



## Fees & Funding policy, including non-payment procedure.

### Fees Policy

- The setting is open all year round closing only on bank holidays, weekends and the Christmas period. We close at normal time on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and reopen on the first working day after New years day. We do charge for bank holidays including the Christmas Bank holidays, but we do not charge for the normal working days we are closed over Christmas the Christmas period.
- **Invoices will be charged in advance.** For parents returning to work after maternity leave and if the child is under 12 months then a 50% discount off the first months invoice will be offered. A sibling discount will apply providing no other child is receiving a funded place.
- **All invoices will be sent out on the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month** (or the nearest working day) for the following month. Whether paid by BACS, Childcare Vouchers or Tax Free Savings, all monies must clear into the Nursery bank account by the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month unless a prior agreement is made. Cash is also accepted. We do not take card payments or cheques.
- By accepting a Nursery place, the signatory/ies on the contract is/are agreeing that it is their responsibility to pay the Nursery fees each month regardless of how they choose to pay for the childcare.
  - Tax free childcare - It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the Tax-free childcare account is set up appropriately and the funds are cleared in the Nursery account before the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month.
  - Universal Credits – it is not Universal Credits responsibility to pay the Nursery fees. It is still the responsibility of the person who signed the contract to ensure the fees are paid on time. The money a parent receives from universal credit is between them and HMRC.
  - Childcare vouchers – if using vouchers, you must ensure these are cleared in the Nursery account before the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month. It is the signatory's responsibility to ensure the vouchers are released in time.
  - If both parents are responsible for paying for Nursery fees and there is a breakdown in their relationship, then the nursery shall work with the family to decide who is responsible for what percentage of the invoice, if necessary. If only one parent has signed the contract, then responsibility will rest on the sole signatory to ensure the fees are paid on time.
- **If a Parent requires an earlier drop off than their start time, then they must** contact the Nursery to make prior arrangement for this. Please do not assume we can accept your child. If a parent is more than 5 minutes late collecting their child, then the normal fee will be charged for the full hour, except after 6pm where the fee will be £25 per half hour after 6pm.
- **Parents must inform the nursery if they will be late to collect their child.** If a parent is late collecting their child and the Nursery has not been informed, the Nursery will contact the child's emergency contacts to collect the child. The Police and Social Services will be contacted in the event of no response from the Parents or from any of the contacts after half an hour of no contact.
- **As a rule, Parents will be charged in the following way:**
  1. Care all year round – weekly amount x 51 weeks / 12 = monthly amount
  2. Term time only care – weekly amount x 39 weeks / 12 = monthly amount
  3. Shift patterns – We will take the minimum number of hours your child would attend and this will be your contracted hours, charged in advance. Any hours over the minimum hours will be charged as extra in arrears.
  4. Extra hours will be agreed with Nursery management in advance and will be charged at the normal hourly rate.

Because the Nursery does not offer set sessions, we charge by a sliding scale. The hourly rate is inclusive of breakfast, snack, hot tea, nappies and wipes for children who are not in receipt of funded childcare. A minimum of 8 hours childcare is required. **Your contract & contracted hours are stated on your invoice.**

BAND A – 10 hours or less	£6.80
BAND B – 11 to 20 hours	£6.60
BAND C – 21 to 30 hours	£6.20
BAND D – 31 to 39 hours	£5.80
BAND E – 40 hours or above	£5.20

An annual revision of the fees will be carried out in April of each year. Notifications of the increase will be given 8 weeks prior to the increase.

- **Hours cannot be swapped short term.** Extra hours can be requested. Changes to hours long term need to be discussed with a member of management **before the 20<sup>th</sup>** of the month and any change in hours will need to commence from the start of the following month.

Parents must speak to the Manager **before the 27<sup>th</sup>** of the month if they cannot make the invoice payment on time.

An unarranged late payment will incur a £10 late payment fee on invoices under £500 and £15 late payment fee on fees over £500.

If an invoice is not paid before the first day of the month, we will not be able to accept the child/en into the nursery until the payment has been made.

#### **When fees are expected and not expected**

**Fees are still due if a child does not attend their booked time.** If a child is off Nursery for 4 weeks or more then a 50% reduction after the 2<sup>nd</sup> week will be applied to the invoice to retain the place.

If the Nursery is to close through own choice, or because the nursery is to be at fault for a closure (i.e. training day or maintenance, environmental health enforcement, or if we are unable to staff the Nursery) no fees will be charged. If the Nursery is to close due to reasons beyond our control for less than one week (i.e. Public Health enforcement, Government enforcement, adverse weather, issues with the building or the Gym below, or Ofsted enforcement not through fault of our) then full fees will be due. If the Nursery is to close for more than one week then we will come to a mutual agreement with parents as to what the next course of action will be.

**4 weeks written notice** is required to terminate a paying place (see below for funding termination notifications). The notice will only be accepted from the date we receive the notice, not from the date written on the notice. Fees will still be due during the notice period regardless of the child's attendance and all fees must be paid before the child's final day.

