little Fingers Pre-school

On

March 2022

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the provider

Carolyn Coleman

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Chair