

Fakenham Infant and Nursery School

Charging Policy

Entitlement

Fakenham Infant and Nursery School supports the entitlement to 15/30 hours free early years provision for 3 and 4 year olds in a teacher led session and for 2 year olds in our Sunshine Room.

Some families will be entitled to 15 hours of free entitlement. Universal free 15 hours provision is available the term following a child's 3rd birthday up until they reach compulsory school age for every child irrespective of background or family circumstances. Some families will be entitled to 30 hours free early years provision or 15 hours for eligible two year olds. This must be applied for and an eligibility code obtained before the start of the claim period that they wish their child to receive the offer of 15/30 hours per week.

The Education Act 2002 offered the opportunity to develop childcare within the maintained sector.

Maintained schools are being encouraged to develop 'wrap around' day care for 3 and 4 year olds attending funded Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Education.

The Department for Education advises that while free entitlement at the point of delivery is statutory, provision beyond 15/30 hours is not and therefore can be charged, in line with the power to charge for extended services. See Child Care Act 2006 (secretary of state's code of practice 2010).

The Governing Board of FINS makes charges for additional child care under section 27 of the Education Act 2002.

Purpose of our provision

The extended provision supports parents who want to return to work, or access education and training.

For children with working parents, the provision can enable access to quality child care and education throughout the day in a single setting. This enhances children's well-being promoting secure foundations for future learning and life.

Aims of the Policy

Ensure that charges are fair and affordable.

To uphold the Government's policy of free entitlement for 15/30 hours a week over 38 weeks of the year, this will be maintained subject to session availability.

Ensure that childcare is flexible and meets the needs of working parents.

Ensure that parents can identify on their invoice the charges made in relation to additional hours above the 15/30 free hours.

A review will be made each year in March to be implemented in the Autumn Term.

Any increase in charges will be made primarily to sustain the Nursery provision.

Parents will be informed well in advance of any increase in charging (1 term).

Education/Child Care Charges

Child care provision can be available from 8.30 am to 3.00pm, five days a week for 38 weeks of the Year (190 days), achieved through two 3 hour sessions with an optional paid lunch period.

Parents are not obliged to purchase additional hours in order to secure a free place.

The charging policy covers children accessing provision additional to Early Years Foundation Stage funded education.

No charge can be made for the Early Years Foundation Stage funded education place of 15/30 hours per week but parents can purchase additional childcare provision where available.

The costings are based on resource requirements to meet Early Years Foundation Stage requirements as specified by Ofsted.

Payment information

Additional childcare may be purchased at £12.50 per session (Rainbow Class) and £14.00 per session (Sunshine Room). Only whole sessions can be booked not part of sessions. Charges will be for the duration of sessions booked irrespective of the length of stay.

An additional charge of £1.50 per day will be made for children attending the optional lunch time session. Children will bring their own lunch.

Payment Details

Parents will be invoiced for sessions attended above the 15/30 hours free entitlement.

The optional lunchtime session does not attract nursery funding and is therefore, charged in full at £1.50.

All fees are invoiced during the first week of each ½ term and should be paid within 5 working days.

Payment will not be refunded when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness.

If a child is absent for a long period of time the Nursery/School will decide on a case by case basis as to whether fees will be paid for the period. The School governor's decision is final.

Payment can be made by ParentMail. Any charges arising from payment in un-cleared funds will be passed on to the parent.

Charges will be made for sessions when the nursery is closed due to circumstances beyond the school's control e.g. extreme weather or for health and safety reasons. This is because the overheads of the Nursery, such as staffing, still need to be covered.

Voluntary contributions may be requested for additional events such as weekly cooking activities, visits or special occasions. Parents will be notified of these in advance.

The notice period for withdrawing from the Nursery is half a school term.

Collection of unpaid fees

1. Debt collection

1.1. The Governing Body has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled including nursery fees.

A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for 7 years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices.

1.2. The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts. However, we will refer uncollected debts to the Local Authority to consider such action.

2. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

2.1. The Headteacher and School Secretary will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and those records maintained.

- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
- A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor.
- The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
- The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.

2.2. The Governing Body:

- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
- Must approve any legal action taken.
- Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- Will adhere to the privacy arrangements.
- May delegate its responsibilities under this policy to the Headteacher.

3. The process for pursuing debts

3.1 Informal reminder – Within 3 days of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the school.

3.2 First reminder letter – If the debt is yet to be paid one week after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.

3.3 Second reminder letter - If the debt is yet to be paid one week after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. The School has the right to alert parents that continued late payments may result in the loss of their children's place at Nursery. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.

3.4 Final reminder letter - If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to the Local Authority to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to

respond. At this point a decision will be made by the Governing Body as to whether the child's place will be revoked.

3.5 Possible legal action – If no payment is made the Local Authority will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

Late collection

This should to be read in conjunction with the schools late collection policy.

Changes to sessions

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate short term changes to Nursery session's such as changing from a Thursday morning to a Friday afternoon for one week only. We require a half term notice for any additions. Fees will be calculated up to the end of notice period. The school will however, do its best to work with parents to accommodate longer term changes. This is subject to session availability.

Application for a Nursery Place

Applications can be made anytime by phoning or going into the School office. Name, date of birth, address and phone number are required. If the child has been registered, the school office will contact you at the beginning of the process. A confirmation of sessions booked will be given. This will outline number of funded/paid sessions. These will only be re-issued if there is a change to the sessions.

Complaints

In our Nursery where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the free entitlement set out in the school's Early Years Funding Agreement and in the Early Education and Childcare Guidance a complaint can be submitted directly to the Head Teacher.

Our complaints policy is made available to all our families as part of the registration process via the brochure and school website.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the resources committee and will be agreed on an annual basis by the Full Governing Board.

Signed on behalf of Fakenham Infant and Nursery Governing body

Signature

Name

Date

Review date