**2 weeks written notice** is required to reduce the hours of childcare.

#### **Non-payment procedure Including non-payment of termination period.**

If services provided by Mucky Pups childcare have been used and not paid, or failure to pay the termination fees, in accordance with the Fees policy, the non-payment procedure will be followed to pursue all unpaid fees.

**Step 1:** You will be issued with an unpaid fee's reminder asking for full immediate payment (including a £15 late fee) within 5 working days. The procedure will continue to step 2 unless the full amount owed is paid within 5 working days, or if a payment plan is agreed.

**Step 2:** You will be issued with a final unpaid fee's reminder asking for full immediate payment (including any late fees) within 5 working days. The procedure will continue to step 3 unless the full amount owed is paid within 5 working days, or if a payment plan is agreed.

**Step 3:** We will commence proceedings for all outstanding fees as well as court costs incurred through [www.moneyclaimsonline.co.uk](http://www.moneyclaimsonline.co.uk). After seeking advice from the insurance provider, you may be given notice of termination of care for your child at any time during this procedure.

## Early Years Funding for 2, 3 & 4 year olds

1. **All** 3 and 4 year old children, and eligible 2 year olds, are entitled to a maximum of 570 hours Funded Early Education and Childcare. These are called the **Universal hours**.
2. Then, If a child is eligible depending on the parents working circumstances, it may be possible to claim up to an extra 570 hours. These are called the **Extended hours**.
3. Funding can be split across a maximum of 2 settings and can claim a minimum of 3 hours to a maximum of 10 hours in any one day.
4. The Nursery cannot request a deposit to hold any funded place. The Nursery can request a deposit on chargeable hours over the funded hours. However, this is not something we currently enforce.
5. The Funding is split across 3 funding blocks throughout the year which start on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1<sup>st</sup> January and the 1<sup>st</sup> April.
6. If eligible, the funding can be claimed from the term after the child's 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday and will run up until the child attends school.
7. The Nursery receives the funding for a set number of weeks across each term and it is at the discretion of the Nursery to decide which days/weeks the funding can be claimed for. The Nursery will issue a calendar at the beginning of each term to inform parents of the term dates. Please note that Term Time Only funding entitlement is only for 38 weeks per year, therefore there may be weeks when the hours taken by your child cannot be paid via early years entitlement funding.
8. Funding can be offered up to a maximum of 11(universal) or 22 (extended) hours per week all year round, **OR** up to a maximum of 15 (universal) or 30(extended) hours during the term time (child will not attend during school holidays). You do not have to use all the offered hours if you do not require them.
9. Parents will be required to complete a Parental Declaration Form and provide evidence of the child's birth certificate and proof of address before the Nursery can claim the funding. This form must be filled out in full. The office staff can help you with this.
10. If you are claiming 2 year funding or the extended hours, you will need to apply for a funding code which will need to be added onto the Declaration form. The Nursery cannot claim the funding without this code or the declaration form.
11. If you are claiming the extended 3 & 4 year old funding then you will be prompted to reconfirm the code every 3 months, and before the end of each term. You will keep this same code each time. **It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the code is reconfirmed, it is NOT the responsibility of the Nursery.** If you do not reconfirm the code before the end of the term then you will not be able to receive the extended funding until the next term. However, you will still be entitled to the universal hours.

You can find out if you are eligible for funding by visiting [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) or [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/earlyyears](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/earlyyears)

12. If you are claiming funding and do not use the full claimed hours on a regular basis then the Nursery will discuss reducing the hours as the Nursery may be required to pay back any unused hours to NCC. For example, if a Parent is claiming 22 hours funding but is only bringing their child in for 20 of

those hours then we may look at reducing it to 20 hours claimed. We understand children may have time off through holidays or sickness.

13. We will only be able to attribute the hours to the child's early years entitlement if this has been agreed and notified to our local authority within their required timescales and adheres to their policy on early years entitlement provision.
14. We will not ask Parents to contribute towards the financial top up of any loss the Nursery may receive on the hourly rate provided to us by the County Council. We will, however, request a contribution towards consumables that are required to provide care outside of the curriculum, such as snack, toiletries etc. This is charged at £0.30p per **funded** hour.
15. Any hours required over the funded hours will be charged at £6.80 per hour. This rate is not inclusive of meals, nappies or wipes.
16. A hot meal is offered at £3 per meal at 4.15pm. They will not be inclusive of the hourly rate. Parents may provide their child with a packed tea providing they comply with our healthy eating policy.
17. Your invoice will clearly show you the number of hours that have been funded as well as the number of hours that are charged directly to you.
18. If a child receives funding without any extra chargeable hours, no notice is required to terminate a place. If a child receives chargeable hours over their funded hours, the 4 weeks notice period (see fees policy) will still apply to the chargeable hours.
19. If your child is not going to attend their session, you **MUST** notify the Nursery **BEFORE** the session start time. If we do not get notification, then we will call after 15 minutes of their session time starting.